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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 889

Witness

Seamus Ua Caomhanaigh,
302 Howth Road,
Killester,
Dublin.

Identity.

Secretary 'Defence of Ireland Fund';
Accountant Sinn Fein Executive;
Secretary, Local Gov't. Dept. Dail Eireann.

Subject.

(a) His national activities, 1916-1921;

(b) Sinn Fein and Dail Eireann.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No S.2180..

Form B S M 2

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ADDENDA

W S 889

302 Howth Road
Killester
Dublin

ORIGINAL

Sicara

The following statement has been written from memory. I have consulted no records nor have I looked up any old newspapers, nor discussed with anybody the events which I am now endeavouring to recall, nor have I read any of the books or articles published from time to time recording the doings which led up to the truce of 1921 and the treaty which followed it.

I had a nervous breakdown in 1929, from which I have not yet fully recovered. Its principal manifestation was a fit of terrible depression whenever I heard or read anything relating to the happenings of previous years. I could not read a book nor look at a movie picture without experiencing it. So I put everything out of my mind except the work of the moment, consequently my memory is rather blurred, but I'll do the best I can. If you think my statement is any good you can have it recorded If not you can scrap it.

Seamus Ua Caoindealbháin

ORIGINAL

STATEMENT OF SEAMUS UA CAOMHÁNAIGH,

302, Howth Road, Killester, Dublin.

I was born in Dublin on the 21st April, 1880, in No. 6 St. Michael's Lane, and reared in a tenement house, No. 10 Upper Bridge St. This house was owned by an aunt of my father and occupied by my father and mother (and family) and my grandfather and grandmother, my father's parents, and one or two other tenants. My father and his parents were comb makers who, like others at that time, carried on their business in their own home. All members of the family, young and old, had to give a hand at the work and were paid in accordance with what they did by the grandfather at the end of each week. The making of combs was very complicated and laborious, the work being practically all done by hand. The house consisted of a basement, a ground floor and three stories above the ground floor. In the basement there were front and back kitchens with space for pantries between, and an area in front with two large cellars extending out under the road. In one of these cellars we kept coal and in the other some odds and ends. When I was big enough to go in for photography the space between the kitchens made a lovely dark room. My grandfather did most of his work in the basement, the kitchens being large, bright and airy. At the back of the house was a large yard in which were situated a dry closet and an ash pit. There was no sewerage system in the city at the time and, consequently, no water closets. In the yard also was what we called the workshop, a long lean-to

glass covered structure extending from one end of the yard to the other. In this the only machinery, if you can call it such, was kept. It consisted of a large wheel, turned by hand, which carried a belt to a smaller wheel from which another belt came to turn the spindle which moved in an oscillating manner to cut the teeth in the combs. The ground floor was occupied by my grandparents, the first floor and a room on a higher floor by my parents. As rooms became vacant upstairs they were taken over by my parents to accommodate their growing family. Combs at that time were mostly made of horn but some of the fancy combs used by ladies as hair ornaments were made from tortoise-shell. My grandmother was an artist at this work and very expert at working out different beautiful designs. While I was still a boy the comb-making, as well as other Irish home industries, began to die out. As in the case of other industries, this was due mainly to the import of mass-produced articles of foreign manufacture which could be produced and sold cheaper than the hand-made articles. The change in ladies hair fashions had also a lot to do with it as the ornamental hair combs were no longer worn. My grandfather struggled on at the business, eking out a miserable existence, but my father had to seek other employment. For a while he earned his living by doing house repairs and decorating. He was very handy at that but gave it up when he eventually secured employment in Pim Brothers, Georges St., in their retail order office. We were a large family. There were ten of us altogether but one, a girl, died as a baby and another, a boy, died of pneumonia when he was nine years old, leaving eight children - six boys and two girls - I being the eldest of all.

With such a large family and a small income, my father could not afford to give us an expensive education. I was first sent to school when I was two years old. It was customary at that time for women of the working classes to send their children to school while they were still babies, as this enabled them to get on with their housework in the early part of the day. Junior teachers were also anxious to have them at school as it kept up the average attendance and kept them employed. I did not remain long in school, however, as after a few days I was knocked down accidentally by one of the big girls during play-time and someone stood on my nose, which was broken. I think a couple of years passed before I was again sent to school. My first school was the parish school, High St., managed by the Parish Priest. The next time I was sent to a school under the management of the Augustinians, the manager being a very nice priest named Father Pentony. There are two things I'd like to mention in connection with my time in this school, John's Lane N.S. It was the first school I'm sure in which school meals were given. On my first day in school when lunch time came round I saw bread and butter and milk being given to some of the children and cried because I got none. After a day or two I got used to this and did not mind. The other thing that remains in my memory relates to an argument I had with another boy named Cannon regarding the spelling and pronunciation of the word 'cannot'. He said it was c a n can n o t not, cannot. I said it was c a n n o t, cannot. When I came home I asked my father which was the correct way and he said c a n n o t, cannot. I went triumphantly to school the next day to show up the other fellow, but he wasn't there. Day after day I waited but he never turned up. After a couple of months I asked when

was Cannon coming back to school and was told he'd never come back. He was dead.

When I reached eight years I was sent from the infants" school up to the Christian Brothers in Francis St. I have very little recollection of the time I spent there except that my first teacher was a big boy named George McGrath, a smaller brother of his being a class-mate of mine. It was this George McGrath who became first Auditor General of the Irish Free State. He and his brother, Joe McGrath, were prominent figures in the fight for Irish freedom. It was there I learned some of the songs from the "Spirit of the Nation",like 'Step Together', which I still remember. I remained in Francis St. school until the following summer when we got our summer holidays. When the holidays were over I left home one morning to return to school. When I arrived at the school I saw a big notice on the outside. There were hundreds of boys standing round reading it. It intimated that the school would remain closed for another month as it would take that time to complete the alterations which were being carried out during our absence. When we were tired cheering we dispersed. When I went home I was met by my mother who asked what brought me home. I explained about the structural alterations to the school not being finished and that we'd been given a further month"s holidays. "Well I've had too much of you at home already" she said, "and I'm not going to put up with you for another month. I know a school that's not closed and I'll bring you to that". Thereupon she put on her hat and coat and lugged me off to the West Dublin Model School in School St. She

interviewed the headmaster, a Mr. Sharkey, B.A., who took me into the school on the spot. My first day in School St. was rather unhappy. The books being used there were different from those in use in the Christian Brothers. The headmaster told my mother that I'd be given a list of the books required during the day and that I could have them by the following day. Then when my mother left I was sent to a classroom upstairs and left in charge of the master there, a Mr. Coates. I was put into a class which was reading at the time and eventually it came to my turn to read. "Next" said Mr. Coates, but I did nothing; I had no book. "Hold out your hand" said he. I held out my right hand. He had a big heavy ruler in his hand at the time. He raised it up and brought it down on my thumb, breaking my thumb. My thumb got all right again in due course but I still feel twinges of pain in it occasionally still. My father was furious when he learned of this and went with fire in his eyes to interview the master, but the master was so apologetic and so genuinely sorry that we all shook hands and everything was O.K. I may say that "Billy" Coates as we called him, was a very nice man, very brainy, versatile and competent man. He and I from that day remained great friends up to the time of leaving school and for long after.

When I reached the age of twelve years I was told, which was customary in Dublin that time, to go out and look for something to do. I had then reached the second stage of the sixth class and at the end of that year would have completed the primary course, or so I understood. I rambled around for some time making enquiries until I got a

job in Dollard's printinghouse. It was not an indoor job, however. It was to drive a pony and trap conveying a traveller for the firm around to his various customers. Being brought up in the city I had very little to do with horses, so the work was new to me and so very interesting. The stable was in Loftus Lane at the head of Capel St. The first morning I arrived I was shown by the stableman how to brush down the pony, hose his feet and oil his hooves and to clean the trap and harness. When I had finished the stableman expressed surprise that I had not been attacked by the pony which, he said, was vicious. It had bitten the previous boy. That was why he left. I got into the trap and started to drive to Dollard's back entrance in Essex St. The horse ran away with me in Capel St. and I found it difficult to hold him in until when passing out a jarvey he made signs to me to take a short grip of the reins. When I did so I got complete control although I suppose the pony knew better than I did where to go and when to stop. The boy who succeeded me in the job fared worse than I did, although he was the son of a jarvey and used to horses. The pony ran away with him, smashed the trap and nearly killed him.

As soon as I was old enough I applied to have my name put down on the waiting list for telegraph messengers. An examination was held which I passed easily. I then went before the doctor who pronounced me O.K., and in due time I was called up and sent to my out-station in James's St. The pay was five shillings per week for a six day week of eight hours a day. After six months on the out-station I was brought into the G.P.O. and did duty there, and in

College Green P.O. and in the Stock Exchange. My pay then became three farthings per message or nine pence per dozen in G.P.O. and College Green and six pence per dozen in the Stock Exchange. For press messages we got only three farthings for each round of all the newspaper offices so that to earn, which I did, about twelve to fifteen shillings per week meant a lot of walking. The hours were very irregular and most Sundays and all holidays were included. For Sunday work we were paid two pence an hour. When I joined the staff of telegraph messengers it was customary when the boys reached the age of nineteen years to appoint them as postmen , if in the meantime they had not passed the examination for sorters or learners, but during my time there a regulation was introduced making it compulsory for boys to join the British Army on reaching the age of sixteen years. When I reached that age I refused to join the Army and so was dismissed. I asked for a letter of recommendation when I was leaving and, strange to say, was given one. It gave me great praise and stated that I had retired from the service having reached the age limit of sixteen years.

I next went into Henebery's, the hatters, in Georges St. to serve my time. I did not like this and left after a short time although pressed by Mr. Henebery to stay. He pointed out the prospects in the business which, he said, were fine.

I worked for a while as junior clerk in a solicitor's office and after a while, when seventeen years, got appointed in the Board of Works as clerk and assistant to the overseer in Dublin Castle.

And now to go back to early childhood! My earliest recollection is of the wake of my little sister when I was somewhere between eighteen months and two years old. She was probably a couple of months old when she died. I remember strutting up and down singing "Empty little cradle, baby's gone". I suppose that was a popular song at the time but I never heard it since and those are the only words I know. My next recollection is of a beautiful, bright, warm Saturday afternoon. I was out playing on the footpath in the bright sunshine. I remember everything becoming suddenly very quiet. An extraordinary ominous hush as if something terrible were about to happen! The people began to whisper to one another. I heard them say that some people had been killed. I was too young to realise the importance of all this. I was only two years old at the time, but it was the death of Burke and Cavendish in the Phoenix Park they were discussing and the days following were ones of terrible anxiety and bustle.
A number of people from our neighbourhood were arrested and some were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.
When I was old enough I was put to serve Mass in the Parish Church. The clerk there was a man named Joe Cleary.
He was a very efficient clerk and very good to the boys.
In the afternoon he'd bring us to the National Gallery to see all the good pictures, to the Museum to see Irish historical treasures, to the seaside or into the country on fine summer afternoons or to visit other churches or chapels. He had one fault; he was a bit short-tempered. That's why I had to leave him. It happened like this. During the Forty Hours adoration the boys were appointed to

kneel in twos for an hour at a time before the Blessed Sacrament. On the Sunday afternoon my time was from three to four. I turned up a little late, but it was not my fault. When I arrived at the vestry Joe let a roar at me "go home". I tried to tell him what had happened; that my father who spent the Sunday before dinner at the wrestling in the Park was late in coming home, that my mother would not let me go without my dinner and that she would not give me my dinner until my father came home, and so I was a little late but could do nothing about it. He would not listen to me but again shouted "go home", so I went. He got sorry afterwards and sent for me to go back. My mother urged me and my father urged me but I would not go. I then went to serve in the Augustinian Church, John's Lane. My brother also came to serve in John's Lane. I continued to serve in John's Lane until I was about seventeen although I had a peculiar experience there also. They had a system there by which each boy was given a mark in respect of each attendance at devotions or each Mass he served. At the end of the year these marks were made up and prizes awarded, the boy having the greatest number of marks being given first prize and so on until the prizes were exhausted. It happened that my brother who was very keen to get first prize, met with an accident and hurt his arm badly. In spite of this he persisted in serving on Sunday morning. After I had served my two Masses my brother was going to serve his. My mother came to me and told me not to let him serve by himself as she feared that moving the heavy Missal might injure his bad arm. I, naturally, did what I was told. When I came in off the altar I was accosted by Brother Nicholas, the brother in

charge of the whole community, who said "Who told you to serve that Mass? If you think you can gain extra marks by serving Masses other than those appointed by me you're mistaken. You'll get marks for those Masses I've appointed you to serve and for no others". I said to him, "Brother Nicholas, I serve Mass for the honour and glory of God and not for marks or prizes. I'll serve all the Masses and attend all the devotions set by you, but give me no marks for them: I can do without them". I explained why I had gone out with my brother and told him I'd continue to do so as long as my mother said I was to do it. For the long time I remained there I never got a mark, never was brought on any of the outings given to the boys, nor was I at any of the parties given at various festivals. I looked after the vestry any time the boys were away on an excursion, and in addition to doing that for the church where I was serving I also did it for High St, the parish church. Whenever they were going away Joe Cleary always asked me to take charge during their absence.

I learned a good deal about drill during those days. It was like this. The British soldiers who garrisoned Dublin appeared to be very hard worked. In addition to the guards on the Castle, the Bank of Ireland, the various buildings and vice-regal residences, they appeared to be always on manoeuvres. Route marches, field-days, reviews, sham battles; every day in the week there appeared to be something doing. We used to follow them whenever we could, watching and making mental notes of the various words of command and seeing how they were obeyed, and when they were drilling on the barrack square we'd try to be there to see

how it was done. In this way we learned a great deal and then we'd put it into practice. One of the fellows, a chap named Ganly, organised us into an army and drilled us in the streets. He'd shout out the word of command and we'd jump to it as if we were a regular army. He'd arrange us into opposing forces. We'd try ambushes and surprise attacks, and sometimes we'd have pitched battles. We had wooden guns and improvised equipment, and people passing by would stand to watch us .

I had a habit in my early years when passing through the streets, of rambling in to see what was going on if I passed a hall where a meeting was in progress that was open to the public. In this way I attended a number of meetings of the Fabian Society which met in Westmoreland St. Up to recently I thought I had met George Bernard Shaw at some of these meetings, but I must have been mistaken as I saw no reference to his attendance at any of them in the various articles respecting him which appeared in the press at the time of his death. My impression was that Shaw was a sort of a Montebank, a soap-box orator, a chancer. In the same way I went into a few meetings of the Theosophical Society in Eustace St. The only members of that society I remember are George Russell(A.E.) who at that time was a clerk in Pim Brothers in Georges St. He was a queer fellow, full of fads and fancies, who would never write with an ordinary pen but used to file down a nail to a fine point and write with that. A man named Dwyer was secretary. He also was employed in Pims. W.B. Yeats and, I think, Horace Plunkett and Paul Gregan were also members. I think the headquarters of the society

was in San Francisco. I saw a lot of correspondence from that city with Dwyer. It was written partly in black and partly in red ink. When the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society (I think that's the name) was started by, or under, Sir Horace Plunkett, he appointed George Russell and Paul Gregan to help him organise it.

A while later I joined the Catholic Boys' Brigade whose headquarters was in Church St. The Spiritual Director was Father Paul of the Church St. Capuchins. The drill instructors were colour sergeants from Linenhall Barracks, the headquarters and depot of one of the Battalions of the Dublin Fusiliers. I only remember the name of one of them - Sergeant Dempsey. I joined up on a Sunday, was posted to a company and attended during the following week. The next Sunday we were paraded, and after other things a list of promotions was read out. I was surprised to find that I had been promoted to be a sergeant. I had not been a sergeant for very long when further promotions took place and I found myself promoted to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. I was posted to No. 6 Company, the Captain of which was a fellow named O'Hanlon. He was very keen and kept his company always up to the mark. If a fellow was absent from a parade he'd go after him, and under his instructions I visited the parents of the fellows in my half company almost weekly and reported how they were getting on. This ensured an almost 100% attendance During this period almost all my spare time was taken up by the brigade. We had our spiritual exercises, drills, weekly concert and our march out on Sundays, headed by our brass and reed band. We had an ambulance team which won

first prize in a competition open to all Ireland, and we had a harrying club of which I was a member, although I was never very successful as a runner. From time to time I had heard talk of the Gaelic League, and while I had a desire to learn Irish I never found time until the autumn of 1899 when I saw a notice in the paper of a branch of the league having been formed to cater for grocers' assistants. It was named the Father O'Growney branch and met in Eustace St. on Sunday nights. As Sunday night was then the one night in the week which I had free, I decided to join. So accompanied by my brother Micheál I went there and was put into a class for beginners. The other members of the class included Brian O'Higgins, Seamus Ó hEochaidh (An Fear Mór) and George Reynolds. Liam Shortall was the teacher and we all were very successful. I won several prizes in the oral competitions at the Dublin Feis at the end of the session. Brian O'Higgins became prominent as a poet and his services in the National Movement are so well known that I need not mention them here. Séamus Ó hEochaidh has been for years the headmaster of the Irish College in Ring, Co. Waterford, and George Reynolds was the hero in charge of the forces at Mount St. Bridge, where he lost his life. I think the Father O'Growney was the second branch of the league to be started in Dublin. Up to that time the Árd Craobh or Central Branch which met in 24 Upr. O'Connell St. was the only one in the city. After a few weeks in the O'Growney Branch I discovered that a member of one branch of the league was entitled to attend the classes or meetings of any other. I decided to take advantage of that rule and attended the Árd Craobh as often as I could. I gave up all other activities which interfered

with my learning of Irish. All the Gaelic League teachers at that time were voluntary workers, as were all the officers except the General Secretary and the Treasurer. On each Wednesday evening the Árd Craobh held a lecture and debate in Irish. At these meetings I met and became well known to a number of people whose names will live forever in Irish history: P.H. Pearse, Douglas Hyde, Agnes O'Farrelly, Father Dinneen and Bill Rooney.

At this time, it was during the Boer War, a committee called the "Transvaal Committee" had been set up by Maud Gonne. Its published objects were to receive subscriptions for the purpose of purchasing and equipping an ambulance to be presented to the Irish Brigade out helping the Boers in South Africa. It also presented an Irish Flag to the Brigade. My brother and I went one evening to 32 Lower Abbey St. to hand in our small subscriptions to the fund. We there came in contact with Brian Callender, who was existing Secretary of the "Celtic Literary Society". He invited us to join and we did so. We got to know all the members intimately; the names of some I can still remember - William Rooney, Arthur Griffith, Peter White, Tom Fox, Pat Bradley, Bill Fanning, Mick Quinn, "Grassy" Lawless, Joe Keegan, Denis Devereux, Joe Ryan, Domhnall O'Connor and others. We had Irish classes on Monday nights where I was sent by Bill Rooney to teach on Monday what I had learned on Sunday. We had lectures and debates and a manuscript journal called the Seánachaidhe. The articles in the Seanachaidhe went to fill up most of the "United Irishman", Griffith's weekly paper. A lot of the articles were contributed by Griffith himself under various

pen names and others by William Rooney. Tom Fox, Pat Bradley, Joe Ryan and others contributed a good share. Joe Keegan was, for some time at least, the Assistant Editor. W.B. Yeats was a frequent visitor to the society although most of the boys disliked him. I had a feeling that he was a sort of a sponger. He would attend and make himself prominent at the social functions of the Gaelic League and national societies without doing anything, either by subscribing or otherwise, to help those societies, and he appeared to have a contempt for the Irish language. A lot of other poets and writers dropped into the Society's rooms - Maurice Joy, Oliver Gogarty, Padraig Colum, Edward Martyn, I can't think of them all now, and the brothers Fay were members and Dudley Digges. Then we had the "Fear na Muintire" Choir, called after Bill Rooney, under the baton of Jim Rogan who is, I believe, still alive and working in the office of the ~~I.W.T.&.W.U.~~ "Irish Transport and General Workers' Union" Then Maud Gonne came along to start a women's society. The name she suggested was "The Daughters of Erin" but she wanted this translated into Irish. Bill Rooney translated it into "Inghinidhe na hÉireann" by which name it became known. The Inghinidhe met in the rooms of the Celtic Literary Society and gave many a céilí, to which we were all invited. These céilís were very enjoyable affairs. We had dancing and singing and any amount of tea and

cakes. I think Maud Gonne was responsible for the organisation of the tableaux which were held in the Ancient Concert Rooms depicting scenes from Irish history, and which led to the formation of the Irish Literary and National Theatres and, eventually, to the Abbey. Mrs. Wyse Power, Máire Nic Shiúbhlaigh, Máire Ní Cillín, Mary Quinn, Sinéad Ní Fhlannagán (Mrs. Eamon de Bhaléra) and some others took the principal parts. They were carried on for a week and were very well attended.

My dates are a bit mixed here and I find it difficult to keep things in chronological order, but some time in 1900 Queen Victoria paid a visit to Dublin. The pro-Britishers and the garrison crowd organised a children's treat for the occasion, which they held in the Phoenix Park. To counteract this Maud Gonne organised a patriotic children's treat. She got permission to hold it in Clonturk Park, Drumcondra. She appealed to the public for subscriptions, and to the manufacturers and caters for cakes, sweets and soft drinks. The response was so good that it enabled her to entertain 20,000 children, who all got as much ginger beer, stone beer, sweets and cakes as they could consume. The stewarding and serving of so many children was an enormous task. The stewarding was, I think, mostly done by the members

of the Fianna na hÉireann hurling club attached to the Celtic Literary Society, and the serving of refreshments by the members of Inghinidhe na hÉireann. Everything passed off without a hitch and the children were happy.

In spite of the fact that most of our public representatives, both parliamentary and municipal, were pro-British shoneens, there was an awakening of national spirit amongst the people generally which resulted in the formation of a number of branches of the Gaelic League in the city and county of Dublin. I believe I was at the inaugural meeting of every one of these new branches, and I dropped in now and again to see how they were getting on.

As I progressed in my knowledge of the language I tried to pass that knowledge on to others and volunteered to teach in some of the new branches. Amongst the new branches formed was the Keating Branch. It was started with the intention of bringing together all those in the city who came from the province of Munster, and came to be known as the Munstermen's branch of the league. Its president was Father Dinneen, and its members were mostly teachers and civil servants. Some of these

were native Irish speakers, some could understand Irish when they heard it spoken although they were unable to speak it very well, and others were just beginners. They were all enthusiastic about the language and literature of the country, its history and its pastimes, and were supporters of Irish manufacture. From the cultural and social standpoint they were all that could be desired, but a great number of them were antagonistic to those who sought the political freedom of the country. The Keating dancers became famous, their choir and solo singers equally so, as were their athletes. They won senior honours in both hurling and football. Their hurlers jumped from the junior to the senior grade in one year.

My brother and I had a great admiration for the Keating Branch but were sorry to see their attitude towards what was then styled "advanced nationalism" and thought we might be able to bring about a change by a little personal propaganda, so we joined that branch. Although we were only Dubliners we were welcomed very kindly. We settled down to continue our study of the Irish language and to take part in all the activities of the branch. After some time our opportunity came to do some work for the National Movement. At a general meeting of the branch

something arose which enabled us to bring in the question of Irish nationality. It was not easy to do so. The fact that the Gaelic League was non political was taken advantage of by the Seóinínî to object to anything national. I remember one night I was in the rooms of the Árd Craobh and started to hum "God Save Ireland". A young lady there objected and I had to stop. Later on the same young lady started to play "God Save the King" on the piano. When I objected to this on the grounds that it was political I was told "No, the King is above politics". I don't remember what we were discussing but I proposed some resolution and spoke for a long time. My brother came after and we thought that would be the end. But no, a sharp high-pitched voice with a Kerry accent was heard backing us up. Then another, a good looking, well-built smallish man spoke for us, then a few others, and when this resolution was put we found we had twenty-five supporters. After the meeting the smallish man came to me and said "Why did you not come to us before the meeting and we would have organised support for you and carried the resolution". I told him I did not know beforehand, that I was new to the branch and was only feeling my way. This smallish man was Cathal Brugha. We formed a friendship then which continued up to the time of his death. The man with the Kerry accent was Diarmuid Dennehy. He was in the Customs and Excise and contributed some fine articles to the 'United Irishman' and gave useful tips to Arthur Griffith regarding taxes and revenue.

Donnchadh Healy and his nephews Paddy and Seán O'Callaghan were others. Cathal Brugha and Dennehy were on the committee of the branch and nothing would satisfy them but that I should be on the committee too. Now one of the rules governing membership of the committee was that a member absent from three consecutive meetings without sending in a written explanation of his absence automatically ceased to be a member of the committee, and the vacancy caused by his absence could be filled by co-option without previous notice. Cathal and Diarmuid watched their opportunity. After a while they told me one member had been absent from two consecutive meetings, and if he were absent the following Saturday they would propose that the vacancy be filled and would propose me for co-option. They told me to be on the spot ready to attend the meeting as soon as I'd co-opted. The committee met weekly on Saturday nights at 8 o'clock. Cathal and Dennehy were waiting inside and I outside. At eight precisely Dennehy moved Cathal to the chair and then mentioned the vacancy and proposed my co-option. The chairman seconded and then asked had anyone any objection. There was no answer so he declared it carried and I was invited in. The whole thing took hardly two minutes and just as it was done the other members came in. They were mad at what had happened but made no attempt to undo it. Father Dinneen then took his accustomed place in the chair and we proceeded to business.

Another thing I remember was the coming to Dublin from London of D.P. Moran. The first I heard of the existence of D.P. Moran was when I read an announcement in the papers that he was coming to Dublin to start the issue

of a new national weekly paper to be called "The Leader". Griffith wrote an article which he published in the "United Irishman" giving great praise to this young man (when I saw him I didn't think him so young at all) for his enterprise, welcoming him into the ranks of Irish national journalists and saying how much a journal of that nature was needed in Ireland at that moment. But Griffith spoke too soon! He should have waited until he'd seen a few issues before he wrote anything about it. All the thanks he got from Moran was a tirade of abuse. Moran was no Nationalist. He had a bitter tongue which he used on all who failed to put an ad. in "The Leader". The Nationalists were "Tin Pikers" and "Flag Waggers" - "A green flag for a green people". The business men who refrained from advertising in "The Leader" were "Dark Brothers" and, according to Moran, had some sort of secret organisation named "Dark Brotherhood", the main object of which was to keep advertisements out of "The Leader". He advocated the support of Irish industries only if the Irish manufactured articles were as "good and cheap" as the imported ones. Apparently he was a free trader and, no doubt, would oppose the imposition of protective tariffs if he were alive to-day.

In 1903 we had another Royal Visit, this time King Edward VII of England. The Seóinî again were in their element. There were loyal addresses by our public representatives, bunting and flags and coloured lights and shields with coats of arms decorated all the streets of the City. All the public buildings as well as most of the business premises were decorated. The usual clashes

between the police and the people took place. A brother of mine, Seán, tore down an enormous amount of the loyal decorations and got away safely. It happened like this: A man named Matt Walker had opened a tobacco and newsagents shop in High St. Matt Walker had been a small newspaper proprietor in Carlow. He and his paper had supported Parnell at the time of the split, so they ran him out of the town and he came to Dublin. He secured employment on one of the big dailies. He opened this shop in High St. and put his name up in Irish "Mac Siubhlaigh". Two of his daughters looked after the shop - Nóinín and Máire. That shop became the rendezvous for all the gaels of the city. He placed a large room at the back of the shop at our disposal without any charge. He didn't even suggest nor expect us to be customers. He got some of his supplies from a chap named John Murray who had a wholesale chandler's place in Cork St. Murray happened to come into the shop one evening when Seán and I were there ~~and~~ We (Sean and I) made it up between us to pull down as much of the decorations as we could and to use John Murray's van to take them away. I was to keep John in conversation while my brother took away the van. I had no difficulty in starting an argument with John which we kept up, with others butting in from time to time, for about three hours. It did not finish till my brother re-appeared and I knew everything was all right. The van was literally packed with bunting and flags and shields. He brought all the stuff around to our house and left it there. When passing through Francis St. he was stopped by a policeman. "Now" said he to himself "I'm for it". However all the policeman stopped him for was to summon him for having no

light on the van "What's your name and address"? asked the policeman. "John Murray of so and so Cork St." was the answer. And John Murray wondered later on why he was prosecuted and fined for driving without a light in Francis St. when he had not been in that street at all We brought the stuff down to the Rooms of the Celtic Literary Society afterwards where it came in useful, after being altered, for some of our national displays. Several people, including Maud Gonne, put out black flags for the royal visit, but they were torn down by the police who burst their way into private residences and assaulted the occupants in the process. The King was paraded around the city on various pretexts, and on one of these parades I saw from the papers that he would pass through the street in which I was living. He was going to lay a foundation stone or open a park or something in or about St. Patrick's Cathedral. I made up my mind then that the King would see at least one blag flag during his visit. I accordingly set about making a flag to have ready for the day of the procession. When the day arrived I placed a board behind the hall door so that it could open less than half way. We had a heavy steel poker with a big knob on the end of it which I also left ready behind the hall door. I expected that as soon as my black flag was seen an attack would be made on the house, and I intended to open the hall door which would be held by the board at the back so that if any policeman tried to force his way in his head would appear first and I would land on it with the poker. Having put everything in readiness I went upstairs and waited until the head of the King's procession appeared. There were cavalry, equerries and all the trappings of royalty of the time, but I concentrated on my

black flag which I pushed out of the window as soon as I saw the head of the procession. They might have passed on without even knowing there was a black flag there if it were not for one of the policemen on duty. The moment the black flag appeared he began shouting "take in that flag, take in that flag" until everyone, including the King, turned round to see what all the shouting was about. The bobby then rushed over to the door and began pounding on it. I ran downstairs, leaving a young brother to hold the flag, to bring the poker into play, but by the time I got down the bobby had gone. I expected reprisals for this but nothing ever happened. I'd like to say here that I was aided and abetted by my mother. My father was at work and knew nothing about it.

I have an idea that Maud Gonne organised another patriotic children's treat at this time but I'm not sure. The Gaelic League in the meantime had been spreading rapidly. As well as the Árd Craobh and the Father O'Growney branches, we now had the McHale Branch, the Keating Branch, the St. Brendan's Branch, the Cleaver Branch, the Colmcille Branch, the Rathmines Branch, Craobh na gCúig gCúigí, the Inchicore Branch, the Purveyors' Branch, Ringsend Branch, Workmens' Club Branch and many others. As the League spread the Cóiste Gnótha found it impossible to keep efficient control by direct contact and so district committees were formed. In Dublin there were two such committees, Cóiste Ceanntair Bhaile Átha Cliath and Cóiste Ceanntair Máighe Life. The Dublin Cóiste Ceanntair thought out a shceme which had a two-fold object. It might be more correct to say its objects were

multifold, but the two principal objects were to advertise the league and to bring in sufficient funds for its efficient working. They decided to have a procession and demonstration and to hold a public collection. They invited all organisations in Dublin such as trades unions, national and literary societies, local authorities, educational bodies and others to send delegates to a meeting which they proposed to hold in the Trades Hall, Capel St. to discuss the matter. The Celtic Literary Society received an invitation to send two delegates and a meeting of the members was called to decide what should be done. They decided to send the two delegates and proceeded to discuss their attitude towards some items on the agenda. They devoted most of their time to a discussion as to what banners or emblems should be permitted in the procession. My brother argued that as the Gaelic League was non-political and un-sectarian participants should be permitted to carry any emblem they pleased. This was argued against on the grounds that the West Britons would take advantage of the permission to carry Union Jacks and other anti-national emblems and it was decided to urge that the carrying of any British emblems should be specifically forbidden. Then they selected two delegates. My brother was one of them. When the night of the delegates' meeting arrived my brother turned up but the other delegate was ill and unable to do so. When that item on the agenda was reached he had to propose the resolution. h e . w a s not in favour of at the Celtic meeting. There was considerable opposition to that resolution but, I was told by another delegate to the

meeting, my brother spoke for about two hours and argued so well that the resolution was carried. My brother was only about sixteen years of age at the time.

The demonstration consisted of a procession through the Principal streets of the City of the Gaelic League branches, public authorities, athletic organisations in club colours, trades unions with bands and banners, historical and other tableaux, trade displays and a lot of things I've now forgotten. It took about three hours to pass a given point and ended in Smithfield with a monster meeting. During the procession a box collection in aid of the language was held. Micheál (my brother) had been invited on to the organising committee, called the Demonstration Committee, and he dragged me in to give a hand. Both the demonstration and the collection were very successful. Either the following year or the year after that Micheál became Secretary of the Collection Committee. Up to the time he took over the collection was principally a box collection, but from the time he became Secretary the scope of the collection was greatly enlarged and several new ideas were put into force. Firstly it came to the notice of the committee that while some people were approached over and over again, others got no opportunity to subscribe at all, or so they said. This led to the introduction of what has since become known as flag days. At first the committee supplied the collectors with little cardboard tags with string attached. One of these was to be given by the collector to anyone putting a sixpence into the box. The subscriber would then tie the tag into his button hole

and no collector seeing the tag would approach him again. A house to house collection was then organised. Each branch of the league was allotted a district and every house in that district would be visited by its members who would write down opposite the number of each house the result of his visit. All these particulars were sent in and kept by Micheál at Headquarters. With regard to the big business houses: he approached a number of very important persons and got them to consent to act on deputations to those houses. He would then write to the directors of the businesses asking them to receive a deputation and to appoint a time. He would then appoint his deputation and accompany them to the meeting. What he asked of the big houses was to have the Gaelic League placed on their subscription lists. Their subscriptions would then be received automatically each year. This worked out very satisfactorily. Each Gaelic League branch was made entitled to a proportion of the money collected in its district, whether the branch was responsible for the collection or not. Full details of the collection were published in booklet form each year.

One year when the time of the demonstration was approaching (it was held on the Sunday nearest to St. Patrick's Day) Mr. D.P. Moran, in "The Leader", started a campaign of vilification against the Cóiste Gnótha of the Gaelic League. He insinuated, in anything but a vague manner, that they were mis-spending the money collected, although God knows, those doing the work of the league never even got,or claimed, their [illegible] out of pocket expenses. These charges repeated week after week on

the eve of the collection exasperated all those hard working Gaelic Leaguers who were spending day and night working without rest to ensure the success of the objects of the League. On the Sunday of the demonstration D.P. Moran, accompanied by John Gore, Solicitor, and, I think, Dr. McWalter, a member of the Corporation, in a horse drawn carriage took his place in the procession. It appears that when their part of the procession was passing through College Green, a young man wearing an arm band, seeming to indicate that he was a steward, took hold of the horse's head and proceeded to take the carriage out of the procession. The crowd thinking this was official, made way for them and it was not until they were landed in one of the side streets off College Green that D.P. and his friends realised that anything strange was happening. Your man kept them there till the procession had passed. It was not until the following day that the members of the Demonstration Committee learned of all this. And then Moran came out of his shell entirely. He demanded an immediate and abject apology from the Cóiste Gnótha. The logic of the man. The Cóiste Gnótha had nothing to do with the demonstration except to look on and subscribe. The Demonstration Committee was but a sub-committee of the Dublin Cóiste Cheanntair and most of its members were not even on the Cóiste Ceanntair, and even they had nothing to do with the expulsion of D.P. Moran from the procession. All this was pointed out to Moran but nothing would satisfy him but that Cóiste Gnótha should go down on its knees. The only active supporters of Moran in the movement were the members of the Keating Branch. They had some members

on the Cóiste Gnótha, Father Dinneen, Richard Foley, Máire Ní Chinnéide and maybe one or two others. These were very strong supporters of Moran and were anxious that he should be tendered an apology. When they failed to have a resolution passed at the Cóiste Gnótha they called a general meeting of the branch. For a branch of its size the attendance was small. It numbered a good deal less than 100. A resolution was proposed calling on the Cóiste Gnótha to tender an apology to Moran. Our side of the house strongly opposed this, but it was carried by a small majority and duly sent on to the Cóiste Gnótha. Afraid the Cóiste Gnótha might be misled by this resolution I decided to write to them explaining the whole situation. I showed that out of a total membership of about 700, only 100 or something less had attended the meeting and out of that number only a little over half had voted for the resolution. I drew attention to the total membership of the league, thousands, and pointed out that of these thousands only about 50 had expressed a desire that a resolution of apology should be tendered to Moran. I also pointed out that the vast majority of Gaelic Leaguers would be antagonised if such a resolution were passed, and pointed out that if a dispute arose between two people attending the procession it was not our fault, and that if D.P. Moran wished to avoid offending anybody he should not be so abusive. I held this letter until the night of the meeting, and just after the meeting had started I knocked at the door and handed it in to the Secretary. When I next turned up at the branch I was called a traitor and an informer, and told that what happened at a branch meeting should not be communicated to anyone outside the branch. Máire

Ní Chinnéide was most abusive. I pointed out I was right on two counts. Firstly, if any member of an organisation felt aggrieved or was misrepresented he had a right to appeal to the principal executive committee of the organisation. Also, it was quite in order for a minority to furnish a report the same as the majority. However, after the first night I heard no more about it and Moran got no apology.

During one of our meetings somebody, I think it was the representative of the Mount Argus branch, brought up the question of St. Patrick's Day and suggested that it ought to be a national holiday. This was taken up at once by all the other members of the committee and they decided to form another sub-committee and to call it the National Holiday Committee. The first move was to appeal to all business people to close their business premises on that day. There were cards printed bearing the words'"Don't Drink", "Don"t Work", "Don"t Shop" on the National Holiday'. These were to be clipped on to sticks and carried in the procession. There was a great demand for these cards, a crowd being continually waiting in front of the offices to have the cards given them. Then forms were got out which traders were asked to sign, one being a provisional and the other an absolute promise to close on St. Patrick's Day. It took a lot of argument and a lot of hard work to get the business men to sign anything, but the movement went ahead and many years had not passed before we were in a position to point out that there was a great popular demand for the making of St. Patrick"s Day a public holiday. The publicans were the

last to hold out and few of them closed until they were compelled to do so by an act of the British Parliament. It is hard for the people of the present day to realise that St. Patrick's Day was just an ordinary working day up to the time of the National Holiday Committee. People went to Mass in the morning and then to work. They just wore a bit of shamrock in their hats or a bit of green ribbon in their coats to mark the day that was in it, and until we had won a strong force of public opinion in favour of the holiday we could not get the Irish Parliamentary Party to make a move. It's terrible to think we had to seek the aid of John Bull to make St. Patrick's Day a national holiday, but I'm convinced if we had not done so St. Patrick's Day would still be an ordinary working day.

I don't think I've yet mentioned Mrs. Wyse Power. She was a prominent member of the advanced nationalist group. I believe she was in the movement from the Land League days, being on the ladies' committee of that time. She was a member of the Board of Guardians and there was hardly a nationalist committee of which she was not a member. Her three children - Máire, Áine and Charley were members of the Keating Branch, and I think, but I'm not sure, that she was a member herself. Her husband - John Wyse Power was a journalist. He had been a First Division Clerk in the Civil Service but was dismissed on account of some political misdemeanour for which he refused to apologise. Mrs. Wyse Power had a shop at No. 21 Henry St. which was operated under the name

of The Irish Farm Produce Company. She was assisted, or partnered, by a sister of her husband - Cáit Power. She always left out the Wyse part of her name. She said there was nothing 'wise' about her. She was a remarkably able woman, very brainy, full of fun and a great teller of humorous stories. The Powers gave frequent picnics on Sundays during the summer. They would invite about a couple of dozen friends to these outings, most of whom were members of the Keating Branch. The outings were very pleasant affairs and were usually held in what was called the Pine Forest on the banks of a stream a short distance beyond Cruagh, Rathfarnham, in the Dublin mountains. It was on one of these outings that I met the lady who afterwards became my wife. It was customary for my brother and I to camp out in the mountains during the summer, usually from the end of April to October. This suited the picnic parties for we kept cups and saucers, spoons, knives, plates etc. in the camp and we had a huge kettle and tea-pot sufficient to make tea for a very large party and give everyone plenty. We were also in a position to get plenty of milk. I had a number of cameras with which I took photographs of groups and individuals. I made lantern slides of any of these photographs which were suitable, and very often we lived these hooleys over again when I showed the pictures on winter evenings by means of my magic lantern. I often remained up all night after a picnic developing the photographs and making prints,which I would have ready on the following evening. They were all impatient to see how they turned out and, of course, everyone wanted a copy

or copies. I never kept a copy of these photographs myself. Of those who took part in the outings, Dennehy, Paddy O'Keeffe and I were regulars. Daithi O'Donoghue and Lucy (his wife), Micheál O'Hanrahan and his brother Larry and the O'Callaghans came frequently, and there were others who came now and again. I've forgotten to mention the girls. All I can remember are Bride and Áine Cullen, Siobhán Callaghan, Eileen Hanrahan and Veronica Ryan. As well as the hooleys given by Mrs. Power the Cullens gave several. These were held in the Furry Glen, Phoenix Park, not a great distance from the home of the Cullens who lived on a farm in Castleknock, Co. Dublin.

As well as these what I might call private hooleys, we had some large well-organised excursions attended by the Cóiste Gnótha officers and ordinary members of the League as well as the general public. The first of these was to Omeath, Co. Louth. Omeath was then a native Irish speaking district. We got there by train to Newry and Warrenpoint and across Carlingford Lough by boat to Omeath. On that excursion I met a priest whose Masses I used to serve - Fr. Anderson. He recognised me at once and expressed his pleasure at seeing me active in the movement. He is one whose name will, I'm sure, go down in history. Long before 1916 one branch of the League in Dublin was called after him.

About this time there were frequent secret meetings held in one of the rooms of the Keating Branch. For a long time we wondered what was up, and then it leaked out that a new Irish game suitable for girls was contemplated.

Then notices appeared in the papers that the plans were progressing and that rules were being adopted. I, of course, knew nothing of what was being done but as the time of the annual demonstration approached I furnished a paragraph for the papers stating that amongst the tableaux to be shown would be one giving a demonstration of the new game for girls, for which an extra large lorry had been procured. There was ructions when this appeared but I said nothing, and till this day I've never told anyone that it was I who put it in.

I remember one of the Gaelic League's excursions to the Hill of Tara. It was a beautiful Sunday with the sun shining brightly. Mrs. Wyse Power had been asked to do the catering and had brought down a large marquee for the purpose. Some time during the afternoon Mrs. Wyse Power remarked that Alice Milligan must be starving as she had had nothing to eat all day. She approached Miss Milligan and invited her into the tent to have some refreshment. "Oh no, Mrs. Power, thank you very much, but I couldn't eat anything now. I've just eaten a banana and a lump of sugar". She appears to have eaten nothing else all day and did not have anything to drink.

Meanwhile we kept up our work in the Celtic Literary Society. One of the Society's functions was the holding of a Davis Commemoration Concert every year in the large Concert Room of the Rotunda. At this concert prizes awarded to members for one thing or another were presented. I was one of the lucky ones at one of these concerts and was presented with a copy of the "Life of Owen Roe O'Neill". At a subsequent oireachtas a first prize was awarded in a literary competition to Micheál Mac Ruadhraigh (afterwards

gardener in St. Enda's) for a life of Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill. There was a lot of argument about this award as Micheál although a fluent and perfect Irish speaker, was regarded as illiterate. "How can an illiterate person win a literary competition"? said some. "The prize was awarded to this work on its merits, the author's name not being known until the award was made" was the answer. I said nothing except to point out there was nothing to prevent an author from employing an amanuensis, although I was one of four people who knew all about it. I lent the book to Bill Shortall, who collaborated with Micheál Mac Ruadhraigh in compiling the work. Bill would read a passage from the book. Micheál would then translate that passage into Irish and Bill would write it down, and so on until the book was finished. I afterwards heard Micheál aver that what he had dictated was the traditional version known to the people of Mayo. The other person who knew was my brother Micheál. I gave him the book to bring over to Bill Shortall. I never got it back.

I don't think I've mentioned that my friend Dennehy and I, whenever the occasion offered, went out into the country seeking ancient monuments and buildings and ruins of historical importance. These I would photograph and from the photographs would make lantern slides. Then in the following winter I would give occasional lantern lectures to the classes. I was teaching, showing pictures of these antiquities, explaining their historical importance, their location and how they could be reached. We usually finished up with a few songs in Irish, the words of which I would throw

on to the screen so that all might join in.

I was married on 2nd October, 1911, to the Áine Cullen whom I've spoken of in my references to the picnics given by Mrs. Wyse Power. We went to live in a large house in Terenure called Willow Mount. There were nine acres of land attached to the house, most of it being in grass. There were huge well-stocked gardens and a number of large greenhouses, including a propogation house. We hoped to make this pay but our experience being limited we failed to do so. The only advantage it served was to provide a place where my friends and I could have unlimited miniature rifle practice. Madame Markievicz was always ready to lend guns and my friends had some converted Martinis and the like. I became expert in the use of the miniature, and when the time came to use the real rifle I found I was equally expert.

I remember the big strike of 1913. Jim Larkin had come over and started a branch of the "Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union" in Dublin. When he had the workers partly organised he began operations. He started on the smaller business men and attacked them one at a time and made a lot of progress. After each success new members joined the union until he felt he was strong enough to start on some of the big firms. In his opinion the worst offender then in its treatment of employees was the Dublin United Tramways Company, so he singled it out for attack. He called out the drivers and conductors. Trades unionism was then in a very bad way. Workers, on account of the way they had been ground down, lived in terror of their employers. So it was that

the strike was not entirely successful. Even some of those who appeared most strongly in favour of striking did not come out. William Martin Murphy was practically the Dublin United Tramways' Company. He was a strong man and a wealthy man. He was able to enlist the full power of the British Government in Ireland against the strikers. He saw that if Larkin were allowed to take on the employers one by one he would eventually win, so he organised all the employers into one federation and all their resources were pooled. This was a formidable force to be used against a few underpaid workers but it was not enough for Martin Murphy. He sought the aid of the federated employers of Great Britain and they were only too anxious to help. They said to themselves "If we give these fellows in Dublin a proper hammering it will knock the guts out of the fellows here and save us a lot of trouble". So with all the wealth of Great Britain and Ireland and with all the batons of a brutal police against them, the workers held out. Most of the other employers came to the aid of Martin Murphy by locking out their employees. If the workers attempted to hold a meeting they were savagely beaten with batons by the police. Even when at home peacefully sleeping in their beds the police invaded their homes and savagely attacked them. I was told after one of these raids that there was hardly a house in Francis St. in which a worker could be found without a broken arm or a broken leg. The wealth of Britain could come into the city to be used against the workers without a word of protest but when gifts of food and clothes from our people in Liverpool were accepted by Larkin there was a storm of objections,

and when people in Liverpool offered to take care of the children of the strikers for the period of the strike the charge was made that this was only a trick to turn them into Protestants. Although I was told that most of the homes to which they were invited were Catholic homes. Jim Larkin was proscribed and his men attacked. Even those suspected of having sympathy for the families of the men on strike were attacked. Two girl members of the Inghinidhe na hÉireann, Máire and Sighle Maher, who had a little shop on Burgh Quay near the corner of Tara St., had their place raided almost nightly, their doors and windows broken and their stock scattered and destroyed although their only connection with the Transport Union was that some of its members were their customers. Although you might almost say that Jim Larkin had a price on his head, he managed to hold huge meetings. He had only to put his head out of one of the windows of Liberty Hall and shout 'Comrades' and Beresford Place would be thronged in a few minutes. I remember one night a friend of mine, Eamon Comerford, asked me to go down with him to Liberty Hall to see a class he was teaching there. He was teaching on the direct method system and had a Christian Brother's chart over his shoulder. When we arrived at Beresford Place one of Larkin's meetings was in progress. We were just pushing through the crowd when someone shouted "baton charge". The crowd immediately began to scatter. These baton charges were deadly affairs. The police laid about them indiscriminately and anyone who happened to be in the vicinity was in danger of losing his life. This time it was a false alarm but those near us thought it was real.

As Eamon was pushed about by the moving crowd the chart he was holding over his shoulder would give a tap here and a tap there to the people around him and each person tapped, his imagination excited by what had gone before, would think he'd been struck a fierce blow by a baton. It was as a consequence of these baton charges and the defenceless state of the workers against them that the Citizen Army was started by Captain White. White was a grand man. Tall, broad shouldered and athletic, he was more than a match for any policeman and he was well-trained. The army which he started rendered a good account of itself during Easter Week as is now well-known, but to my mind it was not as well disciplined as it should have been. With all the forces against them Larkin's men had to give in. They went back to work but they were not beaten. It is as a result of that strike that the workers of to-day are able to dictate terms to the employers.

In 1913 the Irish Volunteers were formed. I did not attend the Rotunda meeting as since the time of my marriage I had become less active in the movement and, also, I had very little confidence in some of those who called the meeting together. John McNeill, for instance, had let us down before and I always feared that he would do so again. But as my brothers all joined up I thought I might as well do so too,,even if the movement led to nothing - which I feared. The Volunteers were organised according to districts and 'C' Company of the 3rd Battalion took in the district in which I then lived, Sth. Great George's St. Dick Doyle was the Adjutant Secretary of

that Company so I handed in my name to him. My brothers Micheál, Peadar and Pádraig were also members of that Company. My brother Seán was in the Fianna, but I think he was also a member of the 4th Battalion as it was with the 4th he took part in the Easter Rising. It was mostly through Seán I kept in touch with Madame Markievicz and the leaders of the Fianna. I did not attend the parades of the Volunteers as I had other work to do and, as I've said before, I had a good knowledge of what they were learning and was a good shot.

One day Seamus O'Connor came to me. He was a member of the Executive Committee of the Volunteers. He asked me to take up the position of Secretary of the "Defence of Ireland Fund". This was the fund out of which the arms for the Volunteers were to be purchased. I was reluctant to do so but Seamus impressed on me the importance of the work and as I was not doing very well at the time I took it on. The work consisted of receiving and acknowledging subscriptions to the fund and keeping an accurate record of the sources from which the money came as each Company of the Volunteers was entitled to arms to the value of its subscriptions to the fund and the money collected by it. I don't know how this eventually worked out. Micheál O'Hanrahan was in charge of the fund from the time I lodged the money in the bank. The offices of the Volunteers were in Great Brunswick St. (now Pearse St.) near the Queen's Theatre. I think the number was 212. We were later in Kildare St. and in No. 2 Dawson St. I think we were in Dawson St. at the start of the Easter Rising.

But in the meantime a number of things happened. There was the appointment of John Redmond's nominees to the Executive Committee. Naturally I was never present at the meetings of the executive, but it was easy to judge from general talk in the office following meetings that there was a good deal of friction between our people and the Redmondites. I heard of a number of incidents, one in which J.D. Nugent attempted to assault Pearse. O'Rahilly, I was told, took out his gun, placed it before him on the table and said to Nugent "If you dare raise your hand again to Mr. Pearse that gun will talk to you, not I". That kept Nugent quiet for the remainder. Then again I heard, not long before the Easter Rising, that Connolly was eager to have the rising started at once. He must have made some threat because John McNeill sent for him and told him that if he tried to precipitate matters by taking premature action, the Volunteers would remain aloof and let the Citizen Army finish what they had begun by themselves. He said the Volunteers would take action only when the executive committee of the Volunteers decided the time was ripe, and would take no action no matter what happened until then. Then there was the Howth gun-running. I have very little recollection of that although it caused so much excitement at the time. Eamon Martin and M.J. Judge were, I think, wounded, and there was the shooting down and killing of people on Bachelors' Walk by the Kings Own Scottish Borderers. I had the pleasure of telling off J.D. Nugent the following day. The Redmondites were anxious to get control of the guns to send them north where, they said, they would be most needed. In the course of my talk I told him what

he and his Hibernians wanted was to get the arms away from us so that they would never be used.

I spent the greater part of the following week collecting guns here and there where they had been left by the Volunteers to prevent their falling into the hands of the British Authorities. The Transport Union had a house and extensive grounds in Croydon Park, Fairview, and some of the guns were hidden there. I was told that the Citizen Army stuck to those guns and refused to hand them back. I'd pick up a gun here and another there, and when I'd have collected about half a dozen I'd tie a string around them, put them on my shoulder, get on to a tram and bring them to wherever I'd been told.

Then there was the split in the Volunteers. I forgot to mention that after John Redmond came in the Volunteers became very popular. All the Seóinínî flocked into their ranks. Lord this and that would call in to the office to see the secretary. I think Liam Mellows was secretary at the time. Then we had an office boy named Seán Dolan. He was a lad - a handsome lad - from Skerries or Balbriggan or somewhere around there. Roger Casement sent him in to learn office work. He was a scream. He spent half his time sharpening an enormous bowie knife, and the remainder spreading out the letters on the floor to get them into alphabetical order. He'd have half of them spread out when someone would open the door and the letters would be blown about. He'd then gather them up and start sorting them out again. This went on indefinitely; they were never in order. Whenever anyone knocked at the door it was opened by Seán.

He would never say a word but point with his enormous knife. They would invariably start back thinking he was about to stick the knife into them. Then he would open the door to the inner room and say "Liam, so and so" or "Lord so and so wants to see you". "What does he want?". "I don't know". "Then tell him to go to hell. No, tell him I'm busy". Seán, by the way, was one of the crew on the boat that brought the guns to Howth. We were in Kildare St. at the time of the split. We put barbed wire, any amount of it, in the front basement to prevent anyone we didn't want from entering the house. We locked and bolted the front hall door and Seán Dolan was placed as sentry in the hall by Liam Mellows, with orders to let nobody in. He had a gun in each hand and his big bowie knife in his belt. There was a knock on the door. As a matter of fact, there were a number of knocks, but I am referring to one in particular. Seán went over and opened the door. At the door was Larry Kettle, one of the honorary secretaries of the organisation. Seán stood in his way with a revolver pointed at him. "I want to go in" said Larry Kettle. "You can't" said Seán; "Liam told me to let in nobody". "But I'm the secretary and must go in" said Larry. "You can't" said Seán. "But I'm the secretary and responsible for the organisation. It's necessary for me to go in". "I don't care, Liam told me to let nobody in and I'll let nobody in" and every time he spoke Seán gave Kettle a prod of his revolver in the tummy. At last he had to go away and that was the end of Larry Kettle as far as the Volunteers was concerned. I don't know what eventually became of Seán. I only saw him once about twenty years afterwards at a

race meeting in Baldoyle. He had come to back a horse for some crowd in north County Dublin. He had a pile of notes in his hand, and whether he lost or won I don't know. I've never seen him since.

I think we must have gone from Brunswick St. to Kildare St, and then to Dawson St. because I have a picture of No. 2 Dawson St. in my mind when I try to think of the days immediately before the Rising. Bulmer Hobson was "great" with a girl named Máire Cregan and they had arranged to spend the Easter in the north. She spent the day, Holy Saturday, in the office, where she had arranged to meet Bulmer, waiting for him to turn up and wondering where he was and what was delaying him. Barney Mellows would tell her he'd gone out for a bit and would soon be back. As the day wore on she became more and more perturbed. I don't know what eventually happened as I left the office before she did, but it became common knowledge afterwards why he didn't turn up to meet her on that day. I was told afterwards that the police spent a lot of time digging holes looking for him and thinking something worse happened to him than what had.

It was customary for me at that time to spend each Sunday with my wife's people in Castleknock, Co. Dublin, and on Easter Sunday I went as usual out to Castleknock after Mass. There I spent the day and following night. I returned to Dublin on Easter Monday. The Rising had started, the various positions were occupied and there had been some casualties. I did not go directly to the Post Office but went to my mother's house to find out how things stood. I found that my brothers

Peadar and Pádraig were at Boland's Mill, Seán at Watkins' Brewery with Con Colbert and Micheál had been in the Post Office but out on a scouting expedition had come home to see how the mother was getting on and came in just as I was there so that I was just in time to hear everything. I went back with him to the Post Office and reported to Pearse, who expressed himself well pleased with the way everything was going. From then on Micheál and I were continually on the move. I believe it was mostly through us that Pearse and Connolly kept in touch with the other posts and with how things were going generally in the city.

We went home a few times on the first couple of days, and on one of these visits the mother informed us that Seán had come home from Watkins" Brewery to say that they were hard pressed and about to evacuate the brewery and go to Marrowbone Lane. What he wanted was some civilian clothes and overcoats for Con Colbert and some others who were in uniform so that they could pass through the streets without attracting too much attention on their way to Marrowbone Lane. She gathered up all the old clothes she could, brought them to the boys and helped them with their equipment to the new position. I also learned that her house had been raided by the British military: the first house raided in connection with the Rising. Some local informer must have been at work for the officer in charge of the raiding party told her he'd been informed she had five sons out in the "rebellion". "I'm sorry for you" said he. "I'm sorry too" she said to him, "sorry I haven't five more out along with them".

My usual way of going to and coming from the Post Office was across the Metal Bridge, through Liffey St., Middle Abbey St., through a little lane from there to Princes St. where there was a big gate into the Post Office. On one of my journeys when returning to the Post Office I was halfway across the Metal Bridge when I saw two people, a man and woman, fall, shot dead at the corner of Liffey St. and Bachelors' Walk. I don't know where the shots came from. I just walked on and back to the Post Office.

When the Helga began to bombard Liberty Hall I was out poking around. As soon as I learned what was happening I returned to the Post Office and told Jim Connolly. "The Helga is bombarding Liberty Hall" I said. "It can't be" said he, "I sent six men down to stop it".

Connolly was a great man. His writings give a fair indication of his intellect, but his physical energy and strength were amazing. He was always on the move. Not alone was he continually planning raids, but he took part in most, and it was in one of these outside raids he received the wound which kept him inactive.for the last couple of days of the fight. I noticed a thing about Connolly that I thought peculiar.

He seemed to take no notice of rank. He would call out a number of men and then say to one of them "Tom" or "Pat" or whoever it might be, "take these men and go to such a place and do so and so and report back to me". Very often the man in charge would be a full private.

On Thursday and Friday I remained in the Post Office. Pearse did not send me out on any assignment, perhaps because things were becoming difficult. The firing was becoming more intense and shells, incendiary and others were hopping off the houses in O'Connell St. The houses on the opposite side of the street were blazing more and more fiercely as time went on. The noise of the explosions, the bursting glass of the big windows, the falling walls etc. was terrific, and the heat was appalling. I forgot to mention that on entering the Post Office the Volunteers broke out all the glass windows and some distance back from the windows erected a barricade of mail bags filled, I think, with coal. Well, the heat from the burning building on the opposite side of the street was so intense that in spite of playing hoses on the barricade of mail bags they were continually bursting into flames.

From Monday evening until the time of the

surrender on Saturday I was almost continuously on foot doing the various odd jobs which were given to me. Up to the Wednesday evening I was out on various scouting expeditions, getting all the information I could about the condition of things away from the Post Office and the disposition of the British Forces. It was late on Tuesday night that I got around to Dorset St. and walked down Bolton St. and Capel St. until I reached the corner of Parliament St. The British had taken possession of the City Hall, and frequent shots were being fired through the length of Capel St. while I was passing through. As I came across Capel St. Bridge I saw one of our fellows in a hallway on Wellington Quay. I don't know his name but he was a smallish, very vigorous looking young fellow with dark hair and very brilliant black eyes. I asked him how things were going and he told me he was one of the crowd that had occupied the Daily Express Office (now the Evening Mail) at the corner of Parliament St. and Cork Hill. He said they had been driven out of the building, had returned and driven out the enemy, and had been in turn again driven out of it themselves. On another occasion I got to the Four Courts and spoke to Joe McGuinness, who gave me a message for Headquarters. I never experienced any danger or difficulty in passing through the city, except

maybe that of a stray bullet, but on a couple of occasions I had a funny experience. I had to appeal to a British officer as to the easiest way of getting from one place to another, and on one occasion the officer sent a sergeant with me so that I could get safely through his lines.

I don't know whether it's of any interest or whether anyone else has described how the British proceeded through the streets of Dublin during that week. They went in two lines, one on each side of the street, and close up to the houses. They took shelter in the doorways and would proceed by short runs from doorway to doorway until they reached the end of the street. These are the sort of little things I'd notice or find out and report on my return to headquarters. Seán Milroy was a man who struck me as being an outstanding soldier during that week. I saw him a number of times going out on forays. He was always cool, collected and energetic. To tell the truth I don't know what they did on these forays. One of the fellows told me when they came back from a raid that they had made a thorough search of the Independent Newspaper buildings. They found some people there and evacuated them. My brother

Micheál was out on one of these and told me they had searched a house in Liffey St. He brought me back a pack of cards he'd found there and told me I could play patience while waiting for some one to shoot at.

There was a good deal of fun during the week. In close proximity to the Post Office in Henry St. there was an institution called the Wax Works. I was never in it but I assume it was something like Madame Tussauds in London only on a very small scale. It had a shop in front. Access was had from one house to another by breaking holes in the walls of the houses, so that one could walk from one end to another of the street without leaving the shelter of the houses. With the accessibility of all that the Waxworks had to offer, it was not long till a number of our troops were arrayed in various uniforms and costumes from the wax figures, and musical instruments were also acquired, such as mouth organs, melodeons and fiddles, the playing of which and the singing which accompanied them, made a good deal of the time pass very pleasantly. All this time the bombardment of the Post Office was going on, and fellows were being wounded and, I'm sorry to say, some killed. On one occasion fifteen fellows on the roof were struck by pieces of an exploding shell. One of these, a grand looking young fellow with a big mop of fair curly hair, I saw being carried down with blood streaming from his face and from his neck. I made enquiries about him

and was told a bullet had entered his face and come out through his neck and that his case was hopeless, but I saw that fellow afterwards (I'll later tell the circumstances) and he told me he'd got two wounds, one in the face and another on the neck. He wasn't killed but he'd lost an eye.

I mentioned being so long on foot. Well, on one occasion, it was the afternoon of either Wednesday or Thursday, I lay down behind a glass partition at the back of the Post Office where most of our forces were situated. I'd been lying down for about five minutes and was just dozing off when a shell struck the P.O. It must have been a very heavy one for the shock shattered the glass partition and I found myself completely covered with broken glass. I wasn't cut by any of the broken glass but I was severely awakened. I got up, shook off the broken glass and took up a position at the front window with George Plunkett to await our further orders.

I think I've already mentioned being tired and getting very little rest. We were also hungry. There was a refreshment room at the top of the building. Desmond Fitzgerald was in charge. He was, I believe, in complete charge of the commissariat but I never was able to get any refreshment there. The only thing I remember getting the whole week was a ration of two thin slices of dry bread and quarter of a mess tin of vegetable soup made from a powder. One small packet of this powder was put into a mess tin of hot water and was divided between four men. I suppose if I kicked up a row I

I could have got more but I never bothered much about food so long as I'd something to keep me occupied. I've been told there was any amount of food of all sorts left to burn in the Post Office and nobody could understand why Desmond Fitzgerald was so niggardly regarding its distribution.

Some time in the early hours of Friday morning George Plunkett told me to lie down and try to get some sleep. He arranged some sacks under a bench at which he was standing and I lay down on them. I was terribly tired with pains in all my muscles. I was lying down half asleep and half awake when my brother Micheál came to me and told me Pearse wanted me to go across to Jacob's with a message to Tom McDonagh. I was tired when I lay down but when I tried to get up I was full of pains and so stiff I could hardly move. I told my brother I'd try but I was afraid I'd hardly be able to make it. When he saw the state I was in he said he'd go and tell Pearse and would volunteer to go in my stead. He went away then and that was the last I saw of him for a long time. He told me afterwards that he had an awful job getting to Jacob's. The British military were everywhere. Several times he had to climb over walls to escape them. He had to go by all sorts of backward places but he eventually got there and remained with McDonagh and MacBride till the surrender. I remained where I was under the counter for some time and it was not very long until I felt rested and all right again.

Some time during the early part of that day I was playing a game of whist with a young chap named Christy

Byrne and two others. I forget who the others were. I remembered their names for a long time but within the last couple of years things that remained in my memory as clear as crystal up till then have faded from my memory. However, we were playing a game of whist when O'Rahilly came to me and said "Seamus, come here". I grabbed my rifle and stood up to go to him, but he said "Leave your rifle there, I want you to come upstairs". I left my rifle down and went with him. He then told me that an incendiary bomb had struck the roof and set it on fire. I went with him to the top of the building. What was called the instrument room was on the top floor. It consisted of an enormously large room covered entirely with a glass roof and contained all the telegraph instruments, at each of which in normal times a telegraphist was seated to receive and dispatch the telegrams to, I suppose, all parts of the world. When we got to the roof the wooden framework was on fire. It didn't look much of a fire. There was no blaze and the wisp of white smoke coming from it was not much more than you'd see coming from a cigarette. We got a hose out through the skylight and played water on it. There was not much water, the pressure was very bad. After a while the wisp of smoke appeared to be getting bigger instead of smaller. I told O'Rahilly I thought it was getting worse. "There's more smoke now" I said. "I don't think that's smoke" said O'Rahilly, "I think it's steam". "No" said I "It's too dark for steam". We then got all the fire extinguishers in the place and tried them but it was no use. The smoke got greater

and after a while there was a tiny blaze. We were out on the glass roof of the P.O. all this time except when we got down for something to help quell the fire, O'Rahilly and I and some Volunteers, not more, I'm sure, than about half a dozen, and were completely exposed to the enemy fire. As soon as we saw the first little blaze I said to O'Rahilly there was one important thing to be done at once. All the home-made grenades and bombs (I think it was Brian O'Higgins who was responsible for the manufacture of these and their distribution and use) were on the top floor of the P.O. ready for the short fuses to be ignited and the bombs thrown at the enemy if they attempted to take the P.O. by assault. I said to O'Rahilly "we'd better get them all down to the cellars before the fire gets any hotter". The O'Rahilly asked me to look after that. I got a few fellows together, about half a dozen Citizen Army men, and they, with the assistance of some of the prisoners (I'll tell about them presently) got them all down to the basement. It was a long carry from the top of the building down to the ground floor, then across a courtyard, in through a door and down again until the bottom was reached. The prisoners were mostly the guard who had been placed on the P.O. by the British Military authorities but some of them were officers and men in uniform who had only been in the P.O. on ordinary P.O. business. I can remember two of them. One appeared to be a decent type of lad who told me he came from Tallaght, Co. Dublin. The other was a member of the R.I.C. who had joined up. He was a dark-visaged, vicious looking, cowardly fellow, who, I was afterwards told, said a lot of vile things about us and our treatment of the prisoners. Our

treatment of prisoners compares very favourably with the treatment we got from the British when we fell into their hands. But about the bombs! Our fellows did not carry any of them. The prisoners did that; our fellows only told them what to do and saw that they did it. Before half the bombs were down the fire had a terrible grip of the top of the building and pieces of flaming material were flying about, particularly down into the courtyard across which the bombs were being carried. The look of the R.I.C. man was terrible at this time. His eyes were starting from his head, he was pale and terror-stricken. He was afraid of the bombs he was carrying. He was afraid to cross the courtyard with its rain of fire, but he was more afraid of the young Citizen Army man who was urging him on with a forty-five stuck in his back. When we had got that job done the top floor had to be evacuated. I returned to my place on the ground floor. Pearse said to me that he'd been told by a P.O. engineer that the next floor was fire proof and that the fire could not come down any further. I said I didn't believe that. I'd always taken an interest in building construction, had done a course in the school of art and as far as I could learn from reading and enquiries a fire-proof building was a thing of the remote future. The P.O. garrison during all this time was perfectly cool and collected. Although I did hear a couple of fellows saying that while they didn't mind giving up their lives for the cause, they never anticipated being burned to death.

The one man above all others I had the greatest sympathy for at this time was Tom Clarke. I thought to

myself - here is a man who has spent the best part of his life in British prisons under the most terrible conditions and after a few short years of comparative tranquility he has to go through this. I'd have given anything to see him safe from it all and living the normal happy life which he had more than earned. But it was not to be.

Some time afterwards O'Rahilly came to me and said he was taking a detachment to try and reach Williams and Woods factory. He shook hands with me and bid me good-bye and then he said "I wonder do those fellows still think we're afraid of them" meaning, of course, the British.

During the week, and particularly this day, I had lost all count of time, but some time after it became apparent that the Post Office was doomed Pearse came to me and said that there was a sniper on one of the roofs in Henry St. who was picking off any of our fellows who tried to leave the P.O. by the Henry St. door. He asked me would I try to get him and I said I would. I went into a room beside the Henry St. door and took up a position at the window. This was on the ground floor; all the upper floors were then aflame and I could not see the roofs on the opposite side of the street very well and, consequently, could not see your man, but I put a few shots near where I thought he might be and waited for results. I heard no more shots and waited patiently in that room for a very long time. It seemed like hours. Eventually Pearse came in. "I was nearly forgetting you, Seamus" said he. "They are all gone. We are the only ones left now". I went

with him then to the side door and found I was one of the last six left in the Post Office - Pearse, George Plunkett, myself and three others whose names I remembered until some time ago but which I've now forgotten. We walked quietly across Henry St. and into Henry Place (I think that's what it's called) till we came to a sort of an elbow. This corner appeared to be under continuous machine gun fire and our people were watching an opportunity to run across the danger spot in ones and twos. When it came to our turn Pearse sent me across in front of him and he came behind me. I had just got across when I heard Pearse stumble and fall. I thought he had been hit and ran back to help him but he was all right. He had struck his foot against a stone and tripped. I think he was the last across. The turn from Henry Place into Moore Lane was to the left, so that when we had negotiated the corner we proceeded for a few yards and found ourselves at the side door of one of the Moore St. houses. We went into that house and found that those who preceded us had broken holes in the walls of this and the other houses in Moore St., making a passage up the street through the houses until we came to another lane or passage through which we did not go. Nearly all the rooms in the houses we went through were occupied by our forces. I felt very sorry for the people who lived in these houses. By going into them we were bringing death and destruction to the inhabitants, though we tried to make things as easy as we could. The floors in those houses were not at the same level, so that when we broke through the wall on a landing of one house

we often found ourselves a good distance above the floor of the next, and mostly we would find we had burst from a hall or landing into a living or bedroom where frightened people were huddled together wondering what would happen to them. In one of these rooms there was an elderly woman and her son, a chap in his early twenties, huddled over a tiny fire. When we burst in she started abusing the son. "It's out helping these men you should be" she said, "instead of sitting here as you are". It was fairly dark by this time and not long afterwards we had to grope our way. The firing was going on all the time and a number of our men were wounded, as well as some of the inhabitants of the houses. Seamus Donegan, an ambulance man and one of the Liverpool crowd, told me that a girl in a room that he was in was struck by a bullet. In the dark he was groping about to find out what was wrong with her. He thought he put his fingers into her mouth as he thought he felt her teeth, but when he struck a match he found that it was through a hole in her skull he had put his fingers and, of course, she was then quite dead. John King, another of the Liverpool contingent, got a bullet through his hip and was lying on the floor bleeding and, I suppose, partly unconscious, being kicked and trampled on by men passing to and fro. I stumbled over him myself, but instead of passing on I struck a match and found him in the condition I've described. I got assistance and had him bandaged up, and I'm happy to say he survived and lived to get married and rear a family. Another chap, Murray, got a bullet through the calf of his leg.

During the night the Executive Council held a meeting. I was in the passage a short distance from the door of the room in which the meeting was being held. Pearse came out once and called for Seán McLoughlin, one of the Fianna, or Irish Boy Scouts. When Seán came Pearse said to him: "I've been instructed, Seán, by the Executive Council to inform you that they have appointed you Commandant General of all the Dublin forces vice James Connolly who is wounded". Seán thanked Pearse and then took over command. On another occasion I heard Pearse tell Leo Henderson that he had been promoted to the rank of Captain. Before it was quite dark I saw an old man come out of a shop on the opposite side of the street. No sooner did he appear than a bullet from one of the 18th Royal Irish who were manning a barricade at the end of the street struck him and he fell to the ground. It was evident that he was mortally wounded but he was not dead. He remained there all night and for hours it was terrible to hear his cries "Water, water, give me a drink of water". It went on for hours until eventually his voice got weaker and finally died away. Later when daylight came a little girl, about 4 or 5 years, came out of the shop and started bawling "Mammy, mammy, my grand-dad is dead". She kept repeating this over and over again. Her mother was inside the door calling her in and afraid to go our herself. She expected to see the child shot at any moment and could do nothing to prevent it. The 18th Royal Irish, a regiment of Irishmen in the British Army, had shot at everything that moved in the street, and at such short range their shooting was deadly.

I saw three men attempting to cross the street killed by three shots, 1, 2, 3, like that. It's a wonder they did not shoot the little girl but they would surely have shot the mother.

On Saturday morning it was decided to make a bayonet charge on the barricade at the end of the street. I was one of those selected to take part in the charge. As I mentioned before, we had had little or nothing to eat during the week and were being kept up only by excitement, but on Saturday morning those selected for the bayonet charge were each to be given two raw eggs to sustain us in the effort. Before the eggs reached me the charge was called off. This was lucky for us. We would all have been shot down and killed long before we reached the barricade and, in any case, none of us knew anything about bayonet fighting. All I had ever learned was high guards, point, middle guards point etc. and how to prepare to receive cavalry, and I doubt if any of the others knew any more than I did. I was glad to get out of that bayonet charge and I was glad I did not get the two raw eggs. They would only have made me sick.

The story of the proceedings that led up to the surrender is now well known. I dare say that Miss Elizabeth Farrell, a great friend of mine, has made her statement. She knows all about that. She has a good memory and is one not likely to leave out any essential details. She was trusted fully by Pearse and all the leaders. We knew something was going on, but until we were called together by Seán McDermott and told by him about the surrender we had nothing definite. He

He told us of the negotiations and that terms had been agreed upon, "and" said he, with tears in his eyes, "the terms are unconditional surrender". He had a word of praise for all who had taken part in the fight and gave us all he had to give, a spoonful of syrup each out of the fruit tins in one of the shops we were occupying. We were then formed up in Moore St., numbered off, given various words of command by Seán McLoughlin - "form fours, right turn, left turn, 'bout turn etc." Finally, quick march to the end of Moore St., then left wheel and left wheel again". When we reached O'Connell St. we marched up the middle of O'Connell St. until the head of the column reached the end of the street when we were halted and the British took over. There was a formidable array of British "brass hats'. You'd think it was the end of the Great War and the Germans were surrendering. They had nearly as many generals as we had men. At least, they looked like generals to me, but then I'm not very well up in military affairs. Eventually we were ordered to lay down our arms and equipment in the street and take so many paces away from them. The guard of British soldiers was far more numerous than the prisoners. I was in the line of prisoners on the Gresham Hotel side of the street. The prisoners were standing in the channel facing the houses and the guards were standing on the footpath facing the prisoners. Those in front of me were the 18th Royal Irish, and the one immediately in front of me told me he had been a Volunteer, I suppose a Redmond Volunteer, but I didn't ask him. He said we should have waited till they came back from France and they would have

been in the fight. He asked me where we got the ammunition for the Howth guns. I said it came in with the guns, but he said not the ammunition we'd been using. He then took a round out of his pocket and showed it to me. "That's what came in with the guns, but what you've been using is quite different". I believe he was right but I hadn't a Howth gun. I had a Martini Enfield, single loading, .303 and plenty of factory made ammunition. After some time we were marched up and placed inside the railings on the little grass plot in front of the Rotunda hospital where we were left all night. We had not much rest that night as the space was too small to accommodate us and, in addition, a crowd of seoinins called "The South Irish Horse" kept flashing torches at us and poking rifles and clicking the locks every few minutes, until at last one of the sentries who could stick it no longer shouted "Take no notice of these fellows, boys. If one of you had a gun the whole lot of them would run like the devil". After that they came back no more. We were kept there until some time on Sunday morning. We were in the hands of the British from early on Saturday, (I don't know how early as I'd lost track of time) but for all that time we had no sanitary accommodation, no food, no drink of water. We were then formed up and started to march to Richmond (now Keogh) Barracks at Inchicore - about four miles away. Our guard now was the North Staffords. When passing through Lower O'Connell St. a voice from somewhere shouted "are we downhearted" and a chap named Murtagh who was immediately in front of me shouted "No", which was no sooner out of his mouth

than he received a prod of a bayonet from a vicious looking fellow with a thin black moustache, a sergeant in the North Staffords. It was a very warm morning with the sun shining brightly. The streets were deserted until we came within sight of the barracks when we were greeted with screeches of abuse from a crowd of women who were dependants or followers of the British soldiery. When we reached the barrack square we were left standing for hours in the heat of the sun which, in addition to being without food or rest, began to take its effect on our fellows. They began to faint, collapsing where they stood, first one, then another, then two or three together until I'm sure dozens were lying on the ground, and the British army were scrounging around "You might as well give me anything you have chum, you'll be shot and won't need it" and so on until at last we were brought into the gymnasium. We could lie around and get a little bit of rest here, but not for long. An officer took his place at the door of the gymnasium. He had a table and chair in the doorway and was surrounded by 'G' men. Some of these 'G' men were going through the prisoners and picking out the ones they hoped to see hanged. The Volunteers were taken one at a time to the doorway where they were interrogated by the officer who took down their answers. Some he passed through the barrack square, others were sent back to stand at the wall at the far end. It appeared to me, knowing them all as I did, that the ones sent back were 'in for it'. I thought at the time they'd probably be shot even without a courtmartial. When I came to the door he asked me my name and address

which I gave him, but I refused to give him any further information. He told me to get back to the wall, but just as I was going away and when the officer had his head down writing, one of the 'G' men pointed with his thumb to the small space behind the officer's chair and I quietly slipped by. I was then put with a number of others into a large room, probably a dormitory. Harry Boland was in the same room. We were then given a small tin of bully beef and a couple of hard biscuits. I forget how I got the tin partly open, I know we were provided with no means of opening them, but I managed it somehow. I scraped out the beef in small quantities with my finger and managed to eat it, but it was terribly salty and I'd nothing to drink. However, I felt a little better after it. The British were bustling in and out every few minutes, officers and sergeants. I heard one officer, referring to Harry Boland, say: "it's a pity we haven't that fellow and a few more like him with us. He'd make a fine officer". There must have been another check up for Harry Boland and Seán McDermott appear to have got through on the first but they were both held for courtmartial as everyone now knows. I was told that Seán was actually among a contingent about to be marched off to the North Wall for deportation when he was picked out by a D.M.P. man, one of the 'G' Division. He was afterwards courtmartialled and shot. Later in the evening we were marched down to the North Wall and put aboard a cattle boat in the place where the cattle are held when being exported. We had no place to lie but on the corrugated floor, and the big receptacles out of which the cattle drank

were filled with water, out of which we were permitted to drink. I was terribly thirsty from eating the bully beef and kept filling and drinking out of the water bottle, which was the only part of my equipment I kept. It was very dark and all our fellows were lying down, so that each time I went across to fill my bottle I was stumbling over them and the drips from the cover of the bottle were falling on them. They passed some uncomplimentary remarks, but I was so thirsty I did not care but kept coming for more. By the time we reached the other side I was in a sort of daze. We were put on a train and brought somewhere, I did not know where. When we got out of the train we were marched through a town. It must have been fairly late by then as there were crowds of people on the streets. We were called some nasty names, and opinions were loudly expressed as to what they would like to happen to us. There was one young man in particular shouting, calling us names and saying "hang the so and sos" or words to that effect. One of the officers in charge of our guard got fed up with him. He went over to him and said "It would be better for you if you followed the example of these men. They were out fighting for their country. Instead of being here calling them names you should be out fighting for yours". At that time Europe was in the middle of what came afterwards to be called World War No. 1 and every able-bodied man was expected to be out in the fighting line. Eventually we reached the prison gate and were marched inside. We were there for some weeks before I learned we were in Stafford Jail.

When we arrived at the jail some were placed in cells on the ground and others higher up. The landings were known by letters and the cells by numbers. There were four or five landings, I forget which. I was on the landing lettered F. and the number of my cell was 27., so that for some time afterwards I ceased to have a name and was known as F.27. When I got into my cell I was for the moment glad of its quietness and cleanliness. I had hardly got into the cell when I heard a thunderous roar "shut that door". I turned round and seeing the massiveness of the door, pushed against it with all my might . Instead of being hard to close it went to with an enormous bang which shook the walls of the cell. The hinges were, apparently, kept well oiled. I next took off my coat to hang it on a hook in the wall which I thought was there for that purpose. It was only then I discovered that it was a bell-pull and not a coat hanger for I could hear a bell ringing loudly in the distance. After a short time the cell door opened and a British soldier, a sergeant, put hn his head and asked me what I wanted. I said "I'd like some water". "There is water in the tin on that shelf" he said. "I know" said I, "but there is dust in it". I didn't know what else to say but I hadn't even looked at the water tin. However, he brought me to the tap near the lavatories where I emptied and re-filled my tin. The cell contained a bed-board, some pieces of tweed to be used as blankets, the water tin, which was kept on a small shelf in one of the corners, a stool and a brown chamber. As well as the shelf which held the water tin there was another shelf for use as a table. I just left off my coat and lay down on the bed-board. I was delighted to be at ease

and rested there until the time came for supper. Supper that night consisted of a tin of something made out of oatmeal. It was too thick for gruel and too thin for porridge. It had neither salt nor sugar in it. I'd no spoon with which to take it out of the tin. I tried to drink it by throwing back my head and pouring it down, but some of it just fell on my face like a poultice and I had to scrape it off with my fingers. I then just put my hand into the tin and took it out in small handfulls which I got into my mouth and swallowed. I rolled myself up in the so-called blankets and slept very soundly throughout that night in spite of the hardness of my couch. I forgot to mention that we were searched very thoroughly several times in Richmond Barracks, but that was nothing to the searching we got in Stafford. We were left naked in our cells while our clothes were taken and searched at their leisure. In spite of all this searching a tiny bit of pencil which had worked its way into the lining of my jacket escaped their attention, and I made use of it later on to pass the time while we were in solitary confinement. One thing I did was to improvise a pack of cards to enable me to play patience. I got a square, or maybe two, of toilet paper and tore it up into 52 tiny pieces, on each of which I wrote the name of a playing card like this: 1H, 2H, 3H etc. for the heart suit and 1D,2D,3D etc. for the diamond suit, and so on until I had the deck complete. It took me a long time to prepare the deck but it took me longer to shuffle it. I don't think I ever finished a game but it kept me occupied. Then I made a sort of sundial on the window ledge. I knew when it was midday

because precisely at 12 noon the signal for dinner was sounded. It might have been a bell, but I think it was a bugle call. So one day while the sun was shining I waited for the signal and as soon as it sounded I made a mark on the window ledge where the centre bar of the window made a shadow. It was easy then to mark off the hours, half hours and quarters. It was owing to this that I knew when the summer time first came into operation. At first when I heard the signal I said to myself "they are giving us our dinner an hour too early to-day", but on thinking it over I remembered the efforts that were being made to bring in a daylight saving bill and I said to myself "it has got through at last".

I was not left without something to go on top of the bed-board for the whole of the time I was in Stafford. It might have been a couple of weeks after we arrived there when I was provided with a sort of mattress I think they called it a biscuit to go on the board, and I was provided with a spoon and a sort of knife and fork, made of tin it seemed. The rations were not very plentiful but were sufficient. We washed our own clothes and were allowed frequent, not daily, baths. We were allowed about an hour's exercise, walking around in a ring, once a day. There were a few happenings during our time of solitary confinement that stand out in my memory. Once we were paraded and a couple of men came in and started peering at us one by one. We knew at once who they were: they had Dublin Castle stamped all over them. We started to booh them as loudly as we could. It was evident to us that they were on the prowl seeking

out more for the hangman or firing squad. They were trembling with fear and were as pale as ghosts and their eyes looked like those of demons. They went off without pointing a finger at any of us, and when they had gone the commandant gave a harangue telling us we had given a shameful exhibition. "You do not know" he said, "what these poor men were looking for. They have probably lost some relatives near and dear to them in the rebellion and were trying to find out what had become of them". We just laughed loudly and derisively.

Another interlude was when Larry Ginnell, M.P., got permission from the British Parliament to inspect the prisons and see how the prisoners were getting on. Of course when he came to us we did not know what he wanted, but we knew Larry and were quite satisfied that he came as a friend. The most outstanding thing that happened, however, was when we were paraded and told that it had come to the knowledge of His Majesty's Government that some innocent people who had no part in the rebellion had been arrested and were now in prison. It had, therefore, been decided to give these people an opportunity to secure their release. A form of queries had been prepared and anyone who felt he had been wrongfully arrested could secure a copy (X) which he could fill in, giving the particulars asked for, signing and giving the name and address of a guarantor. We were given no opportunity of consulting one another but were marched back to our cells. However, I got a chance of speaking a few words to one of our fellows who was doing orderly when the tea was being served. I told him to

(X) See Appendix

get word around to all the boys to do nothing until we had an opportunity to discuss the matter. I said it might be only a dodge to separate us from the leaders to make it appear that the leaders had deceived us so that they could be killed with impunity. The leaders, or some of them, had probably been killed by that time, but we did not know it. I don't know whether my word got around but nobody, with one exception, made any move to get or fill in the forms. The one exception was a Citizen Army man named Dwyer. His form never went on. We got it back before it left the building. Dwyer was a tough customer. He told me afterwards about the form, including the name of the person he had given as one who would make himself responsible for his good behaviour. The name he gave was that of Johnny Barton, a notorious member of the D.M.P. who, by the way, was shot dead afterwards when the war was resumed. "Why did you give Johnny Barton?" I said. "Sure he won't recommend you". "Of course he will" said Dwyer, "he knows me very well". "How does he know you?" said I. "Why wouldn't he know me?" said Dwyer, "wasn't it he who arrested me during the strike when I threw that policeman into the Liffey". I almost forgot to mention that the commandant gave warning when telling us about the forms, of the pains and penalties awaiting anyone who took part in the rebellion who tried to secure his release by filling up one of the forms, but after a day or two when he saw that nothing was happening we were again paraded and told anyone might get and fill in a form but they were to be sure and stick to the truth. Again nothing happened. Another parade took place and what I suppose they thought

were further concessions were made to try to induce us to fill in the forms, which he now referred to as "release forms". This went on day after day until he almost got down on his knees begging us to fill them in. Finally he brought us in one by one to his office. I suppose what happened to me happened to all the others. In my case he told me he had orders from Whitehall to get all the forms signed and that he had to obey orders. He said that if I was not prepared to fill in the form as it was I could alter or amend it any way I liked, and would I not sign it and get him out of a hobble. I told him that as far as I could see the form was not intended to help any prisoners to secure their release but to obtain information for the British Government. By putting all the answers together they would be able to gain information which it would be against our interests for them to have. "But you can alter it any way to suit you" said he. "Exactly" said I, "but this questionnaire has been drafted by the best legal brains in Britain and who am I, without legal or other training, to pit my brains against them. I tell you what I'll do" said I, "give me the form, let me send it to my people in Dublin so that they can get legal opinion on it. I'll sign it then if they recommend me to do so". My object, of course, was to let the people at home know what was going on. But he told me he had no authority to do so. He eventually tried to solve his difficulty by asking us to sign a slip which read "I've been given an opportunity to sign a form respecting my release but have refused to do so". We refused to sign that also but an alternative was suggested and signed by

Mick Collins and some others, I don't know how many, which read "I've been given an opportunity to sign the attached form but refused to do so". I refused to sign anything. I told him that the slip when signed could be attached to anything either by him or someone else and I was not prepared to take the risk. This was rather rude but I could think of nothing more polite to say which would convey my meaning.

The weather during Easter Week was exceptionally fine and warm for the time of year and it continued bright and warm for at least some weeks afterwards. I remember one day during our solitary confinement I could hardly breathe, the cell appeared to be very badly ventilated. I lay face downward on the flagged floor of the cell with my mouth wide open gasping for air, but later in the evening when it became cooler I felt all right. After some time, I'd say about a month but I'm not sure of this, the commandant made an announcement that he had received instructions from Whitehall that we were no longer to be kept in solitary confinement. We could have our cell doors opened or closed at will. We could visit one anothers' cells. We would be allowed unrestricted exercise in a sort of railed in compounds. We would be allowed to smoke and we could write home and receive letters and parcels. The prison consisted of a number of buildings. The one in which we were situated was a crescent shaped structure called "the crescent hall". The compound in which we were permitted to exercise was attached to another building called "the new hall". It was here that those picked up after we had been sent away were incarcerated. The

prisoners from both these buildings were allowed to mix freely. Barney Mellows, who was a "new hall" occupant, used to make a joke of this, saying "I'm not a rebel, I'm only a suspect". Two others there were Irwin and Wm. Sears, owner and editor, I believe, respectively of the "Enniscorthy Echo". About this time leaders were appointed and I found that I had been appointed leader of the left-half of F. landing. Jim Ryan, now Minister of Health and of Social Welfare, was, I think, leader of the right half. The three I can remember, without looking up the names in my autograph book, of those on the right-half landing are Jim Ryan, Mick Collins and Micheál Dore. There appeared to be a very close friendship between those three and they were nearly always to be found together. Mick Collins was a very good natured type. He always appeared to have a stock of cigarettes and other things in his cell and would never see any fellow short of anything that he could give him. If anyone was short of a smoke without telling him he would be mad and give the fellow a good telling off. In spite of that he was the butt of a lot of fellows there. You see, the sort he was, he wanted to be best at everything, and the fellows would combine to make it appear that one of them had beaten him. At football they would oftener than not miss the ball and let Mick take the kick instead. At "filly-folks tail" when Mick's side was down they would all pile on Mick's back and count 24 very slowly to force Mick to give way under their weight, and if one of them slipped down and touched the ground with his foot they would all swear it was "weak horses", meaning that Mick had been unable

to bear their weight, even his own side would be against him, and so it was in all the games they played, Mick being entirely unconscious of the fact that they were all ganging up on him. He was serious about the games himself and thought others were serious too. He was very good humoured through all this and I never saw him loose his temper. But, of course, all this was in fun, even though it was a bit over robust. Mick was an extraordinary man. He appeared to be very strong and was always full of energy. His language was also vigorous. In the most pleasant manner possible he would call anyone the most foul names. "How are you, you old so and so" was one of his forms of greeting, only he did not say "so and so"

Things went on very pleasantly from then. We had our outdoor exercise in the daytime and held concerts in the evening. When these evening concerts had been going on for some time the commandant called us together and asked could we not be a little less noisy. He said we could be heard outside and that people were congregating there to listen to the singing. As far as I can recollect his appeal had very little effect. Another amusement the fellows had was to run around the railing surrounding the top landing holding a stick against the railing as they ran, to make a noise in imitation of machine-gun fire, and occasionally they would drop one of the bed boards over the railing which was supposed to make a sound like the explosion of a big gun.

One day I received a parcel containing a tin of coffee and milk. There was a civilian warder in the prison, a tradesman I think. I showed him the tin, saying

"What use is this to me? I've no means of making coffee here". "There's a small gas stove down in the Main Hall" said he. "You could heat water there in your tin and make the coffee". "Thanks very much" said I, and proceeded to do as he suggested. My next door neighbour, F.28, Paddy McGuirk, who shared everything he had with me, helped me to enjoy the coffee. This went on for a few days all right, but one day when I went down to boil the water I found the stove was being used by another fellow with a long queue awaiting their turn. From that on it was almost impossible to get near the stove, so I said to Paddy McGuirk that we'd have to think of another plan, and I thought of one. The cells were lighted at night by means of a gas jet in a little niche outside the cells. There was then a thick glass set in the wall through which the cell was lighted. I contrived a means of hanging the can of water over the gas jet, which I lighted and so managed to heat the water. It was slow but it worked.
In a few days there was hardly a gas jet in the building without a tin over it. This led to a somewhat amusing incident. The things I've been calling tins were not really tins but were made of some softer metal, so that when one was put over a gas jet without having water in it it melted. There was a bridge across each landing about the middle of it, and there was a gas jet on each bridge. One day a fellow hung his tin over the gas jet on the top landing and put a rasher in it to fry. I was in my cell with the door open when I heard a terrible roar. I went out to see what it was, and on looking over the rails I saw poor Joe Reilly (R.I.P.) holding his head

and groaning. The bottom of the tin had melted and the molten metal had fallen down on Joe when he was passing under the bridge. This heating of water led to a campaign of terrible destruction. Firstly the brackets began to break under the strain, then the lads began to pull down brass fittings to make souvenirs, the polishing of brasses was discontinued and bed-boards were broken, and I was told by one of the last contingent to leave the place that the prison looked a wreck when he was leaving it. When we arrived there the place was spick and span, everything was shining and for a while our fellows kept it up, and then the wrecking instinct became uppermost with the result I've mentioned. There was an iron step in front of the cell door, the floor of the cell being below that of the landing, and these iron steps were rubbed with an oil rag every morning to keep them from getting rusty. At first when we went there our rations were left on this step. The cell door was then opened, the rations taken quickly inside and the door banged shut again. When I picked up my ration of bread I found there was a black oily substance on it. I endured this a couple of times and then thought it wasn't good enough. The next time the rations came round, as soon as the door was opened instead of stooping for the ration I put my foot outside the door. "Excuse me" said I, to the Sergeant "the rations provided for us are meagre enough as you can see; by putting it down on the dirty door-step you are making it even smaller than it is for I cannot eat the dirty outside of it. I'd like you to hand it to me in future instead of leaving it on the step". "I'm sorry" said he, giving me a clean ration out of the basket and he

continued to do this for the remainder.

And then the exodus began. A certain number were taken each day to the station and sent off to Frongoch. I was in about the fourth batch. I was told a very funny story about one of the prisoners - Seamus Robinson. I was told he was to have gone in the first batch but he was naked, his clothes were completely worn away. The rough usage had been too much for them. The commandant decided to provide him with a top coat to cover his nakedness while marching through the town and asked him to sign a receipt for it. Seamus refused. He said he'd sign nothing. The commandant argued with him for a considerable time, but he still refused. Eventually the contingent had to go without him and he went back to his cell. I believe this went on every day until only the last contingent was left. Eventually Seamus got the coat without signing for it. The commandant gave it to him in the presence of some members of the prison staff who signed as witnesses. When we arrived at Frongoch we were marched from the station into a compound surrounded by a high barbed wire fence. There were two camps, the north camp and the south camp. The south camp was on the site of an old distillery with some permanent buildings and some temporary ones. I was amongst those who were sent to the north camp. It consisted of a large enclosure surrounded, as I've said, by a high barbed wire fence. Inside the fence there were a number of long wooden huts arranged in rows or streets like streets of detached wooden bungalows. When we entered we were paraded before the Commandant.

The adjutant and the sergeant major were also there. The commandant made a long speech explaining all the rules of the camp, telling us what we might do and warning us of the things we might not do. He particularly drew attention to a wire stretched on posts around the camp, about 6 feet inside the barbed wire fence, which he called the "death wire". He warned that if any prisoner approached too closely to the "death wire" he would be shot. The sergeant major then spoke of the things we were not allowed to keep in our possession, I forget what they were but I know he repeatedly mentioned "jack-knives". He did this so often that we called him "jack-knives" ever after. The commandant we called "buckshot", I don't know why, and there was a staff sergeant, a low-sized fair, stoutish Welshman who was called "gun-rag". I was placed in hut 19 and was for a while leader of the hut. We settled in at once, were fairly comfortable and things were not too bad. We paraded outside the huts each morning for inspection. The huts inside were cleaned and tidied up and we kept ourselves as neat as we could under the circumstances. The commandant, followed by his staff, came around and inspected everything, praising and condemning as he thought fit. On one morning we were all lined up for inspection, we on our side facing those on the other side of the street who were facing us. Seamus Robinson was housed in the hut immediately facing mine. At that time he had a big mop of black hair and a big black whiskers sticking out straight all around his face. He looked like an enormous golly-wog, particularly when he started, with the help of a companion, to act as one. The companion caught hold of his hair and Seamus started

going up and down by bending his knees and keeping his body straight from the hips up. The timing was so good that you'd think he was hanging out of a piece of elastic and being jerked up and down by his pal. Naturally when we saw this we all began to laugh. The commandant looked round but your men were immediately standing to attention as solemn as mutes. As soon as the commandant turned back they were at it again, and again when he looked round they were at attention. This went on for so long that we were almost sick with the laughing. We got along like this without much trouble until they began sending those who had filled in the so-called release forms in batches to London. As far as I could gather those imprisoned in other gaols had mostly, if not all, filled them in. The Stafford prisoners were the only ones who stood out entirely against it. This was one of the usual mean tricks played by the English. Our men were first kept in gaol in solitary confinement, then given a comparative amount of freedom, and again kept for a couple of days confinement in a convict prison in London before the inquisition. At first those sent to London were all from the south camp. They would be away for a few days and then return, and after some time lists were being read out of those to be released. They were released and sent home immediately. In due course so many were released from the south camp that it was thought inadvisable to keep the two camps going. We were accordingly removed to the south camp. As soon as I reached the south camp I saw my two brothers Peter and Paddy. They were just leaving so I had no opportunity

of speaking to them except to say "hello". At length the time came when I was sent to London myself. I enjoyed the trip although it was very tiring. We were, of course, sent to London under guard, one armed soldier to each man. My guard told me he had been in Dublin at the Rising. He said he'd been at Mount St. bridge and that inside one hour 400 of their fellows had been knocked over. It was nice going through London on the top of a bus and seeing all the streets and shops. Some houses we passed by had a lot of girls looking out of the windows and shouting "up Dublin" as we passed. It was very heartening. I was landed in Wormwood Scrubbs jail. I was put into a gloomy and, what I thought, filthy cell. Its former occupant who had, apparently, only left it that morning, had scratched his name and two dates on the wall. The date he came in was there and also the date he left - that morning. He had been there for fifteen years. I don't know where the interview or interrogation took place. I was brought somewhere in a vehicle and into some sort of a building. I didn't know London and have only a hazy recollection of this. I was ushered into a room where a solicitor named McDonnell interviewed me and started to give me instructions what to say. He explained that he had been instructed by the people at headquarters in Dublin to advise us. I told him I had decided to say nothing and to refuse to answer any questions. He argued against that and said the advice of the people in Dublin who, being outside, knew better than we did what was best, was to try and get out as soon as possible as there was work for us to do outside which was of more importance than remaining in gaol.

I left him without agreeing but afterwards I thought that perhaps he was right, so that at the interview I answered most of the questions put to me but was determined to tell no lies. I answered their questions in accordance with what I've written here but gave no information except to answer directly each question put. I was not one of those released as a result of the interview. Things appeared to be going nicely in the camp for some time. There was a camp council of which I was a member. This was not a thing recognised by the British authorities but one to arrange our own private and national affairs. We got together a library and I was appointed librarian and, as I said, things were going nicely when something sinister happened. One of our prisoners was called out and told there was a visitor to see him at the railway station. He did not come back but we took no notice of that on account of so many releases recently. Then another couple, then another, and then we noticed that those taken away had been resident in England before the Rising. Then the trouble began. Up to then we had been keeping up all the discipline of the camp, answering our names and numbers, attending parades, keeping our bed boards well scrubbed etc. But as soon as we recognised what was happening we decided on a plan of action (or inaction). An instruction went out from the camp council that nobody should answer his name or number in future. The next time a name was called out there was silence. The name was called over and over again, but there was still silence. And then a warning was issued that anyone refusing to answer when his name or number was

called would be sent to the north camp under punishment and would not be allowed to send letters or receive letters or parcels. The names of all were then called out and, I'm sorry to say, a good number responded. Those who failed to answer took up their belongings and walked up to the north camp. From that on the rebels refused to do anything they didn't like. They wouldn't parade for inspection, they wouldn't wash their bed-boards, they would do nothing. We were shifted up and down a few times and eventually were landed in the south camp where we remained until our release on the eve of Christmas.

Some time before Hallow Eve I met with a bit of an accident. A few of the heavy weights like Denis Daly, who was one of them, were sitting on a mess-room form, one of the folding-up kind with an iron rod underneath to keep it in an upright position when required for sitting on. They were jogging up and down on the form when it collapsed. I, unfortunately, had my leg under the form when it collapsed. When they got up and I got out my leg I was feeling bad. My knee swelled out to the size of a small football. Jim Ryan, now Dr. Ryan, Minister for Health, was there and he looked at it. He said it was a miracle my leg was not broken. But my knee was very bad and I was unable to walk. We were not under punishment at this time for the boys had brack and nuts etc. in the Y.M.C.A. hut on Hallow Eve. I was lying in bed not able to move. They brought me some nuts and God knows what else, but Liam Gogan, now curator of the National Museum, sent me up the leg of a roast chicken and a tin of sardines.

The day following Hollow Eve there was a roll call. As before a large number refused to answer but a good few did. The refusers were humped down to the south camp again. This was a bit hard on me as I was only able to go down by putting an arm around the neck of two pals, one on each side, and I had to get others to carry down my kit. Amongst the punishments meted out to us was that of being deprived of medical attention, so that I got no aid for my injured knee and it never got all right again. When we went down to the south camp this time we started a hunger strike. It didn't last long, only three days, but during that time a number of queer things happened. "Jack-knives", the sergeant major, thought, or pretended to think, we objected to preparing and cooking our food and came to us with tears in his eyes saying "It's all right now boys, everything is ready. I've cooked it myself and it's on the table in the mess room ready for you to eat. We won't ask you to do anything but eat it". Then the chaplain, Father Stafford, threatened us with damnation, saying we were committing suicide. But the most harassed man of all was the doctor. He was chasing round all the time trying to examine the fellows to see if anyone was getting weak. I was lying down, it was all I could do, when he came to me. "How are you feeling? said he. "I won't tell you" said I. He wanted to examine me but I wouldn't let him, so he went away. He put the stethoscope on Seán Harford. Seán had been the postman for the Volunteers before the Rising and we called him 'Seán the Post'. Apparently he found something wrong with Seán for he went out for an ambulance, but when he came back Seán wasn't there. He'd slipped away the moment the doctor had turned his

back so that the ambulance men had to go off without him. On another occasion Joe Reilly came in. He had just found a nut, a hazel nut, in his pocket, and he threw it amongst the fellows saying "Here boys, share that between you". The hunger strike, as I've said, lasted only for three days. At the end of that time we were brought again to the north camp. I think the brothers Nunan, Seán and Ernie, were amongst those who were taken from the camp, but I know that Pat and George King and Hughie Thornton were taken. None of those taken away attested. For refusing to serve in the British Army they were treated as conscientious objectors. I forgot to mention that in Stafford prison, besides the two buildings I've mentioned there was another building, I forget its name, in which British conscientious objectors were placed. The term conscientious objector may not now be understood. It was applied to those who for religious or other reasons had an objection to fighting or the taking of human life. Compulsory military service or conscription had been introduced into Great Britain, and when these people were called up they refused to come. They were then arrested, charged and sentenced. They were subjected to all sorts of cruelties and indignities. Some of them were housed in the third of the prison buildings in Stafford. The strange thing I'm coming to is that George and Pat King, who had been in Stafford before being transferred to Frongoch, found themselves again in Stafford but this time amongst the conscientious objectors. There was no need for them to tell us of what they suffered there as we had been witnesses of the

rough treatment meted out to the conscientious objectors while we were there ourselves. During the time we were loose from our cells we'd occasionally drop a few cigarettes here and there, particularly in the wash-house, and we often threw away a cigarette when it was only half-smoked in the compound and we'd now and again lose a few matches. Now in addition to the ceaseless drilling these prisoners underwent and the fatigues necessary to keep the prison ship-shape, they were allotted the task of tidying up the litter made by us in the compound, so that any cigarette butts or matches dropped by us fell into their hands. They would secrete them and use them in their cells or wherever they could while not under observation. After a while the authorities noticed that the prisoners were smoking. I suppose it was the smell of the tobacco which is very hard to hide. However, the commandant warned us not to leave cigarettes, butts or matches lying about. He told us that instead of being a kindness to these prisoners it was inflicting a hardship on them, as whenever they smoked they were invariably found out and severely punished. It was hard to know what to do, and it was back to all this that the poor Kings were sent. I haven't seen Pat King for years, but George, poor fellow, who was on the Republican side in the so-called Civil War was killed in a skirmish on the Leinster Road about 1923. As regards Hughie Thornton, he had a rougher time. I forget what gaol he was brought to but when he arrived he was given a suit of khaki uniform to put on. He refused to do so. They took away his clothes and left him naked in his cell. Each morning

they would throw him in the uniform and he would immediately kick it back to them. This went on all that terrible cold winter until at last the authorities gave in and he was released. When taken from Frongoch he was posted to a certain regiment, so that when he was released from gaol he was sent to the headquarters or depot of that regiment for discharge. When he was leaving the prison he was spoken to by the governor or commandant, who said he hoped he would not hold against him what had happened in the prison. He said he was compelled to do what he had done as part of his duty. He said he admired him so much for sticking to his principles and hoped all the time he would have the strength to stick it to the end. "And now" said he "I'd like to shake the hand of a brave man, if you've no objection". Hughie said "not at all. I've no ill-feeling and shook his hand. When he arrived at the depot of the regiment he was surprised to find all the regiment lined up to greet him. They cheered him and chaired him, offered him all sorts of refreshments and treated him as a hero. It was a great thing that this British move was noticed so soon or a great many of our fellows would have suffered the same as the Kings, Noonan and Hughie Thornton. Hughie Thornton was another killed during the Civil War. He was shot in an ambush in Co. Kilkenny. He was in the National Army.

I think only a couple of days elapsed after we'd returned to the north camp when the trouble started again. In the meantime a somewhat regrettable incident occurred. The doctor who had been fussing around during the hunger strike threw himself into the river Dee, which ran

somewhere near the camp, and was drowned. We were paraded and the commandant made a harangue. He accused us of being guilty of the death of the doctor. He said that, in effect, we were murderers, that our conduct had driven the man insane and to his death. This speech was greeted with boohs and hisses and groans and shouts of "liar", so that when all is said and done I don't think he got the better of the argument. I've just said that the trouble had started again. There was a big parade. The commandant, adjutant and all their staff with an enormous guard came into the camp. All the prisoners were confined to their huts. Each hut was entered separately. The door of the hut was left open while the commandant and the staff were inside and the guard outside. Each man was questioned separately by the adjutant. I suppose the same questions were put to all. The questions put to me were - "What is your name"?. No answer. "Do you refuse to answer"? "Yes". "You admit you have been given an opportunity to answer your name and number but refused to do so". "Yes", and that was the end of my interview. Those who refused to answer were sent back again to the south camp and I think that was the last movement from camp to camp until our general release. We settled down in the south camp then, doing what we pleased and ignoring all orders. I remember one day "gun-rag", the staff sergeant, came in and was talking to me. In the course of his talk he said that he had been in a prisoner of war camp for German prisoners. The commandant of the camp wanted to get out a certain prisoner but the other

prisoners had sheltered him by refusing to answer names or numbers as we were doing. "Do you know what the commandant then did"? said he. "I don't" said I. "What is it?". "He put a gun at the end of the camp, paraded all the prisoners in front of it and told them that if the man he wanted was not given up in five minutes, he would fire the gun into them and blow them all to smithereens. The prisoner was given up". "That's a great idea" said I. "You should get your commandant to do that now and see what will happen". He got up and walked out. Although we did not parade or do things like that the prisoners were very busy wood-carving, macramé, making rugs, polishing stones, making ornaments from the meat bones and sundry work was in full swing. We had no time to wash bed-boards or anything like that. What we did was to break down a partition to where they were stored and get out new ones. There were two vast oak vats in the distillery buildings. These were broken down and provided the material for wood-carving. We had a number of artists who drew the designs - Cathal Mac Dubhghall, Murray, Michael Kelly (a brother of the President, Seán T.), and Frankie Kelly, to mention a few. The bed-boards and tables were used for making boxes. Michael Staines made a grand case, like an attaché case, handle, hinges and everything. I started to praise his workmanship. "Yes" said he, "it will be all right when I put the 'stains' on it". All this time the daily inspection took place. The commandant, his staff and guard would come on and walk around. The prisoners went on with their work and games and took no notice. Some would be

asleep lying on their beds, our hours at that time being very irregular. One morning I happened to be standing near what remained of a table. There was just the top and one leg left when they approached. "Is that all that is left of it"? said the adjutant. "That's all" said I, and then they passed on. At one time I'd have been courtmartialled if even a spot of dirt was found on the table during inspection.

Frongoch is very high up in the Welsh mountains near a place called Bala where there is now a shrine to which pilgrimages go every year to pay homage to Our Lady. On account of its altitude the camp became very cold at the approach of winter. The first fall of snow remained on the ground and became hard, the succeeding falls remaining on top of one another and hardening until I'm sure the depth of the icy snow was not less than a couple of feet. The hardy prisoners, of which I was not one, had a great time then. The weather boards scattered all over the camp for walking on when the ground would be sodden in wet weather were turned upside down and converted into toboggans. About twenty fellows would pile on top of one of these and it would then be pushed down an icy slope. There were dozens of casualties while this was going on. The toboggan might reasonably be expected to hold four, or even six at a pinch, but when about 20 were piled up on it, all on top of one another, it would often fail to keep a straight course and the occupants would be thrown out, suffering various injuries. At one time the authorities suspected a riot when they saw so many limping around with bleeding noses

and black eyes. In spite of their injuries the fellows enjoyed this immensely.

The staff sergeant came in each morning and called out the names and numbers of any to whom parcels or letters had been addressed, but he never got an answer. One morning he called out my name and number and said a telegram had just arrived for me. I, as usual, took no notice but, all the same, I was worried as a telegram would hardly have been sent unless something serious had happened. It was not until the evening of our release that I learned the contents of that telegram. On that evening we were given all our accumulated correspondence and I got my telegram (X) then. It was from my brother Micheál and said "Jane had young son to-day". Áine was what he had written but in course of transmission the name had been changed to Jane. Áine ~~was~~ is my wife. However, I did not bother about that. The news came as a great surprise to me as I had no suspicion anything like that was about to happen. I need hardly say I was delighted to get such good news but was a bit worried as to how they were getting on. In the meantime we were getting on all right in the camp. We had frequent sing-songs, there being some grand singers amongst us and a few very fine musicians. Cathal McDowell, whom I have already mentioned as an artist, was also an accomplished musician. Mick Lynch was another. He became well known as an organist and bandmaster in Dublin and produced at least one opera. But the principal occupation of a large number of fellows was making noise, and the noisiest noise they made was that imitation of

(X) See Appendix

of the machine gun produced by holding a piece of wood against the corrugated iron of the partitions and running round and round. This went on almost unceasingly day and night. The fellows who slept in the day ran round at night, and the fellows who slept in the night ran round during the day, and, strange to say, most of us could sleep during the racket. I heard an argument early one morning between a few of the night noise makers and Henry Dixon. Henry Dixon was an uncle of the aforementioned Mick Lynch. Henry Dixon was a great character and a great friend of Arthur Griffith. He had a great knowledge of law and, I'm told, could have been a famous lawyer, but he refused to take whatever oath or declaration then imposed on lawyers before they would be accepted into the profession and was content to be employed as a clerk in a law office. He was a very cultured man with a nice appearance. He had a long sandy beard and appeared to be much older than my generation. However, like Tom Clarke, he was not too old to do his bit for Ireland. Henry was an early riser, and about five o'clock every morning he could be heard having his morning bath. You could hear the sound of the water splashing over him and that sound which is usually associated with the grooming of horses. There were a few other early birds, and they would converse together in loud voices that could be heard a considerable distance away. Well Henry was arguing with the boys, as I've said, and telling them it was all right to keep up the racket during the daytime but that at night they should let people who needed it have a little sleep. "I tell you what we'll do" said one of the boys,

"you let us sleep in the early morning and we'll let you sleep at night". The noise affected more than Henry Dixon, who, by the way, came to an untimely end in Dublin by being knocked down and killed by a motor car. The ones most seriously affected by the noise were the guards. At first they'd rush in with fixed bayonets, threatening what they'd do if the noise didn't stop at once, only to be met by a barrage of boots and anything heavy and handy enough to throw at them. After a while instead of threats they made appeals, "Boys, can't you stop the noise, even for a little while each day. We're going mad with the constant racket. We can't sleep day or night". But it was of no avail. The noise went on.

And then at an unusual hour one afternoon the whole camp was called to the messroom. The messroom was very large, like a concert hall, with a stage at one end. When we were all there the adjutant came out on the stage and announced that all the prisoners were to be released and sent home immediately. This was not received with the acclamation he apparently expected. Instead questions were fired at him from all sides - "Are there any conditions attaching to this release?" "No". "Are we expected to answer our name and numbers?". "No". A number of other questions were put, chiefly concerned with searches and identification. "I want nothing" he said "except to get you out of here as soon as I can. I'm sick and tired of you". Eventually it was arranged that some of our fellows would make out a list of all prisoners remaining in the camp

and give it to him as we left, and this was done. It was a terrible night. There was a blizzard of snow or sleet. We were paraded at the railway about 6 p.m., standing on the icy ground and the snow, or whatever it was, pouring down on us all the time, and the train did not come in until eight. We were thoroughly saturated. I don't remember anything about the train journey to Holyhead. We arrived there some time in the middle of the night and were standing for a long time before we were put on to the mail boat. The boat was packed with people going home to Ireland for the Christmas. These people were very nice to us. They apparently knew who we were. We bore a very disreputable appearance at that time. Our clothes were in tatters, and with standing so long in the snow and sleet we looked even worse than usual. We were not long on board when a man came up to me and asked me would I like a cup of tea. I said I would. He went away and brought it back to me in no time. Then a lady gave me an enormous hunk of rich Christmas cake. Another gave me a large piece of cheese. I was literally starving as we had no refreshment of any kind since leaving Frongoch and could have eaten anything. I drank the tea, and with the cheese in one hand and the cake in the other I would take an alternative bite out of each and by the time I had got it all down I was feeling fine. Some of the girls who had been released were going home on the same boat. I remember talking to Miss Helena Moloney and, I think, also Miss Kearney. It was a very rough passage. The night was wild. There were no lights showing anywhere on board as this was in the middle of the first Great War,

and the ship took a zig-zag course and went at its maximum speed. The jolly crowd of Christmas homegoers were singing while we were in port but the singing did not last long when we got out into the open sea. You could hear it gradually getting weaker and weaker until it stopped altogether and was replaced by another and less pleasant sound. When we reached the North Wall I was met by Paddy McGuirk, my next-door neighbour in Stafford who had been released earlier. He had an outside car waiting to bring me home, where I arrived in a short time. I was accompanied home by a chap named Joe Duffy, a man from Derrygonnelly in County Fermanagh who had been working in Liverpool and had come over for the Rising with the Liverpool crowd.

I'll have to tell you about Joe Duffy now. While we were in Stafford and after our cell doors were left open, Paddy McGuirk constituted himself a sort of batman to me. He was a very nice chap and very good natured. He had a small appetite and frequently would not be able to consume the whole of his day's rations. On such occasions he would slip me a bread ration and although my own appetite was not very big I would be very glad to get the addition he'd be able to give me. This grew into helping me in various ways until he was always around to do anything I wanted. He happened to be one of the earliest releases from Frongoch. Another chap came to take his place and he was also released in about a week or so. Joe Duffy, who, by the way, was then known by the name of Joe Snow, a lot of the fellows having given assumed names at the

time of the surrender, particularly those with homes in Great Britain, came to me and said "I'd like to be your batman, Seamus. Anyone who acts as batman to you appears to be getting released". This was only a joke as there was no prospect of any of the overseas boys being let out very soon. I said "Right, Joe, that will suit me grand". From that on Joe looked after me and we became great friends. When we reached Dublin Joe had no place to go. He was a stranger in Dublin, never having lived there except for the short time he had been at Larkfield, Kimmage, so I invited Joe to come home with me and to stay until he could get settled. He joined me on the car provided by Paddy McGuirk and we arrived home a short time afterwards.

When I arrived home I found everything grand. My wife was in great form, the new son had been christened and was called Seamus Diarmuid, Seamus after me and Diarmuid as it was the nearest she could get to having him called after Seán McDermott, for whom she knew I had a great admiration. The Irish National Aid had been formed during our absence with the object of relieving distress amongst the dependants of those who had lost their lives or taken away from their homes as a consequence of the Rising. My wife had not sought or received any assistance from them while I was away. On the day I arrived home a Christmas hamper came to the house. I don't think it was provided by the National Aid but by one of the societies of women who were working so hard at the time in the national cause. It contained the usual Christmas fare and was, I need hardly say, very

welcome. I was all right for clothes as I had not donned my best when going away, but I got an order from the National Aid for a complete new outfit.

A day or so after we held a meeting of all the ex-prisoners, at which I was appointed Hon. Secretary. My principal duties now appeared to be looking into the cases of all the ex-prisoners and their dependants and seeing that nobody was left destitute. If I discovered any case of hardship, and there were many, as a number of people were too shy to make known their circumstances, I would bring it to the notice of the National Aid and have it fixed up. As Mick Collins had now become the Secretary of the National Aid I had no great difficulty in having things done properly and quickly. These things and others connected with the movement kept me occupied and the spring and summer passed away quickly. Then one day a couple of ladies called in to see me. They told me an organisation of women in County Wexford had arranged to give a holiday to those injured or some of those injured in the fight. I forget exactly what they said but they invited me to spend a holiday in Wexford under their auspices. Miss Kathleen Browne of Bridgetown, Co. Wexford, was one of them, I forget the other. I thanked them very much and said I'd be delighted to avail of their hospitality. I never thought of asking them how I came to be selected, and until this moment I've never thought of it since. Two of us were to go together, and I was to meet the other one on a certain day and the two of us were to proceed to Gorey by train, where we would be met and brought to Courtown. When I met the fellow who was to accompany me I thought there

was something familiar about him but could not place him. After a while I discovered that he was the boy I'd seen brought down from the roof of the Post Office and whom Jim Ryan had told me was dead. I told him then what Jim Ryan had said about the bullet going in through the face and coming out through the neck. He said "that's what was thought at first, but they discovered afterwards that I had two wounds, one in the eye and one in the neck". He had lost his eye as a consequence but was otherwise all right. We arrived in Gorey all right and were met by someone from Courtown with a hackney car, who brought us to the house of Seán Etchingham (Seán was a prolific writer under the name of Patsy Patrick). We had a great time in Courtown. We were treated very well and everyone was very nice to us. One day we were taken to Enniscorthy to attend a great public meeting and there met again most of the Wexford men we had known in Stafford and Frongoch. After about a fortnight or three weeks in Courtown Miss Browne brought us to her home in Bridgetown to Rathronan Castle. She told me that the castle had been one of the strongholds of the Kavanaghs in the time of Art McMurrough Kavanagh, that a Browne had married a girl of the Kavanaghs and so the castle had come into possession of the Brownes. The castle was interesting, having remained practically unaltered by the years. It contained mementos or souvenirs of the various periods of its existence. From Bridgetown we were brought to Kilmore Quay in the south of the county. It was, and I'm sure still is, a very picturesque, out of the way fishing village. The houses were beautifully thatched and everything neat

and comfortable. We were placed very comfortably in a nice hotel. The weather at this time, early August, became very rough and there were a lot of shipwrecks and drownings along the coast. While we were staying there a young man named Furlong, a visitor, went out one morning for a swim and never returned. His body was never found. A number of other bodies were, however, washed ashore, being mostly those of German sailors whose submarines had been destroyed. We were there about a fortnight when I got a telegram from home saying that a sister-in-law and a first cousin of hers had been drowned at Brittas Bay in Wicklow and asking me to return home at once. I forget how I got in touch with Miss Browne but I did so, and she brought me to the station in Wexford and put me on the train for Dublin. I bid good-bye to my fellow convalescent whose name, I don't think I've mentioned it, was McGrath. His father it was who became first works manager of the 'Irish Press'. He has since died. The bodies of Bridie Cullen, my sister-in-law, or that of her cousin Josie ~~Josie~~ McCoy were never recovered.

I forget what happened immediately after that but Sinn Féin came into operation again with Paddy O'Keeffe as General Secretary. I was in need of a job at this time and called in to Paddy O'Keeffe at No. 6 Harcourt St. to see if anything was going. "The very man" says Paddy. "They are talking of holding a plebiscite of the people of Ireland, with Dr. Dillon in charge. I'll put up your name as secretary of the Plebiscite Committee". Dr. Dillon was a son-in-law of

Count Plunkett, being married to one of his daughters. Within a few days I had a note from Paddy telling me I'd been appointed. We had a great deal of correspondence and put in a lot of work on the plebiscite, but it never came to anything and was never held. I'm trying to remember the names of the members of the Sinn Féin staff at that time. Paddy O'Keeffe was secretary, Miss Anna Fitzsimons confidential shorthand typist. She attended all meetings of the Standing Committee with the Secretary. Seán Nunan was accountant and Barney Mellows was everything. Seán Nunan was sent on some important mission and I was put in charge of the accounts before the plebiscite had matured, and that was the end of the plebiscite as far as I know. Keeping the accounts of ~~the~~ Sinn Féin was no easy task. The organisation was made up of cumainn or branches, and at that time there appeared to be a branch for nearly every townland throughout the country. The cumainn in each parliamentary constituency joined together to form a comhairle ceanntair with the Árd Comhairle or Standing Committee in control at the top. Each cumainn paid an annual fee to the organisation called the affiliation fee. These fees, together with subscriptions sent in by private individuals, were used to pay the ordinary expenses of the organisation, such as stationery, printing, postage, rent, light, fuel etc. as well as salaries of the staff. There was the "election fund" to which the cumainn (and anyone else, as they were able) subscribed and, in addition, there was the "sustentation fund". The "sustentation fund" was a levy on all the

cumainn to enable the Árd Comhairle to pay a sustenance allowance to any honorary officer of the organisation who devoted his whole time to the work and was, therefore, unable to follow his ordinary occupation. It arose from a proposal by Eamon de Valera that a sustenance allowance should be made to the president, in view of the fact that his whole time was taken up by the work of the organisation and he had no time at all to devote to his own affairs. The committee agreed to this and fixed a sum of £250 to be paid annually to the president out of the fund. Then Darrel Figgis proposed that any officer who devoted his whole time to the work should be made an allowance and this was agreed to, the sum fixed being £200 per annum. I know de Valera got his allowance and that Darrel Figgis got his allowance, and I've a sort of recollection that one or two others got it but I can't remember who. What I want to explain is that a separate account had to be kept with each cumann in respect of each fund. In the first place the books had to show at a glance how headquarters stood, both as regards its own financial position and in its account with each cumainn and Comhairle Ceanntair. It would be impossible in a short statement like this to explain the system fully, it being a bit involved. The election fund of any Comhairle Ceanntair could not be used by or for any other comhairle ceanntair and had always to be available to the Comhairle Ceanntair by which and for which it had been subscribed. We had to see that the affiliations of the various cumainn were not allowed to lapse and that the sustentation fund was paid up. In addition to the monies sent to us direct,

a number of people addressed money intended for us to Arthur Griffith personally. This caused us a lot of trouble, for Arthur Griffith (who could write a fine article on finance) appeared to care nothing about money, and when it appeared in his correspondence he simply ignored it. In fact, he had an extraordinary way of treating his correspondence. He would open his letters and just throw them on his table, dealing with anything that could be dealt with at once and then leaving all on the table until "tomorrow". When "tomorrow" came he would push back everything on the table to make room for the current day's correspondence, and so on day after day, the ones at the back simply falling down on the floor. At one time when Arthur was arrested and put into gaol, Charlie Murphy, the manager of Griffith's paper, availed of Griffith's absence to tidy up the mess in Griffith's office. They found any amount of letters, any amount of cheques, cash and postal orders lying in a heap on the floor behind his table. While a lot of the cheques and postal orders were out of date, they recovered a large amount of money, which they lodged in bank to the credit of the organisation. Tom Kelly was another man who had queer ideas regarding money. There was one occasion when a deputation waited on the Executive Committee of Sinn Féin (this was pre 1916) and asked for financial assistance in respect of something or other. I forget now what it was. The Secretary explained they had no money out of which they could help them. Tom Kelly happened to be in the chair and he intervened, saying, "Yes, there's plenty of money here,

I saw it over in that corner. You can have as much as you want". These were subscriptions to various funds but Tom didn't mind. It was money and these boys wanted money, so that was that. Larry Ginnell was another funny artist. When I took over the accounts of Sinn Féin Larry was one of the hon. treasurers. Seán Nunan, when he was handing over to me, told me about him. One of the duties of the accountant was to furnish a balance sheet for the weekly meeting of the Standing Committee. Larry would scrutinise this each week and say to Seán "Your balance and the bank balance do not seem to agree. How is that?". "Well, you see" Seán would say, "there are outstanding cheques" and Larry would interrupt "I don't want to hear anything about outstanding cheques. What I want to know is why the two balances do not agree". This used to go on over and over again, Larry wanting an explanation of the difference without reference to outstanding cheques and Seán, of course, unable to give it. However, I'd no trouble of that sort for Larry was taken away and lodged in gaol before I'd any occasion to make any explanation. By the time he came out of gaol again I'd a new set of books, larger and more numerous. The only thing he said to me was "Are these your set of books?". "They are" said I. "They are a grand set of books" said he "and very well kept". Larry was a peculiar man in other ways as everybody knows. He was a great speaker of English, both in the English House of Commons as a member of parliament and on our platforms. One time Frank Gallagher was asked to prepare a book. I don't remember what it was but I suppose it was something

of a propagandist nature, and Larry Ginnell was appointed to look over it before publication. Frank had prepared a preface to the book which he headed "Foreword". When Larry saw this he crossed it out and wrote in "Preface" and then the row started. Frank said to him, in addition to a lot I won't put in, "You may alter anything I've written as regards facts if my facts are wrong, but otherwise don't dare to alter what I've written. I've written "Foreword" there and "Foreword" it must remain. They went at it hot and heavy for a long time and, of course, Frank won. In addition to being stubborn, he was a Corkman. He was a master of English, with years of practice as a journalist, and was probably a better writer of English than Larry Ginnell himself. I'm no judge, as anyone unfortunate enough to read this can see for himself.

We had a lively time in the Sinn Féin office, between constant raids and arrests, stealing of our files and one thing and another. I had two large brief bags which I always kept on the floor beside me in the office. I kept them open, and whenever the raiders appeared I slipped the papers at which I was working into the bags, locked them, put on my hat and went down the stairs and out of the house with a bag in each hand. Whenever this happened I got out clear without being stopped by anyone. The account books, which were large and heavy, never appear to have been touched. On one of these occasions, it was a raid by the military, the 'G' men, of course, being with them, the raiders were actually in the room when I left with

a double line of soldiers down the stairs and out through the hall. I always had a hiding place prepared in some shop in the vicinity. On one of these raids Paddy O'Keeffe was arrested. Inspector McFeeley was in charge of the raid, with Hoey his second in command. They had been poking about for some time (I had not attempted to leave as I had nothing at the moment which required to be hidden) when Inspector McFeeley came to me and said "Are you Mr. O'Keeffe?". "No" said I. "Where is Mr. O'Keeffe"? said he. "I don"t know" said I, "I haven"t seen him for a long time". Paddy was actually sitting at the same table as I was at the time. Some time afterwards I saw him whispering with Hoey who looked in the direction of Paddy O'Keeffe, who was then approached by the inspector, who said "Mr. O'Keeffe, I have to arrest you". "Be so and so you won't" said Paddy. A long argument ensued between them then, but eventually Paddy gave in and was taken off by them. During the raid Hoey took up a tray of papers when Brian Fagan (I forgot to mention Brian before. He was a nice young chap who had been badly wounded in the Rising. His leg was supported by steels and he could only go about with the aid of crutches) shouted "Hoey, the last man to handle that tray of papers was Sergeant Smyth". It was a fact, and Smyth was shot dead a few hours after handling those papers. Hoey dropped the tray of papers like a hot potato, although I suppose he little thought he would be a dead man before the night was out. He was shot through the neck as he was entering the back door of the police headquarters in Pearse St. The door he was entering is in Townsend St.

Paddy O'Keeffe told me long afterwards that he had made the same prophecy as Brian Fagan while being taken away in the lorry. He had said "Hoey you'll die for this to-night".

Another member of the staff I've not yet mentioned was Frankie Kelly. He was one of the G.P.O. garrison who came from London to take part in the scrap. He was a fellow prisoner of war with me in Stafford and Frongoch. It was he who was sent over to England to make the preliminary arrangements for the escape of de Valera and company from Lincoln gaol. He, after the cease fire, married Anna Fitzsimons whom I have already mentioned. She is now Anna Kelly who is editor of the women's page of the 'Irish Press' and who contributes many humorous articles to that paper.

Joe Clarke was the caretaker of the premises. He occupied the top floor of the building with his wife and family. Mrs. Clarke looked after the cleaning and dusting of the rooms and kept everything in good order. They suffered a lot during this period. The constant raids by day and night kept them always on the alert and it was seldom they got a full night's rest. On one occasion Joe spent a couple of hours under a loose board on the landing in front of Griffith's office while the house was being searched for him. On another he just escaped on to the roof as the Tans and Auxies burst into the house. When they could not find him they questioned his wife. "Where is he?" they asked. "I think he's in Skerries" said she, "he went in that direction". Your men went off to Skerries to look for

Joe, but the Skerries referred to by Mrs. Joe was Skerry's College a few doors up the street, on to the roof of which Joe had fled. The house, No. 6 Harcourt St., was owned by the Sinn Féin Bank, of which Davy Kelly, a brother of Alderman Tom Kelly, was manager. As a matter of fact he was the whole staff of the bank. It was in the Sinn Féin bank that we lodged all the funds of the organisation, and up to the time I left the organisation not a penny went astray. One time when the bank was raided and closed by the British authorities, Davy Kelly put a table and chair on the top step in front of the hall door and carried on, or pretended to carry on as usual in defiance of the British authorities. I remember one morning being in the bank making a lodgement when Dr. Hayes, now the film censor, came in. Davy's back was partly turned towards the counter. Dr. Hayes said "good morning" and Davy's only answer was a grunt. Dr. Hayes looked surprised and only remained a minute or two before departing. When he was gone I asked Davy why he was so grumpy with Dr. Hayes. "Was that Dr. Hayes?" said he, "I thought it was that so and so Seán Ó h-Uadhaigh, I'm terribly sorry". "Why, what's wrong with Seán Ó h-Uadhaigh" said I. "Well I'll tell you" said Davy, "when the bank started Seán took shares in the bank to the value of £50. The shareholders were permitted to borrow from the bank to the full extent of their holding in the concern. After some time the bank did not appear to be doing so well. The bould Seán got frightened, thought he was going to lose his £50 and considered how he could manage to save it. So he thought

of a scheme. He borrowed £50 from the bank and never repaid it. Of course we could have recovered it from him by taking proceedings in the British Courts, but Seán knew we would not do that". Seán's name was, I think, Woods. When he became a Gaelic Leaguer he wanted to change his name to the Irish form the same as everyone else, so he proceeded to do so in the legal manner and changed it by deed poll. Other Gaelic Leaguers were suffering inconveniences, and pains and penalties of one sort or another were being inflicted on those who used the Irish forms of their names. Some were even dismissed from their employment for using Irish. One, a teacher named Cissie Doyle in the Dublin Technical School, was dismissed for signing her name in Irish in the attendance book. Seán wanted to avoid all trouble of this kind so he changed his name legally. I was told that after the Rising in Easter Week, and so that he would not be in any way thought to be associated with it, he reverted back to the English form of his name by the same legal means, and again turned back to the Irish form when the treaty was an accomplished fact and the Free State firmly established.

Another thing that happened during this period was of an amusing nature. Sinn Féin printed and published an enormous amount of propagandist literature at that time. We had not sufficient accommodation in No. 6 to hold it all, so a man named Jack Baird, a local coal merchant, placed a room in his premises in Cuffe St. at our disposal. Cuffe St. was just around the corner from us so that it was very handy. One day Paddy

O'Keeffe went round to Baird's to get some of these pamphlets. Jack happened to be in at the time and saw Paddy go into the room where the leaflets were stored. Paddy was in the room for such a long time that Jack became alarmed and went to the door of the room to peep in and see if he was all right. He opened the door and peeped in and, to his amazement, saw an enormous pile of leaflets stacked up in the middle of the room and a voice coming from the middle of them saying "Can Ireland pay her way? Can Ireland pay her way?", this being repeated over and over again without cessation. It appears Paidin was looking for a pamphlet of that name which must have been at the very bottom, for he kept pulling down the bundles of papers and throwing them behind him till the heap behind had reached above his head and he could not be seen from the door.

I think the most exciting time we had was on the evening of the 11th November, 1918. That was Armistice Day in World War 1. We had had a quiet day in No. 6, just carrying on the ordinary work of the day. The uproar in the city was, I was told, terrific, but it did not reach as far as Harcourt St. At about 6 o'clock in the evening we were about to call it a day and go off home. Just then a young man partly out of breath rushed into the office. He was a student of Trinity College, and told us that the Officers Training Corps of the college were arranging a raid on No. 6. They had organised a large number of fellows, some of whom were experienced grenade throwers, to attack the house, and would probably reach there at about 7 o'clock.

That did not give us much time to prepare a defence. On the premises then were Harry Boland, Seán Nunan, Frankie Kelly and, of course, Joe and Mrs. Clarke. Harry, then one of the hon. secretaries of Sinn Féin, said the best thing to do was to go and have tea and hurry back as quickly as possible. If we met anyone on the way we could send word round as to what was happening. I ran home and had tea, told the wife I had to go back to the office to do some work, and returned to No. 6. In the meantime Simon Donnelly had turned up, also Tommy Atkins and Alderman Tom Kelly. There may have been some others but, if so, I don't remember them. The builders had been in and had left a long scaffolding plank or putlock behind them. This fitted from the bottom of the stairs to the back of the hall-door. This we left in readiness to barricade the hall-door at a moment's notice. Our ammunition consisted to a large extent of anthracite. I'll tell you how we got that. Tom Dunne, a great worker in the movement, was manager of a colliery in Wolf Hill, Laoighis. He thought there was no coal in the world as good as the Wolf Hill coal and persuaded us to try it. The only way we could get it was to order a wagon load, which would come by rail to Kingsbridge. I think we had to cart it from Kingsbridge ourselves. However, we got it and, as coal, it was a dismal failure. If you had a good fire of ordinary soft coal and put a piece of the Wolf Hill coal on it, the piece of Wolf Hill coal would turn red on the side next the fire and when turned over that side would get black and the other red. Tom said that was because the

grate was unsuitable and he provided us with a contraption to put into the grate to make it suit the Irish coal. But it was no use, the anthracite would not burn in our grates. We left it out in the yard until the eleventh day of the eleventh month 1918 (Armistice Day) arrived ~~the 11th of the 11th~~ when ~~it came~~ in very handy. We carried it, mostly in small sacks, up to the windows of the rooms to be thrown out at our attackers. We had no time to waste for it was not long till we heard an enormous roar. At first, in the distance, it was not loud but continuous. Gradually it became louder until at last it became thunderous. Our fellows kept very quiet standing near the hall-door. The attackers, thinking there was no one there, came right up to the door with the intention of going into the house and wrecking it. When they were on the steps Harry Boland, Simon Donnelly and the others rushed out and a melée ensued, in the course of which Simon Donnelly wrested a bayonet from one of them and things were made so hot for them, as well as the surprise they got, that they had to retire. We then ran up the stairs and into the upper rooms to bombard them with the coal already put there. We threw the coal out at them but were making very little impression. They had brought an apparently unlimited supply of large stones with them. The stones were thrown with such force that some thrown through the windows of the top rooms knocked lumps out of the walls and ceilings. The Harcourt St. houses are very high, so that a stone to do such damage at such a height must have been thrown with great force. The only one I actually saw being struck by us was a D.M.P. man who came around the corner of

Montague St. to see what was happening. No sooner did he appear than he was struck by a small bag of coal. He fell flat and had not moved up to the last time I saw him. Harry Boland got impatient with the slow progress we were making and said "There is only one thing for it, we'll have to go out and shift these fellows". Harry had two weapons, a knuckleduster composed of brass in the form of rings joined together to fit on to the fingers of the hand, the outer portion when the fist was closed being in the form of fairly large knobs, this he wore on his left hand, and in his right he carried a "life-preserver". This was a short piece of whale bone with a heavy ball on the end and a strap attached for putting round the wrist to ensure that it could not get lost. Seán Nunan and Frankie Kelly broke a chair and each of them grasped a chair leg. Joe Clarke showed them a way out through the back and round by Montague St., by which they were able to get at the back of the crowd attacking us. They gave no notice of their approach but began cracking skulls from behind and for a long time were unnoticed, but eventually those in front took notice of the fact that the shouting at the back had grown considerably less and turned round to find out the cause. When they saw their fellows lying around in all directions they thought they were being attacked by a large force and ran. By this time news had filtered through the city that No. 6 was being attacked, and a large crowd advanced to bring us assistance. They were shouting as loudly now as had our opponents previously. But they were late, the battle was over. No. 6 was a

was a wreck: but not a single invader had succeeded in putting a foot across its threshold. On account of the destruction wrought amongst the attackers we were expecting reprisals from the British police and military, but nothing happened. Accounts and pictures appeared in the papers, but nothing else.

The first of the more important things that happened when we got together again after the Rising was the Roscommon by-election. As soon as Count Plunkett's name appeared in the papers as a candidate, a man named Gallagher, a draper with a place of business in George's St., called to see me. He told me he was a native of Roscommon and that he continued to take an active interest in the affairs of the county. He asked me was Count Plunkett all right from the Sinn Féin point of view, "for" said he "if he is, he's already elected. I know all about his sons Joe, George and Jack, but you know many a good son has reared a bad father, and I want to make sure he won't sit in the British Parliament if elected". He said his word went far in the county, and if he put in a favourable word for the Count his election was assured. I told him that so far as I knew Count Plunkett was all right but that I would get him an assurance from headquarters. I did that. Whether he did anything or not I don't know, but Count Plunkett's success is now a matter of history. Then there was the general election which put an end to the Irish Parliamentary Party. No need for me to say anything about that. To tell of all the incidents would take up a number of volumes and the general result is well known.

In the beginning of the following year (1919) the first Dáil Éireann was formed. Preparations for the opening caused great excitement and bustle in No.6 , but everything went forward without a hitch. The first meeting of the first Dáil was held in the Round Room of the Mansion House, Dublin, on Tuesday the 21st January, 1919. I give now a list of all the members present at the meeting, together with a list of those absent and the reason for their absence. The list is absolutely correct for I have here in front of me a proof of the picture which Messrs. Wilson, ~~Hartness~~ Hartnell & Co. were authorised to publish. The photograph was taken by Messrs. Keogh Bros. Two copies of the proof were given to me. One, after correction, I sent back to the printers, the other I still retain although not in very good condition.(X)

P. Ó Máille	-	Connemara.
J.J. Walsh	-	Cork City
J. Hayes	-	Cork W.
Eoin McNeill	-	Derry City & University
J. O'Doherty	-	Donegal N.
P. Ward	-	Donegal S.
Joe Sweeney	-	Donegal W.
G.Gavan Duffy	-	Co. Dublin S.
R. Mulcahy	-	Clontarf, Dublin.
S.T. O'Kelly	-	College Green, Dublin.
P. Shanahan	-	Harbour, Dublin.
Alder. T. Kelly	-	Stephen's Green, Dublin.
P. Beasley	-	Kerry E.
D. Buckley	-	Kildare N.

(X) Presented to Bureau of Military History

Con Collins	-	Limerick W.
J.J. O'Kelly	-	Co. Louth.
Dr. Crowley	-	Mayo N.
E.J. Duggan	-	Meath S.
K. Higgins	-	Laoighis
Count Plunkett	-	Roscommon N.
J.A. Burke	-	Tipperary Mid.
P. Maloney	-	Tipperary S.
Cathal Brugha	-	Waterford Co.
Dr. Ryan	-	Wexford S.
R. Sweetman	-	Wexford N.
R.C. Barton	-	Wicklow W.

All above were present.

David Kent	-	Cork E.
James O'Meara	-	Kilkenny S.

Absent through illness.

Mick Collins	-	Cork S.
H. Boland	-	Roscommon S.
M. Staines	-	St. Michan's, Dublin.

'Absent from the house at time of sitting,
I don't know why.

The following members were "under lock and key in England":

Eamon de Valera	-	Clare E.
S. Lennon	-	Carlow Co.
Arthur Griffith	-	Cavan E.
P.P. Galligan	-	Cavan W.
Brian O'Higgins	-	Clare W.
Liam de Róiste	-	Cork City.

P. O'Keeffe	-	Cork N.
T. MacSwiney	-	Cork Mid.
T. Hunter	-	Cork N.E.
F. Lawless	-	Co. Dublin N.
J. McGrath	-	St. James's, Dublin.
Countess Markievicz	-	St. Patrick's, Dublin.
J. O'Mahony	-	Fermanagh S.
Dr. Cusack	-	Galway N.
Frank Fahy	-	Galway S.
J. Crowley	-	Kerry N.
F. Lynch	-	Kerry S.
A. Stack	-	Kerry W.
A. O'Connor	-	Kildare N.
W.T. Cosgrave	-	Kilkenny N.
J. Dolan	-	Leitrim Co.
M.P. Colivet	-	Limerick City
Dr. Hayes	-	Limerick E.
J. McGuinness	-	Longford Co.
W. Sears	-	Mayo S.
J. McBride	-	Mayo W.
E. Blythe	-	Monaghan N.
J. MacEntee	-	Monaghan S.
D. Fitzgerald	-	Pembroke, Dublin.
A. McCabe	-	Sligo S.
J.J. Clancy	-	Sligo N.
P. McCann	-	Tipperary S.
J. McDonagh	-	Tipperary N.
L. Ginnell	-	Westmeath Co.
J. Etchingham	-	Wicklow E.

D. Lynch, Cork S.E., had been deported. Dr. McCartan, Offaly, and Liam Mellows, Galway E., were in America.

Although I have a vivid picture in my mind of the scene in the Round Room of the Mansion House on that occasion, I have no recollection of the details of the proceedings, but that does not matter for I'm sure those details have been recorded and were published over and over again. The main part to remember is, our elected representatives instead of going away to sit in a foreign parliament assembled together, as many as were free to do so, in Dublin and appointed a native government. The various departments of state were formed and ministers appointed. Instead then of having the country governed by a political organisation (Sinn Féin) the reins were taken over by a government of popularly elected delegates, and though they were unable to fully function at once they were in a position to prepare the way to take over as soon as a favourable opportunity offered. There were two departments that started to work almost immediately - Defence and Finance - but the department of which I afterwards became secretary did not begin work in earnest until more than a year later. In the meantime the routine of work, raids and arrests went on in Sinn Féin as before. Here I'd like to mention a thing that I thought unfair to the Sinn Féin Bank. All the money of the organisation was lodged in the Sinn Féin Bank, which was merely a bank to us and in which we had no interest except to lodge our funds and draw cheques to the extent of our credit, but Davy Kelly, the

manager, accommodated us by issuing to us books of unstamped cheques which he honoured by cashing when presented for payment, thereby risking the heavy penalties which would be imposed if this were brought to the notice of the British authorities. This was fair enough, but with regard to the funds of Dáil Éireann Mick Collins introduced a different procedure. He lodged all these monies in one of the joint stock or commercial banks or whatever they are called. They would take no risks whatever and would act only within the strict limits of the law. So Mick when making payments would draw cheques, unstamped, on the Sinn Féin Bank, and then lodge sufficient money to meet these cheques. That system did not bring in much revenue to the bank.

I'd like to mention here the fate that befell poor Davy Kelly. It was his habit to go to the local each night before closing time to have a little refreshment. One night when he was returning home he was met by the Auxies, who shot him dead.

There were two things that struck me as strange during this period. It was the practice when anyone connected with the movement was arrested and tried by the British authorities to refuse to recognise the courts and to refrain from applying for or accepting release on bail. The two things which I could not reconcile with that policy were the release on bail of Mick Collins (in Sligo) and Roddy O'Connor (in Dublin). Perhaps they were considered of such importance to the movement that they were exempt.

I remember the afternoon of the 28th May, 1919, my brother Seán called in to see me at No. 6. He came in to return to me a garden shears which I had lent him. He was pretending to lop off Brian Fagan's hair with the shears. Brian was very proud of his hair, of which he took great care. He was on pins and needles for fear Seán would spoil it. However, he did no harm, but when he was going he complained to me that he had terrible pains across his stomach which he thought "must be rheumatism". The next day was a holiday of obligation (Corpus Christi, I think). I slipped out of the office to attend 11 o'clock Mass in Whitefriars' St. I went down the green, turned into York St., and was crossing Aungier St. to the chapel when I saw my youngest sister, Kathleen, coming towards me. As soon as she had come within speaking distance she called out "John is dead". I got a terrible surprise. I can hardly say I was shocked because sudden deaths were so common then (between the awful epidemic of the 'flu which was killing thousands at the time, and deaths from other causes) that we had got beyond the stage when death came as a shock. I don't know what he died of, whether from an attack of the 'flu or from heart failure, but we gave him a soldier's funeral and the Standing Committee of Sinn Féin passed a resolution of sympathy, the notification to me of which I still have.

When Paddy O'Keeffe was arrested in the office and taken away by Hoey and McFeeley, he was replaced as secretary by a man named Paddy Sheehan. The first I

ever heard of Sheehan was when Daithi ODonoghue told me of him. He had been a clerk in the Land Commission. I don't know whether he had been imprisoned for his part in the Rising but he had lost his job. He started out hawking vegetables, and afterwards was appointed private secretary to Dev. Dev. must have had a great appreciation of him, for as soon as he could get into communication with the Standing Committee after his commitment to Lincoln gaol, his first thought was of Paddy Sheehan. He said he had been considering an increase of salary to him, and asked the Standing Committee to do what they could for him. I remember one day when Jack Kerr came into the office. He stared in the direction of Paddy Sheehan and said to me "is that fellow's name Sheehan?". "Why"? said I to him. "Well, I thought I recognised him" said he. "He was with us at the start of the Rising and afterwards asked permission to go home for some urgent domestic reason. He was given permission to go, went away, and never returned". He returned Dev's kindness to him by turning bitterly against him at the time of the treaty. At the same time I'd like to say I considered him a very efficient secretary to the organisation.

Changes took place in the personnel of the Standing Committee and of its officers from time to time, due mostly to raids and arrests. The hon. treasurers during my time were Mrs. Wyse Power, George Nesbitt, James O'Mara and Larry Ginnell. As the treasurers were the officers I came most in contact with I remember them more than the others. They were all very

nice people, particularly Mrs. Wyse Power, and while I was worked very hard I was comforted by the fact that my work was much appreciated by the treasurers, who reported accordingly to the Standing Committee, as I was frequently informed.

Some of the things that amused me greatly were the disguises adopted by certain people when the going was hard. Barney Mellows, who was very fair, had his hair dyed black and wore a big black moustache, but to those who knew him he was still Barney Mellows. Pearse Beasley wore a black moustache and spectacles and adopted the antics of a stage conspirator. Before entering a room he would open the door, stick in his head and look around in all directions to ensure that no stranger was there to do him harm. J.J. Walsh usually had his moustache stuck on sideways, and his gold-rimmed glasses, without lenses, twisted into some bizarre shape. Another thing that struck me as funny was the way Seán Clarke, who was a wholesale and retail grocer and purveyor, brought T.D.s to their meetings in his delivery van. They would always be delivered at the back or tradesmen's entrance.

One evening I was instructed to procure a sum of money and give it to Frankie Kelly. He was to leave that night by boat and proceed to Lincoln, where he was to make a preliminary survey of the possibilities for the escaping of de Valera from Lincoln gaol. Frankie Kelly had been reared in London and had a posh English accent which fitted him nicely for the work in hand. I'm

sure the details of what he did and of all the incidents which led up to de Valera's escape from Lincoln have been recorded by some one of those more closely acquainted with them than I was.

During all this time a book was kept called "A record of British Atrocities in Ireland", commonly called "The Atrocity Book". I wonder what became of it. It would be a pity if it were lost. Harry Boland when being interviewed by some foreign pressmen would seldom omit to call for the "Atrocity Book" during the interview.

We were finally shut out from No. 6 altogether and were given shelter in the Court of Conscience in South William St. I was there working away with Paddy O'Keeffe one day when I received a note from Kevin O'Higgins asking me to call over to see him in 18 Clare St. When I called he informed me that he had been appointed substitute Minister for Local Government in place of W.T. Cosgrave, who was then in prison in Wormwood Scrubbs, London. He said that the Executive Committee, on the proposal of Arthur Griffith, had instructed him to invite me to take up the position of Secretary to the department. I told him I'd discuss the matter with Paddy O'Keeffe and let him know my decision. Paddy O'Keeffe was entirely against my leaving Sinn Féin and urged me strongly not to do so. It was only when Paddy O'Keeffe started to dissuade me from going over to Local Government that I began to realise that the work of a government department was of greater importance than that of a political organisation, and I

decided to tell Kevin O'Higgins I'd take up the job. When I went over the staff of the department consisted only of myself and a shorthand typist, Miss O'Hegarty, with Kevin O'Higgins the acting minister at the top. As far as I can recollect the first thing to do was to contact all the local authorities and get them to pass a resolution of allegiance to Dáil Éireann. As the Post Office was in the hands of the British at the time it was useless to send communications direct through the post. Our letters would be seized and opened, and instead of communicating with our friends we would be giving information to the enemy, so a system was evolved by which we would direct an envelope to some person who was unsuspected of being friendly to us. This envelope would contain another addressed to the person for whom the letter was intended, and the letter placed in that. In that way all our communications arrived safely at their destination. The address to which the letter was sent through the post was called a covering address. Through my long connection with the Gaelic League, the Volunteers and Sinn Féin, there was hardly a parish in the country in which I did not know of someone who would act as a cover. These people were prepared to help us secretly in any way they could, but would not openly join the Volunteers or Sinn Féin. As well as passing a vote of allegiance to Dáil Éireann, the local authorities were asked to send all the correspondence which they had heretofore sent to the British Local Government Board to us. The response was most satisfactory. There were very few local authorities that did not send a favourable reply. I had not been

long in the Local Government Department when I got a letter from W.T. Cosgrave, the Minister. He was in the private part of Jervis St. hospital and asked me to go see him. I went over to the hospital and found him in bed. I asked him what was wrong with him and he told me he was suffering from a rupture and had been allowed out of Wormwood Scrubbs on parole to receive treatment for it. I asked him had he received some injury recently which had caused the rupture, but he told me no, it was a long-standing complaint. I thought it strange that he should have selected that particular time if it were so long-standing, as a hunger-strike was being arranged in the Scrubbs and I learned afterwards that it actually started on the day following that on which he left. The system of receiving correspondence was the same as that used for sending it out. The man in the country would have it handed to him and would send it to an address in Dublin with which he was supplied. A number of the addresses in Dublin were those of business firms, the receipt of a large number of letters by which would not bring them under suspicion, and we frequently changed the Dublin addresses. When sending anything to the country we would put in a slip saying that correspondence for us should be sent to the enclosed address for the following week.

And that brings me to an important member of the staff - Seán Saunders - the messenger, whom I'd almost forgotten. The messengers in all the Dáil departments were members of the Fianna Éireann, the Irish Boy Scouts.

Why they were called and classified as messengers I never could understand. On their integrity, courage and sagacity depended our lives from day to day. These lads knew all our places of hiding, all our secret offices, all the members of the Dáil and all the Dáil staffs, as well as all our friends and our covering addresses. They worked very hard for long hours, very often till long after curfew, and I heard of one of them, when caught out by the Tans, receiving very rough treatment. But whatever their treatment or sufferings I never heard of a traitor amongst them, nor of any one of them breathing a word of what he knew to anyone but the person to whom it was his duty to report. I remember one occasion on which Seán was taking a large consignment of papers from our office to that of Mick Collins in Mary St. When passing Palace St., at the corner of which a number of Black and Tan Auxiliary Officers were lounging, the papers slipped off the carrier of his bicycle and were scattered on the road. Seán jumped off his bicycle and began to gather them up. The Tans came over to help him, picked up his papers and securely tied them on to the carrier of his bicycle, without examining them or suspecting what they contained. A nervous or frightened lad would have given the show away, which would have been a catastrophe for both him and us. British and Free State soldiers who merely carry letters from place to place are called, I believe, dispatch riders.

The first addition to the staff I've mentioned was Tom McArdle. He had been a civil servant in the office

of the British Local Government Board. He was dismissed for refusing to take an oath of allegiance to the British Crown. The oath was being imposed on civil servants in Ireland, probably with a view to separating the sheep from the goats or the pro-Irish from the pro-British civil servants. Tom was working in the offices of the Irish Transport Union, his boss at the time being Seamus Hughes. One day he called in to see me in our office at 18 Clare St. He said he felt that he could be more usefully employed in the Local Government Department of the Dáil than in the Transport Union. I fully agreed with him. I thought his experience in the Local Government Board would be of inestimable value to us. There was just one crux though; it was that he was very friendly with Seamus Hughes and did not wish him to think that he was deserting him. He suggested that I should speak to Hughes and ask him to agree to release Tom McArdle if I could induce Tom to come over to us. I did so, but Hughes flatly refused. He said I might as well ask him to cut off his right hand and give it to me. I tried to convert him to my idea that the work of an Irish government struggling for existence was of greater importance than that of a trades' union, but I could not move him, so I left, telling him I would ask McArdle to come to us in any case. In the meantime the hunger-strike in Wormwood Scrubbs had taken place. It lasted, I think, about 43 days before the authorities gave in and the prisoners were released. As a consequence of the release of the prisoners from

Wormwood Scrubbs W.T. Cosgrave, the Minister, had not to return on his recovery from his operation in Jervis St. hospital. He was back at work when Tom McArdle came to me with his proposal. I mentioned the matter to the Minister, but he would not agree to his appointment. He said he would not think of it, that we could not afford it. I kept at him day after day until finally he told me to do whatever I liked, but that I would do so on my own responsibility. I thereupon took Tom McArdle on to the staff, and it was time, for the work of the office was increasing daily and could not be dealt with by the meagre staff we then had, although both the Minister and the Assistant Minister were dealing with the correspondence. The advent of Tom McArdle to the staff worked wonders. Between his knowledge and experience, and the fact that he was an indefatigable worker, he was worth a half dozen workers, as well as putting us on the right lines to circumvent the enemy. I was recently told by Tom McArdle that he was preparing a statement for the Bureau of Military History. Any statement he may furnish will be of far greater value to the Bureau than anything I can do, because he is much better at that sort of thing that I am and he has done some research work for it. He asked me for a couple of particulars which he had forgotten, and also where he could get certain papers, including the circulars issued by the department. I told him that any papers of historical importance had been taken over by the Department of Finance and were kept in Government Buildings. In my opinion the whole history of the Dáil Department of Local Government is contained in the circulars issued at

that time. I kept copies of all of them in a portfolio, numbered from one upwards, with an index on the cover showing the number and subject of each circular. Except for frequent change of offices to escape arrest during the frequent raids of the Black and Tans and the British police and soldiery, the work of the indoor staff of the Dáil Department of Local Government became almost routine. As the work increased the staff had, naturally, to increase with it. I find it hard to recall to memory the names of all - Frank Kelly, Maurice Killeen, Ned Merriman came on. Roddy O'Connor gave a lot of his time to us. A Miss Clancy, whose brother met a terrible death at the hands of the Tans, was with us, and a Miss Nelligan, May Carron and Kathleen Bevan. And then an outdoor staff had to be employed - inspectors and auditors. Micheal de Lacy was brought up from Limerick to conduct an examination for the appointment of inspectors. Advertisements were inserted in the newspapers inviting applications for these positions (without disclosing the exact nature of the employment or the name of the employer), and when they were all in Micheál de Lacy set the papers and conducted the examination, which was held in the offices of the Dublin Corporation. Micheál de Lacy was one of the leaders in Wexford at the time of the Easter Rising. He was, I believe, sentenced to death, which was afterwards commuted to penal servitude. He was released at the time of the general release in 1917. Between the time of his release and that of his taking up duty with us he had been headmaster in the Technical Schools, Limerick. It was there he made contact with some of the best men

in the movement, some of whom he induced to come on to our inspectorial staff, notably Nicholas O'Dwyer, Ned Carroll, Paddy O'Rourke, Mick Ryan, I forget the names of the others at the moment. The person who got first place in the examination was Proinnsias Mac Beárnáird, who, when he was given particulars of the job, refused to have anything to do with it. I don't remember the details of what happened afterwards, but it's evident he changed his mind for he came in and continued to work for us up to the truce and afterwards. He was a sound man, of very good-natured disposition but not popular, probably because he was too finicky with regard to his work. I don't remember all their names but the staff grew enormously, particularly the inspectors and auditors. Micheál de Lacy took charge of all the outdoor staff. It was through him that all directions from the Minister were sent to them, and all their reports etc. came to the Minister through him. His title was "Chief of Inspections". I, as secretary, was accounting officer of the department, and all monies passed through me. Micheál had an imprest from me, out of which he paid the salaries and the expenses of the inspectorial staff. All other outgoings of the department I paid out myself. The mode of payment to me was a strange one. A chap named Paddy McGrath was appointed to the Department of Finance as Banc ar Siubhal (The Walking Bank). He came around periodically and handed me the amount in cash that I required to carry on the work of the department. I gave him a receipt for the amount and disbursed it as necessary. After a while the British Forces became aware of 18 Clare St. and we had to clear out. We went to the offices of the Dublin

Corporation but were discovered there. We were given a room on the top floor of the Dublin County Council offices, 11 Parnell Square. This room was the one in which the rate books were made up and was, therefore, only occupied for a short time each year while this work was being done. The rate books were kept on shelving in this room. They were very large and flexible and came in very handy to us, as I'll show. One day we were working away quietly in this room when I suddenly heard a quick military step on the landing outside. The door opened and an Auxiliary officer stepped inside. He glanced around the room, then went out and closed the door after him. As soon as he had gone I called out to Kevin O'Higgins and asked him had he seen that. He said "No, what is it?". His head had been down working away at something which engaged his whole attention and so the incident had passed unnoticed by him. I told him what had happened. "What will we do?" said he, "throw the papers out through the window". "No blooming fear" said I, "we don't want everyone to know we're here. We'll just hide our stuff and wait to see what will happen". I got all the staff to hide their papers in the rate books and put them back on the shelves. When all the papers were scattered among the rate books in this manner they made no apparent difference in their appearance. We had just got the papers safely hidden and were back in our places pretending to work when our friend the Auxie again appeared. He waved his revolver and told us to go down to the ground floor. We went. The members of the County Council staff were also ordered down, which suited

us as we mingled with them and were indistinguishable from them. It was in the cold weather and the fire in the hall was lighted. Micheál de Lacy took advantage of this to get rid of some incriminating papers he had in his pockets. He pretended to light his pipe which, apparently, would not draw properly. He would take out a paper, fold it nicely, light it in the fire and apply it to his pipe. He would throw the remainder of the paper into the fire, give a few puffs to the pipe, which would go out. He kept trying to light his pipe in this way until all the papers were burned. In the meantime we could hear the hammering and pounding of the Auxies breaking open presses and the safe upstairs. After a time they came running down the stairs, gathered up their men in the hall, jumped up on their lorries and away with them They were hardly in their lorries when Frankie Kelly and I rushed upstairs, took our papers out of the rate books, and tying them in two bundles in tableclothes put them over our shoulders, then down the stairs and out with us into Parnell Square and down towards O'Connell St. We were hardly more than 100 yards from the place when we saw the Tans' lorries back again at the door of No.11, but we kept going and did not linger to see what was happening. When we were near the Pillar in O'Connell St. we met Mrs. Wyse Power, who brought us round to a friend of hers who had a shop in Cathedral St. where we deposited our papers pending the finding of a new office. As a matter of fact, there was no need for Mrs. Wyse Power to intervene as we had a safe repository in O'Connell St., but we said nothing of it to her as we

felt that the fewer who knew about it the safer it would be. It was in this place in O'Connell St. that Tom McArdle and Maurice Killeen worked under cover, and its existence was known to very few.

After being knocked about from Billy to Jack for some time Roddy O'Connor discovered a grand place in Wicklow St. It was the top floor of a house, the ground floor of which was a shop, and the intervening rooms were occupied as offices. The top floor was apparently intended as caretakers quarters, it being a self-contained flat consisting of a number of rooms cut off entirely from the remainder of the building. Access could only be had to these premises through a heavy door, like a hall-door, with a knocker and electric bell, which we always kept locked. Roddy O'Connor secured possession by pretending we were a firm of consulting engineers, which would also explain the large staff we employed. We were very comfortable in this place and felt secure, although our security was more apparent than real. For instance, a fellow, a commercial traveller, whom I took to be an ex-British officer, who had an office in the building, accosted me one day when I was going up the stairs and asked me to get him a permit for something or other from the Republican government. I said to him "how the devil can I get you a permit? What have I got to do with it?". He said "I know who you are and all about you, come into the office here and have a spot and we'll talk it over". Said I "I won't take any spot because I'm a teetotaller, thanks all the same. As for the other thing, you can

see our name and business on the door. We just want to carry on our business quietly without any interference from our neighbours. We object to anyone making false accusations against us which might get us into trouble with the authorities. If you continue to make untoward suggestions about us we will have to take such proceedings as will stop you". I heard no more from him. Then again a newspaper boy stopped me in Wicklow St. one day. I used to get the paper from him each evening. He appeared to be in a state of great agitation, almost of terror. "Tell them who I am. Tell them I'm a friend. Don't let them shoot me" said he. There had been some trouble in the Wicklow Hotel close by. I forget what it was, but the boy apparently was afraid of being suspected of informing or spying. "How can I prevent anyone from shooting you if they want to. I don't know who they are or why they should shoot you, but you can take it from me that nobody is shot who doesn't deserve it, unless those shot by the Black and Tans". That appeared to satisfy him and he went away happy. Kevin O'Higgins called to me one day and said he had been going into the question of Poor Relief. He said it appeared to him that too large a portion of the money raised by the poor rate was spent in administration and that something should be done about it. That was the beginning of a scheme which was intended to bring about the abolition of the Unions, i.e. the Workhouse system. He thought it would be too drastic to abolish the whole system at once, so he put the scheme for the amalgamation of Unions on foot. By this means he hoped to have the affairs of a number of

Unions administered by the equivalent of the staff of one of them. After that he intended to have most of the inmates of the workhouses boarded out in suitable homes, and in the case of those unsuitable for boarding out, to have decent institutional homes provided for them. He had a lot of other reforms in mind but the treaty came before the amalgamation scheme was completed. When the completing of the scheme came into the hands of the ex-British civil servants it worked vastly different from what was envisaged by Kevin O'Higgins. The cost, as far as I could see, increased instead of decreasing, and the poor, I was told, were huddled together as miserably as ever in those terrible workhouses. In one only of those institutions did I hear of improvements, that is the Dublin Union, under the sympathetic care and able administration of Seamus Murphy.

During all this time the war had been growing in intensity from day to day. Raids, arrests, burnings, shooting and torturing prisoners, holding up streets and searching pedestrians, stopping trams and searching passengers. This intense warfare had not been going on for long when one day Seán Saunders came in to us with a message from the Minister, Mr. W.T. Cosgrave. He said Mr. Cosgrave had told him to say that things were getting too hot, that he was going into hiding and he advised us, that is Kevin O'Higgins and the members of the staff, to go and do likewise. We continued working as usual but Mr. Cosgrave disappeared from that moment and all letters and orders were signed by Kevin

Extract from Sunday Press
21st November 1965 - Page 4
Leatán miontuairisce

msb

attach to Page 133 of
W.S. 889.

THE SUNDAY PRESS, NOVEMBER 21, 1965

Sheltered Cosgrave from Tans

AN 83-year-old Oblate priest, Rev James McDonnell-Moran, recalled yesterday how he hid the late Mr William T Cosgrave in his monastery in the Dublin mountains for three months during 1921

Only two members of the community, Fr McDonnell-Moran and the late Brother Hennessy, O M I were aware that the newly-arrived "Brother Doyle" was in fact Mr Cosgrave

Said Fr McDonnell-Moran "Mr Cosgrave lived among us in Glencree as a member of the community He lived a very holy and saintly life and was an example to all of us"

Mr Cosgrave first met the Oblate superior early in 1921 and thus started a friendship which was to endure until the statesman's death last week

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 889

Informed on

At the Oblate Monastery in Inchicore, Dublin, Fr McDonnell Moran said yesterday 'When I first met Mr Cosgrave I told him that any time he or any other Irish freedom fighter needed refuge they would be very welcome at our monastery

"A few months later he was in hiding himself and word was sent to me through his sister-in-law that he had been informed on I immediately prepared a disguise and drove into the city to collect him"

"As I was waiting outside his home I was horrified to see three lorry loads of Black and Tans draw up and start searching the area Luckily, Mr Cosgrave was delayed and they were gone when he came out"

Continued Fr McDonnell-Moran "In order to give him confidence in the effectiveness of his disguise, I drove past his home and even his own gardner didn't recognise him"

During his three month stay at Glencree, Mr Cosgrave left the monastery only once—for a meeting with Michael Collins in the city

Eventually the Black and Tans became suspicious and the Glencree monastery was raided on several occasions "But," chuckled Fr McDonnell Moran, "we had a very good tip-off system and the Tans never found anything"

Fr McDonnell-Moran is a native of Limerick and is well known as a missioner in Ireland and England

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O'Higgins, Assistant Minister of Local Government. I heard nothing more of Mr. Cosgrave until the return of Eamon de Valera from America. A meeting of the cabinet was called and Kevin O'Higgins left us to attend it. When Kevin O'Higgins returned from that meeting he told me, amongst other things, that Dev. was furious because of the ambushes, shootings etc. that had taken place during his absence, and said that all such activities should cease at once. Kevin also complained bitterly of the way Dev. had spoken to him for, as Dev. said, usurping the position of the Minister. He told him that nothing should have been issued without the Minister's signature and would accept no explanation. "The Long Fellow (meaning Dev.) gave me a terrible dressing down, and the Big Fellow (Mick Collins) looked on and never said a word".

During all this time I seldom slept at home. I got frequent orders from Mick Collins not to go home. Mick, as is now well known, got news beforehand of impending raids, and sometimes when I had made up my mind to stay at home for the night, thinking things were safe, a late message would come from Mick to get out as quickly as possible. On one of these occasions I went down to Adelaide Road to the house where a friend of mine, an Indian student at the University named Gupta, was in digs. He had frequently told me to come to him if hard pressed and he would put me up. It was rather late in the night when I got there and he had no time to make the arrangement he'd have liked, but he went into the room of another Indian chap, a friend of his, and gave his room to me. I most frequently went to

Castleknock when I could not stay at home. There I went to either the house of the Cullens, my wife's home, or to Segrave's, the home of my wife's married sister. On one occasion I was at home, feeling very tired. I had had a very hard day and was looking forward to a good night's rest and thinking of getting ready for bed when there was a loud knocking on the hall door. My wife went to the door and came back to tell me it was a message from Mick. It was to clear out at once, the Tans were on their way. "I don't care" said I, "I'm too tired to stir. I'll stay here and chance it". So I went to bed. The next day I learned that both the houses in Castleknock which I frequented had been raided by the Tans during the night. Another house where I got shelter was 12 Grosvenor Road. It was the home of a friend of mine, Joe Clarke, a Post Office official who, for a great part of his time, was on night duty. It was a large house, and as there were only his wife and himself to occupy it, his family having grown up and gone away, they had let the ground floor flat to a couple of elderly ladies. One night Mrs. Clarke told me that one of those ladies had said to her that day "Isn't it grand to have Mr. Kavanagh staying here while Mr. Clarke is away. I feel much safer with a man in the house in these terrible times".

There were many feelers put out by the British government from time to time during this period. Even I was stopped a number of times and asked to take messages. These were usually to find out what terms, short of a republic, would be acceptable, or would Dominion Home

Home Rule satisfy, or Dominion status on the lines of Canada. I always refused to take any message, and said if the British government had any proposals to make they should be made openly to the government of the Irish Republic. It therefore came as a great shock to me when I found what was later accepted.

Mick Collins was, I believe, the man most sought after by the British government at that time. As an instance I would like to relate an incident that happened to my brother Peadar. Peadar was a traveller in sports goods at the time. He was travelling under the assumed name of Lynch. His work brought him into contact with a number of British military officers who were his customers for all sorts of sporting equipment. He had a pass, issued to him in the name of Lynch, which admitted him into all the British military barracks. It is not surprising then that these officers thought him pro-British and treated him as a friend. One day he was in Roberts of Grafton St. having a cup of coffee when one of these officers came over to him. "Where have you been this long time" said Peadar. "I've been in the barracks a number of times and you were not there". "Well it's like this" said the officer, "I'm on intelligence work now and away from the regiment, and that's what I want to speak to you about. You know your way about here better than I do and could help me in the work in hand. If I could get Mick Collins it would be worth £15,000 to me. If you get on his track and let me know, I'll give you half the £15,000". Peadar told him he'd keep his eyes and

ears open and let him know the moment he heard anything. What Peadar did was to come around and tell me. I passed the word on to Mick. A day or so after we heard five revolver shots close to our office, and learned afterwards that a young man in a navy blue suit had been shot dead at the corner of South William St. I asked no questions but have a strong suspicion that the young man was Peadar's officer friend. I mention this to show the value placed by the British government on the head of Mick Collins. It was our belief that Dev. was equally wanted by the British government, and, considering the harsh treatment meted out to the ordinary members of the movement, we thought that if either of them were caught he'd be in for a rough time. It must have come as a surprise to a lot of people, it certainly did to me, when in the middle of the summer of 1921 Dev. was eventually caught. The only thing that happened was the arranging of a truce. The truce was signed early in July, I don't remember the exact date. Nothing outstanding happened, that I am aware of, until the following December, when the "Articles of Agreement for a treaty between Great Britain and Ireland" were signed. Knowing all the parties concerned as I did, I could never understand how they came to be signed, except, as was stated, under the threat of "immediate and terrible war". A meeting of the cabinet was called to consider the matter. Kevin O'Higgins was summoned. Discussion of whether the terms should be accepted or rejected took a long time, at the end of which "acceptance was carried by one vote".

When Kevin O'Higgins was appointed substitute Minister for Local Government, and afterwards Assistant Minister, the question of whether he should have a seat on the cabinet with power to vote arose. Some thought he should have neither a seat nor a vote, others thought he should have a seat but no vote, but Dev. insisted that he should have both a seat and a vote and carried the day. The point I wish to make here is that if Dev. had not insisted on Kevin O'Higgins having a vote on the cabinet, the acceptance of the articles of agreement would not have been passed by the cabinet, and if rejected by the cabinet would hardly have passed the Dáil. Kevin O'Higgins himself told me how he came to have a vote. He also told me how he voted on the treaty. When leaving the office to attend that meeting of the cabinet, the girl members of the staff followed him halfway down the street urging him to vote against the treaty, and it was not until he had got away from them and was some distance ahead that he turned round and shouted, "I'm going to vote for it".

In addition to the addenda consisting of my observations regarding incidents and persons I came in contact with during the War of Independence, I append herewith the telegram sent me by my brother at the time of the birth of my son, Dermot, and which I did not receive until the time of my release. I also append my internment order and

the form of application for release which we were urged to fill in and sign, but which was left unsigned.

SIGNED: Séamus MacCaomhanaigh

(Seamus Ua Caomhanaigh)

DATE: 24 adh Meadhon Foghmhair 1953

24adh Meadhon Foghmhair, 1953.

WITNESS: J. MacCarthy Lt.-Col.

(J M. MacCarthy) Lt.-Col.

A D D E N D A

Dick Mulcahy:

I knew Dick Mulcahy as a Gaelic Leaguer before the start of the Volunteers. He appeared to me to be a man of intelligence above the average, a clear thinker and with an abundance of energy. I particularly admired him in Frongoch during the many periods of trouble there. He was always cool, calm and collected, so that I looked on him as a natural leader when the Volunteers were re-organised after the general release of prisoners in 1917. However, as time went on, I began to have my doubts. Dick escaped capture on many occasions by a hair's breadth. I was told after one of those occasions that he only got away in his "night-shirt". Where he failed was, that, while he managed to escape himself, he forgot to take his papers with him, so that lists of names and addresses fell into the hands of the enemy, very often with unfortunate results. I always thought that no one, least of all those in danger of arrest, should keep lists of names and addresses in their possession.

Liam Mellows:

The last time I saw Liam Mellows was at a race meeting in the Phoenix Park. My wife and I went to the races seeking to divert our minds from the horrors of the time brought about by the split over the Treaty. We had been there only a short time when we met Liam Mellows. We were greatly surprised, for Liam never displayed any interest in racing. He told us he had

come just like ourselves, to get away from everything for a short while. He said Dev. had been coming with him but on the way out changed his mind. He thought it would look bad if he were seen at the races while all the trouble was stirring. Dev. is another who never seemed to take an interest in racing nor, I may say, in any sport.

None of the three of us took much notice of the racing on that day. We just sat on the stand discussing the turn things had taken. Liam was exercising his mind trying to think of some solution of the problem of getting all the boys together again. He was definitely against the Treaty, but he had no ill-feeling for those who were in favour of it. He thought there should be some means of bringing the pro-Treaty and the anti-Treaty parties together and that they could remain friends while agreeing to differ. He was arrested a day or two afterwards and I saw him no more.

Eoin Mac Néill:

In the early days of the Gaelic League an agitation was started to have Irish made an ordinary subject on the National School programme. At that time fees were paid to teachers for teaching Irish as an extra subject. The answer of the British Government to the demand for Irish to be made an ordinary subject was to cut out Irish altogether either as an ordinary or a special subject. They stopped paying the fees. The agitation then switched and became one for the restoration of the fees. There were meetings and resolutions from all parts of the country. The largest and most important meeting was one held in the Ancient

Concert Rooms, Brunswick Street (now Pearse Street). One of the principal speakers at that meeting was Eoin Mac Néill. He was a great speaker, although no orator. He spoke in a matter-of-fact conversational manner, but in such well chosen words as to carry his audience with him and his arguments seemed to have a good deal of logic. In his speech on that occasion, when he had his audience well worked up, he, referring to the Commissioners of National Education, said that in a previous national crisis the tails were cut off the cattle, "but", said he, "it's not the tails we'll cut off now, but the heads". This was received with loud cheering, but a few days afterwards he was on the mat. He was a civil servant then, a clerk in the High Courts of Justice. He was called in to the Chief Secretary's Office and told to apologise. This he had to do or lose his job. I thought no worse of Eoin Mac Néill for this, but I thought that no civil servant should take up a position of open antagonism to the British Government unless he was prepared to face the consequences.

On several subsequent occasions Eoin Mac Néill showed that, although a brainy and an able man, he was not a strong one. His last essay was the fixing of the border and in that he showed neither ability nor strength.

Seamus Dwyer:

Seamus Dwyer was one who was in the thick of the movement. He favoured acceptance of the Treaty when it came before the Dáil, but, later on, when he saw the dissonance arising amongst erstwhile friends because of the Treaty, he expressed great sorrow and set about

finding a means of bringing them together again despite the Treaty. He kept moving back and forward between the opposite groups to try and make peace. That's what he told me anyway and I believed him. However, there must have been others who did not, for one evening he was shot dead in his shop, a high-class grocery on the Rathmines Road.

It may have been a couple of years afterwards when I met Paddy Sheehan in the street and stopped to talk to him. Paddy was then Secretary to the Prisons' Board or whatever it was called then. After a while I asked him had they ever discovered the person who had shot Jim Dwyer. He told me they had. I wondered who it was as I had seen nothing about it in the newspapers. He said he couldn't remember the fellow's name at the moment but that his body had been found in a ditch up in Milltown. The name of the man whose body had been found in a ditch in Milltown was Frank Lawlor who, from what I was told afterwards, could not have shot Seamus Dwyer for he was in another place when Dwyer was shot.

Pádraig Ó Conaire, Joe Gleeson and Lord Ashbourne's Hat:

One day I was passing through South King Street. When I was half-way through the street, I looked across and saw Pádraig Ó Conaire and Joe Gleeson standing on the footpath on the opposite side. They appeared to be discussing something of grave importance. When they saw me they shouted across, "Seamus, come here!". Pádraig was holding a very fine black velour hat in his hands. "Will you buy this hat?", said he, "I'll give it to you cheap." "Where did you get it? Who owns it?", said I. "Well, you see, it's like this", said Pádraig,

"we were at an anti-recruiting meeting and, when it was over, Lord Ashbourne went away taking my hat with him by mistake. So I had to take his; this is it. I'll give it to you for half-a-crown if you care to buy it". "No", said I, "a Lord's hat would never suit me". The idea of Lord Ashbourne taking Pádraig's hat by mistake was very funny. You'd want to have seen the greasy, heavy, out-of-shape old caibú worn by Pádraig to appreciate how funny. They were apparently trying to raise the price of a drink on the hat, wherever they got it, but I wanted to have nóthing to do with it.

The I.R.B.:

I was invited to join the I.R.B. but excused myself from doing so on the grounds that, in my opinion, there was no need for such an organisation at that time. The work being done by the I.R.B. could be equally well done by any open organisation such as the Gaelic League, or the G.A.A., or the Celtic Literary Society, or any of the '98 Clubs. All organisations have their secrets, and members of all organisations are expected to keep their private business secret. The fact of members being oath-bound to secrecy only tends to make the weaker ones anxious to tell what they know, and the person who can't keep his word won't keep his oath. Another danger is that the Church condemns secret societies, with the consequent result that some members of such societies, when the time of the missions comes round, feel that they must, when they go to confession, tell of their membership. The next time that priest gets into the pulpit, or when he speaks from the altar, he warns the congregation of the dangers of these societies, and tells them that, to his knowledge, such

a society exists in the parish. The information, in this way, soon reaches the ears of the authorities who put their dogs ("G" men, spies, peelers) on the trail. So that one unintentional hint from the pulpit, and a few weeks' spying is enough to make known to the authorities, not alone the existence of a secret society but a fair idea of the names of the members.

My reasoning appears to have been sound, as it is quite plain that the Irish Volunteers could have succeeded without the help of the I.R.B., whereas the I.R.B. could have gone on indefinitely without achieving anything but for the Volunteers. Then again, after the surrender in 1916, when we were all together in the gymnasium of Richmond Barracks, the "G" men went through our ranks picking out certain people for court-martial and those picked out were, as far as I could see, all members of the I.R.B. I remember in Stafford gaol, when our period of solitary confinement had expired and when we were allowed to converse freely with one another, a chap who occupied the cell next to mine, named Paddy McGuirk, asked me how it was that some who were only privates in the Volunteers were court-martialled and others, like himself, who were officers, were only deported. I told him that, like "wheels within wheels", there were organisations within organisations and that it was the members of the inner organisation who were court-martialled. Most of the ordinary members of the Volunteers were asking themselves the same question, which goes to show the inefficacy of the secret society.

On the other hand, I have to admit that I had a great liking and the greatest of respect for those members of the I.R.B. that were known to me personally.

The leaders were great men, honest, sincere, able. And the rank and file were mostly a very decent lot of fellows. But there were a few who talked too much and a few others who spent their time whispering. I don't mean to say that the ones who talked too much gave away any secrets deliberately, but one can't keep on talking without saying something. Fortunately they did most of their talking to those who had the same political aspirations as themselves. The whisperers were worse, but maybe it was all in a good cause. You see, the I.R.B. wanted to have their men in the key positions in all other national organisations and the whisperers may have thought that, by vilifying those who stood in the way, they were doing good work. At any rate I did not like it and the men selected by the I.R.B. to fill these key positions were very often duds. And lastly I'd like to say that, to my mind, the I.R.B. was largely responsible for the dissensions that took place during the Treaty debates and that led up to the so-called civil war.

Séamus Ua Caomhánaigh

(Seamus Ua Caomhanaigh).

24adh Meadhon Foghmhair 1953.

24adh Meadhon Fhoghmhair 1953.

Witness J. MacCarthy

G. Lt.

(J.M. MacCarthy) Lt.-Col.

Presented by Seamus Ua Caomhánaigh, 302 Howth Road, Dublin, and referred to in his statement of evidence (W.S. 889 , Page 113). The two documents comprise:-

(1) A printer's proof copy of a photograph of the first Dáil Eireann in session and a list of the members. The manuscript corrections are in the handwriting of the donor, an official of the Sinn Féin Secretariat, at the time of making the corrections.

(2) A second proof copy of the list of members of Dáil Eireann adjusted in accord with the fore-mentioned corrections.

Seamus Ua Caomhánaigh
Lt.-Col.
24.9.53

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J. Mac Lochlainn
Lt.-Col.
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