

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 845

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 845

Witness

Tomas O Maoilleoin,
Bushfield,
Nenagh,
Co. Tipperary.

Identity.

Vice-Comd't. East Limerick Brigade;
Second i/c. East Limerick Flying Column.

Subject.

National and military activities,
East-Limerick, 1913-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.1974

Form B.S.M. 2

STATEMENT OF TOMÁS MALONE,
Bushfield, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

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- 'B' Statement of ex Head Constable McGreal.
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Statement of Tomás Malone,

Bushfield, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

I was born on the 7th August, 1896, in Meedin, Tyrrellspass, Co. Westmeath. My mother was a National School teacher. My father was born in London. His people had been associated with the Fenian movement, and, in consequence, some of them, including my grandfather, had to clear out of Ireland. I don't know to what extent they were associated with the Fenians, but that is how my father came to be born in London. His people had gone over there, all except an old uncle, Andy, who took care of the place at Meedin, and he took my father over to Ireland when the latter was very young, to live there. Both sides of the family were associated with the national movement, with the Fenians, etc. - both my mother's side and my father's side - and I don't remember any time when I was not a rebel. I went to school locally. Then I went to the Franciscan College in Multyfarnham and spent about five years there.

I first became actively associated with the modern national movement at the time of the Redmond Volunteers. I was only a schoolboy then, or little better. I was in the National Volunteers.

Sometime between 1911 and 1913, at a Feis in Mullingar, I met Liam Mellows. He was introduced to me by somebody whom I cannot now place in my memory. He was keen on establishing a branch of the Fianna in our

area at that time. That was my first time meeting him. I cannot remember who introduced me to him but he was passed on to me by somebody. It might have been my brother, Seumas, who first met him. Mellows did actually establish a branch of the Fianna in Athlone that time, and as I agreed to join he attached me to the Athlone branch. I was only once or twice in Athlone at parades. The intention was that we would establish a branch of the Fianna in our own part of the country, Tyrrellspass, which is twenty miles from Athlone, but we never got as far as doing that because the Volunteers were started then and a Volunteer Company was established at Tyrrellspass.

Rev. Fr. Smith, C.C., was in Tyrrellspass at the time the Volunteers were founded, and he was largely responsible for the movement in that area. He was moved from Tyrrellspass some time before the Rising. We believed he was transferred because of his revolutionary views and activities. His transfer at the time it took place, was a serious blow to us. I think had he been with us at Easter 1916, that the Tyrrellspass contribution to the fight would have been more formidable than it was.

Actually, I suppose it applied to most country areas, but I knew, through Mellows, that there was a rebellion coming off, and that the mobilisation for Easter Sunday 1916 was not just an ordinary parade. Seumas was in Limerick at this time teaching at the Jesuit College there. I was, to a certain extent, in charge of the Tyrrellspass area at the time. We, that is, the Tyrrellspass Company, were connected with

Tullamore and Drumraney rather than with Athlone. There was a Company, of course, in Athlone, but our local associations with the McCormack's in Drumraney and with Peadar Bracken and Seumas Brennan in Tullamore linked these Companies together. I travelled several times from our own place to Drumraney, over in the direction of Moate, with despatches and they, the McCormack's of Drumraney, came across with despatches from their area too, or they came over to discuss affairs anyway.

My brother, Seumas, came home for the Easter holidays and we made all the arrangements that we could. Our original plans were to blow up the bridge at Shannonbridge.

I knew, for some short time previously, that the Rebellion was coming off on Easter Sunday, and that when we set off on that day that it was not just on parade we were going. During the week before Easter we were busy getting gelignite, arms and other equipment together. We thought the amount of gelignite we had was considerable then, but from experience gained since then I now realise it wasn't as great as we then thought. I believe, however, it was enough to destroy the bridge at Shannonbridge if it were used effectively.

There was a local man whom we hoped would come along and work this gelignite but he did not come. The man in question was a pump or well borer and, as a result, had some experience in the use of gelignite. It was, of course, because of the nature of his work that he managed to accumulate the supply which he had. Although not willing to come with us, he gave us all the fuse,

detonators, gellignite and other equipment which he had, including a Howth rifle. He instructed us as best he could on how to use the explosives to the best advantage. This man was in the Volunteers and, I believe, would have found himself in the firing line if the Rebellion had developed.

Our instructions were conveyed from Headquarters through Mellows, and it was from him we got the instructions to blow up the bridge at Shannonbridge, afterwards going on to join the Galway unit with the Athlone, Drumraney and Tullamore groups. We were to go on into Galway. In other words, the plan for the Rising, as far as we were concerned, was that the Drumraney unit and our own and Tullamore would join up with Athlone and proceed to Galway. I am not certain if Athlone Company was to come directly with us or not, but it also was to go to Galway. Possibly the Athlone people were to do something to the bridge at Athlone. I don't know that. These were the plans that I was given by Mellows sometime prior to the Rising. Incidentally, Mellows was in jail or deported for a short time before the Rising. He escaped and came back a very short time before it. He passed through our place on his way to Galway. I saw him and spoke to him. It was then we got final instructions in connection with the Rebellion.

My brother, Seumas, by the way, was in the Howth gun-running. He brought two rifles down from Dublin that time after the Howth gun-running. We had these and also some shotguns. We had two .22 rifles and I had an automatic pistol. Seumas had a .32 revolver.

We also had a sort of a Winchester sporting rifle, probably a .44, but we only had a few rounds of ammunition for this and I don't think it was in perfect repair either. The remainder of our Company were armed with shotguns. Everyone that turned out had some kind of a weapon. Seumas had a revolver of sorts, a .32, and a Howth rifle. I had a .25 automatic pistol and one of the Howth rifles. Of course, we understood at that time that the moment we would get to Galway, we would all be handed arms. We only looked on the arms we had as good enough to protect us on our march to Galway.

I am informed by my brother, Seumas, that although seventeen of the Company indicated at some stage during Easter their willingness to fight, that only seven or eight (eight, I think) actually paraded on Easter Sunday.

When we returned from Drumraney after getting the counter-manding order we remained under arms at our own house. During the following week, that is, while the fighting was on in Dublin, the other nine or ten came to the house and volunteered to fight if we got further orders. Seventeen represented about 60 per cent of the total strength of the Company at the time.

We had orders for this parade on Easter Sunday. I don't know that we had anything written but, in between times just prior to the rebellion, we had been over in Drumraney at the McCormack's, and in Tullamore - Bracken and Brennan were away from Tullamore at this time - but we discussed our plans for the Rising between ourselves. It was probably through the McCormack's

at Drumraney we were in touch with Headquarters in the few days immediately prior to the Rising. We took our orders from them. Seumas might know a little bit more with regard to orders than I, but we took our rations and all the things we were supposed to take, including needles, thread, buttons, extra shirts, socks and first-aid equipment. As far as I can remember, the first-aid equipment consisted of a roll of bandages and a small bottle of iodine for each man.

There were three brothers of us in the Volunteers but we decided to leave the youngest at home. When we had gone a certain distance, he came after us on a bicycle. His name was Joe. He was captured with me in Westmeath but he was only taken into Mullingar Barracks, released from there and let home again. He was only seventeen years old then.

The Tyrrellspass Company mobilised at our own house on Easter Sunday and set out for Drumraney. When we got over near Drumraney, where we were to meet the Drumraney and Tullamore Volunteers, we got the word that the rebellion was off. Peadar Bracken and Seamus Brennan both came down to Tullamore in preparation for the Rising but returned to the City when they got the countermanding order. I think it was Professor Liam Ó Briain of Galway who brought word to Drumraney about the cancellation of the plans for the Rising. I did not meet him at all but I know from others that he brought the message to Drumraney that the Rising was off.

We had hired a local jarvey with his horse and side-car to carry some of our stuff, because we were travelling early, in daylight, and we could not carry these things so well on bicycles. We were told to attract as little attention as possible, and we told this man whom we had hired that we were going to an Aeriocht in Moate, which was in the direction we were going anyway, but when we got a certain distance, we let him go back. I don't think he knew where we were going but he may have suspected. We passed through a village called Ballinagore and were probably noticed by the R.I.C. there. At any rate we were followed by an R.I.C. man. This was quite a usual procedure. One or sometimes two R.I.C. followed groups of Volunteers and, occasionally, suspected individuals in order to report on their movements. When we discovered that we were being followed Seumas and I dropped back and halted the R.I.C. man. He appeared to be quite friendly and obviously thought we were on an ordinary parade. We told him we objected to being followed and he told us he had no alternative - that he was only carrying out orders. We took the valves out of his bicycle and proceeded on our journey. He didn't raise much objection but said he'd have to report the matter and that we'd get into trouble. He had no arms - we searched him - as we could do with an extra gun. We considered it would be unadvisable to allow him to follow us to Drumraney where he might see too much.

I mention this to show that we were definitely under the impression that the fight was coming off for certain. Normally we wouldn't have interfered with this R.I.C. man. We had the jarvey car still with us at this stage.

When we got the countermanding order then, we were in a little bit of a fix to get back again. First of all, some of our fellows had no bicycles but had travelled on this car, and, needless to say, money was not very plentiful as we had spent all we could afford on equipment, clothes, boots etc. during the previous week. Seumas and I cycled into Kilbeggan and hired a motor car. The owner and driver of the car was a man named Hennessy. We told him we were going to a dance. When we got to where the remainder of the boys were waiting with the guns and other equipment, we explained what we really wanted. At first he refused to drive, but when we pointed out that he had no option - that we were commandeering him and the car - he was helpful enough. We told him he would be paid some day and offered to give him a receipt, but at that stage he said he didn't mind if he never got paid. I am mentioning this incident because I think this motor car must have been the first to be commandeered in the name of the Irish Republic. This was Easter Sunday night.

We arrived back to our house at Meedin sometime about midnight. We remained in the house. After having something to eat we arranged for sentry duty, at which we all took turns, and the remainder went to sleep in beds or on chairs or wherever they could manage.

On the following day, some of the boys went back to their own homes but returned later. We were given to understand that this was only a very temporary lull in the arrangements. We understood that the Rising was not off altogether. We were to stand to. That is

what we were told, not to disband at all but to remain under arms or remain mobilised, and we did remain mobilised. We remained mobilised from that time on, some of us until we were arrested ten or twelve days later. We were left under the impression that we would get another message. We remained around at our own home waiting for this further message.

On the following day, Monday, my brother, Seumas, and I went in different directions to try and get in contact with somebody who might know something. We were not so very far from Dublin at all, about fifty miles. I suppose it was about Tuesday - or possibly Monday night - we heard that there was shooting in Dublin. Then we came to the conclusion, of course, that we had been fooled some way or another and Seumas went to Drumraney and I went to Tullamore. This was Monday night I think. There was nobody in Tullamore who knew anything more than we did ourselves. The two important people, Brennan and Bracken, had gone to Dublin and some of the McCormack's had gone to Dublin too. Nobody knew anything.

We decided, about Tuesday, that we would try and get to Galway and carry out our original plans, but nobody seemed to know what was the best thing to do. Some of us were in favour of trying to go to Dublin. We did not hear of any fighting anywhere except in Dublin but we did go to a place called Horseleap, where the railway from Galway to Dublin crosses the road between Kilbeggan and Moate. We tried to blow up

the railway bridge here. We chiselled out the mortar between the stones of the bridge and put in about 2 lbs of gelnite into the cracks. We then attached a fuse and detonator and set it off. The explosion was loud enough but it failed to do any damage. It was a failure.

The destruction of this bridge was not in the original plans but we thought it might help to prevent enemy troops from reaching Dublin from the West. We had an idea that the destruction of the Athlone bridge was in the original plan, and that by destroying the same railway line at a point nearer to Dublin we would be helping the original plan to some extent. After the explosion we had to clear away but we got in touch with a man named Kelly of Castletowngeoghan who, we thought, might know more about explosives than we did and attempted to blow up the same bridge on the following night. We then got some tools and bars from Kelly and removed a section of the railway line. That is all we could do. We still had a little gelnite left but didn't consider we would be justified in wasting it on another attempt. I don't know whether the removal of the rail had any effect.

On Tuesday or Wednesday of Easter Week about four R.I.C. approached the house. I learned subsequently that they came within a half mile or so of the house by motor and then approached on foot. I was one of the sentries at the time and I fired to warn the boys inside. The police retreated, firing a few shots as they did so. All our boys turned out and some of them fired in the direction of the police but after the first shot or two

I didn't see anything to fire at. We learned from the neighbours that the R.I.C. cleared back to their car immediately and drove away. The R.I.C. were within three or four hundred yards from the house when I saw them and they didn't approach any nearer on that occasion. On the following day, I think, another party of R.I.C. approached from the opposite direction. They were seen by our sentries who again opened fire. I was in the house when the shooting started but I ran out immediately. I had a Howth rifle. The police took cover and opened fire. After five or ten minutes they retreated and we remained in position till we found out from the neighbours that they had gone away. There were about five or six R.I.C. in the party.

The third attempt by the R.I.C. to approach was much more serious than either of the first two. They succeeded in reaching a fence within 40 yards of the house before they were discovered. They fired fifty or sixty shots and we replied from the house this time. Some of the windows and some slates were broken. I was firing from an upstairs window. I find it hard to say how long the shooting continued and possibly our boys continued to fire after the R.I.C. had retired. Our inexperience may have exaggerated the length and intensity of this engagement, but I think now it must have lasted from 20 minutes to a half an hour. I thought at the time that it was a much longer fight and some of the others who were present think so still.

Our arms were very limited and, with the exception of the two Howth rifles, could not have done much damage

but at all events we drove the enemy back. I think there must have been about ten R.I.C. in this party. I heard they came from Dalystown and Rochfordbridge, both about 3 miles from our house.

I am attaching here a copy of two sworn affidavits in connection with the time which I think should be attached to this statement (Appendix A.) When this statement was drafted we found it difficult to agree as to the length of time these engagements lasted. Some of the boys thought they were longer and some, including myself, thought they were shorter. Of course, it is not easy to say at what moment exactly an engagement ends. I am sure we did not know when exactly the enemy retired, and we were on the alert for much longer than is stated in the affidavit. On the other hand, if the length of an engagement is to be estimated from the firing of the first shot until the firing of the last one, I think these engagements were much shorter than stated. The times given in the statement represents the average opinion of those concerned.

One night during Easter Week my brother, Seumas, and I were returning towards home when we were called on to halt at a place called Newtown, between Tyrrellspass and Kilbeggan. We were cycling and refused to halt. The R.I.C. fired two or three shots and we replied without getting off the bicycles. There were three R.I.C. in this patrol.

A statement by ex Head Constable McGreal

who was in charge of Tyrrellspass R.I.C. station during Easter 1916, should also be attached to this statement (Appendix B.)

We knew by Monday or Tuesday of the week following Easter that the Volunteers had surrendered in Dublin and that executions had taken place. We disbanded on, I think, Tuesday morning. Seumas went off and succeeded in getting back to Limerick. He was taken off the train just as he arrived in Limerick. He was arrested there.

On Thursday morning of the week following the rebellion, when we woke up the place was surrounded by military and police. They were from Mullingar where there was a military station. They called on us to surrender. When we disbanded I considered the question of going on the run but finally decided against it. I had a feeling that I would be executed and that I might as well fight it out to the last. We had heard very exaggerated reports about the number executed in Dublin and I felt certain I would be shot out of hand the moment I was captured. As I explained before we had two good Howth rifles, with about a hundred rounds for each of them, and we would be able to put up a good fight. We had a secret dump in the room for arms. It was fairly secure and at no time during subsequent raids was it ever discovered. Nearly all the arms (except shotguns) of the Company were kept in this. When we eventually decided to surrender we hid the Howth rifles and one revolver which was in order. Two or three old broken revolvers and one .32 or .38 Winchester

sporting rifle were useless and we left them for the police to find. The fact that they got these, in addition to the Browning .25 which I kept concealed on my person, helped to convince them that they had got all the arms in the place.

My brother, Joe, and I were actually asleep when the police and military arrived but as the whole place was barricaded they weren't able to rush in suddenly. My mother, who was up, refused to open the door for them. You see, she never opened the door for a raid. They always had to break in. That was one of her principles, that they would have to break in. The local Sergeant did not want any trouble and he carried on negotiations with her from outside. We were upstairs and she was downstairs acting as intermediary between us and the enemy. They had the usual exaggerated reports of our numbers. An R.I.C. man afterwards told me that the report they had was that there were supposed to be three or four hundred of us there. They were much more afraid of us in the local barrack than we were of them. I often regretted afterwards that we did not attack them. We could have taken the local barracks without the slightest trouble. The R.I.C. man told me that, if we had only appeared, they were prepared to surrender. The negotiations went on for a long time. I refused to surrender. They told my mother that they had no instructions to arrest us, that their only business was to search the house and that, if we came down we would not be interfered with.

I had this little .25 automatic concealed on me

as best I could, on the offchance that it might be useful to me some time, but, when we came downstairs, one of the R.I.C. hit me with a rifle. They searched me and they got my pistol very easily where I had it concealed. When they hit me, I tried to pull it out from where I had it concealed on my person and that is how they found it. They disarmed me anyway and they took the two of us away, first to the local barracks. They were very much amazed to find that there was not a huge garrison in the place. They were disgusted with themselves. We must have kept them there for several hours before they approached the place - just to give you an idea of what might have been done. I don't know how many of them were there, but there were large numbers of military and police.

We were taken first to the local R.I.C. barracks and then to Mullingar. We were left in a cell that night and on the following morning my young brother, Joe, was released. He was taken out and sent home. He was allowed to come in to me and talk to me afterwards. I was taken from there up to Dublin. I think we called at Kilmainham or some other place but we did not stay there. I was eventually lodged in Richmond Barracks. I think I arrived in Richmond Barracks on Friday, that is, the Friday in the week following Easter Week. I know that Seán McDermott was still alive when I arrived there because he was in the actual room where I was put. He was taken out, I think, the next day or maybe that evening but he was there actually when I arrived. He was one of the people whom I recognised when I went in there because I had known him previously. Of course,

I was a very insignificant man in the movement at that time and I don't think anything worth mentioning passed between us. He seemed to be in the best of humour and was all the time encouraging the boys. He was in the very best of humour, the very same as if nothing had happened but I believe he knew he was going to be executed. I remember some of the boys remarking to him "You have a great chance now when they did not execute you before this!". But he just laughed at them, as much as to say, "Oh! I haven't any doubt about that at all". In fact, my own impression was that he would be a bit disappointed if all the rest of them were taken and he were left alone. He was not worried about it anyway. I cannot recall whether it was one night or two nights he was there with me before he was taken out.

I remember that Gearóid O'Sullivan was also in that room with us in Richmond Barracks. He may have been taken out for courtmartial, but he came back to the room again afterwards because he was still with us after Seán McDermott had been taken away. We seemed to have been a good while there. It was nearly a fortnight before we were deported.

I was there during Asquith's visit. Asquith actually spoke to me. When he and the officers who accompanied him entered the room, one officer ordered us to stand up but I did not stand up. I think most of our crowd did not stand up. I know I was lying in a corner across the room when an officer came over and shouted at me to stand up. Asquith said, "No! That's alright". He came over and spoke to me. He asked me if I had any

complaints. I don't remember what answer I made him but I don't think it was a very civil one. I said something about not being treated as prisoners of war, and he said something about, "In what way are you not being treated as prisoners of war? Is your food not alright?" I said, "If we were prisoners of war, our leaders - our officers - would not have been executed". Then he passed on. He did not stay more than five or six minutes in the place. Before Asquith came, the food and conditions generally had improved out of all recognition. We were not worried an awful lot about the food we were getting at that time. About a week or a fortnight after we arrived there, we were taken away and sent to Wandsworth prison in England.

I would like to refer here to the statement made to the Pensions Board in support of the claims of my brother Seumas and myself by ex-Head Constable McGreal, or whatever he was, who was the R.I.C. Sergeant of Tyrrellspass barracks in 1916 (Appendix B). The man is dead now I know, but his statement, which is a good one, should be on the Pensions' files. At the time I got in touch with him he was in Sligo, and he told me that he had come to Dublin in 1916 bringing up the stuff that was captured in our house and to give evidence in my proposed courtmartial. I did not realise at the time that my being kept so long in Richmond Barracks while several groups were sent off for internment meant that my courtmartial was pending. This man claimed, however, that he put in a plea for me on account of my youth.

Henry Dixon was a great friend of mine in Wandsworth.

Griffith was also there. He was sent to Reading afterwards. Larry Ginnell, M.P., a neighbour of mine at home to whom I used to give lessons in Irish was a great friend of the family, and he came in to see me when I was in Wandsworth. He was very, very useful. He used to wear a swallow-tail coat and he would get the crowd around him in a ring. He would whisper "Search the coat now, boys. Search the coat now, boys", and we knew how to get at the tail pocket of the coat. He would have it full of cigarettes, matches and tobacco and, when we had taken out the cigarettes and matches, we would dump whatever letters we had into his coat. He took notes of our complaints and did them in his usual shorthand. He could not write normally, as far as I know, as he had a shake or something, but he used a sort of shorthand of his own. He made numerous notes while he was in there. Mrs. Gavan Duffy was another who came in to see me there. She spoke to me or I spoke to her in Irish. Whatever warder was there objected, and she gave me a Fáinne when she was going away. I don't know what became of it afterwards. I think it was stolen or taken from me afterwards. She was the wife of Judge Gavan Duffy who died recently.

We were taken to Frongoch sometime about June. There were a good many fellows there before us but some came after us. We were in the South Camp. Mick Staines was O/C of the South Camp when I got there. Ginger O'Connell I think was there afterwards. There was a Camp Council of Officers. Anybody with a rank was on it, and I was on this Camp Council. I think the I.R.B. was very active in Frongoch because everyone who

was on the Camp Council was an I.R.B. man.

We were taken in groups from Frongoch back to Wormwood Scrubbs in London and were brought before some sort of an Investigation Board consisting of both military officers and civilians. They had files on each prisoner and the investigation consisted of questions with regard to our activities during and prior to the Rebellion. We, naturally, were not very informative, and I seem to remember that our instructions were to confuse the Board as much as we could.

After the investigation some of each group were sent back to Frongoch and some of the more prominent officers were sent to Reading. I don't think anyone was released directly from Wormwood Scrubbs but the decision to release them was probably made there.

For some reason or another I was not sent back to Frongoch with my own group - neither was I sent to Reading. I was kept in Wormwood Scrubbs alone for a week or ten days and was brought a second time before the Board. I don't know what was the reason for this and I believe I was the only one who was ever kept back in that way. My impression was that they couldn't decide whether I was dangerous or not. I was very young, hardly nineteen years old, and my youth may have helped them to decide to release me. I remember one member of the Board giving me fatherly advice and warning me of the consequences of evil company. I was subsequently sent back to Frongoch and released some time in August I think.

Amongst those who were released with me were Paul Cusack and a creamery manager from Granard named Cauley, or Crawley. I was released some time during the summer.

I went straight back to Tyrrellspass when I was released. We had instructions, of course, to get in touch immediately and try to get things going again. Peadar Bracken had been on the run before the Rising and he was still on the run when I came back. He was not raked-in in the general round-up. I was in touch with Peadar Bracken from the time I came home, and we tried to do the best we could to get the Volunteers together.

Sometime about December or coming up to Christmas, 1916, I attended a Volunteer Convention which was held in Barry's Hotel, Gardiner Place, Dublin. This was not the Croke Park Convention, which was held in October of the following year. The first Convention was the first attempt made since the Rising to do something in a general way about the organisation of Volunteer units throughout the country. This convention consisted of representatives from units all over the country. All who were in touch with Dublin were asked to contact units and individuals so as to make the convention as representative as possible. The convention elected what was then called a temporary executive. It was Bracken brought me up. At this convention Archie Heron acted as Secretary. I distinctly remember Archie Heron, of course, and I distinctly remember Diarmuid O'Hegarty. He had, evidently, escaped getting arrested too. I was under the impression that Hegarty was appointed Chairman or Secretary of the Army Council or what we called the "Dublin Committee" or he may have acted as Chairman of the Convention. This Dublin Committee was a special committee set up to

carry on the work of an army council. The convention elected an Executive first. My recollection is that it was decided to elect an executive consisting of two representatives from each province plus an additional one from Dublin. I think the executive did not exceed twelve. Peadar Bracken and I were elected as Leinster representatives. This executive was deputed to elect a standing committee, most of whom were Dublin men or men living in Dublin. I am unable to recall how many were elected on this Standing Committee but I remember that Diarmuid O'Hegarty, Archie Heron, Joe Doherty of Derry and, I think, Cathal O'Shannon were prominent at the meeting of the executive and may have been elected on the Standing Committee. Frank McGrath of Nenagh was elected on the executive too. I met him then for the first time but met him again shortly afterwards and so can recall him distinctly. I knew Vincent Doherty from Derry in Frongoch and I met his brother Joe at this convention and remember him. He too was in Frongoch but I don't seem to have known him well there. He too was elected on the executive.

I recall that the I.R.B. dominated this convention. I was told, probably by Peadar Bracken, for whom I was to vote. Both Peadar and I were members of the I.R.B. since before the Rising. A number of the other people there were strangers to me. A number of them had not been interned at all. The only ones that I knew were people who had been very prominent in the movement and, even then at that stage, outside of Pearse, Seán McDermott and Tom Clarke, I did not know many of the Dublin people at all except those I had met in prison. I

cannot remember anything beyond ordinary discussion about organising and getting in touch with fellows when they were released. There seemed to be a feeling at that meeting that there would be a general release of the prisoners in a very short time, that all the internees at any rate would be released very shortly. The purpose of the Convention was, therefore, just to hook things up and get the organisation going again. I cannot remember any more names of those who were present other than those I have already given. These are the only people I can be certain were there, people that I had met before. The others were strangers to me at the time.

There was a publican in Dublin. He had a publichouse at the corner of South King St. and Stephen's Green. I think he may have been present at this Convention because some time subsequently I was in the pub and he recognised me. He spoke to me and we discussed things that passed at the meeting. I think his name was Farrelly.

Following the Convention, there was the reorganisatic-
 Shortly after the summer of 1917, or early in 1917, my brother, Seumas I suppose had got in touch with Seán Treacy and Eamon Ó Dhuibhir - "Eddie Kate" they used call him - of Ballough, Co. Tipperary. Seumas went down there as a sort of semi Gaelic League and Volunteer organiser. He organised several classes down there and he brought me down to Mid and South Tipperary shortly after that. Dan Breen, Seán Treacy, Ned Reilly, Seumas Robinson, Paddy Kinnane and Jimmy Leahy were the

principal people I remember there at that time, also Joe McLoughney and Micksey Connell in Thurles. Robinson had gone down to stay with Dwyer after the release of the sentenced prisoners in July. The Maher's of Annfield - near The Ragg, Thurles - were prominent in the movement in the Thurles area at that time. I mentioned a while ago Frank McGrath. He was married to one of the Maher's of Annfield. It was there that Seán Hogan was arrested after Soloheadbeg.

Before I was arrested in Tipperary we carried out a week-end training camp under canvas at a place called Ballough, near Rossmore, that is, Eamon O'Dwyer's place. It is near Dundrum and Rossmore, somewhere between Thurles and Dundrum. We carried out a week-end training camp there. I don't know whether we had this camp for two nights or only one night. I think we had up to a hundred fellows on it from all over the area. Eamon O'Dwyer would be able to verify that. We had canvas tents, I think two or three big tents - marquees. We just slept in them. A lot of us did not sleep at all, of course. We were around the place all night but we went through the form of a military routine, posting sentries and so on like that. These tents were actually used on the following Sunday for an Aeriocht or Feis, but we were all mobilised there and spent one night at least under canvas. We took advantage of the fact that the tents were there for the aeriocht, to carry out this week-end camp. We did manoeuvres and drill and that sort of thing there as best we could. Seumas Robinson would probably remember that as he was there with Eamon O'Dwyer and Seán Treacy.

Just before I was arrested - I was only in Tipperary about three months altogether at that time - we tried at least twice, maybe three times, to capture or disarm four R.I.C. men who were guarding a boycotted house near Drumbane. Paddy Kinnane, Dan Breen, Seán Treacy and Ned Reilly took part in the attempt. Seumas and I and possibly one or two local fellows were there. It was very near Drumbane. We were staying in digs near Drumbane at the time. The R.I.C. were protecting a boycotted farm in the area. The boycotted man was nick-named "The Mock" or "Mac". Two police stayed in the house all night and were relieved by two others around daylight in the morning. We hoped to capture all or at least two of these on their way to or from the boycotted farm, but although we lay in ambush at least three times both at night and again at daybreak the time for changing the guard must have been altered because we didn't succeed in meeting them. I don't remember the precise date of this but it would be much earlier than the Soloheadbeg ambush of January 1919.

We carried out a raid on Molloy's of Thurles, a big hardware place there. We got an immense lot of gelignite and detonators. Some of the same men took part. I don't know whether Seán Treacy was in it or not, but Jimmy Leahy, Jack Maher, Paddy Kinnane, Ned Reilly and Ned Maher, the latter since ordained for the American mission, Seumas and I were there. The amount of stuff we got was so heavy that we were not able to carry it and we had to commandeer an ass and car to cart it. There must have been about seven or eight big chests of gelignite and several boxes of detonators.

That was used afterwards extensively by the I.R.A. Molloy's kept this explosive in a special store, which was built down in the yard. We mobilised for this raid at Micksy Connell's. He was the man who afterwards sent the famous wire to Seán Treacy at Knocklong in connection with the rescue of Seán Hogan. We broke in the door of the store and took the explosives out through a ruin of an old Protestant Church out to the Mall in Thurles. We took it away out near Annfield and we dumped it eventually in a vault in the graveyard. It was used afterwards all over the country. There was a big lot of gelignite, detonators and I think there was some gunpowder and fuse. That was one of the first raids for military equipment that was carried out in the country. That was in the summer of 1917.

During that summer I was arrested for assaulting police at Dundrum. Countess Markievicz was down there in the area, and we were drilling with wooden guns. The police tried to stop us and I hit one of them. I was captured the following day. A most extraordinary thing happened when I was arrested. I had a copy of the I.R.B. Constitution in my pocket when I was captured and I was very uneasy about it, but I managed to get rid of it by burning it in the day-room of the R.I.C. barracks. They did not search me until they brought me in to the day-room. Somebody said "Have you any letters or documents?". I said, "I have only a few old love letters. You don't want to read them!" While I was saying it, I took them up and flung the whole lot into the day-room fire, but I was very uneasy about it

until the fire had completely burned the papers. I was taken from there to Cork where I was tried and sentenced to two years, after which I was brought to Mountjoy Prison in Dublin.

I was in Mountjoy during the Ashe hunger strike, just the tail-end of the Ashe hunger strike. That was September, 1917. The hunger strike was nearly over when I got there. I came in under all the good conditions. Seán Treacy was there at the time. Actually Treacy mentioned in his diary that I was in the cell with him. In Desmond Ryan's book he mentions from Treacy's diary that I was in his cell. J.J. Walsh and Fionán Lynch were some of the people who were there, but I was so many times in jail that I get confused as to who was with me at any particular time. I was in Mountjoy at a subsequent period also. After a short time there, we were removed to Dundalk and an attempt was made to deprive us of the concessions that were granted as a result of the Ashe hunger strike.

We went on hunger strike in Dundalk immediately after we arrived there and we were released after the strike had lasted eight days. I did the full eight days but Seán Treacy only did four. Austin Stack I think was in it also. We were all released after eight days' hunger strike. There were some others released from Mountjoy about the same time. Evidently a general attempt was made at that time by the prison authorities to revert to the old conditions.

The doctor came in after one or two days hunger

strike and recommended the release of several prisoners, including Seán Treacy. Their health was supposed to be bad, but the last of us did not get out for eight days. We were all released after eight or nine days. I went back to Thurles again with Jimmy Leahy who was released from Mountjoy at the same time.

Shortly after that, I went home to Tyrrellspass to assist in re-organising the Offaly Brigade. I was instructed by Headquarters to do this. Although my part of the country, Tyrrellspass, was in Westmeath, I was attached to the Offaly Brigade at that time, because there was nobody very active in Westmeath at that time anyway. We were on the borders of Offaly and so we became attached to the Offaly Brigade. The Brigade Staff that was appointed at the first meeting was Peadar Bracken, O.C., Ned Morkan (then a bank clerk in Birr) Vice O.C., Eamonn Bulfin, Quartermaster, and myself, Adjutant. We organised it fairly well. Eamonn Bulfin is now in the Customs and Excise, stationed in Birr. His sister is married to Seán McBride, and his father was Senor Bulfin who wrote "Rambles in Erin".

I remember some of the Battalion O.C.s too. I used to meet them at Battalion meetings. There was Jimmy Corrigan. He was a teacher and was teaching in the Workhouse in Birr. There were schools in the Workhouse at that time. He died since. There was Paddy Gerahgty. He was executed afterwards in 1922. He was in Tyrrellspass, in my part of the country, and he was in charge of the Company there. There were the Byrne's. They were over near Bill Egan in Croghan.

Joe Byrne was executed too in 1922. Bill Egan, who was later Quartermaster General in the National Army and now Chief of Staff, was one of this crowd. I remember that Bill was in Offaly at the time because I was on manoeuvres with him around that time in the Croghan and Rhode area. The Joe Byrne mentioned was a first cousin of his. Joe Byrne was executed with Geraghty during the Civil War in 1922. Another man who used attend the Brigade Council meetings was Felix Cronin from Lorrha near Birr (sometime Q.M.G. of the National Army). He may have been Battalion O/C or Director of Training or of Intelligence. Lorrha is actually in Tipperary but it, too, was attached then to the Offaly Brigade.

During that time I had a few interviews with Mick Collins, the nature of which may be of some interest. He stayed at our house once or twice while he made contact with somebody near Horseleap. I think it was an R.I.C. man that he was in touch with and that he was related to Collins in some way. This was the anti-conscription period. It would be around the spring of 1918 because I know we had no difficulty in getting recruits at the time. We were very strong, and that was probably the time.

I met Mick Collins in Mullingar, to where he had travelled by train. He must have been on the run at this time because he went to a good deal of trouble to hide his movements. He came out to our house and spent the night in it. We discussed organisation generally as to who was any good and who was "no bloody good", as he would say - a general survey of the local situation. I took a message from him to some house in Horseleap

and met a lady who I think was a policeman's wife. I brought back a reply to Collins, and he went there himself and met this man. I had the impression that she was a sister of his or a cousin, that is, the policeman's wife, or that the policeman himself was related to him or somebody belonging to him. Collins came to our house twice during that period to make contact with this policeman. Whatever he was doing with him or getting him to do, I did not know, but this R.I.C. man was probably some part of the Intelligence system that Collins was then organising. That might be interesting now. He was definitely building up an Intelligence network and he had somebody there, but it was all hush-hush and I knew nothing about the details. After Collins had been there the first time, I met him in Dublin and he asked me to arrange for a second visit. He came down again. He had stayed overnight on the first occasion in our house at Meedin, but on the second occasion he did not sleep there.

I was captured again at this time. My release from Dundalk had been under the "Cat-And-Mouse" Act. Of course, we did not report to the authorities as we were supposed to under the Act. It was not very long until they started to look for us again. They raided our own house several times and they raided houses I had been in. It was not too easy for me to hang on around there. There were not very many others on the run at all at that time around that part of the country. I went down to Galway to meet Seumas, my brother, and I was arrested there at a place called Killeeneen, near

Craughwell. Seumas's wife came from there. This arrest took place immediately after Christmas 1918, that is January 1919.

Seumas's wife is now living in Dublin. She has a great knowledge of everything that took place around the Galway area in 1916. Mellows continually stayed at her home.

Seumas and I were arrested at Killeeneen and taken into Athenry. We bored out through the back wall during the night. It was somewhere around Killeeneen that the Galway Volunteers mobilised in 1916. There were a lot of fellows from Killeeneen arrested at that time. You may remember a father and son, Michael Fleming and his son who were interned with us at Frongoch. They were from the same place. Eamonn Corbett came from there. He is dead. There was a man named Callanan, known locally as "The Hare". He has a shop or a business house. He was in the Galway fight. He is living now somewhere around Craughwell. I think he was a Commandant or Captain in the National Army. He was a famous character down there at that time. I think he got away to America after the rebellion and I think he did not come back for a long time afterwards. I don't think he was back for much of the fighting afterwards.

When Seumas and I were arrested, we bored out through the back wall of the police barrack in Athenry. Seumas escaped through it but I being bigger than he could not get through the hole. He escaped. We dug out the mortar between the bricks with penknives and used the iron stay from under the form as a lever. Our

little cell window had been bigger at one time but had been built up to the form of a porthole, and it was the new masonry we were able to remove. We had to do it very quietly. I managed to push Seumas out through it but I could not get through it. He was much smaller than I was, and he got away. I don't think he was ever captured again after that.

I was taken from that to Mountjoy where I was sent to complete my sentence. Paddy Fleming was there when I arrived, also J.J. Walsh and Piaras Beasley. I was amongst the twenty who escaped over the wall that time. You have all that story I suppose.

After that escape, I went with J.J. Walsh to Croke Park. We knew it as Jones's Road at that time. I stayed that night with the O'Toole's, where I met Mick Collins and Harry Boland. They both came there to see us that night and it was to be arranged that I would go back to Offaly.

In the course of a general talk, Mick Collins raised the question of the split in East Limerick between the Manahan and Hannigan factions and how the Volunteers in East Limerick were disputing among themselves. We discussed that. I had been saying that it was tough for me to be working around Offaly where I was so well known, and he suggested that I should go to Limerick. He said that he would get in touch with me later, and he did get in touch with me later. He gave me a definite instruction that I was to go to Limerick, and I was to see MacCurtain, the Lord Mayor in Cork - evidently MacCurtain had been some way

mixed up in this Limerick split - and he was to introduce me to the area. MacCurtain had been concerned in some way in trying to adjust this dispute in East Limerick and was, therefore, familiar with the matters involved and the personalities. I think he represented the I.R.B. in the matter. I was appointed as an Organiser for the Dáil Loan there. That was all fixed, cut and dried for me. I had not even to apply for the job. This was arranged by Collins.

My ostensible mission to East Limerick, therefore, was as a Dáil Loan Organiser and, while I did in fact work on this job, I also gave attention all the time to my real mission, which was the organisation of the Volunteers in that area. I went along there. The instructions, of course, from Mick Collins were to get these fellows doing something and not be wasting their time disputing amongst themselves, and that is actually what I did. We got them fighting and they forgot all about their troubles. Both sides came in then, and that finished the row.

It was at the end of August or beginning of September, 1919, that I was appointed as a Dáil Loan Organiser to East Limerick, and I got a transfer to the East Limerick Brigade. The Offaly fellows resented it a little bit because I know they complained to Headquarters. They wanted to get me back and had asked Mick Collins about it several times. I found this out afterwards. He told them he would arrange to have me transferred back, but then the Limerick fellows asked Collins to let me remain there in Limerick, and so I remained.

In view of the fact that I was on the run as an escapee from Mountjoy, I assumed the name of Seán Forde when I went to Limerick. My reason for taking this particular name was that my brother, Seumas, who was also on the run, had taken the name of Michael Forde. He, Seumas, was teaching in Cork. There was a Michael Forde from Galway who was actually then in America, and Michael Forde had a brother, Seán, who was in America too. I was known by this name of Seán Forde from then on until the Truce, and all my activities in Limerick were under this assumed name.

I did not do anything in the nature of forming Companies or Battalions or anything like that, but I went around to the people whom I knew were fairly sound and discussed this whole split with them and the foolishness of the split. I suggested that the best way to put an end to it would be to get them all into a fight with the enemy, somewhere. There had not been very many fights at the time. Soloheadbeg and Knocklong had occurred, of course. I think somewhere around in North Cork there was a fight too. I am absolutely certain that Collins wanted a fight started. That was his idea. It was, "Get going! Start a guerrilla war there!" That was the gist of his instructions to me when I was going to Limerick. He might have found fault with us for not consulting him or not notifying Headquarters about proposed actions. He often did things like that, but he was never opposed to a fight anyway.

After various discussions with individual Volunteers on the possibilities of a fight I got a number of them to meet me at Kilfinane and we put the thing formally to them as to whether they would agree to an attack on Ballylanders Barracks. We met at McCarthy's house, not Jack McCarthy's but Justin McCarthy's, who is a first cousin of Jack. Jack was there though. There was no special significance in the selection of Ballylanders Barracks for this attack except that it looked a reasonably easy task.

I went to Seán Wall who was the O/C of the Brigade. He was not at the Kilfinane meeting. He was the Brigade O/C. He was a great Brigade O/C but he was not much of a military man. He never went in much for military affairs but he knew that I was there trying to get things straightened out alright. I had no particular appointment on the staff or anything like that then. I had no formal appointment at all. I know that Wall knew all about why I was there. In addition to doing the Dáil Loan, he knew that I was connected with the military side of it too and had been sent in by G.H.Q. So I went to him after the meeting in Kilfinane and got authority from him to carry on. I went to him and said, "We are going to attack Ballylanders Barracks". He said, "Carry on!". He asked me what were the chances of success and I told him I thought we would capture it in an hour or two hours, but I remember he made a bet with me as to how long it would take. It was agreed at the Kilfinane meeting that I should command the attack because I belonged to neither the Manahan nor Hannigan

factions.

Soon after Ballylanders, I was appointed officially on the East Limerick Brigade Staff. For the attack on Ballylanders I was just selected by the boys and by Seán Wall. It was by popular consent that I commanded the attack and by agreement with Seán Wall. Donnchadh O'Hannigan was there but I did not summon Donnchadh. I more or less was inclined to leave Donnchadh and Manahan out of the thing because of the split, not exactly that I did not want them in it but so as not to start the row again. I had brought both sides - the O'Briens's of Galbally, the Crowley's of Ballylanders, Ned Tobin and all these fellows - together and they seemed to get along alright. I thought that, by bringing the principals into it, it might start something again, so we did not even tell them it was on. Hannigan was told by somebody that it was on and he came along to me. He asked if I would have any objection to him coming along and I said, "Not in the least! Men to fight is all we want". That was how he came into it. He remained with us then and I think that put an end to the split.

With regard to the Manahan and O'Hannigan split, I knew very little of that at the time. I was warned at the time when I was going to Easter Limerick not to go into this at all and not to enquire into the merits of the two sides in the matter, and the general impression was that it was all a bottle of smoke and that it was all a question of personalities. That was actually what I did and that was the attitude that I took any time that it was discussed by other people. I just said, "I know

nothing about it and it doesn't make one bit of difference to us. What we want to do now is to go ahead and fight". The opinion I formed, from what I gathered at the time, was that the whole dispute was a bottle of smoke. Both parties to it, Hannigan and Manahan, were good men and anxious enough to do their best but you know the way these quarrels and rows start with a small spark. Then somebody adds fuel to the fire and eventually it develops into something very serious. It was a very serious affair there in East Limerick and, if it had been allowed to continue, there would never have been any fighting done there. I got the impression from fellows who were on one side or on the other side that they were beginning to realise that too, that the original dispute was not as serious an affair as they originally thought it was, and they were prepared to admit that there were good fellows on both sides, as indeed was proved afterwards. I knew, of course, that the F.R.B. was involved in this dispute but I was very careful not to take sides. These were my orders from all concerned.

In the attack on Ballylanders Barracks, we put Hannigan in charge of a section occupying one of the houses there opposite the Barrack. Crowley's house itself was occupied and several other houses. We put them around in sections. I picked seven or eight fellows to come with me into a house adjoining the Barracks. We burst through the slates of the house in which we were and got out on to the roof of the Barracks. We burst in the slates of the roof of the Barracks.

The moment we started bursting through the slates of the houses adjoining the Barracks, the other sections opened first on the windows of the Barracks. We got out through the roof of the occupied house. It was about a foot lower, I think, than the Barracks which, therefore, gave us a little bit of protection from the fire of our comrades. We were out on the rear of the Barracks, while most of the fire of our fellows was directed on the front of the Barracks and sides. We were not too confident about the marksmanship of our fellows and, therefore, kept ourselves covered as best we could by the Barrack wall. We broke in the roof of the Barracks anyway and threw in a few bombs.

Some of the bombs were Mills bombs and some were home-manufactured ones. They were not percussion ones. We tried percussion bombs subsequently in Kilmallock and they were very dangerous things, but we did not have them in Ballylanders. These percussion bombs were things that exploded on impact. They had no time fuse and there were a number of accidents with them. The bombs we used in Ballylanders were of the Mills type. (The percussion bombs referred to were made, I understand, by some of the G.H.Q. munition factories. They had no heavy spring or hand lever, nor was there any time fuse. The firing fuse was held off the ignition cap by a very light spring, as well as a safety pin which was discarded when throwing. The firing pin was on some kind of delicate balance against the hair spring, so that the shock of impact when the bomb reached its destination after throwing, exploded it instantaneously).

We got out on to the roof of the Barrack, broke it in, threw in bombs and called on the R.I.C. to surrender. They began some kind of a discussion with us. At the time, we had broken through both the ceiling and roof, and this parley was going on with them underneath, through the hole we had made. While the discussion was going on, one of the policemen stole in through the door of the room underneath and fired upwards. He very nearly got me. I was carrying on the negotiations about the surrender, and having a revolver in my hand I replied to the fire. I believe I hit him alright. One of the R.I.C. men was wounded in the thigh. I signalled to our lads to open fire again and then we flung in paraffin and petrol through the hole in the roof and ignited it. After ten or fifteen minutes, we called on the R.I.C. again to surrender. We could hear them shouting, "We surrender. We surrender". At some stage, Meade, one of our men, was wounded in the lung. He was on the opposite side of the street in one of the houses. I did not know this at the time.

When the R.I.C. surrendered I told them that nothing would happen if they came out and brought all their stuff out. They did bring out all their stuff except a box of bombs. The Sergeant told me that it was under the bed in one of the bedrooms and that the place was on fire, but we got in through the fire and got it out. I think we got everything that was in the barracks, rifles, ammunition, revolvers and this box of bombs.

In the meantime, the Barracks was blazing away

and we let it burn out. We helped it to burn out actually. I think parts of it that were not burning, we put paraffin and petrol on to make sure it would go off. We took the R.I.C. garrison up to a house up the road and left somebody in charge of them. We piled up all our stuff and we took it to a little country church called Glenbrohane. It was dumped there in the ceiling or some place over the altar.

There were six or seven R.I.C. men in the Barracks but the only casualty they had was the one wounded in the thigh. When they surrendered, we had very little stuff left. I believe some of the sections had only one round, and some I think had none. I had a few rounds of revolver ammunition. That is all. Of course, it was not long until we were re-equipped from the stuff we got from the Barracks. We did not show our weakness either. We did not pretend we were short. We just called on some section to come along and disarm them and march them up.

Meade was wounded and we took him away across country in a horse and trap, or car, to a house near Kilfinane. Somebody else went off to get a doctor for him. He was very bad for a long time. We eventually had to take him into hospital. He was shot through the lung. So we sent in a fake message to a doctor for an ambulance to go somewhere. We just stopped the driver. I think the driver was alright but we went through the form of commandeering the vehicle. We took Meade to the County Infirmary in Limerick.

There were some arrests after the Ballylanders attack but none of those who actually took part was captured. A man named Johnny Riordan, who was O/C Kilmallock Battalion, was arrested. He was alright, but he was not actually in Ballylanders on the night of the attack. Somebody told me that he was somewhere in the vicinity, a few miles out, with a Red Cross unit. I don't know whether that was true or not, but he certainly was not in the fighting or anywhere near the village that night. He was accused by the British of having been in command of the attack, and following his arrest he was sentenced to two years as having been O/C of the attack. I have seen statements of his in recent years, in which he claimed to have been in command of the attack on the Barracks in Ballylanders, and that is why I would like to put it on record that the things he has said and written in connection with these things, a lot of them were done for the sake of getting pensions for himself and other people. There was a good deal of history falsified in connection with this. All his statements would want to be taken with a grain of salt. If you read the articles published on "East Limerick's Fighting Story" which were written by Riordan, you would imagine he led the whole of East Limerick during all the time, and if you ask Hannigan or Jack McCarthy about this, or any of these fellows about him, they would be able to verify what I am saying concerning him. I venture to make a bet that he never even fired a shot, or never even heard a shot fired during all the fighting, because he was arrested soon after the Ballylanders attack and was not released until after the

Truce. I don't know what part he took during the Civil War. I think he was fairly active again during the Civil War, although nobody was ever able to decide on which side. I believe the reason he was identified by the R.I.C. as having been in command at Ballylanders was that, superficially and at a distance, he resembled me somewhat, while I, being new in the area, was not so well known to the police.

I think that it was immediately after Ballylanders I was appointed officially as Vice O/C of the East Limerick Brigade. Jack McCarthy would probably have a better idea of the date. I was definitely appointed as Vice Brigadier. It was either before or after the Kilmallock Barrack attack, but I was again put in charge of this job, that is the attack on Kilmallock. We got very brave, of course, with our extra arms and our success at Ballylanders, and we looked around for some other Barracks to attack, but all the soft ones were closed immediately after Ballylanders. All the outlying ones, Killtealy, Elton and all the small ones were closed immediately after Ballylanders. The police were all brought into Kilmallock and the bigger centres. We had done so well at Ballylanders that we said at some of the meetings, "Why not attack the big one and do it properly!". I don't know whether it was then that we decided to re-organise the Brigade and make the appointments, or whether this was done subsequently, but anyway all these fellows that were afterwards on the Brigade Staff were at these meetings. We got in touch with the adjoining Brigades to assist

us. We knew it was going to be a fairly formidable affair. We got in touch with South Tipperary, Seán Treacy and, incidentally, we got ammunition from the South Tipperary Quartermaster, Mick Sheehan. Every time I met Mick Sheehan afterwards, he used remark jokingly, "When are you going to send me back that ammunition you stole from me!"

There is a fairly good account of the transfer of that stuff, which came to us through Galbally. Galbally, which is on the borders of East Limerick and South Tipperary, had been attached to East Limerick, but they always worked in with the South Tipperary fellows over there. Kilmallock Barracks attack is dealt with in an old edition of An tÓglach. This is the army version of the fight and was written by an officer named Quirke who took part in it. I have a copy of that article - which describes the fight pretty well from the military viewpoint.

We got in touch with Clare and Mick Brennan came to assist us in Kilmallock. We were anxious to get as many guns, and men to use them, as we could.

We had hoped to capture a number of R.I.C. outside the Barrack but we did not get them. They had gone inside before we got into position.

We had very elaborate plans in connection with this attack which provided for widespread activities in the surrounding area, including North Cork, Mid Limerick, South Tipperary and all the surrounding areas.

The local Volunteer Companies were all engaged in connection with the blocking of roads and the cutting of railway lines, because we guessed that it would take a good while to capture the Barracks and that enemy reinforcements might be rushed to its relief. It was, I think, actually the biggest Barrack attack that took place during the whole fighting in order of importance. We did not get the police outside the Barracks, so that, starting off, we got into a house adjoining it again and used the same method of attack that we had used in Ballylanders. We were hoping in Kilmallock to mine the wall between the two houses and blow in a hole that way, but we did not actually do that. We thought the other one would be a simpler way, but the house was not quite adjoining. The back wall of the house we occupied was touching the front wall of the Barrack. In other words, the building we occupied was not in line with the Barracks, the front of the Barracks being set back so that it came in line with the back wall of this house. We were a little bit higher than the Barracks, in the house that we occupied. We broke out through the roof of the house we were in but we were not in contact with the Barrack roof. In Ballylanders you could actually hit the roof with a hatchet or something like that, but in this case you had to throw weights on to the Barrack roof to break it down. Of course, the garrison in Kilmallock was much stronger too.

I don't think anybody ever found out how many were there in all. There were some Tans there, whose names were never given nor whose presence was never

admitted, and the names of some of the people who were killed there were never published - some of the Tans that were killed. It was our first experience of meeting the Tans. It was the first time they had been seen around there.

We used what I call these big home-made percussion bombs in Kilmallock but they were very dangerous. At one time/^{we}nearly had a very serious accident in the house in which we were filling bottles of petrol and paraffin oil. We had brought up a petrol waggon which we had commandeered, pumped petrol into buckets and bottles, which we then threw at the roof of the Barracks. In this way we got the roof on fire. We were up in the garret, with all the bombs and explosives and everything else, filling bottles of petrol, when the place went on fire but we managed to put it out, fortunately. I shouted for a bucket of water and somebody came along with a bucket. I flung it into the blaze but it was paraffin oil was in the bucket. We managed to put out the blaze somehow. Somebody kept his head and we got wet blankets and wet sacks and stamped it out.

We used an awful lot of ammunition. The fight lasted all night long. In fact, I was reprimanded very severely by Gearóid O'Sullivan afterwards for the amount of ammunition I had 'wasted'. I remember I said to him as a retort, "How many of them did you capture with less?".

There was a man named Liam Scully whose name should be mentioned in connection with this attack.

He was killed in Kilmallock. Sometime about six months ago, shortly after the "Sunday Press" was established, I saw my name mentioned in that paper. It was in the course of a newspaper controversy about teachers and the part teachers had played in the national movement, and whoever wrote this letter, under a nom-de-plume, quoted me as one of the teachers having taken part in the national movement and, who had taken away this dead man in his arms. Somebody from Kilmallock wrote a reply. He did not say anything against me but he said that I did not take away Liam Scully because I had left the scene when Scully was shot. It mentioned that Liam Scully, who was also a teacher, had died in his, the correspondent's, arms in Kilmallock. Well, it was not I who took him in off the street. It was a man named Tobin. It was not Tobin that wrote in the newspaper. The man who wrote to the paper might have been there helping. He said that I had left Kilmallock before Scully was shot, but that was not true at all, of course. It was in my car Scully died, the car I was driving. We took him away down to West Limerick and we left him in a house down there. I went on that night to his own place, somewhere between Tralee and Killarney, and brought back his brother. I think Donnchadh O'Hannigan came along too, and a Fr. Dick McCarthy. We went on down to Scully's native place. Ballylongford is the name of it, I think, and brought back his brother. The following morning we buried Scully in a place called Templeglantine. There is a monument to him there. It is not too far from Abbeyfeale. That is what I wanted to say in connection with that.

We were a bit disorganised after Kilmallock. We went down to West Limerick. We had originally intended to go on to West Limerick after the attack on Kilmallock Barracks. I should have mentioned that the West Limerick fellows - Seán Finn and some others - were with us at Kilmallock. It had been intended, following the Kilmallock fight, that we would go to West Limerick, shift all our stuff down and continue our activities there by the attack on Newcastlewest Barracks a few nights afterwards. However, we found that ammunition was too scarce. We had expended so much ammunition and explosives that we could not carry on with our original plans. That is why the Newcastlewest attack did not come off.

A lot of the rifles did, however, go down to West Limerick in accordance with the pre-arranged plan, and a lot of the boys, including Donnchadh Hannigan, went down there. They remained around there for a while and eventually decided to come back. They came back across country, and that was the time it was decided to form. They came back with their rifles and stuff like that carried openly across country. They had managed to escape and live on the country, and that gave them the idea of the Column. I think that was one of the first Columns to be established.

When we were down there in West Limerick, General Lucas was captured. I did not go back with the other East Limerick men that time. I went across the Shannon into Clare with General Lucas. He was captured on the 27th June, 1920, so it must have been about that time

that this move to West Limerick took place.

While we were still in West Limerick after Kilmallock, some of us crossed the Shannon to assist in an attack on Sixmilebridge in Clare. Ernie O'Malley was in charge. The attack did not take place for some reason. The plan included a breach in the Barrack wall with explosives, and I think the only gelignite we had was defective. I remember Ernie O'Malley collapsed in a house where he was trying to restore the gelignite by teasing or kneading it. It seems he was overcome by the fumes or by absorption of the nitroglycerine through the skin. I don't know if the defective explosive was the sole reason for abandoning the attack or not but it was abandoned anyway. We returned to West Limerick.

While we were in West Limerick and soon after the burial of Liam Scully, we got a message from North Cork - Seán Moylan or Liam Lynch - to go down to take over General Lucas, who had been captured a short time previously, and there was great enemy activity around the North Cork area. We took him over somewhere around - I think it must have been Newmarket, Co. Cork, in that direction anyway. I can't remember exactly. I know that, approaching Abbeyfeale on our way back with him as a prisoner in the car, we ran out of petrol and that he had to help us to push the car to the tops of the hills when we could let it run down. In this way, we got as far as Abbeyfeale where we got petrol. We took him to a place outside Abbeyfeale and kept him there for a night. Subsequently we took him on near

there
 Shanagolden. I am not sure whether/was any R.I.C.
 garrison in Abbeyfeale at this time, but I think that
 probably there was not. We got the petrol in a garage
 at the outskirts of the town. We spent a night near
 Abbeyfeale, or possibly it may have been only a day, and we
 moved on after nightfall. We took him to a place near
 Shanagolden. Dore was the name of the man who owned the
 house. We kept Lucas there for several days, perhaps for
 a week. At the time there was a suggestion that the
 British might exchange a prisoner for Lucas. Bob Barton
 was a prisoner in British hands at the time and it was
 hoped he might be exchanged for Lucas, but the latter
 scoffed at the notion. He said he was not as valuable
 in British eyes as we seemed to think. Lucas was a very
 decent man and could even see our point of view. He said
 to me once that if he were an Irishman he would be in the
 I.R.A. He was a very keen card player, very fond of
 bridge, and we, of course, tried to make everything as
 pleasant as we could for him. He was a bit of a nuisance
 while he was around, our attention being concentrated on
 looking after him. He held up the whole place. Nobody
 could do anything while he was with us. We did, of course,
 what North Cork did - passed him along to somebody else.
 We got in touch with Clare and suggested that it was
 getting too dangerous to keep him in East Limerick. There
 had been raids here and there. We took him across to
 Clare side in a boat and handed him over there to Mick
 Brennan and company. We remained for some time in
 Clare with Lucas.

I was wounded in Clare actually that time. I ran

into a military patrol. This was the time that Lucas was down there. It was after we had handed him over to Brennan. We were just coming along the road and we saw this lorry coming. We took to the fields, and a lucky shot got me in the thigh. It was not very serious. I was taken into hospital at Limerick afterwards. Lucas was kept in Clare for a while. Then he was transferred to mid-Limerick and he escaped from the mid-Limerick fellows. The mid-Limerick fellows were trying to palm him back to us and we did not want to have him. He escaped from these fellows, that is, Dick Connell, and the suggestion is anyway that his escape was connived at by his guards. I would not be one bit surprised if that was so, because they were all sick of him. He was a nice fellow and everyone liked him. We would have been very sorry if he should become a subject for execution, as a retaliation or anything like that, while on the other hand keeping him in custody imposed a burden on whatever unit held him at the time.

Lucas was actually nearly being killed after escaping. There was an ambush in Oola, or somewhere down there, on the day he escaped. He got in touch with some military lorry, halted the military lorry, and the lorry was later ambushed by Seán Treacy and that crowd, I think, in Oola, in ignorance of the fact that Lucas was on the lorry. Lucas and the British party thought it was wonderful Intelligence organisation on our part to have discovered his whereabouts so quickly following his escape.

Bill Hayes, Nicholas Dwyer, a fellow named Cremins and I went down to Scariff to help the Clare fellows at an attack that did not work out too well, although we were a long time at it. Paddy Brennan I think was in charge. The Brennan's were in some trouble at that time with Headquarters over something or another, in connection with discipline. I don't know what it was, but I think Mick was suspended and Paddy was actually the O/C. Mick had, in fact, been suspended by G.H.Q. I think it was in connection with the raiding of a Post Office where money was taken for the purchase of arms, the purchase being made in England direct by the Brigade. We were all courtmartialled down there subsequently for getting in arms on the quiet, but it was not a very serious matter. Collins objected to local units crossing the lines of Headquarters' purchases by attempting to purchase directly on their own account.

The attack on Scariff came off but we again thought we would get some of the R.I.C. outside and so reduce the numbers of the garrison somewhat. We had a car. We were to drive through the town. Mick Brennan or Austin - I don't know which - was in the car with us, that is the East Limerick lot, Bill Hayes, Nicholas Dwyer and myself. We were supposed to be veterans at this time, having been through a few skirmishes. I began to drive down past where the R.I.C. were playing pitch and toss outside the Barracks and fire on them as we passed to try and get as many of them as we could. We had the car in the side street and were getting everything ready, getting bullets up the breech and

everything in order to come out the side street and go down the Main street past the Barrack, when somebody, who had got in quietly to a house covering the Barrack, let off a shot. The police scurried for the Barracks and, though I fired on them, we were a good way off at the time and did not hit any of them. We decided we would attack, however, and do the best we could. Although there was a house adjoining the Barracks, the local Volunteers did not want to occupy it for some reason or another. I had a bit of a debate with them in connection with this matter. There was another house separated from the Barrack by a gateway. We got into this house and we got out to the roof of it alright. I got up to the roof of it and started flinging bombs. I found, first of all, that some of the bombs had no firing sets fitted. We flung several that did not explode before we found this out. We came down again and we got some bombs. Having examined and found that they had no detonators in them, we fitted these and then began again. We loaded them up again. Trying to get the bombs to explode on the roof was a difficult business because you could not time the explosion so well. So we got strong twine and tied pieces of it on to the bombs. We then tried flinging the bombs while retaining hold of the end of the twine until the bombs would explode, but they did not have much effect on the roof. Even if we did make a breach in the roof, I don't know whether we would have been able to set fire to the building in this way or not. I could not get the Clare lads to agree to take over the house adjoining and try to blow

a hole in the wall. I was up on the roof of the other one. Anyway, the fight was called off. No success. Nobody injured. Paddy Brennan was in charge. The three Brennan's were there.

All the local Volunteers went away then except Austin Brennan who was with us. He was our guide. Mick and Paddy and all the Clare fellows had cleared away. I told somebody to put two gallons of petrol into my car and he poured two gallons of oil into the petrol tank in mistake. Everybody was gone and we were on top of a hill. We thought the car would start off by running it down the hill, but it did not. Everything was all messed up. The lubricating oil, which had been put into the tank, had got into the carburettor and everything. We got into the Workhouse in Scariff and we took off the carburettor. We cleaned it out, and Bill Hayes, Nick Dwyer, Cremins, Austin Brennan and I went back down to Scariff again. The police had come out of the Barrack at this time. They were very brave when they thought everyone had gone, and they were firing all round the place. The four or five of us - I think Austin Brennan was with us at the time - attacked them again but, as soon as we started to shoot, they all scuttled back into the Barracks very quickly. We went down to a garage and we blew the lock off a garage door. We brought out six tins of petrol and washed out the carburettor and tank of our car. We got the car going again and came away. We wanted to get through Limerick before daylight. That was one of our ideas, but daylight came before we reached Limerick. We were all tired but we had to try and cross the Shannon.

There was only a few places where you could cross it. You could cross it at Limerick, at O'Brien's Bridge or at Killaloe. We intended to come down to cross at Killaloe after we had dropped Austin Brennan, but eventually we drove right up through Limerick and nobody said a word to us. We crossed the Shannon at Limerick and went up past William St. Barracks.

When I was wounded in the leg in Clare, after handing over General Lucas to the Clare Brigade, I was taken into the County Infirmary Limerick City. After about a fortnight there Limerick City Intelligence Department got a tip that the County Infirmary was to be raided for wounded Volunteers. I was taken away during the night on a stretcher and transferred to Dr. Dan Kelly's rooms in the Mental Hospital. The County Infirmary is opposite the County Gaol, and the latter adjoins the Mental Hospital. Dr. Dan Kelly is now R.M.S. in Carlow Mental Hospital.

I remained in Dr. Kelly's apartments until I was able to get about again. A bed was always kept ready amongst the mental patients so that in case of a raid I could be slipped in there where it would be difficult to pick me out.

When I was convalescent and able to hobble around, Fr. Lyons, a young priest in Limerick City, came in with an urgent message from Tom Crawford of Ballylanders. The message stated that Crawford was in the Military Hospital in the New Barracks suffering from a gun shot wound in the chest. He was wounded a short time

previously when the Black and Tans and Military came in to burn Crowley's. Some of the boys who were around fired on them and Crawford was wounded and arrested. The message stated that he, Crawford, was not as badly injured as he was supposed to be, that he could manage to get out the window of the hospital and could escape if a bar was cut in a high railing at a certain point in Casey's Road. The message was brought out by a friendly orderly but was not delivered in time. Crawford expected the bar to be cut on the previous night. I was very upset when I discovered this in case Crawford might think we had failed him. I had no way to get in touch with Crawford to let him know we would have the bar cut on that night - that is the night of the day I got the message. Fr. Lyons was satisfied to attempt a visit, but he was known and if an escape came off he might get into trouble. I asked him to change clothes with me and he went out and came back with a complete clerical outfit in a short time. We considered that a bold approach was the best and, at any rate, I was still lame and could not walk so well. I got Dr. Kelly's car and drove out the back gate of the Mental Hospital and up the City to the main gate of the New Barracks. I was stopped by the guard but was allowed to drive through when I explained that I wanted to see the Officer-in-Command. I was directed to the Adjutant's office where I asked for the O/C. The Adjutant told me Colonel, the O/C, was away but that perhaps I could discuss my business with him. He was very courteous. I forget what rank he held

but he was Second in Command. I told him I was Fr. O'Brien or Fr. Ryan or Barry - some very common name anyway - that I was a curate in Ballylanders, that Crawford's people were very worried about their son. I asked to be allowed to visit the patient so that I could allay his people's worries. I deprecated the existing situation and talked about innocent young lads like Crawford being led astray and tried to ingratiate myself as best I could along those lines. The Adjutant was very distressed that strict orders from G.H.Q. forbade visits to prisoners except with the personal sanction of the Colonel in Command who was, unfortunately, absent. He felt sure, he said, that if I called the following day when the Colonel would be back that I would have no trouble in getting to see Crawford. He assured me that Crawford was not fatally wounded, was getting the best of treatment and progressing favourably. I asked him to convey a message to Crawford to say that I had called, that I should have called the previous day but was unavoidably delayed. I hoped Crawford would guess that something would be done that night. I made an appointment for 9 a.m. the following day and drove out of the barracks.

It would appear that the Military rang up Ballylanders and found there was no priest answering to my description, because every young priest in Limerick was held up and searched that afternoon. Crawford was transferred the same afternoon and sent to Dartmoor, where he remained until after the Truce.

In spite of intense enemy military activity we cut the bar in the railing at Casey's Road that same night but, needless to say, Crawford didn't come. He had already been moved. I didn't keep the appointment on the following day.

I took part in dozens of small skirmishes such as sniping patrols, raids for arms and equipment etc. These were minor affairs and are not worth detailing.

I think the next engagement worth mentioning would be Grange. I think Grange was a pretty formidable fight and ^{we} might have got the worst of it. Grange is on the main road between Bruff and Limerick. (See attached sketch map). We had a big number of men mobilised for the attack alright, but arms of course, of any use, were confined to the Column. I would say that the East Limerick Column must have been thirty strong at that time. That is only just a rough estimate. The Column took up position inside a big high demesne wall. Most of the men from the local Battalion area were in positions on the opposite side of the road.

We had all preparations made for two lorries that were supposed to come out from Limerick and, instead of that, a convoy came in the opposite direction, from Kilmallock, Mitchelstown or Kilworth, towards Limerick - including armoured cars. That was our first experience of fighting against armoured cars. We could not do anything to stop the fight, as our outpost had fired and so warned the convoy of our presence. We had run the

barricades across, even though they were stopping them in the opposite direction to that which we had arranged, and it was fortunate for ourselves that we did run out the barricades because we were in a very bad position for ourselves inside the demesne wall. All the country behind us was level marshy land with no cover in it. There were a few trees and bits of woods around this demesne wall alright that gave us a certain amount of cover. All our people on the other side of the road had a good getaway and actually did make use of it.

The first lorry that came along, I would say everybody in it was killed because it stopped right beside me. I remember getting up on the wall myself. We had a sort of a parapet erected by placing planks along half-barrels behind the wall, to enable us to look over and fire over the top of the wall. I remember myself emptying an automatic pistol into one of the lorries and throwing a little haversack full of bombs into it as well. From what I could see stooping over, all the military in it were bleeding and hanging out of the lorry in various attitudes. The second lorry was fairly badly damaged too. None of the other lorries came right into the ambush position, where we were. They remained on the other leg of the "L" bend in the road and they were on higher ground than we were. All the helpers, as we called the local fellows, were on the opposite side of the road.

To give some orientation of the positions we were in, we may take the road leading to Limerick as pointing north. The position we occupied was on the west side

of this road, and the position occupied by the local Volunteer Battalion people, was opposite to our position, on the east side of the road. The high ground swung around the "L" bend on the road to the south of our position, and the lorries which did not come around the bend were, therefore, on higher ground south of our position. There was a stream running east and west between us and the enemy who were on the road south of us, that is, the part of the road around the bend. There was a certain amount of cover at this stream. Actually, it was our nearest point of real cover. We had, therefore, to advance to cover instead of retreating to cover when we were fired on by the enemy party south of us. This party had got out of the lorries and deployed in the field south of us, where they started shelling us with either trench mortars or rifle grenades. Probably it was rifle grenades they used. It was our first experience of anything like that and, although we could not be seen in the wood, we had no cover from fire there. I, with about half of our fellows, went forward in the direction of the enemy to the cover at the stream, and opened fire from the line of the stream. The other half of our crowd went towards a grove on the north-west of our position, where they had some cover. Hannigan was already at this grove when the second section moved in there.

The enemy had begun to advance on our position when we reached the stream, but our fire checked them and they retired again towards the road. In the meantime, our fellows had reached the grove, in which

Hannigan was already in position, and then took up the fire on the enemy, which enabled my party to get back. Then the whole party managed to get out by an avenue gate on to the main road, on the Limerick side of the ambush position. No lorry had succeeded in passing our barricade or moving on to the Limerick side of the bend, except the two referred to which had heavy casualties in the beginning of the fight and which were partially wrecked. This was fortunate for us because, if any of the other lorries had rounded the bend we would have been cut off. We crossed on to the east side of the road and joined up with the rest of our force, that is the local Volunteers who remained there. We had one wounded man and we carried him away with us.

That fight lasted a good while. I would say it was one of the best ones we had, as far as we were concerned, because we were hopelessly outnumbered and in a very bad position and all the fellows who were in the Column showed that they had become accustomed to fire and were able to stand up to it. They did not panic. That was the whole idea. There was not a word about it once we decided what we would do. We divided the Column in two, the first half going forward and occupying a position at the stream and the other half going back to where they could cover our retreat. It was done just as effectively as if they were in a well-trained army all their lifetime. We had only one man wounded. He was wounded fairly badly but we got him away. All the East Limerick Column were there and, in addition to that, the local Battalion, which was I

think the 4th Battalion - the Bruff Battalion. Jerry Dwyer, afterwards of the Army Equitation School, was there. Dwyer was Battalion O/C of that particular area. He took all his troops there with shotguns, rifles and revolvers, such as they were. Of course, a good many of them were on outpost duty a distance away, concerned with knocking down trees to block roads and such like. Hannigan was the Column commander. I was the Brigade Vice Commandant. Though we were of equal rank, no difficulty of precedence or authority ever arose between us. He made all the administrative arrangements and, by mutual agreement, he used leave the tactical handling of situations as they arose to my discretion. I remember at one time in the middle of this Grange fight, he came up to me and said, "Will I sound the retreat?" I said, "It is better to sound it and let the local fellows have a chance of getting away" - they were not very well-armed or very experienced - "but we (that is, the Column) will keep up the fight as long as we can". He said we were in great danger, and indeed we were. "Well", I said, "If we all run together, we will be in more danger". We consulted about the situation.

Most of the time I was on the Column with Hannigan. Though there were some ambushes at which I was not present and there were other occasions when I was in fights, on my own or with a few others, I am sure most of the Column men had minor skirmishes with the enemy on their own or with one or two companions.

The next action of any consequence was Glenacurrane. We had a little one near Kilfinane and a little one

outside Hospital.

Glenacurrane is between Galbally and Mitchelstown, on the main Mitchelstown-Tipperary road. It was a great place for a fight. We collaborated with the North Cork fellows there. I am sure Hannigan mentions it because we had a pretty big fight there too, but this one differed from the one at Grange. The very opposite happened at Glenacurrane. We were prepared for a very big crowd of the enemy, we had a huge number of men and we were well armed. In the meantime the raid on the Military Barracks at Mallow had taken place, and Ernie O'Malley got some of the stuff which was captured there sent up to us, including one machine gun. This was a Vickers gun. As well as that, we also had an old German machine-gun which was not in perfect working order, but someone professed to be able to get it to work and they did, in fact, fire a few shots with it. The Vickers gun, being a belt-fed gun, would take a lot of ammunition to keep it going, and all the ammunition we had would not keep it going for five minutes. We did fire a burst or so with it, as much for the moral effect as for anything else. It was the North Cork fellows who had the Vickers gun.

The enemy put up no fight there at all. We were prepared for the size of force that we had met in Grange but only two lorries came along and they put up no fight at all. There would be about ten to a dozen military on each lorry. I think there was a touring car as well. They were carrying mail to some of their stations and, having captured this, we censored it.

Several of the enemy were killed and several very badly wounded. They came around a bend on the road and, when they saw the tree across the road, one of the lorry drivers started to reverse. There was a Sunbeam car and two lorries. The first was a lorry, then the Sunbeam car and then another lorry. We had men extended for about three miles along on either side of the road. It was the biggest number of men I saw together during all the fighting there. We had the North Cork and our own fellows and everybody we could muster. Our men were dotted along the ambush position, and a lot of them saw nothing of the fight as they were so far away from it. Hannigan and I were just near the barricade where we thought the fight would begin but we expected it would extend over the whole glen. It is a deep glen with heights towering up on each side of it - an ideal place for an ambush. There were on one side of it, on what we call the Limerick side, little by-roads connecting our various positions. After taking up our positions, and while awaiting the appearance of the enemy force, we held up dozens of cars. There was some sort of celebration or garden party in some castle about Mitchelstown, and a lot of the local celebrities going to this function came up to our position. We came to the conclusion that it would be better to detain these, in case they might advise the enemy of our presence, as they would be bound to notice something unusual going on as they passed along. We took them all up a by-road and kept them there until the fight was over.

As I mentioned already, we expected a big force of the enemy and were prepared for this, but our information was bad. We did not get as many lorries as we thought we would. I would say that, had a big enemy force come along that day, we would have put up a good fight, because the position we occupied was ideal. The enemy could not get away in any direction. They were just caught down in a glen, and we up on the heights on all sides. We had taken precautions so that they could not, under any circumstances, get in behind us or above us. Our men were placed from one end of the positions to the other, three miles long.

The men in the second lorry jumped out and tried to take cover over the fence, on what I will call the Cork side of the road, towards the Galtee mountains. That lorry was, therefore, stationary on the road. The driver of the first lorry, trying to reverse out of the position, crashed his vehicle into the second lorry. The men from the second lorry, who had tried to take cover over the fence, were in no better position there, because we had men on that side also, and so they came under fire from these as soon as they had crossed the fence.

Realising that they were in a hopeless position, they surrendered at once. The whole fight did not last very long. A few of the enemy were killed and a few badly wounded. We bandaged them up. We took them up to a house and bandaged them up.

One of the people we had held up before the fight began was a parson. He said to Hannigan, "If any

of these people are of my religion, they might like to see me". So when the fight ended Hannigan brought along this parson to talk to the enemy wounded. I was sort of interested in what he would say to the wounded men concerned. The first man we brought him to was dead. "Oh!", he said, "I could not do anything for a dead man!". The next man was alive but very badly wounded. I think he may have died afterwards. The parson knelt down beside him and said, "I am a Church of Ireland clergyman. My poor fellow! Can I do anything for you?". The tommy said, "Oh! Don't you worry, old chappie! I'll be alright". I remember that so well. I don't know whether he died afterwards or not. We brought the wounded to a house and bandaged them up. I think we got great praise from them afterwards individually - whether we got it officially or not - for the way we treated them. We bandaged them and dressed their wounds. It was said that by doing so we saved the lives of several of the fellows who were wounded. That was near Christmas, 1920. It was coming on to the winter of 1920.

The next thing I remember is Donnchadh and myself setting off for Cork. Donnchadh's brother, Dan, was a seaman aboard a merchant ship trading between Liverpool and other English ports and Cork. He did a lot of work bringing in munitions and guns and anything like that he could get hold of. His ship was due in Cork at this time. It was coming up to Christmas and numbers of the men on the Column had asked Hannigan to let them go home for Christmas. We discussed this

situation and decided that it would be better to break up the Column temporarily and let them all go home for Christmas officially than have them drifting off independently in this way. Donnchadh and I decided to take the opportunity of going to Cork to meet Dan and pick up whatever stuff he might have for us, a few revolvers, ammunition, automatics and as much stuff as he could pick up.

We left Limerick about two days before Christmas, I think. We met Dan and we took most of this stuff from him on Christmas Eve. We disposed of it alright, although the house we were in was raided while we were there. We got all the stuff out. All the women in the place came along, packed all the stuff around their persons and went off out to a nearby church, where they remained while the raid was in progress. They were not raiding the house at this time. It was the street was held up and the stuff was, therefore, got out by the women before the raid on the house itself took place.

On Christmas morning we went down again to get some stuff that remained over in the ship, including some parabellum stuff Dan Hannigan had for me personally that no one knew anything about at all. This was a little private agreement between Dan Hannigan and me. I had a parabellum pistol and, if the parabellum ammunition which he had brought went into the general stores, I would only get a small share of it. So I had this private arrangement with Dan that he would bring this for me and give it to myself quietly.

Actually, I think Hannigan knew about this arrangement but we did not say anything about it between us.

We went off down again to the ship and, on our way back across Parnell Bridge, we were halted by the Tans. I had no gun on me but I had the ammunition and some other loose stuff, that is, stuff that he had not handed over to Donnchadh and the boys. It was kept for me specially. Dan and I were walking together. Donnchadh and a brother of mine followed. There were six of us and we were walking in pairs at considerable intervals. I had my hands in my pocket, unfortunately, and one of the Tans told me to "take your se-and-so hands out of your pockets". I took them out and the other Tan said, "Wait!". While covering me with his gun, he ordered me to put my hands up. We both put up our hands - Dan and myself. I knew that I was for it if I was caught. We were on this bridge, a swing bridge. The footpath was railed off from the roadway by an iron railing, about four feet high. We were walking on the footpath between the outer railing of the bridge and this railing, which divided the roadway from us, when the Tans held us up. The pathway was only six or eight feet wide. We could not run anywhere.

It was uppermost in my mind that I must not be caught with the ammunition in my pocket. So I hit the Tan who was holding me up with my fist and, bursting past the two of them, I ran across the bridge. They swore at the courtmartial afterwards that they fired a hundred and forty shots after me at point-blank range. They could have caught me with their hands if they had

tried to but, relying on their firearms, they kept standing back and firing. Following me along, they kept on firing. I don't know how they missed me, but they did miss me. The only thing I found afterwards was a bullet hole through my overcoat. I got away from that crowd of Tans. I was a hardy young man at the time and well able to run too.

I did not know the city very well and I kept bearing on to the quarter that I did know, where we had been staying, so that eventually I would get in touch with somebody. I ran into a second crowd of Tans who, apparently hearing the shooting, were coming in that direction. I was caught then in between both crowds. The second crowd started firing at me, and then they were firing at me front and rere. Being Christmas Day, no shops or anywhere was open that I might have a chance of escaping through. I could not get in anywhere, and I was caught in a narrow little street. I backed up against a fence, a little box or privet hedge, and they kept advancing. The intercepting party stood fast but the Tans who were following me kept moving up towards me.

During this time I managed to get rid of a little of the ammunition I had in my pocket, into the box-hedge against which I was pressed. I never went back afterwards to see was it there. I could not get rid of it all, however, in the time. The first fellow that came up fired straight into my face with his revolver. He said, "B. J....! I kept one for you". He had only one round left, fortunately, having

apparently fired the rest away during the pursuit. Fortunately for both of us as it happened, he fired straight into my face and I instinctively ducked and grappled with him. The two of us struggled for possession of the revolver. I was afterwards accused of trying to murder this Tan. The two of us struggled for his gun. I was a little bit stronger than he was, and I pulled it round until it was pointed at him. I pressed his own finger on the trigger. Fortunately for him and for me, it had been his last round. He had told the truth when he fired it at me.

I remembered no more than until I woke up later. Another, it seems, had come up. He had no bullet either. They had fired everything they had, but he hit me with the butt of the rifle on top of the head. I woke up in Union Quay Barracks. I was handcuffed when I regained consciousness. They found this ammunition alright on me but nothing else of any importance except an address I had written on a slip of paper. Mellows was after coming back again from America at this time and I was to meet him at an address in Cork. It was one of the things I was sorry about. I had written the address down but no name.

They questioned me. I gave all sorts of names - the usual thing. The first name I gave was Egan. I had some old papers belonging to an ex-British officer named Egan, and I gave that name first. Things were very hot around the place, and a local R.I.C. man told me afterwards that it was he saved my life by getting me taken away from Union Quay Barracks to the Bridewell.

During some of the questioning anyway, I was sitting on an old stool and one of the R.I.C. gave me a kick on the mouth. He broke every tooth I had with the kick. Another fellow, objecting to this action, hit him. They took sides. They were all very drunk. A D.I. or somebody came on the scene then and he got me taken away. I was dumped into the Bridewell. I got no food, of course. After some time in the Bridewell, they gave me tea and, whether it was doped or not, I got the impression that it was doped. I did not drink it anyway. I was afraid to drink it. Of course, my teeth were all broken and I was all blood. Whether it was that gave me the taste or not, I don't know but I thought it was doped and we had such a terror of these things, I was afraid to drink it anyway.

At about two o'clock in the morning I was taken out and brought along into a sort of sittingroom, along a dark corridor. It was not a sittingroom but like a day-room in a Barracks. A fire was lighting. There was an officer sitting at the table and two other military officers were standing by. There were three of them altogether. All of them were masked, which made me very uneasy, and I tell you they gave it to me if anyone ever got it! They gave me an awful doing there. It started off first by one of the officers taking out a package of cigarettes and offering me one. He said, "Sit down. Take a cigarette!". I took a cigarette. He did the usual - went through a whole lot of manoeuvres with a big sheet of foolscap and

making all kinds of ostentatious preparations, but having offered me the cigarette he said nothing to me, except just, "Sit down! I have some questions to ask". At this time I had decided I would tell them my name was Malone. I thought that was a safer thing to do and, if they began to question me about Egan, I would not be able to substantiate my assumption of this name. As I had been known for some time back as Seán Forde, there would be very little against Tomás Malone except perhaps my escape from Mountjoy. During the time I had been in the cell, I had been thinking over the question of my name when I would be questioned, as I knew I would be, and had decided on resuming my own name, about which there could be no question of doubt about my ability to sustain the claim to this name. While I knew they had plenty of charges they could place against Seán Forde, there was very little they could bring against Tomás Malone.

The officer seated at the table began by asking me my name. I told him my name was Malone. He said, "You gave the name of Egan when you were arrested". I replied, "These were old papers I found, and I thought it would be safer to give that name". I told them I had been in the Volunteers and had escaped from Mountjoy and so on like that, with the idea that, as I thought, half the truth would sound a more credible story. He gave me a very thorough questioning about the Volunteer movement generally and, included in the questions was: did I know a fellow called Seán Forde. It was interesting. I told them I had heard about him

but that I heard his health had broken down and that he had gone to America. He said, "It must have been very recently. He was in some ambush - I think it was Glenacurrane - only a week ago". They asked me had I ever seen him, and I admitted that I had met him. They asked me to describe him, and I gave them a description as unlike myself as possible, not that it would have made much difference.

I thought I was getting on very well - question after question after question. I don't know how many questions he asked, and I answered them all, to my own satisfaction. He wrote down very carefully every answer. When he came to the end, he took up another sheet of paper and said, "Now, we will begin again, and this time you will tell me the truth. When he had asked the first critical question and I had given him the answer as before, he nodded over to one of the other officers with the remark, "Alright, Jack!"

Jack went over very deliberately and, taking up the tongs, put them into the fire. Nobody said anything for an awfully long time. Then they sort of nodded at one another. There were three of them altogether. The first fellow was sitting at the table, the second fellow was standing on one side, and the other was at the fire. The second fellow came to me and said, "Take off your coat!". He came over behind me, pulled off the coat, waistcoat and shirt, and stripped me off down to the waist. The questioner, speaking in a voice of sarcastic politeness, said, "Now we will ask

that question again. So he asked the question again and I answered in the same way. On receiving my reply, he said, "Alright", nodding towards the officer standing by the fire. The tongs were now red-hot, and the third man came towards me with them in his hand. The questioner then said, "And now we will ask this question again!". I gave the same answer. The other fellow then just touched the red-hot tongs against my back. The pain of the burn was about the last straw, and I loosed my tongue upon them. I felt that this was not playing the game. I felt that, as their prisoner, they were entitled to question me and I was answering as best I could, to give them as little information as possible and yet satisfy them, but now they had, by their actions, decided me to adopt an attitude of defiance.

I told them I knew as much about the Volunteers and the I.R.A. as anyone they had ever got into their clutches. I said "I have been polite enough up to now to answer your questioning, but now I will tell you nothing. I'll admit I was telling you lies but I won't answer at all now". The fellow on the right hit me on the side of the head and knocked me down. I got up again and I told them what I thought about them, referring to them as the "brave British officers" who could act like this towards an unarmed and helpless prisoner. I scourged them with words as best I could. This fellow said, "Shut up!" again and he hit me. When I was falling over, the fellow with the tongs, on the other side, hit me also, but they did not knock me out. I was fairly well knocked out though. I was not unconscious but I felt a big groggy.

Then one fellow said to the other, "Oh! It's no use. It's only a waste of time!" He took up a glass of water and threw it into my face. I wiped off my face as best I could with my hand. "Oh!", he said, "Take him out and plug him!". "Oh!", I said, "Take me out and plug me. You have plugged better men than I". I was sure they were going to carry out that threat, but having made up my mind to die I did not feel afraid and there was no fear that I would grovel or beg for mercy.

They called in two members of the guard, a Sergeant and a Corporal, or something like that, and they had some whispering with them. I was taken out by these N.C.O.s, and one of them said, "Paddy, you had better cough up. They are going to plug you". "Oh!", I said, "Plug away!". I did not mind whether they were going to plug me or not at this time. I had my coat, shirt and all the rest under my arm. They did not plug me anyway. They marched me back and threw me into the cell where I put on the clothes again and flung myself down on the floor. I was half-dead at the time from all the beating and general ill-treatment. They had not used the hot iron on me further than just the once, but I had got a good hammering. It was more the psychological effect of it than anything else. I suppose I dozed off asleep when they came in for me again. It was about four or five o'clock in the morning. I don't know what time it was. They brought me out and put me up on a lorry.

They brought me to the address that was written

on the paper they had found on me, where I was to have met Mellows. Mellows had probably learned all about my arrest. He would not be staying there anyway. It was only a place where I could get in touch and where I could find out where he was. The woman of the house was a Mrs. Hynes from Galway, whom I knew beforehand. The military pulled me off the lorry and ran me up towards the door of the house. This woman was in bed. There was no man in the house. Her husband was on the run too. They ran me up to her and said to her, "Do you know this man?". Of course, she knew me very well, but she answered, "No, I don't know him". I spoke up at this stage and said, "Oh, you do, Mrs. Hynes! Don't you know Tomás Malone?". I wanted to mention my name as Malone, to prevent any mention of Seán Forde. When I gave her the lead, she said, "Oh yes! I know him. He is Tomás Malone from such-a-place". They took me out again and they gave her a great questioning about me afterwards, but she established that I was Tomás Malone.

I considered making a run for it that time. I was still sure I was going to be executed. While I was deciding, waiting for them, I did not get into the lorry. Remember, it was Christmas night or St. Stephen's morning - frosty, cold morning. I kept walking up and down, by the way to keep myself warm, each time walking a little further in both directions. There was a fellow standing above me and one below me with rifles, and I was trying to make up my mind about making a rush past one or other of them. Before I could screw my courage to the sticking point,

the others came out of the house and put me into the lorry again. I was very cold and very battered. One of the officers asked me if I would like to get into the driver's cab in front where it was a little warmer. I said I wouldn't mind, and I got in in front. He took a flask of whiskey out of his pocket and offered me a drink. When I refused this, he said, "It is alright. You need not be afraid. It is not doped or anything, and it will do you good", which would indicate that they did dope the first stuff that they gave me. He took a drink out of it anyway and he gave it to me. I took a mouthful and I can say it was very welcome. I could feel it did me some good. Remember, I had no food all day up to this time, and I was after getting kicked and battered very badly. I was taken back and thrown into the cell again.

There was an old lad in the cell who was evidently a curfew prisoner - one of those people arrested for being abroad during the hours of curfew. Of course, I was afraid to address him because I thought he might have been put in there specially to draw information from me. His wife came in to see him, with tea, and he gave me a little drop of the tea. When being released, I wrote on an empty cigarette packet, or something like that, "If Mrs. Malone wants to see her husband, he is in the Bridewell". I forget now at what address I asked him to deliver this but, of course, I was careful not to implicate anyone.

I should have stated that I was married at this time and my wife was in Cork. My marriage had taken

place in the middle of all the war. I got the message to her anyway. It was delivered alright. She came along and asked to see me. I had all the money we had - £25 or something like that - in my pocket and they had taken this from me when I was searched but they gave it up to her at my request. Somebody who was friendly said to her, "You should go to the D.I. and ask him to get your husband transferred to the detention barracks", or something like that. They had some other military prison there. So she asked the D.I. and he agreed. He said that it would be wise because the Tans were out at this time, following an ambush that had taken place that day - some of the ambushes in Cork City or nearby - and that, when they would come back, they would likely be in a bad mood. It would be, therefore, undesirable that I should be ready to their hands. The suggestion was that they might take me out of the Bridewell and do me in.

I was transferred to the Military Detention Barracks, where other Volunteer prisoners were held. I had met a few of the prisoners previously. Some of them had not given their correct names. I remember Tom Crofts was one of these. I was kept there for a while and brought out several times for identification and the usual thing - spies looking at you through peepholes.

Then I was brought up for courtmartial. I was accused of having ammunition and attempted murder - attempting to murder this Tan in the circumstances I have described. I refused to recognise the Court, and all

the Tans who had arrested me came along and gave their evidence. The Colonel, or whoever was in charge of the courtmartial, asked me had I any questions to ask. I questioned one fellow - the Tan who had tried to shoot me, and I brought out that he was trying to kill me. I said, "Did you fire so many shots at me at point-blank range?". He admitted he did. I said, "When you came up to me and I had my hands up, did you fire into my face?". "I did", said he, "and I am sorry I did not get you too!". I said to him, "And I suppose you call yourself a good shot!", which remark seemed to infuriate him, for he dived his hand back for his gun.

The President of the Courtmartial intervened at this point and severely reprimanded the Tan for his indiscipline and lack of respect for the Court. He had him placed under arrest on the spot. He ordered that this Tan be taken into custody when the Court closed but, in the meantime, ordered him to answer my questions. He answered the questions. I said to him, "Did you try to shoot me?", to which he answered, "Yes". I said, "When I closed with you, did you not struggle with me for the revolver?". He admitted he did. I explained to the Court the circumstances of this struggle and said that in this case, where it was clearly a question of my life or his, I felt entitled to defend my own life by taking his if I could.

I was acquitted of the charge of attempted murder but found guilty of the charge of having ammunition. At that time they had brought in a regulation that the

possession of ammunition warranted the death penalty. They sentenced me to death but, in view of the fact that I was one of the first - if not the first - who had been tried under this regulation, the sentence was commuted to "I don't know how many years" penal servitude. I did not mind what the period was because it did not make any difference. I was glad, of course, not to be condemned to death and at that time believed there was no prison built which would hold me for more than a year.

I was taken then to Cork Jail. While I was there, the Cork hunger-strikers were there - the Crowley's from Ballylanders were there also. There was some kind of an attempt, or there was to be some kind of an attempt at a rescue. I was to have a revolver brought in. A warder in the place was in the know, and the prison chaplain acted as our contact medium with the Volunteers outside. Actually he did bring the revolver in to me. There was a fellow named Joe Murphy who had been sentenced to death. Mick Murphy was a Battalion O/C in Cork. The British had arrested this Joe Murphy, who had little or nothing to do with the movement, and he was identified by them as Mick Murphy. He was tried and sentenced to death in the belief that he was Mick Murphy. He was to be executed on a Saturday morning but, just a few minutes before it was time for him to go out, through all the influence that had been brought to bear on his behalf, the execution was postponed for a week. Again in the second week it was postponed. He was eventually reprieved. He had nothing whatsoever to do with the Volunteer movement. I met him several

times - at least, I could talk to him. When I was out at exercise in my little yard, his cell window looked out upon this yard and I could talk to him through the window where he was in the condemned cell. He told me that he would love to be executed, that he would rather be executed than have the death sentence hanging over his head. This chaplain who brought messages in to me from outside communicated the instructions to me about this proposal to rescue Murphy. These instructions were that he, the Chaplain, was to bring in and give me a revolver. Arrangements would be made, through the friendly warder I suppose, that my cell door would be left open about the time that the executioner, Pierrepoint, and the prison governor or the chief warder were going out for the execution. My cell was on the first landing and was, therefore, a little bit above the level of the heads of those going out on the ground floor. I was to crawl along this landing and wait until the chief warder opened the door going out. The priest was to be with them too. I was to shoot Pierrepoint and then make a rush for the outside. The University wall was covering this door and our own boys were to be in position on top of this wall, with a machine gun and rifles. We were to run towards the wall and up a rope ladder, then out into the University grounds and away.

Anyway, the execution never came off, so we did not have the satisfaction of shooting Pierrepoint. I don't know whether it would have succeeded or not, but it might have. In the excitement there was just a chance that we might have got away with it. The

Volunteers assembled in the University on two or three successive Friday nights or Saturday mornings.

I was taken out in the middle of the night again, put on board some kind of a tender, taken down the river, transferred from the tender to a destroyer in Cork Harbour and off to Bere Island. This would be about five or six weeks after I was arrested, or about the beginning of the second week of February, 1921. There were some internees there, including fellows who had been caught in the Cahirguillamore dance raid, Co. Limerick. Jed Dwyer was amongst those who got away on that occasion. There were several wounded there, and a few fellows killed and a lot of them captured. These prisoners were down in Bere Island when I arrived there. I was taken there with some others and we spent a short time in this Island, just barbed wire around us. It only amounted to an internment camp.

Later on, we were taken to Spike Island and we were segregated there. The "convicts" as they called them, that is, the sentenced prisoners, were put in one end, while those who had not been tried were put in an internment camp at the other end. The sentenced prisoners had no contact with the fellows who were interned. Everything was going on grand, the usual plans for escapes and so on being discussed, until some internee saw me at Mass and he asked a friendly soldier would he take a package of cigarettes over to Seán Forde. This internee was one of our own fellows and he ran in excitement up to his own O/C, that is, the prisoners'

Commandant, to tell him that he had seen me, Seán Forde as he called me. Now, the O/C of the internment camp knew that, if I was there, I was not there under the name of Seán Forde and he, therefore, advised the other man to say no more about it and keep my identity secret. The soldier came back to him and said he could not find Seán Forde. He asked him to come over to a certain point, where they could see us parading, to identify me. He went with the soldier alright but, having been well drilled about this by his O/C beforehand, he failed to identify me, though he could see me quite well. He told the soldier he must have been wrong, that the man he thought was Seán Forde was not he at all. The soldier asked him then would he point out the man whom he had thought was Seán Forde, but he pointed out someone, not me. He was clever enough about it.

Father Fitzgerald was chaplain in Spike at the time. He came in to hear confessions, and he brought in a message to me. In the meantime, we had been in communication with Headquarters outside and had got many messages in. We thought there was a chance of bribing some of the sentries. Seán McSwiney, a fellow named Conroy and another named Seán Twomey - he would be an uncle or father of Seán Ó Tuama, associated with the Gaelic League - and several other fellows were fellow-prisoners with me and we were engaged in planning an escape. This message that Fr. Fitzgerald brought was to the effect that the British authorities suspected my identity as Seán Forde and that if there was any chance

of my getting out, I should take it as quickly as possible. We were trying to plan a big escape but this message indicated that I should not wait for this to materialise and that there was an immediate danger of my identity being established. Anyhow, the possibility of the mass escape was remote.

There was an ambush carried out by Liam Lynch in Cork just about this time, in the course of which some British despatches were captured. One of these despatches was to the effect that a man answering the description of Seán Forde was a prisoner in Spike Island and that D.I. Sullivan of Listowel, who was made a D.I. after his defence of Kilmallock Barracks and transferred to Listowel, would be able to identify him. Liam Lynch sent down two fellows to Listowel and they shot Sullivan the following day, or that day. Of course, the message said it was only a matter of time until they would get somebody else to identify me. The message from Liam Lynch to me was that he was sending an officer to Cobh to see if anything could be done about an escape.

In the meantime, of course, we had explored all the possibilities of escaping, and I asked Fr. Fitzgerald did he think this was urgent. He said it was. Actually, I was told that evening to be prepared, that I was being transferred back to Cork. One of the soldiers said to me, "They must be going to release you, Paddy. You are going back up to Cork to-morrow". I knew what going back up to Cork meant. That was the following morning. When talking to Fr. Fitzgerald,

I asked him could a motor boat come to a certain point of the island the next morning. He said, "I suppose it could be managed".

Seán Hyde, who was the officer sent by Liam Lynch, was over in Cobh, and it was to him Fr. Fitzgerald took my messages. Seán Hyde is now a Veterinary Surgeon. He is a brother of Tim Hyde, the jockey. Seán Hyde said, "Yes, that could be managed". They would get a motor boat. These were all the negotiations that were in it. I said, "If we have a motor boat at a certain point, we will make a run for it", and on the understanding that this boat would arrive at the time appointed we made our arrangements.

We were employed at this time moving a golf course for the officers. The course ran round the shore of the island, and there was one depression there where one could not be seen from the barracks top of the island and where we usually stopped for a smoke. We were not allowed to smoke in the prison. The usual soldiers who were with us every day did not mind. They had become friendly. There were always two of them with us, and then there was an escorting soldier as well, sometimes two, according to the number of fellows they had to spare, but there was always one, with a rifle. These two fellows who were working with us - one of them had a revolver and the other had nothing at all. He was a sort of a golf professional and was there to supervise the work. One of the regular escort was a Sergeant, the other was a Corporal and the sentry was a private soldier. Usually the sentry even would come

into this depression and have a smoke with the rest of us, but the one on duty would not come in with us on this day. In view of this, some of the lads said, "We had better put off the escape until to-morrow". We had intended to tackle these fellows and overpower them. We had no arms and, therefore, the sentry standing a bit off from us made this task rather difficult. We could have got in a gun by the chaplain but there was no time for this now. I was afraid to wait until the following morning. I was lucky we had arranged the business for that day because, as I said, I was due for removal to Cork that evening.

I had a hammer which I had mending the lawnmower we were using. McSwiney said, "We had better put it off till to-morrow". I said, "If you will handle these two, I will attend to the sentry". I went down on my hands and knees, like a fellow starting for a 100-yards. The sentry saw me coming alright and became confused in the emergency. His mind hovered between trying to stand me off by a thrust of the rifle towards me and pulling the bolt so as to load a round into the breech. I had about fifteen yards to run up to him. I think he had no bayonet fixed on the rifle. He changed his mind. If he had a bayonet on the rifle, he certainly would have stopped me but he decided to pull the bolt and load a round into the breech. I realised that, if he fired a shot, the fat was in the fire as far as our escape was concerned, so I closed with him. I grabbed the rifle just above the muzzle and hit him in the temple with the hammer. He fell forward and I hit him a second time to make sure. He died about six weeks afterwards but I did not learn

that until some years later. I cannot remember if he had the bayonet fixed on the rifle but I think he had not because, if he had a bayonet on the rifle, he should have been able to hold me off. The two "working party soldiers" surrendered to McSwiney and Twomey without a struggle and we tied them up with cords and towels and old electric cable.

Seán Hyde saw the whole thing happening. He was coming along in the boat. We did not begin our activities until we saw the boat coming. We had our signal arranged. The man who was driving the boat, although he was kind of semi-friendly, thought this was going a bit too far. You see, those in the boat could see what we were doing, and the boatman thought that killing a soldier with a hammer was involving him in something he was not prepared to get mixed up in. He made some objections about driving it and said that he would get into trouble. I think Hyde had gone through the form of commandeering the boat to safeguard him, although he, the boatman, was not too bad. He was friendly enough.

I jumped into the boat. Seán said something about this man objecting to the course we were going to take, up to Crosshaven, that it was a dangerous one. I said, "Dangerous or not, the sooner we get out of here the better!". I put over my hand on to the throttle lever, which was on the steering wheel, and pulled it fully open. So we shot away.

We calculated that, if we got twelve minutes clear,

we were alright. Hyde had a car arranged to pick us up near Crosshaven. We were only out about fifty or sixty yards when we saw two officers coming along, playing golf, and heading towards the place where we had left the soldiers. The fat was in the fire then, and it was only a matter of a few moments until they would spot us. We had, therefore, to change our plans and make, as fast as we could, for the nearest point of the mainland. We cut short into Ringaskiddy. That was the nearest point to land. We turned in short to the right. The old boatman was grumbling about the danger of rocks and kept slowing-down the boat, while I kept putting my hand over him and pulling the throttle wide open.

We saw the officers actually coming along and finding the soldiers where we had dumped them. The two N.C.O.s had been tied up with old waste electric cable that we had found lying around and were gagged with towels. Of course, the soldier I had hit with the hammer was unconscious. The other two fellows had put up no fight at all. We had taken the soldier's rifle and bayonet and web equipment, containing ammunition. We had these with us in the boat. Actually, I found a ten-bob note in the leather pocket of it afterwards when we were miles and miles away from Spike.

We did hit the rocks somewhere but we were very near shore at the time. We were able to wade for shore. I did not wait for anyone but simply moved along as fast as I could. One of the officers who had found the soldiers we had trussed up, when he saw what had

happened, blew a whistle first. Then he took out his revolver and fired a couple of shots in the air to give the alarm. We could see all this from the boat as we pushed away towards the mainland. This caused a great deal of excitement and activity. The British opened fire with rifles on the boat from the top of the island but we were out of the boat by this time and moving up a boreen.

As we ran down the boreen, some coastguards in a station above us, warned by the shooting from the island, ran out as if to intercept us. They had no coats on, but they had rifles. At this time they could not see us and they did not know where the trouble was coming from. I fired a shot towards them - a sort of snap shot - which did not hit anybody, and they ran in again to the station. They ran straight back in and we ran down past the gable end of this station and down into the street.

There was a youngster with a pony and trap, or a horse and trap, standing outside a butcher's stall. I looked back. I was leading. "Come on!", I said, "We have a way of carrying us anyway". We all piled into the trap. There were only the three of us and Hyde. I don't know what became of the boatman. He made his way home. The four of us piled into the car. We galloped the horse as hard and as fast for as far as he went, until he dropped. The shafts of the car were broken. We piled out of the car. We were not thrown out - at least, no one hurt or anything like

that. We cut across the corner of a field, then across a main road and up a hill on the far side of the main road.

We were well up the hill, half a mile up the main road, when we saw the lorries coming along and dropping soldiers here and there to form a cordon. They searched inwards towards Spike, but because of the horse and trap we had got just outside the cordon. Only for that, of course, we would have been caught inside. They searched every inch of the ground inside of the cordon.

We footed it then across the mountains. We slept that night in Ballinhassig, that is, Seán Hyde's native place. I slept in a dug-out there that night. I got back by easy stages to Limerick. I went on to where Seán Hegarty, that is P.S.'s brother, was in charge of a Column, and we got on there. I moved on towards Mallow and met Liam Lynch somewhere around there. I exchanged the rifle for a parabellum with Liam Lynch. Somebody there told me where I could locate a motor-bicycle, which I commandeered to take me on the rest of my journey.

I got back into Limerick again, and I was nearly being shot by our own fellows when I arrived on the motor-bike. I had found out where our fellows were. Fortunately, there was light enough for them to see and recognise me. Actually, I fell off the bike when I ran into a trench which had been dug in the road and, when I came to myself, I found three fellows with rifles

presented at me. They thought I was some enemy agent but, when they came closer to me, they recognised me.

It was about March or April, 1921, when I escaped from Spike, and it took me about a week or so to get back to our own crowd, that is, the East Limerick Column, who were at that time in West Limerick. Things had got a bit hot for them in East Limerick and they had moved into West Limerick for the time being, to rest up and let things settle down. There had been two or three ambushes in the meantime. My brother, Seumas, after I was captured, went back with Donnchadh Hannigan up to Limerick and remained there. He was made Director of Intelligence. He was Brigade Intelligence Officer up there from the time of my arrest.

I don't think they filled my position on the Staff, because, when I came back, I was again Vice O/C. Very shortly afterwards, however, I was appointed to the Divisional Staff. The Divisions had been formed in the meantime, and Ernie O'Malley was our Divisional Commander.

One of the first operations after this occurred when I was not a very long time there at all. We were in billets outside Kilfinane when word came in that there was a patrol. That there was a round-up on us was the first thing suspected but eventually it transpired that it was nothing but a patrol, and a good many of the boys were there. We did not all get into it but we got word around. It was a military patrol. We decided we would have a go at them. I felt it was a long time since I had been in a fight. We had plenty

of arms. We were fairly strong at that time, plenty of guns and plenty of ammunition. I was spoiling for a fight. We placed our men anyway. The military had seen some movements, fellows running from the billets to get into position. They dumped their bikes and ran. They took to the fields and got away from us alright. We had a sort of a skirmish across country after them but they got away, and we did not get any of them. We got eighteen bikes from them. That was all we got as a result of this skirmish.

Shortly afterwards I was down in South Tipperary at a Divisional Staff meeting. Actually it was at the previous Divisional meeting or on the way home from the first Divisional meeting, that Seán Wall, the Brigade Commander, was killed in a brush with the enemy who surprised the officers in a house where they were billeted. My brother, Seumas, was there at that meeting, also John Joe O'Brien. I think Hannigan was in it too. Wall ran out. He seemed to have kind of lost his head when the place was surrounded. The boys decided to fight it out. He ran out of the house and was captured. The Tans shot him afterwards on the spot. I was not present on this occasion.

The following meeting, I attended as a member of the Divisional Staff and I was appointed as Director of Operations for the 2nd Southern Division. That was the rank I held at the time of the Truce.

I don't think anything much happened except that Jed Dwyer and I had a bit of a run-in on our own with the

enemy, just the two of us together. We were driving in a car and we were halted. We fired on the enemy who tried to hold us up, and we got away unhurt.

I had a few little experiences. I had a single combat with a British Intelligence Officer, named Captain Brown. Brown was a tough nail. It was just outside Kilmallock. I was driving a motor car. I came out a by-road at the back of Mount Coote, which was Lord Daresbury's place. It was one of the by-roads that we usually travelled and, just as I approached the junction with the main road, Brown passed by the end of it, also driving a car. I kept going and went out on the road. He was the local military Intelligence Officer and he was in uniform at this time, but I knew him and he knew me. He went on towards Kilmallock and I turned up the other way, back towards Kilfinane. I think my course was down a little bit towards him and down to the left again - I forget now. I was unable to stop or anything from the time I saw him until I had got out on the main road and turned towards Kilfinane. The car I was driving had been captured from a District Inspector somewhere. He stopped and I stopped. I had an automatic, but he fired first. He gave some kind of an order to halt. I suppose he recognised me. I stopped too. I was not frightened of him because there was only himself in the car. I thought it would be alright if I could get him, and I suppose he thought it would be alright if he could get me. He fired anyway and I fired. We fired three or four shots at each other but without effect. We were sixty or

seventy yards apart and to make a hit at that distance with the pistol was an uncertain kind of thing.

My engine was running all the time, and I put the car into reverse. I began to reverse the car towards him, so as to close the distance somewhat. I was keeping my head down and firing an odd shot at him as I moved. His nerve failed as the distance began to close. More than one of my bullets had hit the windscreen of his car and others had hit the back of the car. He had a Webley. It was heavier than my pistol. He skeddadled in the end. When I came to this turn, the same road junction where I had entered the main road, I turned my car about on the road, to head in the direction he had gone, and gave chase after him towards Kilmallock. I gained a little bit on him and fired a few more shots after him. I was afraid to go too near Kilmallock. So I stopped and cleared off again. He got away alright in the car. Instead of his capturing me, I nearly caught him.

During this incident, he was driving a car that had been captured from me.

My wife came down to East Limerick to see me just before this time, and Bill Hayes and I, a fellow named Maurice Meade and a fellow named Moloney - four of us - drove her back to Boher in time for school on a Monday morning. We were starting back for Limerick when we ran into a patrol between Nenagh and Birdhill, near where I am living at present. She was teaching at that time in Boher. We ran into a patrol there, and they called on us to halt. They were Cavalry.

We did not halt. We turned the car. The road was pretty wide. We swept around in one turn, and we got away. They fired on us alright, but did not hit any of us.

We were now travelling in the wrong direction. We wanted to ^{go} to Limerick but we hit away on towards Templemore and Borrisoleigh. This was at the time of the "saint" - Jimmy Walsh. This business was going on at that time in Templemore. There was a lot of traffic going that way, and we thought it was a good thing to go with the general crowd. We even got into Templemore. While we were there seeing the "saint", the house was raided. A cordon was thrown above our car and below our car but we were not inside the cordon. The Tans searched the house that the boys were supposed to frequent but never touched the car nor looked at it, although the number on it was D.I. 455 or D.I. 303. This was an imaginary number we had painted on ourselves. It was an old car we had captured. 303 was sort of significant, you would imagine.

We got back to Limerick, and we went into Hayes' in Kilttealy - Bill's place. We were waiting for tea and I was sitting down playing the piano. I saw a fellow in khaki running past the window, stooped down. So I knew we were for it. We had to jump and run for it quickly. We flung open the door and fired a few shots. Then out with us and across a hedge - the three or four of us. The military were not yet in position. They were only surrounding the house at the time and we took ^{them} unawares by our sudden rush out.

They fired a few shots but we got away alright. Bill Hayes knew the fields and the lanes and we got away. Of course, the enemy took the car which we had left in Hayes's yard.

This was always a very sore point with me, and it was this car that the British Intelligence Officer was driving at the time he and I had the duel. That was half the reason I was so anxious to capture him and it, because he had done great boasting about having captured my car and he had been using it himself to drive around since its capture. I met him afterwards during the Truce at a coursing match in Kilmallock. We went into lunch together. There was some kind of a tent there. A Lord Daresbury was running the coursing for his friends but we were invited. Lord Daresbury was one of the coursing club, and it was this club actually that ran the thing. While we were at lunch, this car which Browne was still driving around was taken by some of our lads. He came along to me and made a great complaint to me. This was during the Truce. I promised I would get back the car for him but I did not succeed in getting it back. I don't know what became of it afterwards. He and I chased it a bit along the road. I believe we got within a hundred yards of it at a point where the lads ran out of petrol, when we decided to give up the chase at this point and turned back without realising that the car was grounded a short distance ahead of us. It was a battered old Ford.

Before we got back to Bill Hayes's place, we went into a publichouse in Birdhill for a drink. While we

were inside, nineteen Tans stepped off a lorry and walked in on top of us. Some of the lads had gone out the back but I was still in the bar, talking to the lady of the place. The Tans walked in past me and down along the bar. One fellow asked me would I have a drink. I said, "No, thanks", and asked him would he, by any chance, have any oil, that I had been in there inquiring for oil for the car. They had a long consultation then among themselves. I knew by their manoeuvres that they suspected me and that it was only a matter of time before they would pluck up courage and go for me.

Anyone would know by the apparent alarm of the lady behind the bar that something was wrong. She was giving the wrong change and serving whiskey instead of stout and was obviously frightened. I had an automatic and I had a bomb. I had my hands in my coat pockets and I was trying to work the pin of the bomb out with my finger. I intended, if I had to run, to just throw this bomb on the floor and run out the door, but the woman in the bar kept coming behind me, repeating over and over again, "Jesus, Mary and Joseph!". I kept whispering to her, "You get out! You get out of the place!". I did not like throwing the bomb while she was there. I walked towards the door, by the way to look out. There was some kind of a shuffle behind, and I stepped back again.

The boys who had gone out into the yard had tumbled to what was wrong and had gone across to the far side of the street. They got into position there

to cover me if I came out. The woman was trying to give this message to me but she did not succeed in communicating it. Anyway, I stepped out a second time. My car was facing in the right direction, towards Limerick, and the Tan lorry was facing the opposite way. After giving a few looks out, I said, "It looks like rain". The next thing, I moved out quickly, stepped into my car and pressed the self-starter. Fortunately, the car was working perfectly because it started immediately and I drove off at once. I had driven 150 or 200 yards before the Tans got out the door. They made a dive for the door. It was a narrow little door and they interfered with each others movements in trying to get out. They fired a few shots and then jumped into the tender. The boys never interfered at all because they said that if I got a bit of a start I would be alright as I knew the country and the by-roads well.

It was dark or near dark, I remember, because I put off the lights. I took the first turn, up a by-road, to the left and continued on until I came to another crossroads. I stopped the car there, and evidently they passed. I came back again and picked up Bill and the boys.

The lady was in a terrible state. We went off. We were not very long gone when they were back again. They asked her did she know who I was. They had only seen one of us. She said no, she had never seen me, that I was a stranger. They told her that I was Seán Forde. Apparently they had identified me alright. Imagine, they knew me - nineteen of them there - but

they had not the pluck to try and capture me while I was there, and they thought I was alone at the time. She pooh-poohed the idea that I was Seán Forde but they said, "Oh, we know him alright and you know him too!". She denied all knowledge of my identity. One of them said, "There is nobody else who drives a car like that fellow did". She said, "If he was Seán Forde, why did you not arrest him?". He replied, "Oh, that fellow would get five or six of us before we would get him, and I might be one of the five or six". There were nineteen of them there and they knew who I was, yet none of them had the pluck to do it. Bill Hayes could tell you all about it. The lady is still there too - Hassett's publichouse at Birdhill. That was the place where the incident happened.

This Birdhill incident occurred before Spike, that is, before I was arrested at Christmas, 1920. The only way I can fix the date of the Birdhill incident is the time of the "apparitions" in Templemore and Jimmy Walshe. Occasionally we came up there. My wife used visit a Fr. Humphreys. He has a brother a T.D. up somewhere in Kildare. He was a curate in Knocklong and we used meet occasionally in his house. I would often run her back maybe on Monday morning or on Sunday night.

We had an ambush at Bruree. We had one at Kilfinane also. I think the only fight I was in after coming out of Spike Island was the scrap near Bruree, apart from small incidents. I had several brushes

with patrols and the like. We would be fired on and that sort of things. We were often fired on and had to run. It is amazing all the same when we look back on it now, and to realise that they were as much afraid of us as we were of them in the end.

We had two scraps on our way back from that meeting of the Divisional Staff. Bob Price, late Major General of the National Army, was in another one with us. O'Malley was on his way back to inspect East Limerick and he was moving on to Cork. Bob Price was down from Headquarters. O'Malley was mad to have a fight. O'Malley was always complaining about these Dublin fellows coming down and saying, "Why can't these fellows go and have a fight, and then go back and carry on with their work in much the same way as these things were done in Dublin". They did not seem to understand how different things were in the country where, if men went out to take part in an ambush or suchlike thing, they could not return home because the whole countryside, including the enemy, knew who were engaged in the fight. O'Malley was very anxious that we would run into trouble somewhere or another, just to show Price that it was not all "jam". Price had some kind of travellers' documents or something like that to show if he was questioned. He was posing as a commercial traveller in case he was held up.

On our way back, crossing the Limerick-Tipperary road - we had scouts out - a scout informed us that there were two or three policemen from Oola Barracks at the

crossroads, where we were about to emerge on to the main road. We were travelling in a jennet and car - the three of us. O'Malley announced "We will attack them". Price was not very keen on this at all. We came along anyway, but they were gone from the cross when we came out. I was a bit relieved about this, as well as Price, but nothing would do O'Malley only that we would have to follow them towards the village. He said, "They can't be long gone". He questioned everyone around as to whether they had seen them and how long since they had passed. This was in the middle of the night. They had got to a point near the Barracks - three or four police - when O'Malley started banging but without any hope of hitting them at that distance. They ran to the Barracks and they opened fire. They spent three-quarters of an hour firing from the barrack windows. We were gone a long time by this. O'Malley remarked, "If only we had a little more preparations, we would go in and take the damn place".

O'Malley mentioned in his book that, after his tour of inspection, "I was now in East Limerick where Tomás Malone was in charge of a Column". We had the Column kind of divided into two sections at this time. Hannigan had one section and I had the other. The numbers were too cumbersome to handle as one Column. He also said, "I knew I was in safe hands and I slept for the first time for so many nights", or something like that. He just mentions that.

Afterwards, we were going through a demesne up on the North Cork border and we were halted by a patrol.

We had to run for it and fire. Price, O'Malley and myself were there, and whatever local fellow was scouting. It was night time. We got away alright. We left our horse and ran. The fellow who was driving the horse was a local fellow and he accounted for himself alright. He said he was going on some message or another. They reprimanded him for being out after curfew and let him go at that.

There were hundreds of small incidents of that kind which are hardly worth recording even if I could remember them all. I think, however, that what I have here related covers all the principal and important incidents with which I was associated up to the Truce of July, 1921.

Signed:

Tomas O Maoileoin

(Tomas O Maoileoin)

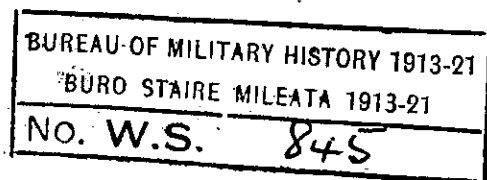
Date:

12th May 1953

12th May 1953.

Witness:

J. V. Lawless Col.
(J.V. Lawless) Col.



Appendix "A".

Record of Military Service of Tyrrellspass Company Irish Volunteers Easter Week 1916.

We the undersigned hereby certify that Malone's House at Meedin Tyrrellspass was garrisoned and defended against R. I. C. during the entire week commencing Easter Sunday 1916 and for part of the following week. On three different occasions during Easter Week R. I. C. attempted to capture the house and were repulsed by rifle, revolver and shot-gun fire. On all three occasions the attacking party returned the fire. To the best of our recollection these engagements took place on the Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday of Easter Week. The engagement on Saturday lasted longer than a half-an-hour. One section of the attacking party succeeded in approaching within 50 yards of the house. Their fire shattered windows and slates. The house still bears unmistakable evidence of the attack. On the occasions of the two previous attacks firing lasted from ten to fifteen minutes and the enemy failed to get near enough to the house to do effective shooting. The garrison consisted of:-

Seumas O'Maoileoin (2); Tomas O'Maoileoin (3); James Morgan (3); John Jordan (3); John Kelly (3); Patrick Bracken (1); Seosamh O'Maoileoin (3); Richard Newman (3); Laurence Kelly (1); Eamonn O'Carroll (1); Joseph Seery (1); Patrick Seery (1); William Kelly(1). The figures in brackets after the names indicate the number of engagements in which each man took part. In addition to the foregoing the following visited the house during the week and may have participated in an engagement Joseph Martin, John Carey, James Farrell. All the above men and in addition John J. Brennan, Patrick Brennan, James Rigney, Michael Newman and Michael Kelly mobilized on Easter Sunday and took part in preparations during the previous three weeks.

(1)

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BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 845

Seumas and Tomas O'Maoileoin had a further engagement with a police patrol at Newtown when returning from dislocating railways. Patrick Bracken, Laurence Kelly, Michael Kelly, Seumas and Tomas O'Maoileoin and James Morgan took part in the work of dislocating railways at Streamstown and Horseleap. On the occasions when Seumas O'Maoileoin and Patrick Bracken were absent from engagements at Meedin they were engaged in damaging railways and organizing. The garrison demobilized on the Wednesday of the following week but Tomas and Seosamh O'Maoileoin continued to defend the house until the following day when they were forced to surrender by an overwhelming force of R. I. C. To the best of our knowledge they were the last two men captured under arms in the Rising. Seumas O'Maoileoin was captured near Limerick where he was arranging for the removal of arms that were in danger of being surrendered. James Morgan, Patrick Bracken, John Jordan and John Kelly were evading arrest until after the general release from Frongoch.

Signed on behalf of the garrison:-

Seumas O'Maoileoin, District O/C.

Tomas O'Maoileoin, Coy. O/C.

James Morgan, Coy. Adj.

We the undersigned solemnly swear that the foregoing statement is correct in every detail.

Signed: Tomas O'Maoileoin

Patrick Bracken

James Morgan

Sworn before me at Tullamore in the County of Offaly this 1st September 1938, and I know the Deponents.

Signed: P. O'Breachain

A Commissioner for Oaths.

(3)

This is a statement by a neighbour who was then living about a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from our house.

I James Mohan, Tyrrellspass, solemnly swear that Malones' House at Meedin was garrisoned and defended during Easter Week 1916. Shots were exchanged with R.I.C. on several occasions and on three occasions I saw police going in the direction of the house and returning and I heard the firing.

I visited the house on the Sunday following Easter Sunday. There had been firing on the previous evening. Thomas and James Malone, John Jordan, Patrick Bracken, Dick Newman and some others present were under arms. James Morgan and Joseph Malone were on guard on a hill nearby which commanded a view of all approaches to the house. The house bore evidence of the attack. I was then living about half a mile from Malones' House.

Signed: James Mohan.

Sworn before me at Tullamore in the County of Offaly this 1st September 1938 and I know the Deponent.

Signed: P. O'Breachain,
A Commissioner for Oaths.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 845

APPENDIX 'B'

COPY.

1, Ballydoogan Terrace,
SLIGO.

30th December, 1937.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that I personally knew the three Malones, James, Thomas and Joseph (brothers) of Meedin, Tyrrellspass, Co. Westmeath. I was Sergeant in charge of Tyrrellspass R.I.C. sub-District prior to and during Easter Week 1916. I was aware from police reports and from personal observation of the Malones' association with and activity in the Volunteer movement. They were then considered to be the most active members of the movement in the whole of Co. Westmeath. I received information on the Monday or Tuesday of Easter Week 1916 that Malone's house at Meedin was occupied by armed men. The report stated that the garrison was a strong one, but I learned later that the number did not exceed ten or twelve men. It was said that the party at Meedin was awaiting reinforcements and arms from the south when, it was said, they would attack the surrounding police stations. The police station at Tyrrellspass consisted of about 8 men and would not be strong enough to engage a large armed attack. I know that some patrols in motor cars believed to be from Mullingar and Rochfordbridge were fired on when they attempted to approach Malone's house at Meedin and that two men on bicycles called on by Kilbeggan R.I.C. to halt at a place named Newtown two miles from Kilbeggan in Tyrrellspass direction fired shots and succeeded in getting away.

On about the middle of the following week with police reinforcements from surrounding stations, I raided Malone's

house at Meedin. At this time the crowd had disbanded but we were not aware of the fact. We found Malone's house barricaded and after some time effected entrance. Thomas Malone and his brother Joseph were in an upper room and for some time refused to surrender threatening to fire on the police. He, Thomas, was armed with an automatic revolver. I directed some of the police to cover him with their rifles and ultimately he and his brother Joseph surrendered. When we searched the house after arresting the Malones we found four or five unloaded revolvers of various patterns and one .32 rifle.

I took the Malones, Thomas and Joseph, to Mullingar and handed them over to the military stationed there at the time. On the following day the Colonel commanding the military discharged Joseph Malone on account of his youth and committed Thomas Malone to Richmond Barracks Dublin to await trial by Courtmartial.

I was at Richmond Barracks Dublin in connection with Thomas Malone's case a few days afterwards, and was present in the Court Martial office when the military officer in charge of the records decided to have Thomas Malone tried by courtmartial but subsequently the same day cancelled that decision and sent him under escort with others the same evening to England for internment.

I am aware that after Thomas Malone's release from internment he was active in the Volunteer movement and I raided his house with other police at Meedin on several occasions with the intention of arresting him for charges of illegal drilling. He evaded arrest, however, on those occasions. I also know from police reports and my own experience when subsequently stationed in Cork West

that James and Thomas Malone were much wanted men by military and police.. I may add that I learned subsequently that the following men, most of whom I knew personally, were amongst the garrison at Malone's house in Meedin on Easter Monday 1916 in addition to James, Thomas, Joseph Malone viz: James and Michael Morgan of Tore, Tyrrellspass, Dick Newman and two of his brothers of Cloncullane, Tyrrellspass, John J. Brennan and Patrick Seery of Cloneyheigue, Rathnagore, Westmeath, Patrick Bracken, brother of Peter Bracken, Tullamore, John Jordan of Tyrrellspass and a man named Carroll of Tullamore as well as others whose names I cannot now remember.

(Signed) William J. McGreal

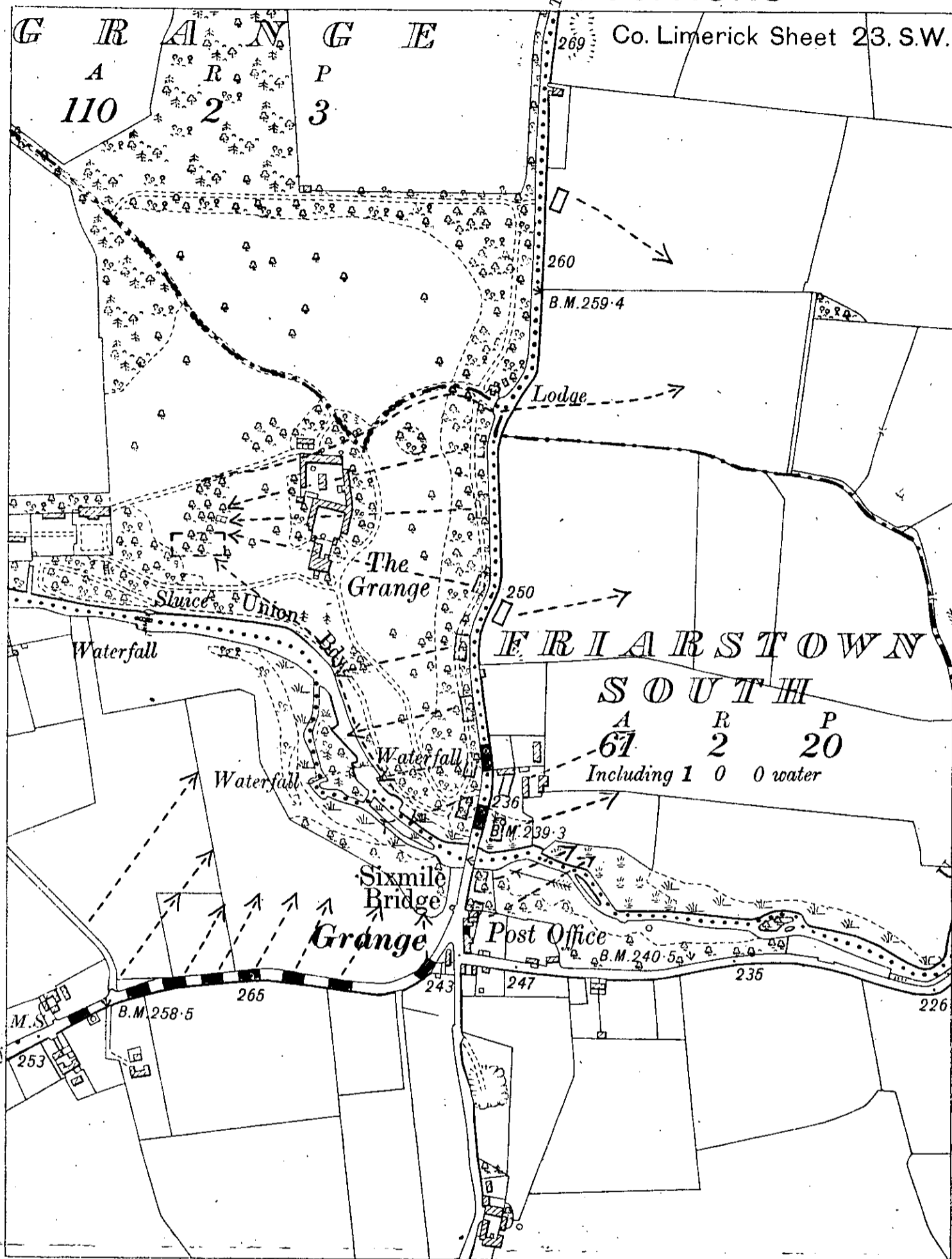
(ex Hd. Const. R.I.C.)

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 845

GRANGE AMBUSH POSITIONS

(APPENDIX 'C')

SKOOL TP.



O.S.O. 4/53.

Scale— 12 Inches to 1 Statute Mile.

LEGEND

■ British Military Lorries. □ Volunteer positions.

→ Direction and approximate limit of British advance.

→ Direction of initial Volunteer retirement.

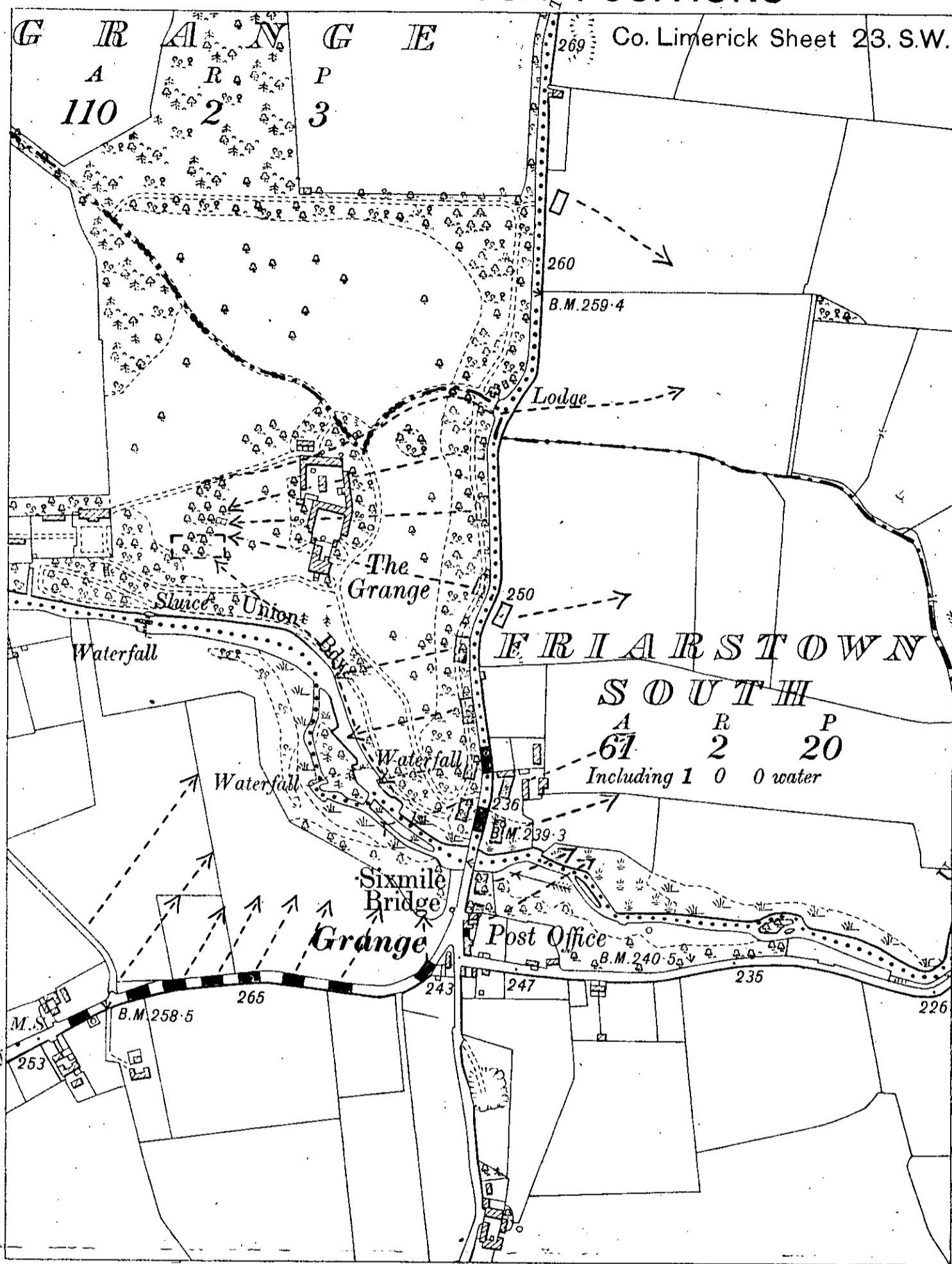
→ Direction of eventual retreat of the Column.

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