

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 753

Witness

Kieran Downey,  
53 Derry Drive,  
Crumlin,  
Dublin.

Identity.

Son of Joseph Downey who served with  
the 4th Battalion Dublin Brigade  
Easter Week 1916.

Subject.

Conversation which his late father, Joseph Downey,  
had with Joseph Plunkett on the Easter Week  
Rising, 1916.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.2077.....

Statement of Kiernan Downey,

53, Derry Drive,  
Crumlin, DUBLIN.

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My late father, Joseph Downey, died about twelve years ago. He took part in the 1916 Rising in Marrowbone Distillery. Following the Rising he was arrested and removed to Richmond Barracks. Before he died he related to me that he had been suffering from ptomaine poisoning while a prisoner in Richmond Barracks. During this illness he was nursed by Joseph Plunkett who was then a prisoner there.

Fr. Ryan of Goldenbridge, Inchicore, called to Richmond Barracks to render spiritual aid to my father. Whilst there he censured my father, Plunkett and various other prisoners for attempting to disrupt the British Empire. With that Plunkett turned on the priest and asked him if he would condemn something which already had the blessing of the Holy Father in Rome. Fr. Ryan apparently said "No. Certainly not." and then Plunkett told my father and Fr. Ryan that he had been an Envoy of the Volunteers to Rome where he placed their plans and intentions before the Holy Father and had received the Apostolic Blessing.

Two evenings later Plunkett told my father he was being removed to Kilmainham for execution and it was at this time Plunkett asked my father to tell all his fellow prisoners that he had received the Popes Blessing on the undertaking of the Volunteers.

I should mention that before my father died he

wrote a letter to the Irish Press concerning this particular matter.

Signature Kieran Downey  
(Kieran Downey)  
Date 26<sup>th</sup> Nov 1952

26th Nov. 1952.

Witness: W. Ivory Comdt.  
W. Ivory, Comd't.

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