

W.S. 826

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 826

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 826

Witness

Miss Maeve MacGarry,
31 Upper Fitzwilliam Street,
Dublin.

Identity.

Member of Cumann na mBan,
Dublin, 1913

Subject.

National events, 1913-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

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STATEMENT BY MISS MAEVE MCGARRY,
31 Upper Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin.

My mother was always interested in the national movement as a young girl from Parnell's time. My father on the other hand did not agree with her outlook, although he never interfered with her national or political activities. He was very quiet and so my mother was able to bring up us children in the way she wanted.

The first thing she wanted was to get schools for us to go to where the Irish language would be taught. My elder brother went to Newbridge. Milo went, of course, to Pearse's School. My sisters went to St. Louis' Convent, Monaghan. But a boarding school did not suit my health, so I went to Loreto, St. Stephen's Green. My youngest sister, Eileen, finished in the Green. She is now Mrs. Trimble, living in Clontarf.

My mother, who was always an Irish-Irelander, brought me to the Gaelic League - first to the Ard Craobh and then to the Cúig Cúigí branch.

She was also interested in the Suffragette movement and brought me into it. She spoke at meetings in Hyde Park. Pethwick Lawrence and his wife came to Dublin to speak at a meeting and they stayed with us. There were many public processions in which I marched. At one of Redmond's meetings in the Mansion House, we assembled in the crowd with banners with slogans on them. The A.O.H. attacked us and treated us most brutally. There was another meeting - I think a garden party - at Artane at which Mr. Asquith was present and spoke. We heckled him when he was going in

and coming out. I think that was 1913 and before the War broke out. My mother organised a couple of jarveys to follow the cars containing the prominent visitors as they left Artane. Some of us were in the outside cars, shouting "Votes for Women" after the visitors. My mother was taken by the police and kept until the visitors had departed. We felt we had a great triumph in achieving our object.

My mother was an active participant in the founding of Cumann na mBan. She brought me with her to the first meeting at Wynn's Hotel which founded Cumann na mBan. There was a good number of women present. Those I remember were Mrs. Wyse Power, her daughter Máire, Mrs. Kettle, Mrs. Skeffington, Iza Lawler (Mrs. Hughes now), I think Miss Bloxham, one of the Plunkett's (Philomena I think), Miss O'Rahilly.

This was not long after the excitement caused by the big tram strike when Larkin had a shipload of food from England and started the kitchens in Liberty Hall to feed the unemployed and the schoolchildren, with the help of Madame Markievicz and others. There was a good deal of feeling worked up about this by the William Martin Murphy Press, and some prominent Catholics realised the position and that they should be doing something to relieve the distress caused by the strike. The interest of the clergy was aroused and committees were then formed by prominent Catholics, chiefly to prevent Larkin carrying out his threat to send the strikers' children to be looked after by the Labour people in England. The events of those days aroused the conscience of all sections of the people and opened the eyes of the better-off citizens to the shameful conditions under which the working people of Dublin - and indeed of all Ireland - lived.

My sister and I were in O'Connell Street on the famous Sunday when Larkin spoke from the balcony of the Imperial Hotel. As a consequence there was a baton charge by the police - many of them mounted - and we were forced back along the Quays where some anti-Larkinites threatened to throw us into the Liffey. There were many injured on this occasion.

I was in 25 Parnell Square on Good Friday 1916. It was supposed to be a First-Aid meeting, but we just assembled and did nothing. We felt that the atmosphere was very tense. As it was Good Friday night, not all the members turned up. I can't remember whether we got any instructions about the following Sunday. Kavanagh, who taught us drill, came in but did not stay very long.

There were rumours about the disaster to the motor car in Killorglin on Saturday. It caused depression among our people.

On Sunday we - especially my mother - were sort of waiting and expecting something. All day long nobody came until late on Sunday night between twelve and one. She would not go to bed but remained up reading, as if she was expecting someone to come. She sent us to bed. She might have known more than we did. She used to meet McDonagh and different people and have chats with them about the position. At an earlier period Pearse used to come to the house, when he got into difficulties with the school. I saw him cry one day on account of his financial distress. She used to help him with money, as she had the greatest sympathy with him and she thought St. Enda's the most important undertaking of the time, from a national point of view. She took Milo away from St. Mary's and sent him there and

helped Pearse in every way she could. Pearse used to take Milo and the two Dowling's down to Rosmuck in Connemara for the summer holidays.

Near one o'clock on Easter Sunday night, there was a knock and Mother knew the meaning of it and said to herself as she went down the stairs, "This is the call". She opened the door and admitted Miss Marie Perolz and Charlie Wyse-Power. They came into the dining room and told her they had a despatch for her from Pearse. They gave her instructions about what she was to do next morning. She was to take the despatch to Limerick to Daly's house, where she was to contact Colivet. If he questioned her, she was to give the password ("Sarsfield").

She took an outside car to the station and went by train to Limerick. She was accompanied by Milo who at the time was young and frail and she thought it best to take him out of the City. Also she felt if anything happened to prevent her from reaching her destination, Milo could get away more easily with the message. She was not at all nervous. On the contrary, she felt triumphant that she was the bearer of the message to her own town. I remember how exultant she was. It was the 9.15 train she took. As I saw them off at the door, after I had given them breakfast, I noticed the streets were extra lively. There were people gay going off to Harcourt Street station and to the Dalkey trams for the Easter Monday outings. A short time afterwards they were all trailing back, frustrated by the Volunteers who turned them back at the various points.

Soon after my mother left, Miss Sorcha McMahon came in person to mobilise me. She had a list of Volunteers I was to mobilise first. Then I was to go into Jacobs. I

told her that my mother had gone to Limerick and I was alone in the house with my father and the two maids, and that I had ammunition in the house. I asked her what I was to do with it. She told me that it was known where the ammunition was and somebody would come to collect it. I felt I could not leave until the ammunition was collected and, when I said this, she told me to do whatever I thought best. She then advised me to get some Volunteer to do the mobilisation if I could not manage it myself. She left and then I prayed earnestly that some Volunteer would come. Almost immediately Maurice Danaher, a friend of Milo's and a Volunteer in C. Company, 3rd Battalion, came. He is a barrister now, living in Rathgar. I gave him the list and told him to mobilise the Volunteers on it. After that Lilah Colbert came - a sister of Con's - and May McDonnell, who afterwards married Con's brother. He lost a leg in the Civil War. Several Volunteers then called to the door to ask where they were to go. As I had memorised the list, I was able to tell them. I had not seen them before but I remembered the names. Theobald Wolfe Tone Dillon, a brother of James Dillon, T.D., came on the Tuesday. He afterwards became a priest. Three others who, like him, were not on the list came for instructions and I suggested they should go into the College of Surgeons. Maurice Danaher met them on Wednesday and they had not got in anywhere.

Maurice Danaher was in and out during Tuesday and Wednesday, bringing ammunition from various places. I don't know where he got it. One or two lads came in looking for ammunition and he gave it to them. During his various journeys, he collected quite a lot of information about how things were going. Another man who came was Denis McMahon.

He was from Raheen in Clare and was manager of McLysaght's shop in Lower Baggot Street, at the corner of James Street. where Conor Clune and his brother, also from Clare, were employed. It was called the Co-Operative Stores.

In the whole of Fitzwilliam Street and Square there was nobody but enemies of our cause. These people described the Rising as a riot, adding that the police would soon put it down. When on Tuesday they found the gas cut off and all the shops shut, they had to admit the real position. There were two snipers on the neighbouring roofs. One seemed to be on the roof of the big house in Leeson Street facing Fitzwilliam Place; the other on the roof of a house in Lower Pembroke Street. He was very busy sniping during the whole week. I went out our back door to Lad Lane and saw the police in the Barracks collected at the windows, watching Plunkett's house and ours - I expect for snipers.

I went out on Monday for bread, also to explore the possibility of going into the College of Surgeons, although I knew I could not stay there on account of my responsibilities at home, as I have already described. I got as far as the Shelbourne Hotel that day and had to turn back. I met Eamon Curtis there and it was he advised me to turn back, saying I could not get any further. At Merrion Row, at the entrance to Stephen's Green, I saw a dead horse. I was told it belonged to a cabman who insisted on going on his journey although told by the Volunteers to turn back. They shot his horse and must have taken away his cab, because it was not to be seen.

On Wednesday morning about five o'clock I saw the British military arriving. They crept along on their hands and knees along the railings from Baggot Street into Upper

Fitzwilliam Street where the residents gave them every help in their power, food and comfort of all sorts. Those were all people who were holding jobs under the Castle Government, although practically all of them were Irish and many of them Catholic. Some of them were the landlord crowd, others lawyers, judges, etc. There were very few doctors in the Square or Street then, except those who had also jobs under the Castle regime.

I should have mentioned that on Monday afternoon I saw many of the wounded G.Rs being brought into the military nursing home next door to our house. I had seen a few of these G.R. men, whom I knew, in the neighbourhood who had set out in the morning dressed in their grand uniform on their route march, returning to their homes in the afternoon, looking very crestfallen.

During Wednesday morning Mrs. Skeffington came in to see us and incidentally to collect ammunition. I gave her something to eat and then she went away carrying the ammunition in her umbrella and in a pocket which she had specially made inside the tail of her skirt. She came again in the afternoon and, by this time, we had heard from Maurice Danaher that her husband had been arrested. She had just been to the College of Surgeons - apparently she was in and out there - and she was in a very nervous condition although the average onlooker would not have noticed that. But I knew her so well and I could see she was terribly upset. She was so courageous that, even if she had any inkling of her husband's arrest, it would not stop her carrying out the task she had been given to do. Maurice looked at me to see whether he should tell her. I bowed my head and he informed her. She replied in a low tone, "I surmised something had happened to him. I must get on with the

work". She had been asked at the College of Surgeons to secure a doctor. We wondered whom we would get and Maurice suggested Dr. Michael Davitt; and he went down to Merrion Square for him. Dr. Davitt came up with Maurice at once and Mrs. Skeffington told him what he was wanted for. He consented to go to the Surgeon's but only on condition that he would not be kept - he probably had other patients. She gave him the password - Sarsfield - and he went back, I think, to get his bag and then went to the Surgeon's. I held her for a while chatting. We went out into the garden to give her time to get over her shock. She went away then and I did not see her again that week.

From Wednesday the firing from the British machine guns became intense, especially in the neighbourhood of Mount Street. From our top floor windows we could see the military firing from the square tower of Haddington Road Church. It became very dangerous to move around in that area and the streets became quite deserted. A young priest came up from Westland Row Church warning the people not to go down there and not to go to Mass on Sunday. On the previous days they were to be seen going down in groups to the Church.

Of course, during these days we had no bread, no milk - except tinned milk which I had bought on the Monday - no meat. There were so many coming in and out that all our food was consumed. My mother had laid in a side of bacon but that was gone too. We never went to bed the whole week. The nights were terrifying.

On the Monday after the surrender our house was raided by a band of detectives accompanied by a military officer and a guard. They came in by the back, forcing in

the back door. Lad Lane police barracks was right at the back of our house. They went through the whole house, asking questions about the inhabitants, especially about my mother. I told them she had gone to the country for the Easter holidays. I remained in the hall the whole time for fear Maurice Danaher, or any other Volunteer, might come. I wanted to warn them. I was not interfered with by the raiders. As it happened, Milo came to the door and I opened it and warned him to go away. My mother had come back earlier in the day from the house of some friends in Mountjoy Square (Miss Magee and her grandmother, Mrs. Lennox), where she had been obliged to spend the whole week after her return from Limerick. She had gone back to Mountjoy Square again to take some provisions to her friends as none could be obtained on the north side. The raiders did no damage and went away. They also raided Plunkett's house, No. 26, about the same time. They found nobody; the family must have been in Larkfield. My girl friends - all of them except Lilah Colbert - who had stayed in our house the whole week, went back to their own lodgings.

Later in the week another raid was made by the military. Groups went into every house but did not stay long except in Plunkett's house and ours. Among those who came to our house - but he did not come in - was Lieutenant Murphy, a brother of Muriel Murphy who afterwards married Terence McSwiney. They went through the house systematically questioning everyone. They were looking for the menfolk of the household.

The National Aid started shortly after the Rising and my mother was an active helper in this. Some of the prisoners were coming home in batches and, when the big release took place in December, we had a number of their

friends and relatives staying in our house - the Daly's and Mary Hayes of Limerick. Marie Perolz and Helena Molony came to us after their release. We did what we could for them.

In 1918 there was an agitation to get better treatment for the three women prisoners in England. Dr. K. Lynn, Miss French-Mullen, my mother and a few others were busy at this, but they achieved nothing. My mother helped the families of many deported men until things were organised. She did not spare herself or her money.

Before the Rising my mother was negotiating about a house in the Square - No. 5 - and she got possession of it in the autumn of 1917. Countess Plunkett pointed out that she was giving herself an awful lot of trouble because the house was too big. My mother intended to let the top part of the house in flats and to live in the remainder.

Just as we were moving into No. 5, M. Blanche, the French Consul, who had just come to Dublin, arrived one evening - the day after landing - with his two daughters. He said he had two letters for my mother and he wanted to hand them to her personally. She was down in No. 31 and said she did not want to go up to No. 5, but I persuaded her to go. When she met M. Blanche, they took to each other at once. He handed her one letter which was to be delivered to the Director of Sinn Féin. The other was to herself explaining that the first was to be delivered as soon as possible. He told my mother that this letter was from the leaders of a party in France who were very interested in the Sinn Féin movement here, and keen that they should send someone over to France to tell the truth about the situation here. I think he said that the person

who sent the letter - it may have been the Prime Minister - was very anti-British and wanted the Irish cause truthfully publicised, as they got no news there except through British channels. He was delighted that he had delivered the letters safely.

I can't exactly remember how M. Blanche obtained my mother's name and address. It must have been through friends of hers in France. It may have been through the eldest brother of William O'Brien - the Labour man - who was the man representing the Hearst newspapers in France. I meant to ask William about it.

My mother brought the letter to No. 6 Harcourt Street, and de Valera sent Harry Boland to interview Blanche.

Meanwhile M. Blanche asked my mother if she could find a suitable place for them to live and she said she could let him a flat in the upper part of the house. They moved in even before it was ready, because they were uncomfortable in their hotel.

We gathered that Blanche was very pleased with his interview with Harry Boland and some satisfactory programme must have been decided on, but I have no idea what it was. The whole family became very friendly with us. Mme. Blanche was more English than French.

Early in 1919 two priests came from France - one was the Abbé Flynn - to get Irish workmen to go to France to work on the land. They evidently thought that the people here in some parts of the country were so destitute that they would be glad to start this scheme between the two countries. M. Blanche told my mother that he was not keen on the idea. By this time he understood conditions here and saw it was not necessary for the people to leave this country.

The priests had several interviews in our house with some members of the Dáil; I am certain Harry Boland was one of them. Mme. Bannard Cogley acted as interpreter. The scheme was not approved of here, though I think a few men did go over privately with the priests themselves.

My mother helped with the elections in 1918. She went down to Longford with Mrs. Pearse who called for her. It was a very hard fight and a very great success. There was terrific excitement. She also went to Roscommon to help in the Count Plunkett contest, that was early in 1917. I remember that because there was snow on the ground.

In 1918 and 1919 there were many Sinn Féin and Dáil meetings in No. 5. Joe Reilly was a constant visitor and so was Diarmuid Hegarty, bringing messages. Terence McSwiney had lunch there; he was meeting some friends from America; that must have been in 1918. When the Dáil Loan campaign was started, people - priests principally - came from the country with their collections. My mother collected quite a lot of gold. No. 5 was one of the places where the Dáil used to meet, sometimes the whole Dáil and sometimes only the members of the Cabinet.

In May, 1920, my mother went with the Lord Mayor O'Neill and Miss O'Neill and Mrs. McKilty as representatives of the Dublin Corporation to Rome on the occasion of the beatification of Oliver Plunkett. My mother was chosen by the Corporation to represent the women of Dublin. She paid her own expenses. She was not keen on going at the time, because things had become very tense here. Afterwards she was glad she went, because the whole thing was wonderful.

In 1919, when the Loan Bond campaign started, Daithí Ó Donnchadha had his office in the cottage which my mother

had built on the site of the old stables at the back of No. 31. Mr. Freeman, the veterinary surgeon, occupied all that building except two rooms on the ground which were cut off from the rest and which had a door into our garden. The door leading into the rest of the cottage was kept locked. We had kept these two rooms for storage. We fixed up one of these rooms as a bedroom for Michael Collins and the other as an office where Daithi Ó Donnchadha worked all day. The only entrance to these two rooms was through the main hall door in Fitzwilliam Street. The main house was occupied by Dr. Michael Burke who was friendly.

One day in 1921 there was a big raid on. Daithi Ó Donnchadha's office was raided by the Auxiliaries in full force with armoured cars and lorries. They broke in through the locked door in the back while Daithi was out at lunch. They took every paper and every bit of furniture out of it. They also searched every room and questioned everyone in the main house of No. 31, but found nothing there, although Fiona Plunkett and I and an engineering student called Harnett - a brother of Nellie Harnett's - had hidden some grenades and ammunition under the boards in the bathroom. I have one of the grenade cases still as a memento. I never heard that they got anything worthwhile among Daithi's papers either. He had the habit of taking everything important away with him.

At the same time some of the raiders entered Plunkett's, No. 26. The whole street was full of Auxiliaries and armoured cars.

My mother was in the Corporation and a Councillor for the Fitzwilliam ward since 1919. She had just come

home from a meeting and was having a cup of tea, talking to the housekeeper, when the military broke in. She had an important paper in her bag and wondered where she would hide it. She stuck it down her blouse. She concluded from the intensity of the raids on the Fitzwilliam Street and Square houses that the Castle had some reliable information.

Fresh reinforcements of armoured cars, etc., kept coming along. So she uttered a fervent prayer, put on her hat and coat, walked coolly down the stairs, though the military and Auxiliaries were in every room and on the stairs - they had burst in the back and come up the garden - and she passed through the midst of them out the door. She could not make it out at all. They did not seem to see her. She said herself it was a miracle in answer to her prayer. She went by tram straight out to Loughnavale on the Strand Road, Merrion, where she found a meeting in progress. De Valera, Cathal Brugha, Seán McMahon, Collins, Dick Mulcahy were there. Mellows was in and out a good deal to Loughnavale and he must have been there too.

When my mother went in and told about the raid, Collins turned to de Valera and said, "It is time for you to leave here". Countess Plunkett's maid also called a little later, with the news of the raid. The meeting dispersed as rapidly as possible. Collins was the last to go because he remained to arrange about de Valera leaving that evening.

I should have mentioned that this house, Loughnavale, belonged to my mother and had been let to tenants. These had left and my mother sent me out to stay there with my father. I was not well at the time and she thought the change would do me good after all the hard work I had to put in in No. 5. The American Delegates stayed at our house (No. 5) in 1919 as there was a hotel strike on in

Dublin. Father O'Flanagan, Dick Mulcahy and Mrs. Seán T. O'Kelly had come in and begged my mother to do something for them. This entailed a lot of work and a good deal of it fell on me although I got help from various people.

Countess Plunkett and the boys were most helpful. My mother had only two days' notice to prepare the house. We were all shunted out of our bedrooms to make room for the three delegates, their secretary, Mr. Lee, and a Mr. Walsh from Canada who was a prominent journalist and wanted to report on the Irish situation. He was not very favourable to us when he came first, but he went away very changed, full of admiration for the marvellous movement that was evident in Ireland. He came back in 1937 when de Valera was at the head of the Government. We were in Glenvar then and he had some difficulty in finding us.

The Dáil gave a reception in the Mansion House and a dinner at our house for the Delegates. We had a great big crowd in the house that night for the dinner which was supplied by Mitchell's. It was I did all the cooking for the rest of their stay. My mother and Frank P. Walsh used to stay up till three or four in the morning talking about Ireland. He was a noble character.

Later de Valera had a flat at the top of the house (No. 5) where he worked and saw visitors. It was from there he went to America in June, 1919. When the boat that was to take him arrived, he was down in Greystones saying goodbye to his family. The man in charge of the operation was Neil Kerr. There were others helping him - I remember O'Neill and Kavanagh. They were in a fever of suspense and had sent to Greystones for him - I think it was Joe Hyland went - because they had to fit him out in his disguise for the journey. They had to fit on various

pairs of dungarees before they found one to fit him. He went away then, and the next place I saw him was in Loughnavale after his return, where he stayed some months. Kathleen O'Connell, his Secretary, came from America to resume her work with him. Mrs. de Valera paid short visits to her husband there. I used to go out with him for a constitutional walk after dark, but before curfew, as he was not able to take any exercise in the day time.

One of the stokers on the boat who was looking after de Valera during the journey to Liverpool now does odd jobs for me. De Valera told me that this man had got a bottle of whiskey before embarking and hid it in his bunk. This was where de Valera was hidden away during the journey. De Valera found the whiskey and, thinking it would be a danger to himself if the stoker drank it, put it out through the porthole. During the night the stoker came to look for it and, not finding it, used some very strong language. The stoker - Michael Byrne - was not aware of de Valera's identity but knew he was working for the cause. Just then somebody came to the door and called Byrne away and thus saved the situation. Byrne was one of those employed in the cross-Channel boats who were working for Michael Collins, bringing messages, ammunition, etc. He was a great big burly fellow. His one fault is betting. He puts every penny he has into that. He has two pensions, an I.R.A. one and the Old Age pension, but he has to be constantly helped. His wife was with us for years.

While de Valera was staying in Loughnavale, one evening about February a car came out for him to bring him in to No. 5 Fitzwilliam Square to meet Joe Devlin and Seán McEntee on some important matter. Devlin was staying at the time with some lame doctor in Merrion Square whose name

I can't remember. De Valera asked me to accompany him. As we came to Ballsbridge, we saw the military holding up and searching the cars. We asked de Valera to search quickly to see had he anything on him but he hadn't. We slowed down and prayed for guidance in our dilemma. Just before we arrived at the spot, the military decided to stop the searching and moved off. We careered then down Pembroke Road, turned into Wilton Place, got out of the car to walk down Lad Lane and get in through the stables at No. 5, where somebody was waiting to lead us in. Just then an ambush took place on Leeson Street Bridge, that was one of the routes we could have travelled. The firing was going on as we went down Lad Lane and, when we arrived at the house, my young sister led us in. She gripped de Valera's arm, saying "You are safe now". Joe Devlin was in a panic; so was McEntee who thought we were caught in the ambush. The driver, Joe Hyland, was a splendid man.

There was a big raid a week afterwards at Loughnavale. De Valera had left the night he was warned and gone back to Dr. Farnan's where he had been before. He was not able to do his work there, as he was stuck up in the top of the house and could see nobody. Kathleen O'Connell stayed on with us at Loughnavale. The raid was an awful one, even worse than any I had previously experienced in No. 5. The Black and Tans smashed in the door and the glass porch. They took possession of the house. Kathleen O'Connell had brought home quantities of presents from people in America to their friends here. The Tans took them all. I was in my room on the second floor in the back, sitting on the side of my bed preparing to get in, and I put out the light. They climbed up on each other's shoulders, pushed up the window and climbed in. I had heard nothing up to then and got a

great shock. Then I heard the smashing in of the door. They asked me why I had put out the light. They lifted up the floorboards all through the house. They found a glove of de Valera's in a recess in one of the wardrobes. It had evidently been overlooked by Liam Mellows when he packed de Valera's things. The Tans stuck the glove - which had de Valera's name - up to my nose and asked me did I know anything about that. I said I didn't.

All the important papers had been removed from the house after de Valera's departure. But quite a lot of papers - a couple of sackfuls - had been left behind, and Kathleen and my mother had spent the week burning them. Many of these were regretted afterwards as they had records of the American campaign. We felt great relief when they were all burned.

There was only one man in khaki - the officer in charge, a drunken little brute who gave my father an awful time. He wanted me to sign a paper saying that they had done no harm, but I would not sign it. He asked why. I said, "You are taking my father away and I don't know what you are going to do with him!".

I should have mentioned that, in the raid on No. 5 Fitzwilliam Square, the raiders had taken away my mother's desk and all papers, family records, etc., and we concluded that among these papers some record - such as, a rent receipt - referring to Loughnavale had been found and that was probably the reason Loughnavale was raided. My mother was quick enough to realise the situation and that was why she was so anxious to warn them. Mick Collins, realising the danger, told me he would send for de Valera that night and he did send a car for him.

The raiders took my father away in a lorry and the Tans were singing as they went down the avenue. They were dragging a Sinn Féin flag along the ground. My father said, "You have nothing against me. Take me to your commanding officer". He was kept in the Castle that night.

In the morning after the raid we were examining the damage when three D.M.P. appeared at the side door. They asked us, "What has happened here?" They advised us to go into our neighbours' when they saw the smashed door. We barricaded the door from inside and put a notice on the door outside - "A raid by Black and Tans has taken place here last night". Kathleen and I had planned to separate. She was to go in to tell de Valera at Farnan's what had happened and I was to go to No. 5 to tell my mother of my father's arrest and that the house, Loughnavale, wanted to be repaired. I did not find my mother at home; she was at Plunkett's. When I found her, she told me to go straight back and that she would get in touch with Olin's, the plumbers, of Brunswick Street who were in the movement. They came on at once to Loughnavale and did whatever temporary repairs were necessary. Milo came along to tell me my father was released.

My mother brought him out later. Kathleen came along then and we were told about my father's experiences in the Castle. He got a dreadful cold but did not suffer in any other way, although he felt on the way in, in the lorry with the drunken men, that his last end was coming.

Kathleen O'Connell arranged to stay at Farnan's until a place was found for the two of them. They did not know what to do or where to go. Kathleen asked could my mother get some furnished place for them and would I come with them.

I said my mother would probably not let me. One day de Valera came in the back door at Loughnavale to persuade me to go with them, as we had all got used to each other.

My mother at last was induced to look round for a place and she went in to a great friend of hers - now dead - in Battersby's and told him the sort of house she was looking for. She got the addresses of a few houses but she rejected them all as unsuitable. At last she was told about Glenvar, the owners of which - Dove and Featherstonehaugh - had had some deaths in the family and wanted to go back to England. They were taking most of the furniture with them, but left a small residue which fell in with my mother's ideas - enough to serve the purpose for the time being. She had to negotiate with the seller on behalf of her sister, Mrs. McCarthy. She said her sister's son (de Valera) was getting over an illness and she wanted a quiet place to put him in. Some of the rest of us also assumed false names. I was Hayden, his nurse, de Valera was Mr. Sankey and Kathleen kept her own name.

The things we needed were brought along in a lorry. De Valera's were brought in Joe Hyland's taxi. His American trunk, which came later and to which he was looking forward as it had a lot of nice clothes which he had collected in America, was practically empty when it arrived. It had been rifled. De Valera was very disappointed over this.

It was about the middle of May we took up residence in Glenvar. We could not have a maid, so I did all the work. Seán Harley, the messenger boy who brought all the dispatches for de Valera was supposed to do jobs, but I could not be bothered with him.

Collins used to visit him and so did Liam Mellows before the Truce. De Valera did not as a rule leave the grounds which were extensive and gave him ample scope for walking exercise. He used to go to Mass straight across the road, through a wicket gate and in to Clareville where the sick and old Holy Ghost Fathers lived. One of these priests used to visit him in Glenvar.

One day de Valera walked out in knee-breeches with Liam Mellows on the main road. He looked very remarkable and some people in a trap that passed by slowed down the horse and stared hard at him as if they recognised him. They probably did, as he had taught for a long time in Blackrock College and in Carysfort College. This worried me.

His documents accumulated fast in Glenvar and we were all uneasy lest there should be a raid. We got legal boxes to pack them into. We intended to hide them in the high meadow grass.

One day I went out to a shop in Booterstown Avenue to buy matches. There was no electricity in the house and we used lamps. When I came back up Cross Avenue, I saw two soldiers at the back gate with fixed bayonets, and several inside questioning the occupants of the lodge. There are three cottages belonging to Sion Hill Convent nearby and the inhabitants were peeping out with scared eyes, amazed that Glenvar, a house that was always occupied by pro-British people, should have come under suspicion. I walked along with a heavy heart to the front gate wondering how I would get in to help. I found the gate wide open; the people in the lodge, Mrs. Harley and Seán, had fled. I walked up the avenue. There was an armoured car outside

the hall door and some soldiers were scattered about the meadows, watching in case anyone would come down the drive. They did not seem to see me. I walked into the hall then and they challenged me. So I gave the name as Miss Hayden. They wanted to know what I was doing here. I said I was looking after the house. They then sent me into the study where there were two armed soldiers standing at the door. De Valera and Kathleen O'Connell were there, and Margaret Macken. She was a sister-in-law of Dr. Farnan and was the only visitor allowed to come. She was not in any movement at the time and had no connection with anything political. She was also a teacher at Carysfort College.

Kathleen was very agitated. She had not given her name to the military. De Valera had given his as Sankey. All the boxes, with the documents, were on the floor, ready to be taken into hiding for the night. De Valera was walking up and down, and he whispered to me, "Don't you get arrested!" Two officers came in and started examining the papers. They took out some of them and, seeing the beginning - "Dear Mr. President" - they would look up and say in derision, "And you are Mr. Sankey!". I do not believe that they then exactly knew who he was, but they knew they had an important find, such an unexpected find that they were almost speechless with surprise.

One officer then went out of the room and sent for reinforcements. These came in the form of a couple of armoured cars and lorries.

Meanwhile Kathleen O'Connell, who was visibly upset and had consistently refused to give a name, handed a bundle of papers to Margaret Macken who stuck them down inside her coat. The top of the bundle was peeping out above

the opening of the coat, and the officer saw it and said, "Allow me, Madam!", taking the papers and putting them in his pocket. They were American letters dealing with the political situation over there. Kathleen had a bundle of financial papers which she held up the back of her blouse. I signalled to her to put them under the rug, which she did. These incidents took place before the examination of the boxes or the interrogation of the people of the house. The soldiers were still searching the house to find out who else was in it.

This raid was an investigation raid to find out who was really occupying the building. They had been raiding Blackrock College during the week and the I.R.A. had made an attack on the mail van on Blackrock Road and had brought the mailbags to Cross Avenue to be examined. The military had evidently come to investigate this raid on the mails and had stumbled on Glenvar quite by accident. They entered by both gates, back and front. De Valera, who was taking a walk with Margaret Macken, saw them coming up the drive and said, "Here are the military". He entered the house by the conservatory and went upstairs, realising that nothing could be done. He had thought of getting across through the farmyard into Eoin McNeill's back garden. But the soldiers would have followed him. Margaret Macken went into the study to tell Kathleen who had already seen the soldiers coming up the drive. It was then I returned with the matches.

The military took away all the boxes, all papers and a small writing desk in a lorry. Kathleen O'Connell was taken in an armoured car to the Bridewell, where she was stripped and searched and kept for the night. Margaret was taken in another armoured car, I think to the Bridewell, and

searched too. She was brought back in the armoured car at 2 a.m. De Valera was taken in a lorry to Portobello. As he was sitting in the lorry, I jumped up on the wheel and said, "Don't worry! I'll get word to the boys". He answered, "Good, Maeve! Mind yourself". As he was being driven away, the officer said to me, "I'll be back for you". I believed him, as they were all taken away singly, and when the armoured car returned with Margaret Macken, I thought it was coming for me. I need not say that, by this time, every bit of me was shivering after the ordeal I had gone through. I also had the worry about getting the news to the proper quarter, as I expected to be followed. There were no soldiers left on guard, strange to say. The whole thing must have been a complete surprise to them and I'll never forget the look of amazement on the officers' faces. They were all very nice people and very unlike those on previous raids I had been through, though they did their duty with regard to searching and so on. After the Truce one of the officers came back with the small desk. He said he could never get over the surprise of what they had landed on that night. He was Irish. I said it was a pity the others were not in to celebrate the occasion. He answered that they had already celebrated.

I was not taken. I had fled into the garden and stayed there until I heard Margaret's voice calling me. She was very upset about the papers that had been taken from her.

The next morning Sean Harley, who had fled to the Blackrock Volunteers at the beginning of the raid, arrived and I arranged that he should go with the news to somebody who would convey the story of the raid and arrest of the Chief to some of the leaders. I went with Margaret Macken

into Portobello Barracks with de Valera's breakfast. I was told he was not there, but one soldier said, "He is well looked after". I went to the Castle then and was told that no prisoner had been brought in there. Then we went to Bewley's and phoned Mrs. Farnan to come, and we told her the whole thing. She then took charge of Margaret who kept crying all the time. I said I would make for Loughnavale where my mother was ill with the 'flu. She saw me from her bedroom and realised from my early visit that something had happened. She got up and let me in, and I just had time to tell her the story when Mrs. Harley ran up the drive and said, "Come on back to Glenvar! O'Connell has arrived and is in a very bad state of nerves". Mrs. Harley the night before had evidently got a drive into town from a priest whose car she held up, saying she was stranded and wanted to get home before curfew. She came back to Glenvar in the morning, expecting to find the place blown up. She was a great little brick of a woman with much more pluck than her son.

I went back at once with her to Glenvar and I had just got Kathleen a drink of coffee when I saw de Valera walking up the drive, a lone figure with his raincoat thrown over his shoulder. That evening he went home to Greystones. He said to me as we walked to the Blackrock station, "There is nothing for me to do now except to go out with the boys on the hills". He had told us how he had been treated in Portobello Barracks. After some time, when the Castle people had telephoned to Lloyd George to inquire what they were to do with him, an officer had come and put him into different quarters, telling him that anything he required he would get. An orderly was put in to attend him. He accepted nothing at their hands. He was released in the course of the morning.

Kathleen related her experiences. She was taken into the Bridewell and searched. She was put into a cell next door to one occupied by rowdy prisoners. In the course of the night the policeman came in to know whether she wanted anything. She still had not given her name. Then quite suddenly a policeman came in and told her she could go.

When she got in to Glenvar, she was suffering from the reaction and the shock of a night spent in a cell with rowdies all round her. She said she had been stripped naked during the search. This was an awful experience for her, as she was not yet quite used to the situation in Ireland. At last I succeeded in calming her and, when she had it all told, she was quite relieved. It was then I looked out the window and saw de Valera coming up the drive and we could not believe our eyes. We could not make head or tail of it and, when he came in, he said, "I have been thrown out".

He went down to Greystones to see his family. He went openly, making no effort to disguise himself.

Lord Derby had been over I think in May, but he never came to our house. I don't even know whether de Valera saw him at all.

Soon after de Valera came back from Greystones and said he had got word to go into the Mansion House. He had arranged this with Larry O'Neill so that he could see people and receive messages. When he came back, as he was walking across the lawn, he took a letter out of his pocket and waved it at us. It was the first letter from Lloyd George asking for an interview.

During tea he discussed the situation. He said Griffith was not well and must be released, also that Seán McKeon, who was waiting execution, must be released.

The next few days were very busy - in and out to the Mansion House, letters and phone calls backwards and forward to Lloyd George. We had a 'phone in the house but we had never used it lest it should be dangerous, but we decided to use it now. Then it was arranged that he would go to London. Major Loftus from Kilkenny placed his London house at his disposal. He asked Dr. and Mrs. Farnan to accompany him to act as host and hostess in London. Kathleen O'Connell, Lily Brennan, Count Plunkett, Bob Barton and the Lord Mayor went with him too.

The night before he travelled to London, Collins came and the two of them spent hours walking up and down in the garden discussing things. De Valera and Collins were devoted to each other. Collins worshipped the ground that de Valera trod on and, while de Valera was in America, Collins went down to Greystones to Mrs. de Valera every week to see that all was well there and to bring her her husband's salary. De Valera was equally fond of Collins. Some years later, when he came to 31 Fitzwilliam Street to look for consulting rooms for his son, he asked to see the room which Collins used to use.

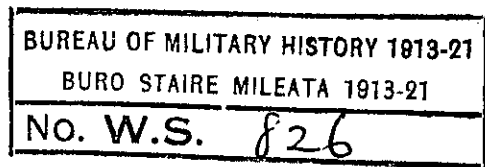
When de Valera came back from London, I could see that he had been through a trying and painful ordeal. In a few days, however, he bucked up and his visits to the Mansion House were resumed. He stayed on in Glenvar till November. He also took the loan of a flat in No. 5, Fitzwilliam Square, to receive visitors. It was there he had the chats with Colonel Chartres and others.

When the final negotiations were going on, my mother wrote to de Valera, saying that having regard to the changed situation there was no necessity for me to stay on in Glenvar and she had decided to close the house. The household broke up then and de Valera went down to Greystones until Mrs. Peterson's house in Kenilworth Square was procured for him.

SIGNED: Maeve M. MacGarry.
(Maeve M. MacGarry)

DATE: 31st March 1953.

31st March 1953.



WITNESS: S. Ni Chiosain
S. Ni Chiosain