

W. S. 907

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 907

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 907.....

Witness

Laurence Nugent,
The Swan,
Athy,
Co. Kildare.

Identity.

Lieutenant 'K' Company, 3rd Battalion,
Dublin Brigade.

Subject.

National activities, 1913-1923.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

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ORIGINAL

STATEMENT by

Mr. Larry Nugent,
The Swan, Athy,
Co. Kildare.

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Chapter 1.

FOUNDING OF THE VOLUNTEERS.

On Saturday, 8th November, 1913, an article appeared in An Claidheamh Solus and the Leader, advocating the formation of Volunteer Corps. On Saturday, November 15th, 1913, The Evening Telegraph published a news item that a movement was on foot for the formation of a Volunteer Corps. On November 19th, 1913, an advertisement appeared, announcing a meeting to be held in the Round Room, Rotunda, on Tuesday, 25th November, 1913, for the purpose of forming a Volunteer Corps. "All citizens are invited to attend. Further Announcements later."

The feelings aroused among the Nationalist population of the City and County of Dublin by the above publications were indescribable. In business houses, workshops, offices and various professions, a feeling of comradeship which never previously existed sprung up. Men who had only a nodding acquaintance shook hands when they met in the street. The young men clicked their heels when they met their pals and actually hugged and pulled each other around: all were joining up. Would Tuesday ever come?

"A soldier's life is the life for me,
A soldier's life so Ireland's free."

The Home Rule Bill was being debated in the House of Commons, and let it be understood that outside of the professional politicians, Home Rule meant to the

ordinary citizen freedom for Ireland without any qualifications. Carson in Belfast had already raised thousands of volunteers and had imported large quantities of ammunition and rifles, for the purpose of preventing the British Government from putting the Home Rule Bill into operation. The British Army on the Curragh, led by Lord Gough, mutinied and refused to obey the orders of their Government. The mutineers were supported by some British Cabinet Ministers. The operations of the Home Rule Bill were shelved and so ended the most cowardly act ever committed by any constituted government in any part of the world.

The meeting in the Rotunda was a great success - a large number of men were unable to gain admission. The principal business was a resolution proposing to found a Volunteer Corps for Ireland. Aims and objects were explained by a number of well known men in the Gaelic League and G.A.A. and other supporting organisations, but the politicians were absent. We were informed as to the best way to form Companies and that further instructions would be issued later. I succeeded in having my name registered that night. I was then living in Dundrum, Co. Dublin. Another man who joined up that night was Thomas J. Cullen, a leading Dublin architect and International Rugby player, and well known in other sporting activities.

After the Larkin Strike in Dublin in 1913 a number of workers formed themselves into a Citizen Army. They caused some trouble at the meeting as they were suspicious of our motives. This was all cleared up later and the majority of the men in the Dublin Volunteers were Dublin working men. The men who joined up on the 25th had no illfeeling against the Carson

Volunteers. They recognised one old enemy only and they knew that if ever we got our freedom in Ireland we would have to fight for it.

We often talked this over in our Gaelic League classes and at G.A.A. meetings, at Centenary Meetings and processions. As a little boy I heard it talked of at the country fireside and later in secret societies. Dunboy, Limerick, the Irish Brigade in France, '98, Tone, Emmet, The Young Irelanders, The Men of The Land League - they all fought without counting the consequences. Tonight we were no longer a mob. We looked forward to long lines of well-trained armed marching men. We were Volunteers. We would pay for our own arms when we could get them, and we would fight for the freedom of Ireland when the opportunity arose. This was the mind of the new organisation, the will to do and dare, and how successful that was will be seen at the present time when most of the men who joined up that first night have passed away, and the remainder are growing old but do not feel old.

On the 26th November 1913 the newspapers published a report of the meeting, giving it three columns. On November 7th 1913 an advertisement appeared asking for volunteers to attend at 41, York Street, at 8 p.m. on Monday, 1st December, 1913. This was largely attended and Mr. T. Cullen, architect, became a member of C. Company at this meeting. From then until the end of the year there was very little publicity of volunteer activities, but the organisation of the companies went on rapidly. In the various big centres in the country very successful organising meetings were held at which great enthusiasm prevailed. At the original meeting a provisional committee was

nominated to carry on the organisation and, as An Claidheamh Solus and The Leader were first to advocate the formation of a Volunteer Corps, a large number of men of advanced opinions were elected. There was no voting, names were called from the body of the hall and accepted. Most of them were known in public life but some were not. But the object of the meeting was accomplished - the founding of a Volunteer Organisation. That was what brought us to the meeting, and let the committee worry about the organising later on. Every man who handed in his name was determined that he himself would become an organiser or would join up with the first squad or company available. Drilling and forming companies went on night after night. Every man paid a subscription. Yes, men paid for the privilege of being allowed to train as Irish soldiers and later to purchase their own arms and equipment. In Ireland we had no knowledge of military training; we would not watch a company of British soldiers training on the Barrack square; we would not even watch the changing of the guard at the Bank of Ireland. And now to the rescue came the fulfilment of John Boyle O'Reilly's prophetic words when he wrote on the white-washed bricks in his cell in Arbour Hill:-

"We have borne the scorn and insult but the Saxon
yet shall feel
The strength of Irish vengeance and the points
of Irish steel.
The foremost men to strike the foe in freedom's
glorious war
Shall have worn England's scarlet and the blue
of her Hussar."

(Arbour Hill. '66-'67.)

The ex-soldiers of the Dublin Fusiliers, Munster Fusiliers, Connaught Rangers and men who had fought in other British Regiments, flocked to the drill halls and parade grounds and offered their services free. These services were gladly accepted and in a short time we were knocked into shape. We could hold our heads up; we could drill; we could march. We were taught what discipline meant and we knew how to obey orders, and I might mention here that from start to finish of the Volunteers, discipline became a matter of honour with every man. To the Irishmen who wore the English Scarlet or the Blue of her Hussar, or later her Khaki, whether in her Army police or other services and joined their forces with us in our fight for freedom, a free Ireland owes an everlasting debt of gratitude.

The new provisional committee had a difficult task. Its composition did not make for unity. Ireland had only recovered from the turmoil of the Parnell split. The Gaelic League and the G. A. A. were the only national organisations making for unity, but they were both conservative in their rules. At the same time their organisations were open to all members of the community. The G. A. A. represented the greater portion of the young men of Ireland, a voluntary organisation, and all prepared to fight when the opportunity arose. Sedition was the watch-word among the majority. In Gaelic League circles, particularly at the top, the idea prevailed that it was only necessary to speak Irish and eventually we would become a free people. There was no question of a fight here. But, among the boys, the men and the women who attended the classes, opinions were different. We were becoming defiant of British rule, and men had no hesitation in going to jail for having their names on their carts in

Irish, or other minor offences. Sinn Féin, in these days, was purely a passive resistance movement. Repeal of the Union was one of their main objectives and the King, Lords and Commons portion of their Constitution. They also tried to adopt the Hungarian policy and established courts for the purpose of settling disputes. They were the only political party opposed to the Irish Parliamentary Party, and they succeeded in having several members elected to the Dublin Corporation. They were the principal advocates of an Irish industrial revival. The members of Sinn Féin were genuinely Irish in their actions and outlook, but they were neither Separatists nor Revolutionary, and the proof of this is that while Arthur Griffiths edited Sinn Féin or Nationality, Shaun McDermot published Irish Freedom, a revolutionary paper. Then we had the Irish Parliamentary Party who controlled more than two-thirds of the votes in Ireland, and we had their kindred or controlling organisation, the A. O. H. (Ancient Order of Hibernians). Membership of one qualified you for membership of the other. There were some clashes between these two organisations, but John Redmond held sway often with difficulty. For some years prior to the war of 1914 the Irish Parliamentary Party were not a very happy family within their own organisation. The bosses of the A. O. H., John D. Nugent and Joe Devlin, and their satellites in Dublin and Northern Ireland were one section of the party who were trying for supreme power. Then there was the mighty John Dillon who thought he should hold control of the party, and John Redmond who had the support of the majority of the members of the Parliament. And now, on account of the new national spirit growing up in the country, a number of young men joined what was known as the Young Ireland Branch of the United Irish League.

This was the Irish Parliamentary Party. And these young men were encouraged to join this new party by the members of the three parties mentioned, all trying for the active support of the younger men. These young men had different ideas from the Irish Parliamentary Party, and had hopes of bringing Irish politics into line with the natural aspirations of the Irish people. Most of them were members of the Gaelic League and the Revolutionary organisations. They succeeded in keeping fairly clear of parliamentary politics. John Dillon succeeded in getting the active support of one of these young men, Dr. Davitt. He was supposed to be Dillon's agent in whatever intrigue was going on in the Party ranks. This alliance between Dillon and Davitt was resented by most of the other members of the new organisation, and had its repercussions when the Irish Parliamentary Party nominated him as one of their representatives on the controlling committee of the Volunteers in 1914. (The objection to Davitt caused most of the friction, and the objection does not seem to be well founded. I knew the late Dr. Davitt for a few years afterwards and I considered he was a very staunch republican. He gave me his two-seater car and driver for the day in the 1918 elections and he was one of the secretaries of the National Aid Organisation, and one of its founders.) But on the formation of the Volunteers these party disputes were dropped and both parties decided to either control or abolish the new organisation.

The A. O. H. up to this period and for a number of years afterwards were the most insidious organisation ever established in Ireland as those of us who had to work with them and against them knew too well. They controlled every form of business and profession in

the country. Various types of business had each an A. O. H. Branch of their own. Contracts were arranged with institutions for good members. The secretaries or storemen were good members, so there was no difficulty. I was offered one of these contracts if I would join. The same applied to the professions: doctors had their own branch and appointments were made accordingly. The same applied to the law, education and every other walk of life in the country. They even sent a deputation to Pearse and McDonagh to Oakley Road, offering them any job they wished to name, either at home or any part of the Empire, if they would join the A. O. H. They built halls all over the country, particularly in the North, and with lavish displays of success, they succeeded in diverting to themselves a large amount of Orange oppression towards Catholics, which gave them a high political standing. They even tried to get control of the G. A. A. through the C. J. Kickham Club in Dublin. Their Insurance Society, which was merely a collecting society for some of the big English Insurance Companies, kept them in close contact with a goodly number of the population. The A. O. H. was a sectarian organisation. The I. R. B., Clann na Gael and A. O. H. American alliance, all revolutionary, were on the wane.

A number of men in the I. R. B. asked permission to join the A. O. H., thinking they could stop some of the Anglicising propaganda which was being carried on in the country. But the permission was refused. A number joined the A. O. H. in Dublin and other parts of the country. These men justified their actions as will be seen later in this story. The new provisional committee was made up of men from all these organisations, and while the leaders of the Parliamentary Party and the A. O. H. were absent from the original meeting, they had sufficient

members there to have a number elected on the provisional committee. So that obstruction at headquarters started from the very first meeting. But the men who wanted to make the organisation a success remained cool. Liam Mellows was elected secretary and those of us who were working outside saw for the present that the organisation was safe. Col. Moore offered his services, so did Casement, and both were accepted. Two more good men were Merry and Monteith (both ex-Army men). They did an enormous amount of organising work.

It was now the early part of 1914, and various Volunteer companies were doing well. I organised a company in Dundrum, Co. Dublin, of about one hundred and all these were working men. We got no support from the well-to-do people, with one exception, and he was a County Councillor and a member of the United Irish League and the A.O.H. So it can be seen that they were keeping an eye on us. We had only two men in the company who could give us any instructions. Mr. Masterson gave us a field in Goatstown for drilling, and we made good use of it. Instructors were sent out from Dublin, including Monteith. He admired the Dundrum boys and said he would like to have them in a scrap. From this time onwards I gave all my time to military training and ceased to attend meetings of any description only Volunteer meetings. Monteith mentioned to me the question of talking sedition to the men. But they mostly knew Irish history and all the failures of previous attempts to free the country by force of arms. They were all G.A.A. men and were not members of any political organisation. But they were working men and depended for their living mostly on the employment of the Unionist inhabitants and so the economic pressure prevailed.

In the majority of companies in the City and County a large number of the Volunteers were members of the A.O.H. or United Irish League. But in actual training, no political opinions were expressed and training went on smoothly. The Carson Volunteers in Belfast had plenty of money and arms, while we had neither. The question of turning the Volunteers into a Territorial Force, the same as was then operating in England, was seriously considered and whilst the committee did not commit themselves to this course they did not oppose it. They adopted the same attitude towards the Parliamentary Party when their help for the movement was proposed. During these early months of 1914, while the Irish Volunteer Organisation was labouring under difficulties, Carson was gaining strength and succeeded in having a covenant against the inclusion of the Six Counties in the Home Rule Bill, signed by an enormous amount of people in England, both military, naval and political. At this period Redmond surrendered on the partition question. When the Parliamentary Party were first approached as to their attitude towards the Irish Volunteers, they refused to commit themselves as a party. But some of them, whether genuine or otherwise, seemed to be in favour of carrying on the movement.

About the middle of April 1914 Joe Devlin and some other members of parliament met McNeil and other members of the provisional committee. Joe Devlin told them that Redmond must have control of the Volunteers. It was afterwards generally believed that England was responsible for forcing Redmond to take this action.

In the meantime, the Volunteers were consistently training and were beginning to clamour for arms. By the middle of June the Parliamentary Party had got a majority on the provisional committee. They were anxious about their own political position in the country. The halls which were built for A.O.H. purposes were now being used for drilling volunteers, and their members were losing their enthusiasm for their leaders. The old national spirit was creeping in amongst them so that the party had to have control or fail in the favour of the people.

The ordinary volunteer knew little of the squabbles that were going on at the top, but they hoped for the best. In the month of June we had a great day in the South County Dublin. Manoeuvres were arranged. Two columns of volunteers vied with each other for certain important points in the Dublin foot-hills. Pearse was in charge of our party. I was then O/C Dundrum Company, when we mobilised around Milltown and marched through Dundrum. We heard Mass in Sandyford and, such were the numbers, that only a fraction of the men could gain admission to the Chapel. The balance formed continuous lines along the road-side, and were a continuity of those in the Church, so that every man got Mass. That day was a great success, and the men who took part in the manoeuvres realized their strength in case they ever went into action. So great was the interest taken that, where opposing parties came in contact, there were frayed tempers and on one occasion we had difficulty in keeping the Dundrum boys quiet.

Some days prior to Sunday 6th July (the day of the Howth Gun-running) I was told to have the men on parade for a route march and that an officer from

headquarters would take charge. We were on the square at Dundrum station when Monteith arrived in uniform. This was the first man the men had seen in a volunteer uniform. This route march and others were arranged so as to deceive the police authorities as to the intentions of the men who marched to Howth. The Company was presented with a Howth rifle as a mark of appreciation of our help in diverting police activities from the Howth men. But this gun did not come to Howth - it was one of the lot landed at Kilcool, and I collected it at Stillorgan. These Kilcool rifles did not reach the city until the fight in 1916. When we arrived back in Dundrum from our route march we got an account of the happenings in Dublin, particularly the shooting at Bachelor's Walk. Monteith was curious at the action of the British authorities and, had he been present at Howth, the Howth rifles would have been brought into action against the British troops. We were hungry after our long march. But he would not wait for anything to eat. He hired a car and drove to Dublin.

The landings of these rifles gave the Volunteers great hope for the future. Money was already coming into the organisation, as after the Irish Parliamentary Party got control, a large number of wealthy men, some of them lords, earls, etc., and quite a few ex-British officers who were apparently opposed to the Orange Volunteers, joined up. The provisional Committee was still talking, but no useful work was being done. Nevertheless, the Volunteers kept on training.

Early in August England and Germany were at war. This caused a lot of excitement among the

volunteers. Men who were on the Reserve of the British Army were called up. We were largely left without instructors, although during our periods of training a number of men had become very proficient, and we were able to carry on. We had one very good man in Dundrum who was called up early. We guaranteed to protect him if he failed to report. He agreed for a short time but, eventually, economic circumstances prevailed. We could save him from arrest, but we could not support his wife and family. He was only a few days in France when he was killed. The same happened in several cases. The men were loth to go back to the army but they had no option. The British Army authorities at this time offered to arm the Volunteers as a Territorial Force for Home Defence. This proposal, though not publicly considered, was much talked about among the ordinary volunteers. A large number were in favour of getting arms on any favourable terms. In a short time the offer was withdrawn. The British were afraid to arm us.

Chapter 2.

VOLUNTEER SPLIT.

About the end of September the Dundrum Company were out on a route march on a Sunday morning. Our way was towards the city. At Windy Arbour we met John Redmond in his car. He saw us in the distance and had his car parked on the side of the road when we came along. I was marching at the head of the Company with Jim Cashman, Coy/Lieut. We recognised John Redmond but just kept marching on. He seemed very disappointed and the men told me afterwards that he looked very angry. That was the day he made his recruiting speech at Woodenbridge. The men were not satisfied with his previous pronouncements and they were very glad that I

did not give him an opportunity of addressing us, which was apparently what he wanted to do. At the following meetings of the provisional committee there were angry scenes and by the end of September 1914 a definite split took place. The majority stayed with the Irish Parliamentary Party and the minority issued a statement asking their followers to form a separate organisation. At all parades immediately afterwards votes were taken and the split was complete.

The majority remained on the Party side, simply because they were enthusiastic followers of the Party: others, who had no party connection, remained on account of the facilities for training and because all the funds were in the hands of the Party and offered better opportunities of getting arms. I remained with my Company when the vote was taken. This happened much later than in other districts: I had tried to prevent it if possible. Only five men went over to the new committee and we continued training as usual. The Company was about the best trained in the County Dublin. We won several shooting competitions. We were one of the few companies trained to the use of the .303 Rifle.

At the time of the split in the Volunteers, Capt. Thos. Cullen (Architect) remained with the majority of the Volunteers and was elected Commander 3rd Battalion, Irish National Volunteers. He was also appointed a member of Col. Moore's staff on the National Committee. This Battalion had their hall in Lr. Pembroke Street and training was carried on there every night. I was also appointed a member of the military staff by the Colonel. We were responsible to him only. Consequently we were independent of

the politicians. From the first meeting our object was to get in as much arms and ammunition as possible, and considering the opposition we were up against, we were very successful. There was also on the committee of the National Volunteers a few men who had joined the A.O.H. from the I.R.B. in pre-Volunteer days. These men came from long distances. But we never numbered more than seven or eight, so that at no time could we hope for a majority. Still we kept on the fight for arms. Captain Thos. Cullen and myself always attended the meetings of the committee. We were always on the general purposes committee and this was a very noisy affair. We had continuous obstruction from the A.O.H. members. But we had a National objective in view and we carried on.

Training was never relaxed. A summer camp was established at Old Bawn, Tallaght, in charge of Captain T.J.Cullen. This camp was largely attended during the summer holidays and at weekends. I continued to train in Dundrum and by this time Mrs. Nugent had organised a Boys Brigade. These boys got a very good training.

During the period after the split in many districts the men began to fall away. The early enthusiasm was disappearing and this applied to both sections of the volunteers. But mostly in the National Volunteers. Recruiting for the British Army was in full swing and large numbers were joining up. The economic pressure was brought to bear on men all over the country. There were no industries of any account. Those that did exist offered tempting facilities to their employees if they joined the British Army. The Corporations, and Co. Councils, offered facilities and guaranteeing their employers re-instatement and reimbursing them for any losses of salary. The Heads of the churches advised men to join up and the country

was plastered with placards asking men to fight for little Catholic Belgium.

British propaganda at that period was extraordinary and there was little opportunity of counteracting it. Men of Sinn Féin and the Volunteers who spoke against recruiting were jailed. The country generally had lost its old national spirit. We were sinking very low nationally. There were persistent threats of conscription and protest meetings were being held, but the men who spoke were usually imprisoned or deported to England. This deportation was a new system of persecution adopted by England. Recruiting meetings were being held in various parts of the city nightly: there were often disturbances at these meetings, but men and boys were joining the British Army.

By arrangement with the Irish Volunteers the National Volunteers marched into O'Donovan Rossa's funeral. I had about ninety men from Dundrum and Captain T. J. Cullen had about three hundred. From this day the National Volunteers ceased to exist only in name in Dublin and in country districts. Those of us who were in charge had no option. We were ordered or advised to remain as we were and do all we could to procure arms. In later years we were described as trotting after the Irish Volunteers in the funeral procession. Yes, we marched in the funeral procession and we made a good impression on public opinion: and we continued to march - but not into the British Empire.

A short time after the funeral I attended a parade in the Volunteer Hall in Pembroke Street. Captain T.J. Cullen had mobilised all his men who marched in Rossa's funeral and I attended as representing the Dundrum men. Eamonn Ceannt ,

representing the Headquarters of the Irish Volunteers, addressed us and stated that there was a possibility of a large consignment of rifles and ammunition being landed in the country. Probably a lot more than the Irish Volunteers would be able to use, and would we take part in any action decided upon for the freedom of the country. They would probably be compelled to strike soon. Every man promptly agreed, and to their credit this meeting was kept an absolute secret until 1916, when the men were mobilised but there were no rifles. Fred J. Allen's Battalion in Dunlaoghaire was also addressed by Eamonn Ceannt at this time with the same result. Other men were questioned in the country and the response was the same. Pearse sent a message to Casement in Germany that the National Volunteers were prepared to fight if the rifles arrived. We continued our usual training and did all we could to have the National Volunteer Committee continue to import arms. We were successful in a small way and a number of rifles from time to time fell into the hands of the Irish Volunteers. When the fight started in Easter Week they found a good number of rifles and a quantity of ammunition in 44, Parnell Square (Headquarters of the National Volunteers.)

On September 2nd field exercises were held in the Park. The National Volunteers from the city and county took part. The numbers then were about four thousand for the whole of Ireland. Captain T.J. Cullen was in charge of the Groups.

In a short space of time after the outbreak of war in 1914 large numbers of troops were on the move to the boats at the North Wall for transport to England and France, and large numbers of British recruits were

brought over to Ireland for training. The streets of Dublin and the military centres all over Ireland were packed with the British Army. These daily marches to the North Wall became a regular routine, with bands playing and soldiers singing. Some of these troops were mere boys and some of them had only a few weeks training before they were packed off in order to complete the numbers of the drafts. By the end of 1915 recruiting had slackened off and the marches became less regular. And when the fight started in Dublin in 1916 there was only a small number of British soldiers in Ireland (in comparison with the large Army of occupation usually maintained here). The press were publishing the numbers joining up from day to day, and the young and irresponsible boys kept joining up here in reduced numbers as if it were the correct thing to do. They were advised by paid recruiting agents and professional politicians and in the excitement of the times thousands of Irishmen went to fight for the freedom of small nations and, as they were told, for the freedom of their own country.

On through the Autumn of 1915 continuous training and route marches were continued. Captain Cullen's men in Pembroke Street and Fred Allen's men in Dunlaoighaire never slackened. They had given their word to take up arms when they were available and consequently they were anxious to learn all the arts of warfare. A long portion of the training and lectures and manoeuvres were what the British would do as per book, and we were training to counteract these hard and fast rules by learning to do something opposite. We carried out night exercises in Dundrum on several occasions, dividing the companies in two and using the Boys' Brigade as scouts. One

party using British book tactics, the other the opposite. The opposite always had the best of it. On Sundays we stretched lines of men across the country as if held by British military. The opposites succeeded in getting through these lines safely, carrying guns. The Boys took an active part in this training, and they certainly put it to good use when it came to the real thing. In the fight for independence and in the Civil War they showed extraordinary ability in keeping their lines of communication open. In some of these manoeuvres Captain Cullen brought out his men from the city, and we had some very instructive battles. Every man and boy, both in the city and county companies, were now first class shots and competitors in shooting were very keen. The Dundrum Company won all County Dublin shooting competitions. Captain Cullen's men in Pembroke Street won the City Cup Competition for all-round efficiency and, again, when these men were put to the test in the War for Independence, they distinguished themselves and proved the result of long and continuous training. In various departments K Company supplied the Battalion Armourer, Jim Lambert. This man also did a lot of Brigade armoury work. It also supplied the assistant armourer, J.F.O'Donnell the Batt. Musketry Instructor, Lynch, Batt. Adjutant, Lieut. Frank Gallagher, Batt. Technical Adviser and Inspector of Guards and H.Q. I/O Thos. J. Cullen and Cpt. John McCluskey, who was taken on special service by Mick Collins as one of his most trusted men. When Captain Thos. Cullen was transferred to the Battalion Staff, Harry O'Farrell, another man who had gone through all the original training, was elected Captain of 'K' Company. He made an excellent Company officer. We had our I.O. in the

Post Office when the famous mails were captured. We had Sgt. Jack O'Connell at Westland Row. We had Jack DArmen and Lieut. Bohen in the Fire Brigade in Tara Street, who did great work for the I. R. A; Peter Keating, a distinguished Headquarters I.O. in the Civil War, and myself, who acted as assistant Q.M., small arms instructor, and G.H.Q. Secret Service agent. All these men with one exception were members of Captain Cullen's Battalion in Pembroke Street in 1915 and 1916, and with numerous other members were standing 'to', awaiting orders and arms. In Easter Week 1916 when Rory O'Connor said 'Send them home, We will want them again. We have no arms for them now.' In the War of Independence they purchased and procured arms for themselves. They used them and taught other companies how to use arms.

Towards the end of 1915 the Americans were getting very angry with Germany on account of the sinking of her shipping. The national population of Ireland did not like the prospect of America coming into the war on the side of England. Conscription was the general topic and the Irish Volunteer Organisation was putting up a good fight against the conscription propaganda. Father O'Flanagan spoke at a large meeting in St. Mary's Hall, Belfast, and Pearse and McNeil spoke at the Anti-Conscription Meeting in the Mansion House, Dublin. Irishmen were prevented from sailing from Liverpool to America. England and France were getting more than they were able to take from Germany, but the war went on.

Darrel Figgis at this period made an effort for a fusion of the Volunteers, but the matter was dropped. In January 1916 a conscription Bill was introduced in

the British House of Commons. This Bill was not to apply to Ireland. The Irish Party voted against the Bill generally, but in a week or so they withdrew their opposition to conscription in England. The Defence of the Realm Act was not in operation and various raids on houses were carried out by British military and police. Countess Markievicz got particular attention in Dublin and Terry MacSwiney in Cork. The big air-raids had started in England and desperate attempts were made here to get recruits for the British Army. Government grants for public works were withheld so as to cause unemployment. There were loud protests from local councils, but they went unheeded.

British propaganda, recruiting and censored accounts of the War was the only news appearing in the newspapers. On February 3rd 1916 a report of a recruiting meeting held in Galway was published in the daily papers. The following are some of the headings in large type:-

BIG RECRUITING RALLY IN GALWAY
100 NATIONAL VOLUNTEERS ATTEND CARRYING RIFLES
GOD SAVE THE KING AND GOD SAVE IRELAND WAS
PLAYED BY THE BANDS.

John Redmond and the Lord Lieutenant spoke. The general drift of the speeches was 'join up or be conscripted'. Reference was made to obstruction at recruiting meetings. Obstructors were warned that they would be seriously dealt with. John Redmond made a peculiar speech at this meeting: he talked about the R. I. C. and stated that they were a little army in themselves - 10,000 to 11,000 well-armed men: in Britain there was no comparison: in Ireland there was an R. I. C. man for every 398 members of the

populace, men, women and children: in Scotland there was a policeman for every 1,000 of the population and at the same time there was no crime in Ireland. But he did not mention that they were part of an army of occupation and the eyes and ears of that army. Alex McCabe of Sligo was found not guilty by a Dublin jury on a charge of being in possession of gelignite. On February 9th Joe Devlin stated in Belfast that 4,500 National Volunteers had joined the British Army, and about the middle of February another big recruiting meeting for the British Army was held in the Mansion House, Dublin. Terry MacSwiney was fined 1/- in Cork at this period under the Defence of the Realm Act. The British Press were now demanding the suppression of Sinn Féin and the Irish Volunteers.

There were big raids for arms in Cork in March, and about the middle of March Mr. Horan was prosecuted for driving P. H. Pearse through Grafton Street without a licence. Mr. Pearse attended court and stated he ignored the Government. The case was adjourned and dismissed at the next hearing and Pearse denied using words attributed to him.

On St. Patrick's Day big parades were held in Cork. All parties marched in the procession and about 2,000 British military asked for permission to have a place in the procession but were not allowed to march. In Galway, Tipperary and other centres, Irish Volunteers and National Volunteers marched side by side. These parades were most orderly. In College Green about 2,000 men were inspected by Eoin McNeill. On the platform were Pearse, McDonagh, Sheen, De Valera, Ceannt and Hunter. At a concert or a play in Tullamore some trouble arose outside and the police

tried to gain admission. They were refused and tried to force their way in. They were fired on by some Volunteers. Near the end of March there was a series of raids on what was known as the Mosquito Press. These were weekly publications and were all critical of the British Government and, of course, were printing anti-British propaganda. They were The Spark, Honesty, The Gael and Gaelic Athletic. At this time Blythe and Mellows were imprisoned in Arbour Hill and deportation orders were issued for men in Galway. Thirteen men in Tullamore were charged for firing on the police. Charlie Power defended. A report of a cancelled order to march on the Citizen Army Headquarters was read at a Corporation meeting. This publication caused an amount of speculation in the city as to the intentions of the British Army authorities. A large meeting to protest against deportation, at which Alderman Corrigan presided, was held in the Mansion House. Eoin McNeill challenged the British to bring out their forces. There was an overflow meeting and a march through the city. Protest meetings against overtaxation in Ireland were being held. These meetings gave Sinn Féin an opportunity of coming out in the open before the public. The Irish Party were annoyed and accused Sinn Féin of being pro-German. The British newspapers admitted over-taxation in Ireland. Mellows and Blythe were deported to England early in April. The police searched a motor car from Co. Wexford in College Green - the car contained a number of rifles and revolvers. A big parade of Irish Volunteers was held at Parnell Square and at a meeting in the Mansion House Eoin McNeill referred to deported Volunteers as "Casualties". Judge Kenny in Green Street Court referred to open hostility to recruiting and general anti-British propaganda in Ireland. The newsagents in Dublin

were warned that they would be prosecuted if they sold seditious newspapers. On April 20th 1916, at a meeting of the Dublin Corporation, a protest was made against the statements of Judge Kenny. There was a sensation in the Council Chamber when Alderman Tom Kelly read a secret order (supplied by Mr. P. J. Little), threatening raids and attacks by British military. The order was that all Irish Volunteer Halls and National Volunteer Halls were to be occupied. On April 22nd the following newsitem appeared in the newspapers:-

'A collapsible boat containing rifles and ammunition was seized at Corrohane Strand, Tralee, on Friday. A man of unknown nationality was arrested. It is not known from where the boat came or for what it was intended.'

A late news item stated that three Dublin men were arrested and charged in connection with the landing of arms at Kerry. A parade of Volunteers was ordered for Easter Sunday. But on Saturday, Eoin MacNeill, Chief of Staff, issued a circular rescinding all orders given to the Volunteers Corps, owing to the very critical situation. He ordered that no parades, marches or other movements of Irish Volunteers take place: each individual Volunteer will obey this order strictly in every particular.

Casement was arrested in Kerry after landing in the collapsible boat. (Monteith, who landed with him, escaped and later on came to Dublin where he remained for some time before going to the U.S.A.) He was taken by rail to Dublin and on to London. Were it not for the dissensions existing in the Irish Volunteer Executive Council Casement could have easily been rescued from his R.I.C. guards at any railway station and particularly at Westland Row. Lest it should appear from any of the proceeding statements leading up

to this event that there was any sympathy with an advanced movement in Ireland, it must be understood that the only sympathy forthcoming was from the few engaged in this movement and their families, and spread all over the country we had what ever remained of the old Fenian movement. These men never forgot. And, although they fought in the Land League and took sides in the Parnell split, at heart they were anti-British, although they were old and seldom seen in public. Their conversation and advice at the fireside carried weight and had a steadying effect on the younger generation. Their simple influence prevented a stampede into the British Army and, as happened in most places where the old Fenians had passed away, the old women were in many cases still alive. The advice and influence of these women was better than that of the men. They were less cautious in their statements and more robust in their denunciation of English treatment of Ireland in the past. They had no hesitation in declaring that we would get nothing from England unless we fought for it. In rural Ireland, as in the cities and towns, the walls were decorated with pictures of Tone and Emmett. Napoleon also got a prominent place. Soon these pictures would have company - the pictures of heroic men and women: some who had paid the extreme penalty and some who were pretty lucky to escape. But all of whom took the same desperate decision that Ireland might be free.

On the other side, by far the greater number of the population were backing England in the war. All ex-soldiers and military were called up and their dependants were getting a generous allowance. These people were very troublesome. They suddenly became very anti-Irish and were at all times ready to display

their hostile opinions in attacks on any Irish company or procession. When Pearse brought a number of Volunteers from Dublin to Limerick City, they were actually pelted with stones in parts of the city. The same would have occurred in any large town in Ireland outside Dublin. The old-time Britisher and most of all the well-to-do people were sure in their own minds that, with a few exceptions, all Ireland was loyal to the Empire. Another aspect of the general situation was that the advanced party was conservative to a degree. The heads of the organisation or most of them at any rate, and I knew a number of them personally, were different from the rank and file and would accept help from any source. But the other section, and they were the great majority, adopted the attitude 'if you are not with us you are against us'. This was the reason why their intelligence service was so poor. Of course this was an old failing with Irishmen. Wolfe Tone found that he had a difficult job to counteract this attitude in his day. The same applied to Emmet and other revolutionary leaders and the men of the advance movement were turning away good moral support in many cases by direct insults. Another aspect of the situation in Ireland with regard to the freedom of the country was the attitude of the Irish in America. (Casement went to America in 1915 but he apparently did little good.) The Irish party at this period were popular with the majority of the Irish people. The leaders of the advanced movement in the U.S.A. were awaiting their opportunity to gain any political advancement that might come their way in the U.S.A. if the Home Rule Bill was put into operation in Ireland, and they were well aware of the possibility of a rising and were

behind it - but to what extent? During the years of agitation they sent money for any purpose only the buying of guns. At no period up to the Civil War did they send guns and they could have sent them in small lots. It is well recognised that a few dozen machine guns would have swept the British Army off the streets of Dublin in 1916.

British persecution in Ireland suited the political ambitions of Irish leaders in America. They were afraid that if we got our freedom they would lose some of their influence in American politics. Political trouble in Ireland suited them and they never hoped for any success through the use of arms. I had a personal experience in this matter of arms and freedom in the year 1912 or 1913. The members of the A.O.H. American alliance were called to a meeting to meet a fraternal delegate from the U.S.A. This man I knew personally in previous years as Chairman of the Dublin G.A.A. Football League which held their meetings in the Pantheon in Essex Street. His name was Pidgeon: he had emigrated to the U.S.A. some years earlier. The late Harry Dobbin presided at this meeting. Portion of Pidgeon's address was to the effect that war in Europe was possible in a few years and if it did start the most we would be able to do would be to become hewers of wood and drawers of water. Most of the members protested against this statement and Mr. Pidgeon was told to tell his friends in U.S.A. that the Irish people would never adopt this attitude.

That was the opinion of some at any rate of our friends in the U.S.A. We must not fight with guns. Even when the new War for Independence started they still kept to the same attitude. No guns seemed to

be their policy. But when a treaty was signed in London under a threat of immediate and terrible war they immediately backed the Treaty party and some of them came home to Dublin as if they were conquering heroes, and on Paddy Fleming's return from the U. S. A. in 1921, he was able to have a consignment of Thomson guns landed in this country. These guns were used for instruction purposes during the Truce in the various Battalions (Shaun Budd was the instructor in the 3rd Battalion), and in a short space of time we had a number of men competent to use these guns and also capable of instructing others in their use.

In the enterprise for the importation of these machine guns Harry Boland and other I. R. A. men in the U. S. A. took a leading part. The rank and file of the Irish in America were now able to see through the veneer of the professional politicians and were prepared to break with them on the arms question. The politicians adopted the policy that they would never give England the opportunity of protesting to the U. S. A. that she allowed arms to be used against a friendly nation. And so, when the Irish Volunteers struck for freedom from England, it was English guns they had to use, with the exception of a mixture of antiquated arms from other countries.

EASTER WEEK 1916.Chapter 111.

Early in the week preceeding Easter Week Capt. T.J. Cullen was warned to prepare for a call. But by the end of the week word came through that the rifles were not coming and all orders were cancelled.

When the decision to fight was taken there was not nearly enough arms for the Irish Volunteers themselves and, consequently, we got no word to mobilise. We had our usual Sunday training on Easter Sunday at Goatstown. Nerves were on edge but no one knew what would happen next. On Easter Monday I was in Sandyford during the early part of the day. The first indication I got that anything was stirring was when I saw a company of what was known in Dublin as "George Rex Officers" Training Corps starting for home in a hurry. They were auxiliaries of the British Army and were out for rifle practice. They occupied Beggars Bush Barracks and Trinity College. They were attacked by the Irish Volunteers on their way home. A few of them were killed and a few wounded, but the most of them got safely back to barracks. When I arrived home I sent two boys to Mountpleasant Square to Captain Cullen, but he was not at home. When I arrived in Dublin on Tuesday morning I had a look around to see what was happening. A number of the population were hostile, a number very hostile. The Citizen Army

had evacuated St. Stephen's Green and a man lay dead over his rifle inside the railings. I was ordered to get back while looking at this man by the British in the Shelbourne Hotel. It was occupied by some British Officers and sniping was going on between the hotel and the College of Surgeons. The United Service Club was also occupied by some British officers, and sniping was going on from here also. A large number of women and children were watching events at the top of Merrion Row (Stephen's Green end). It was one of these who told me about the dead man in the Green. So I went over to see if it were true. There was no use in warning these people about their danger. They were curious and did not understand what was the cause of all the trouble. Bullets were whining but they did not seem to mind.

When I got back to the shop (9 Lr. Baggot St.) Captain T.J. Cullen and Rory O'Connor came in. There were a few people in the shop at the time so I sent them upstairs and closed the doors. In a short time Mrs. Nugent came in and I was behind the counter. Captain T.J. Cullen took off Rory's hat and said "That was a narrow shave". Rory had told him previously how near he was to being killed. I examined the hat and told him he could not have been wearing the hat and not have been killed. It was bored in two places in the front. I parted Rory's thick black hair and discovered an upward red patch as if it had been burned. It then began to pain him. (The hat is still in existence).

Rory was an I.R.A. Intelligence Officer and carried a half a ham and some mutton as a very good disguise when

meeting British soldiers. He was on his way to Plunketts when he met Captain Cullen. He was using an assumed name in case of capture as his father was a Congested District Board Commissioner and he had to be protected. He told us the whole position and it was hopeless. He told us to do everything possible to arrange a truce or armistice. The ammunition would last only a few days, and as the arms were of various types some of it was used up already. In the meantime we were to observe all military movements and report when possible.

On Tuesday Captain T.J. Cullen had a number of men standing-to in Pembroke St., but Rory's words were "Send them home. Send them home. We have no arms for them now. We will want them again". Here was founded 'K' Company, 111 Battalion I.R.A.

Plunkett was confident of a German landing. He was the only one who believed this as he had been to Germany and received promises. It took a whole day to get a deputation together to call on the Lord Mayor. We got Major Crean (he was then in charge of the National Volunteers), the Hon. Fitzroy Hempil and Creed Meredith. We called on the Lord Mayor (Gallagher) on Wednesday. These three men knew nothing of our instructions. Our reception was anything but dignified. Both the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress gave us terrible abuse. Both expressed the hope that not a rebel would escape. One by one we tried to reason with him that it was for the purpose of stopping the fight that we wished him to intervene. He had been to the Castle and had consulted with the Army Authorities already. After a long debate

he said he would mention the matter. But he would not recommend any cessation of hostilities until the rebels were wiped out. (Judge O'Connor told me afterwards that the Lord Mayor did mention the fact to Maxwell that some prominent citizens were trying to arrange an armistice, but that Tim Healy, who was also present, objected). Capt. Cullen and myself then went to Rathgar and met John T. Donovan, M.P., Sec. National Volunteers. We explained that we were trying to arrange an armistice, and would he try and get in touch with Mr. Redmond for the purpose. Donovan was also very hostile and said that a telegram had been sent to him by Mr. Redmond ordering him to call out the National Volunteers to assist the British military. The telegram had not been delivered and that was why he did not act. He could not act on a "phone message. We were sorry for this as we would have answered the call and used the arms and ammunition in our own way.

When we got back we met Rory O'Connor who told us to get in touch with the Dublin Fusiliers and offer them £2 per man if they would join up with the Irish Volunteers. These were Pearse's instructions. We had no chance of making the contact. The Dublins were in Kilmainham and that district was well held by the British.

We were in the Mansion House again on Thursday. We met the Lord Mayor and suggested various men who might intervene. We mentioned the Archbishop, The Most Rev. Dr. Walsh. He said the Archbishop was down with scabies. "What about his Secretary"? we said. "He is as bad as the rebels we are fighting" was the reply. "The Commissioner of Police"? "No use, the D.M.P. are suspected and

suspended. And so he went on. He had an excuse for every suggestion offered. We tried again on Friday without result.

In the meantime the telephone was made use of. Captain T.J. Cullen rang. He just said 'military call' and was put through. Most of these calls were to Mr. Hanna in Clontarf. He was Redmond's secretary and was very hostile. Most of the calls were made from the Leinster Club in Leinster St. Mr. Slattery of Tralee was in the club when the trouble broke out and had to stay there until it was over.

On Friday I left the Mansion House with Fitzroy Hempill. I must say at this stage that he was sympathetic. We came home by way of Leinster St. and Clare St. The British then had a post in a chemist shop in Clare St. Dr. Sigerson was walking up and down the footpath outside his own house with his head down and his hands behind his back. The British there were lining the street on one side and had sand bags across the road on the junction of Merrion Sq. and Merrion St. We were not questioned at any time during the journey. Dr. Sigerson kept in touch with events during the week. Miss Sigerson was continuously moving around. She was up in Baggot St. on a few occasions looking for information. On these occasions she met Captain T.J. Cullen.

Apart from my movements with Captain Cullen my own personal experiences were interesting. I was living in Sunnybank, Dundrum. I drove into the city on Tuesday morning in a horse and trap and had no difficulty

in getting to Lr. Baggot St. or to the stables in Ely Place. Mrs. Nugent also drove in later in an outside car. The balance of the day I have already explained. I drove home late in the evening, and apart from the sound of gunfire there was no sign of trouble in a large area of the south east portion of the city. The Volunteers occupied a house at the junction of Lr. Leeson St. and Adelaide Road but evacuated it on Tuesday. I wonder why as there was no threat of attack. They also evacuated Davy's of Sth. Richmond St. and Harcourt St. station, but these two posts could be attacked from Portobello Barracks and there were only a few men to defend them. The early evacuation of Little's public house at the corner of Cuffe St. seemed strange, as if it were attacked there was a good line of retreat to the College of Surgeons. The Citizen Army men who occupied these posts were by Wednesday confined to the College of Surgeons, and their scouting, if any, seemed defective.

I drove into the city again on Wednesday morning. I took Ben Duff with me this time. He was one of the Dundrum Boys' Brigade. In the interval between our Mansion House visit and our Rathgar trip, a business order came in from the Adelaide Hospital, opposite Jacob's factory. I had the horse and van yoked up and with Ben Duff drove to the Adelaide hospital. We went by Pembroke St., Adelaide Road, Harrington St., Heytesbury St., past Jacob's, on to the hospital and back the same way. There were a few bullets screaming but on this journey we saw neither British troops nor Volunteers. I told Ben to keep his hands folded up against his heart in case

a stray bullet got him. Ben was to know the destructive work of bullets in a later war and is still alive.

On the way into the city on Tuesday and Wednesday morning, it was amusing to see 'Suburbia' carrying bundles of naked bread. They were able to get to the D.B.C. in Sth. King St. and some bakers were working. We drove home late on Wednesday evening without any interference.

By this time the hostility shown by numerous people to the Volunteers was changing. Everywhere, as far as was known, they were in possession of most of the city, and various posts, with a few exceptions, had not yet been attacked. We drove in again on Thursday morning, and with the exception of a consultation and a visit to the Mansion House and Leinster Club I had only one experience. I may here mention that the weather was hot, brilliant sunshine. Towards evening some business or mission took me to Upper Leeson St. As I arrived at the church at Leeson Park a party of British soldiers came up along Leeson St. from Donnybrook. They were a machine-gun corps with 14 machine-guns and ammunition carts. They had marched all the way from Dunlaoghaire in the heat, pushing or driving their guns and carts. They were mostly lads, territorials and poorly trained. Before they arrived at the church they were halted by their officer, and in a moment every man was lying on the ground. I never knew tea to be made in such a short space of time, for within a few minutes every man had a cup of tea. Upper Leeson St. was loyal to the Empire. The officer had a map, and I saw and heard him ask a man who was passing how he would get to Richmond Barracks. He did

not know he was at Leeson St. bridge. I am well aware that the Volunteers in the College of Surgeons knew the position by the time the troops were on the move again, and had they sent out a dozen men they could have captured the machine-guns as these boys were unable to fight. But nothing was done! The garrisons in Jacob's or Marrowbone Lane could also have captured them. I do not know if they knew of the presence of these guns.

We were able to drive home to Dundrum on Thursday night, and later in the night I got word that Leeson St. and other bridges were occupied by British troops; so I walked in on Friday morning. When I got to the junction of Upper Baggot St. and Waterloo Road there was a soldier standing by himself without arms or ammunition. He told me he lived in Fleming's Place and was home on leave. He had been placed there to watch a woman who was supposed to be carrying despatches for the Volunteers, and to warn her and keep her away. The woman was poorly dressed but ladylike. I talked with him for a few minutes and when I came to the sentry, who had seen me talking to the soldier, I was allowed to pass.

The military then had their headquarters in Baggot St. hospital. I was brought in there for identification. The porter knew me and I was allowed to cross Baggot St. bridge. I could have saved myself the trouble, as I discovered afterwards that there was no sentry on the lock-gates and people were crossing them at will. I crossed the lock-gates at Leeson St. bridge later in the day without any question.

The flag still continued to fly from the College of

Surgeons, Jacob's and Boland's Mills. I had news from Boland's during the week. A boy named Stephen Boylan who was in my employment was with the garrison in Boland's and called to see me when he was out on messages. This boy was sent home by the British after the surrender took place. He came to me directly.

We could hear the intense firing when the attack on Clanwilliam House commenced on Wednesday. The defence put up by this garrison is one of the most outstanding features of the whole fight. They fought to the death and their heroism compares with the defence of Dunboy 300 years earlier.

I remained in Dublin on Friday night. The firing was intense in many parts of the city, but around Baggot St., Merrion Row and southern parts of the town all was quiet. The whole area was aglow with fires from O'Connell St. After our interview with Rory O'Connor on Tuesday he went to Plunkett's, Fitzwilliam St., and met Captain T.J. Cullen later in the day. Captain Cullen went with him as far as the Metal Bridge. Here Rory left him and crossed to get to the G.P.O. After Capt. Cullen got back to Baggot St. we fixed up our deputation for the Mansion House next day.

At all times during the fight we admired the pluck of the men and women who occupied the different posts, but at no time did we agree with their tactics. We had made a study of military tactics for a considerable time. Consequently, we considered it a mistake to advertise one's position by hoisting a flag to tell the enemy

where one is. Another item was that the men from the College of Surgeons could easily have captured the few officers who occupied the Shelbourne Hotel and the Conservative Club. By doing this they would have been free to move at will through a large part of the city. Capt. Cullen and myself, along with members of our deputation, were able to walk up Merrion St. and along Stephen's Green to the Mansion House up to and including Friday without any opposition. I am in no way criticising, merely pointing out the position as we saw it. The College of Surgeons, Jacob's or Marrowbone Lane were not attacked at any time during the fight. An item which I have already recorded as well as all our movements and which Capt. Cullen tried to preserve by placing his documents in his bank in Lr. Camden St. - this document could not be found in later years but two similar documents were seized by the British and must still be in existence somewhere. This document refers to our movements during the fight.

The St. John Ambulance Brigade were very busy, particularly to and from the Royal Automobile Club in Dawson St. where they were supposed to be getting their petrol supplies. As well as their own ambulances they took on a number of private cars for ambulance work. These ambulances were carrying military officers all over the city and also took the Lord Mayor on at least six occasions from the Mansion House to the Castle. We actually saw officers getting out of the ambulance in the Club yard from the window in the Mansion House. At the same time the St. John Ambulance Brigade left a dead

Volunteer in Stephen's Green for a whole week until some charitable men took the body away for burial to Glasnevin on Sunday. I gave evidence of identification in this man's case for a death certificate. These ambulances did military work under cover of the Red Cross, and the military in Upr. Baggot St. used Baggot St. hospital as their headquarters and used the tower of the church in Haddington Road for sniping. The ambulances took Tim Healy and Judge O'Connor to Dublin Castle and back, so it can be seen that they were being used as a line of communication during the week for British military.

An interesting item of intelligence work during the fighting was when Capt. T.J. Cullen met a gentleman who was a British enthusiast. In casual conversation he told him that there was a secret post at Baggot St. bridge and that there was a machine gun in this post. Of course this was not true, but the information was passed on to the British and it was after midday on Friday before they made any attempt to cross the bridge, and then only one soldier crossed although they had a good number around the hospital and Waterloo Road. I have mentioned the poor intelligence service prevailing in the Irish Volunteers at the 1916 period. In later years I had information on this subject from a man on the maintenance staff in Griffith Barracks who held a similar position in Dublin Castle in 1916. This man's mother was also employed in the Castle. These people were friendly with the Volunteers as were other employees in the Castle, and had they been made more use of prior to the rising their information would have been such,

that the Castle would be easily captured when the attack was made and a number of high officials captured, as a Privy Council meeting was in progress when the attack was made. I was also informed that a red negative photo plate was in the Intelligence office in the Castle showing that James Connolly was shot in the Castle grounds.

The plans under which operations were to be carried out in the Rising of 1916 were not made public, but in conversation with Michael McGrory (who was Pearse's confidant) and Alfred McGlaughlin, a cousin of Pearse, I was informed that the plans were Emmet's original plans for the whole of Ireland. The matter was often discussed between Pearse, McDonough, Alfred McGlaughlin and Micheál Magruaidhe some years before there was any talk of Volunteers. These men were for a long time before the founding of the Volunteers in the habit of going out in the Dublin mountains for practice with a .22 bore rifle. They claimed that they were the first Republican Army, and that if ever Ireland struck for her freedom the plans of operation should be Emmet's. When the fight did start these plans could not be put into operation as the number of men and amount of arms available were too few.

In a few weeks after the surrender in Easter Week Captain T.J. Cullen and myself were invited to a meeting in Creed Meredith's house in Herbert Place. There were present as well as Creed Meredith, Fitzroy Hempill, Major Crean and a number of others, including Robert Barton in the uniform of a Dublin Fusilier Officer. The

purpose of the meeting was to get a declaration from the National Committee of the National Volunteers that they would accept Home Rule with Partition. Barton left before the meeting opened. Capt. Cullen and myself protested against any such proposal and the meeting ended without any decision. The British Prime Minister - Asquith - was then anxious for some sort of a settlement in Ireland in order to try and whitewash the executions. The Irish Parliamentary Party were assisting him in this effort to try to save their own faces.

Pierce Beasley, writing from a prejudiced angle, stated that Rory O'Connor took no part in the Irish Volunteer operations until a late period. It has rarely happened in any military history in any part of the world that where military officers refer to their opponents in arms, that they attempt to cast aspersions on their memory, particularly when such officers were brave and upright - as was Rory O'Connor. And now to contradict this prejudiced statement. The long arm of truth of those still living who know to the contrary and the camera which does not lie, stretches out to prove without doubt, if there should be any, that Rory O'Connor was an active member of the Irish Volunteers at Earkfield, and remained true to his faith in the Irish Republic until the morning of his execution in Mountjoy.

Rory O'Connor was born in Kildare St., Dublin, on the 28th November, 1883. He was educated at St. Mary's College, Rathmines, and at Clongowes Wood College. He took his B.E. and B.A. in the old National University

in 1910. He left Ireland for Canada in 1911 on construction work on the Canadian Pacific Railway and later on the Canadian Northern Railway. He returned to Ireland in 1915 on a call home from Joe Plunkett (other men were called home under similar circumstances). On his return home he attended a war council of the Irish Volunteers. While offering no objection to the proposed rising, he stated "Do you realise what this effort is going to cost in blood. But if you now decide on fighting I am with you". And he kept his word. On his return from Canada he took up an engineering position in the Dublin Corporation and continued to be an active working member of the Irish Volunteers. Those people who took part in early Volunteer operations know what an amount of work any man had to do who operated with Joe Plunkett and Seán McDermott for a considerable time before the Rising. Rory O'Connor was also well known to all young men who took a prominent part in the 1916 Rising, as he was a member of the Young Ireland Branch of the United Irish League in 1907 and 1908. A number of the leaders of 1916 were members of the U.I.L. Branch when John Redmond repudiated them on account of the pressure they were trying to bring to bear on him to divert his energies solely to Irish interests.

Rory O'Connor was not a politician or a parade man. He was a great silent worker and, consequently, he was not as well known to the rank and file of the army as were most of the other leaders. When hostilities started on Easter Monday 1916 he was Intelligence Officer in the

G.P.O. He now adopted the name: 'Cyril Cooper' as I have already mentioned his father was a Commissioner of the Congested Districts Board. Rory saw to it that his father's position was protected by assuming a name that would sound palatable to British officers if the necessity arose. When he was wounded by fire from the College of Surgeons it was under this assumed name he was taken to Mercer's hospital and later to a nursing home in Er. Leeson St.

As soon as he was sufficiently recovered he continued his Volunteer activities. He was I.R.A. Officer Commanding Britain. He was arrested by Auxiliaries at the end of January 1921 and escaped from the Curragh with a man named Ryan, a native of Lacken, Tipperary. This was the first escape from any British Internment Camp in Ireland. Rory strongly opposed the Truce. He wanted to fight on as there was then a possibility of getting a supply of arms. Other men opposed the Truce, such as Cathal Brugha and Stack, but the majority prevailed. Rory O'Connor was not married and few people who knew him realised that there was a romance, and that the bullet that killed him in Mountjoy affected the life of a lady member of a great Irish family.

I must not forget the men who, in a short space of time, formed K. Company 111 Battalion Dublin City Brigade I.R.A. They were 'standing to' on Tuesday of Easter Week when Rory O'Connor said "Send them home. We have no arms for them now. Send them home. We will want them again". These men went home but were

back again at work in a short time. They immediately started collecting dumped arms and ammunition. Some of the men who were fighting and who were partly isolated, dumped their arms before surrendering, and, in consequence, the men who were free, with the assistance of a few local people, were able to make a collection of arms. They also became part of the organised movement against recruiting. They were continually engaged in some useful work for the new fight. They were witnesses to a week of terror and destruction. They were aware of the executions and trials still going on. Some of them witnessed the savagery of the British soldiers in Nth. King St. where innocent men were shot or bayoneted before their eyes. A large number of these experiences only made them more determined and better soldiers when the time came to strike again.

An instance of this failure to surrender to the British at this period, and the determination to rearm and carry on the fight when the country was re-organised, was that in the Portlaoighise area, of which Eamonn Fleming was in charge. (His brother P.J. was with him). Himself and his small column dumped their guns and disbanded. Eamonn saw to it in a short time that these guns were carefully stored for future operations, and in later years every man in that column took part in the fight for freedom. They were aware that the 1916 attempt was a "blood bath"; still they were prepared to carry on without counting the consequences, and the same spirit prevailed in other districts. It was this type of individual self-sacrifice that made the 1916 Rising a success.

How the news of the Rising reached the U.S.A.

In the month of January 1916, the late Tim Ring of Valentia, Co. Kerry, was in Dublin and met Seán McDermott in Tom Clarke's shop in Parnell St. Details were there worked out - if and when the rising took place a message was to be sent to Kenmare which Tim Ring would get. This arrangement worked according to plan. Then a message was to be sent by Mary O'Sullivan of Kenmare to her sister in New York. The message, as pre-arranged, was "operation successful". This message was in the possession of the Irish republicans in New York by the time the Rising started, and they immediately published the news.

The British Secret Service in the U.S.A. and at home were completely baffled. They could find no indication of how the news arrived and they paid no attention to the simple family message. But as time passed the Irish people in the U.S.A. as well as the people at home were showing their appreciation of the men and women who suffered in the Rising. Large sums of money were being subscribed for the National Aid Fund, and enthusiastic meetings of protest against the treatment of prisoners and executions in Ireland were being held all over the U.S.A. John Devoy was a witness to this new enthusiasm. He saw that political differences were being swept aside and that the Irish in the U.S.A. were uniting for the common cause in

Ireland. He felt that he and some of his associates were being swept aside by this new patriotic wave, and in order to prove to the Irish people that he was one of the prime movers in the Rising he announced at a public meeting in New York that he was the first to get the news of the Rising from Ireland. He explained the whole arrangements for the dispatch and receipt of the message and then he gave the name of the man who sent the message - Tim Ring of the Cable Station Valentia. This latter information was quite unnecessary and it amounted to felon setting. Tim Ring was immediately arrested and taken to Tralee barracks while inquiries were being made. There were a number of Mary O'Sullivans in Kenmare who were prepared to say they sent messages to their sisters in the U.S.A. The police were unable to get sufficient evidence for a conviction, and he was taken to Dublin and kept in Arbour Hill for a time. He was then taken to London, and after a further period in prison without trial he was interned with other Irish prisoners. He was released at the end of the year, and as there was no charge against him he returned to his position in the Cable Station.

addenda ?

On the evening of the general surrender cars were sent around various parts of the city carrying white flags. This was a very depressing evening as all seemed lost. Boland's Mill garrison or Jacob's had not surrendered and the crack of sniper rifles could still be heard in our area around Merrion St. But after dusk a British Sergeant with

a rifle on his shoulder came marching slowly up Lower Baggot St. and after every few paces he would shout "Close those windows and put out all lights". This action added to the general depression and was resented by the loyalist inhabitants. They felt that they should not be put on the same level as rebels, but the British military knew nothing about people proclaiming their loyalty. In fact they suspected them. It was now plain that after a week of freedom the British army were again in complete control, and to add to the general desolation the rain which had kept off for over a week came down in torrents. This heavy rain falling on the burning buildings in O'Connell St. area added to the general gloom. The steam could be seen rising to great heights over the burning buildings, and the men who had surrendered were kept in the open during the night in this cold drenching rain. On Monday shops were again open and the D.M.P. were reinstated and on duty. Some of them were sent around to shops to collect orders for perishable goods which were commandeered by the military at the various stations. Papers were again on sale and were eagerly bought. Announcements of courtmartial and executions were published. The press generally favoured the executions, but a large section of the population were getting angry. De Valera was the last to surrender and the publicity in this case created a general public interest. His statements to the military officers as published by Dr. Myles Keogh who was present -

"Save my men but do as you like with me" and "If the people came out with knives and forks we would have beaten you" left people asking who he was, and he was the only Commandant sentenced to death in which the public took an interest in the attempt to save his life. He was an American citizen, and I had proof later in the year that influential people appealed to the American Consul in Leinster St. to try and save his life. The Irish in the U.S.A. used their powerful influence with President Wilson and it was established that he did intervene. He was seen to leave his box in the theatre the evening prior to the date fixed for the execution, and in the morning we had the news that the death sentence was commuted to a life sentence.

Later in the month of July we had a visitor from U.S.A., a Fr. Gleeson of Waterbury. the Secretary to the American Consul, was a parishioner of Fr. Gleeson's and they were very good friends. This Fr. Gleeson was a cousin of Rev. Dr. McGrath O.S.A. John's Lane, Dublin. Fr. Gleeson who was very Irish and anxious to find all the information he could, gave a dinner in a hotel in Bray and in the Dolphin Hotel to Dr. McGrath, Captain Thos. J. Cullen, the Secretary of the American Consulate and myself. This young man assured us that there were numerous appeals to his office to save de Valera and that President Wilson did intervene with the British Government.

The British soldiers now patrolling the streets were very nervous. Large numbers of them believed that

there were great numbers of hairy men with long tails in the mountains and until these surrendered the fight would not be over, and indeed some of the natives in Dublin kept telling the soldiers that this was true. All street traffic was held up for questioning. This traffic was for the most part horse traffic as there were few motor cars and these had to procure permits .

Rory O'Connor was badly wounded after his escape from the G.P.O. He was admitted to the hospital as a civilian under an assumed name. Capt. Cullen knew this name, and when Rory sent him word through a friendly nurse he was able to go see him. Plunkett was told that he was alive but that was all, as visitors calling to see him might cause suspicion. As soon as he was well he immediately started work again.

Some of the big firms in Dublin dismissed their employees because they took part in the Rising. Rory made a printing press and printed a number of circulars warning these firms that the dismissals must stop and that the employees already dismissed must be reinstated. These circulars may be seen in the National Library in the late Mr. Bouche's collection of peculiar types of printing. These warnings were strictly obeyed. I served some of them myself.

My own Company in Dundrum and also the Boys Brigade were back in training. We were well watched

but were not interfered with. The amount of work to be done at this time, particularly in the city, was very heavy. The Volunteers who took up arms in the Rising were still in prisons or prison camps in England, as were also the members of the Sinn Féin organisation. But as for Rory O'Connor, Capt. T.J. Cullen, myself and the men who had already started organising again, the war was still on. Rory mentioned that it did not stop at any time, and while he and those who were prepared to work with him did so it would continue to carry on in various ways.

Chapter IV.

Founding of National Aid Association.

As soon after the surrender in 1916 as it was possible to move around a few people held a meeting for the purpose of raising funds for the dependants of the executed, sentenced and deported men. Dora Sigerson Shorter came from London to help in the enterprise. The first proposal came from Ald. Corrigan and Capt. T.J. Cullen. When they succeeded in forming a committee an appeal was published on the 22nd May 1916. The appeal for funds ended as follows:

National Aid Association

Established 1916

No doom of law condemns to privation and penalty the relatives of imprisoned men or the families of the sentenced men.

Secretaries: Louise Gavan Duffy
Fred. J. Allen
Michael Davitt, M.B.
Thos. J. Cullen, M.R.I.A.I.

Offices of the Association : 10 Exchequer St.,
DUBLIN.

Subscriptions came pouring in and in a few weeks the first list was published. This list contained the names of Thos. Cullen and Laurence Nugent and amounted to £10,000. The people who organised the subscriptions and allowed their names to be published were taking great risks. Martial law was still in existence and men were

still being tried for their lives and no one knew what would happen next.

Some people objected to certain members of the association and on their own account issued an appeal for funds on June 8th, 1916. . But in a short time, through the intervention of Rev. Fr. Bowden, of the Pro-Cathedral, both parties merged and the association was carried on under the control of the original committee, with a number from the rival committee added. . To make the association more representative, Colonel Moore and Major Crean were co-opted members.

The objection to the members was not well founded. They did not like Dr. Davitt on account of the trouble which arose in the original Volunteer Committee when he was proposed as a representative of the Irish Parliamentary Party when they got control of that committee. . But Dr. Davitt, like the rest of the members of the Young Ireland Branch of the United Irish League, had long since changed his views and had become a good Republican. . Now, with the other members of the association, he was taking great chances. . The very people for whom he was working (and his name in this work was a good one) objected to him as secretary and as a member of the Committee. . Another unpopular member was Fred Allen. . When a number of I. R. B. men joined the A. O. H. for a definite purpose, Fred Allen was one of them. . Another objection to him was that he remained with the Volunteers under Redmond after the split in 1914, and that he took no part in the Rising of Easter Week. . But the persons who objected did not know that he and his men in Dunlaoighaire gave their word to Eamonn Ceannt that they would fight when the arms arrived. . They were also unaware of the fact that he and his men were

'standing to' awaiting the arrival of these arms. On the fusion of the two committees, these objections ceased and the work of raising funds proceeded smoothly.

The association was not interfered with by the British Military. Lists were published regularly: they came from all parts. Ireland, England, Australia, New Zealand and U.S.A. The amount collected reached the sum of over £200,000.

The formation of the National Aid Association meant more to the country generally from a national point of view than the mere collection of funds. With the exception of the Gaelic League and the G. A. A., the national spirit in the country had sunk to a very low level. The only history of the country which the young people knew was what they heard from the old people at the fire-side. We were only just recovering from the disunity caused by the Parnell split, and when the War started in 1914, all news and propaganda was in British interests, with the exception of a few weekly publications. These were often suppressed and the staffs imprisoned or deported. In all populated areas of Ireland, the women who belonged to the old British garrison type formed canteens for the refreshment of the soldiers and the young girls of the district were invited to help. Sewing and knitting committees were also set up by the same people, and in these cases also the local girls were asked to knit and sew for the British soldiers. In a great many cases the girls attended these classes, not because they were enthusiastic, but because they did not like to refuse when asked. In like manner the young men were ridiculed for not joining the British Army. Recruiting meetings were being held regularly in all districts. Prominent local men and politicians addressed these

meetings. Where there were persons strong-willed enough to oppose and refuse to accept any of this type of propaganda, they were ridiculed, raided and provoked by the police and, in some instances, were imprisoned or deported for what were termed offences against the state. Gradually all the good work done by the Gaelic League was dying. This, then, was the position in which the country found itself when the Rising took place in Easter Week.

The news of the Rising stirred the imagination of the people, especially the young people. Now they only wanted a lead to bring them back to their rightful sense of Irish feeling. So that when the National Aid appeal was published, the young people took advantage of the opportunity to break away from the degrading position into which British propaganda had plunged them. They set about forming collecting committees and, in this way, they were able to express their opinions to each other more freely. They got to know themselves and their friends. The canteen and knitting and sewing classes were largely deserted and a new type of local society was formed among the young people and, of course, they got a great deal of help from the older people.

Right through the period from the rising to the 1917 elections it was this new spirit that brought victory after victory in these elections. The Rev. Dr. Patrick Browne of Maynooth wrote a lament for Shaun McDermott and when he appeared afterwards on the platforms in the Cavan elections, he was cheered to the echo by these young people. He had done something to help them to save themselves from the slavery of the British propaganda and they showed their appreciation in wild enthusiasm.

The people continued to organise and gradually became defiant of British rule in Ireland. They eventually became the great Irish Voluntary Army which brought victory and freedom to this country. So it can be seen that after the effect of the Rising, the propaganda which developed out of the National Aid Appeal gave the young men courage to organise and gave them the strength to strike again when the opportunity arose.

There were private meetings almost nightly and myself and Captain T.J.Cullen were now enmeshed in the stark reality of secret service. We were there for some time previously but now we had to make use of every man we knew. We had to pretend to be good members of the National Volunteer Committee and in this case we got to know most of the Irish Parliamentary Party's political moves, and at the same time, through Colonel Moore and Major Crean, we got to know every move the British military intended to make. At the same time we were sneered at by some of the men whose cause we were serving.

Intelligence and secret service is a difficult and thankless job but we were not working for thanks: we were working at our own expense for a cause in which we believed. Mrs. Nugent was also working in the capacity of an intelligence agent but in a different vein.

Our business was high class and she was daily in contact with wealthy ladies and ladies of rank and the wives of some of the foreign diplomats and, of course, the militant suffragettes. The ladies talked freely to an apparently sympathetic listener, while the suffragettes were loud in their denunciation of the British Government.

How Captain Cullen kept his health in the years following Easter Week it is difficult to imagine. He was

one of Ireland's leading architects. He was consulting architect to many dioceses in Ireland, as well as his general high class practice and on various nights, often at times working all day and up to eleven or twelve o'clock at night in Volunteer interests, I would part with him at the top of Nassau Street, he going to his office to do a day's professional work and I on my way home to bed.

On the first Sunday after the start of the executions myself and Mrs. Nugent were able to get from Dundrum to Rathfarnham to see Mrs. Pearse. Dr. O'Kelly and Mr. Fintan Murphy, Senior, were also there with Mrs. Pearse and Miss M. Pearse. It was a sad meeting but, even so, the future of St. Enda's was discussed and the intention to carry on the school was arrived at.

At the end of the first week in June, 1916, British sentries were again placed on public buildings. The people were beginning to show defiant attitude and placards were posted on walls with various anti-British slogans. At this stage Count and Countess Plunkett were deported to Oxford. Colonel Moore wrote to the press, stating that the agitation going on in the country was spasmodic and not continuous. He favoured Partition and stated that a convention of National Volunteers should be called. The courts martial were still proceeding. Subscriptions for the National Aid were still pouring in and all reports showed that the country generally was against partition. It favoured independence. On June 19th, 1916, a Requiem Mass was celebrated in Marlboro St. Cathedral for the repose of the souls of the executed leaders. Excitement ran high during the day. Republican flags were carried and when the police attempted to seize them there were serious clashes. Hoardings were pulled down in places and four men were arrested. These hoardings were plastered with British Army recruiting posters.

On the night of June 20th, 1916, a specially convened meeting of the National Committee of the National Volunteers was held at 44 Parnell Square. Captain T.J.Cullen and myself attended. Mr. Creed Meredith presided. Colonel Moore proposed a motion agreeing to temporary partition with Home Rule. This motion was seconded by 'O'Loughlin'. The voting was seven for and eleven against. The resolution naturally got great publicity and there were strong letters of protest from all over Ireland in a few days. At this time a meeting of Bishops was held in Maynooth. When Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer arrived, he received a great ovation from the students present. Cardinal Logue advised prudence and referred to two speeches by Dr. O'Dwyer as imprudent. On June 23rd, 1916, a convention of the Ulster division of the A.O.H. was held in Belfast. 704 delegates attended and by a majority of 210 they voted in favour of the partition of Ulster. Conscription was then being debated in the British House of Commons and by the end of June the motion to impose it was withdrawn.

On June 30th the Irish Independent published the following statement:- 'Sir Roger Casement found guilty by jury as expected and awaits execution'.

The National Aid fund now amounted to £17,355 and branches were being formed in all parts of Ireland and the U.S.A. Martial law was still in existence and as the Military Courts were unable to try all the cases, removable Magistrates were appointed to try some of the less serious ones. If they only knew the less serious cases were in some districts the most serious, as good determined men knew how to take care of themselves and hold their tongues. The authorities could not find any crime and only for the military and political case the courts might have been empty.

By the middle of June 1916 there were about 40,000 British troops in Ireland, although Germany were beating them all over France. The French Government complained about the number held in Ireland. There were rumours of trouble with Irish soldiers in France. They had received some news of the Rising but did not know exactly what had happened and were anxious about their people at home. For the purpose of preventing any further trouble that might arise on account of the secrecy, Colonel Jameson Davis of Wexford, who was well known in the early Volunteer days, with the connivance of the Irish Parliamentary Party and, of course, with the assistance of the British military, dressed in the uniform of an Irish Volunteer Officer travelled to the war area in France and conversed with various Irish companies and battalions, and succeeded in allaying their suspicions. This arrangement never came before the National Committee. The whole affair was kept secret and we only got to know of it when some men came home on leave. At the same time men at home who fought for the freedom of their own country were being tried for their lives and Larry Ginnell, M.P., was arrested in London.

Sir J. Maxwell's report of the Rising which, of course, was onesided, was published. Colonel Moore had now arranged for the signing of an appeal for a reprieve for Sir Roger Casement. This attempt to save Casement got good support. A large number signed but to no avail. He was executed the first week of August.

By the end of July Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, wrote a strong letter to the daily papers stressing the fact that Ireland was being lead to disaster (this leadership of course referred to the Irish Parliamentary Party and the A.O.H.)

While prisoners were being tried by courtmartial or removable magistrates, others were being released. The I.P.P. in the House of Commons were being accused of encouraging Sinn Féin by their political opponents. John Dillon, in trying to defend the I.P.P., stated that the I.Vs. were legal up to the date they prepared for insurrection. How did he know the date they prepared for insurrection? He was just doing a bit of white-washing.

By the 1st August martial law was withdrawn, and a few new politicians appeared on the scene and attempted to form a new organisation called the Nation League. These people got no popular support but of course anything new which would help England was welcome to some sections of the community and they had no difficulty in getting publicity, as the Independent and Freeman's Journal were carrying on a wordy battle. The Independent were out to smash the Freeman's Journal (the I.P.P. organ) and the easiest way to do that was to smash the I.P.P. who were subsidising it. And so the Independent adopted for a time the new Party, whilst the crowds in the streets were shouting 'Up the Republic'. Recruiting meetings were being held again; organised opposition was under way and in many cases possession was taken of the platforms. There were numerous protests over the execution of Casement. A large crowd attended the O'Donovan Rossa memorial service in Glasnevin. Republican flags were seized by the police from some girls. These flags were rescued again by some men but the three girls were arrested about the middle of August, 1916. J. J. O'Kelly, M.P., for Roscommon (my native place) was reported to be seriously ill. Rory O'Connor asked me to go down home and find out the feelings of the people as cautiously as I could. The day I arrived in Rooskey, a meeting was being held for the

purpose of forming a Co-operative Society with the view of purchasing agricultural machinery. I was fortunate in being able to meet these men so easily. They were all anxious for news of Dublin and elsewhere. It was easy to see how they felt about the executions and imprisonments. I mentioned the possibility of an early election. The unanimous pronouncements of about a dozen of these farmers was "Give us a candidate and we will elect him." They told me not to be nervous of trusting the people; that they were behind the men who fought in Dublin.

I spent a week at home and in that time I was satisfied that a man with a name upon whom people could rely would get at least two-thirds of the vote in an area of over eight miles along the Shannon, and the same distance inland. This seemed a tall story to bring back, but it was true. Rory was cautious but determined, and he found out from other districts, and from other people, that my information was correct generally.

Joe McGuinness was a native of the area referred to, and was very popular. No one mentioned him then as a candidate, as the people at that time wanted someone big. There was a long interval between this period and the election and at no time would Sinn Féin consent to put forward a candidate. They mentioned we could not win. The people would not vote for a republican candidate. Men who had been out fighting had these same views. I remember reminding them that they were not afraid to look down the barrel of a British rifle and now they were afraid to meet the people for whose freedom they had so gallantly fought.

By the end of August, 1916, the National Aid Fund had reached £27,189.0.0.

Early in September the first of the St. Enda's schools in Oakley Road, then St. Ita's, but controlled by

Pearse, was sold by auction, the lease having expired. The property was purchased by the National Aid for the Pearse family. Three trustees were appointed; Miss Gavan Duffy, Alfred McLoughlin, representing National Aid, and myself, representing Mrs. Pearse (she asked me specially to act.) I had known the Pearse family for a good many years previously, all of them personally, I am glad to say. I had many talks with P.H. but therein lies another story.

During this time there was no relaxation of training. In Pembroke and Dundrum we had regular parades. The Boys' Brigade in Dundrum were particularly active. They had caught the military spirit and were burning for knowledge. In 44, Parnell Square we had rifle lessons every Sunday morning. These were attended by men who were lucky to escape arrest. Recruiting meetings for the British Army were still being held at which there were disturbances, but I saw meetings completely ignored. The movable platforms were there but the people were not. Of course, in thickly populated areas they got a good sized crowd, but recruiting had come to a standstill. The British press were howling abuse at Ireland in order to have something to write about and to keep the peoples mind off the events in France. A paragraph appeared in the Irish Independent stating that the men who were not arrested were a menace to public society. This was copied by some of the London papers. Colonel Moore, in October, wrote to the press favouring conscription by an Irish Colonial Parliament. At the same time public statements demanding further repressions and that Ireland covered the heart and vitals of England were published.

By the end of October the National Aid Fund amounted to £41,445.0.0. A further appeal was made for

more funds, and the list of casualties was given as:-

Executed - - - -	16
Killed in action - - -	51

There were good reasons for not giving the number wounded.

Early in November Sir John Maxwell was recalled and Sir Bryan Mahon appointed in his place. This move was a weak attempt at reconciliation. The I.P.P. knew how unpopular Maxwell was and they advised a change thinking they could stem the rising tide of Irish patriotism. We heard these conversations at meetings in 44 Parnell Square when they were seeking the views of the people generally, but the change made no difference in Ireland. The British press were furious and the National Aid Fund reached the figure of £58,000. I give these figures from time to time so as to make it clear that the Irish people were becoming more and more sympathetic.

The Dublin correspondent of the London Times stated that the political atmosphere in Dublin was making recruiting impossible, and that there were still 161,289 fit men available for service after making all deductions.

For a considerable time there were reports coming through about the ill-treatment of prisoners in jails and camps in England. These stories were also arousing the feelings of the people and the men of K Company were doing their part in this propaganda.

At a bye-election in W. Cork the I.P.P. lost a seat to an Independent candidate. There was no Republican candidate.

In the first week of January, 1917, Colonel Moore issued an order to Volunteers to cease drilling for one week (Swedish Drill excepted) until the present situation was considered. The reason for the order was that Sir Bryan Mahon was trying his hand at a peaceful settlement

in Ireland. He had made a proposal to the I.P.P. that the Home Rule Bill would be put into operation and conscription applied at the same time. The Colonel's original proposal was conscription with Colonial Home Rule. The proposal now was Conscription with the Home Rule Bill on the Statute Book for the whole of Ireland, but Carson would not accept this. He had to have partition at any cost, even to the extent of losing the war. I remember we advised the Colonel at this time that he was going too far in committing the country to such a serious decision without sufficient authority. He was at this time playing around with Sir Bryan Mahon but we still had to remain on the committee and protest whenever possible and, at the same time, not give ourselves away. There were other members of the committee working with us. These men were from different parts of the country and myself and Captain T.J.Cullen were the only members who were in daily touch with Rory O'Connor. At this period any attempt by England to impose conscription would be met with serious resistance. Early in December the Dublin Corporation appointed a Commission to visit Frongoch Internment Camp. The Reports coming through of the treatment of the Irish prisoners in the various British camps were very serious. The men were very badly treated: they were starved: they had no facilities for exercise and they were housed in an old disused factory with no sanitary accommodation. Another new Party had now sprung up in Dublin, calling themselves an Amnesty Association. The policy of these, while pretending to be humane, was to try to get the British Government out of the serious trouble which was developing in the prisons and camps in England. If they succeeded in organising a popular demand for the release of the prisoners, England, of course, would agree on condition that the men signed ^{guarantees} for their future good

behaviour. The men, as a matter of principle, would refuse this offer and British propaganda would play on this refusal to the extent that if they released these men without any conditions they would start trouble all over again. We had previous experience of amnesty associations in Ireland and when prisoners were released conditionally they either lost their national outlook or were re-imprisoned. The National Aid Association was now the most popular organisation in the country and the Amnesty Association asked them to cooperate, but they got a point-blank refusal, and the convention, as these people called themselves, was abandoned in consequence. During a long period we were pressing for a National Volunteer Convention. The main object of this Convention was to get control and so come into the possession of the large funds which were then being squandered. The I.P.P. supporters were afraid to hold this Convention as they felt they would not get sufficient support to maintain their position, as a large number of their political workers had joined the British Army and they were afraid to trust those who had not yet joined up. So the proposal to hold the convention was refused.

There were seven of us working secretly on the National Volunteer Committee in the interests of the Republican movement. One man, McClinchey of Derry, resigned after the Rising of 1916. He would not sit at a table any longer with the members of the I.P.P., but we kept on doing the best we could to get in arms and ammunition and even while General Maxwell was here in command of the British Forces, we were succeeding. The I.P.P. and the A.O.H. at all times wanted the names of the Volunteers as a support in the country. When we put forward the plea that if the Volunteers had no arms or ammunition with which to practise, they would all disappear.

In consequence of our persistent demands, a quantity of rifles and ammunition was purchased and imported under permit by the National Volunteer Committee. Some National Volunteer officers in the country districts had a small number of rifles and surrendered them after the Rising. These rifles were also handed back to the people who surrendered them. There was no ammunition surrendered. We got in a good supply of .22 bore rifles and ammunition for practice; and so we continued training as usual.

We imported 1,000 of .303 ammunition: as soon as this arrived I purchased it. Christy Byrne of Wicklow had a number of .303 rifles and the men around Ashford were anxious for some ammunition. I engaged a taxi in Thomson's garage driven by Joe Hyland (Joe was afterwards Mic Collin's official driver). He drove Christy Byrne and myself to the hotel in Ashford. The men were waiting. The three of us went in to the hotel and when the ammunition was safely removed myself and Joe started home for Dublin. The journey both ways was without incident. But when Joe examined his car on our arrival home he found one packet of ammunition which the men had left in the car. This 1,000 rounds of ammunition was afterwards included in the list of ammunition in the Q.M.G.'s list (I.R.A.)

English diplomacy in Ireland was badly shaken at this period and by the end of 1916 we were listening to secret threats of serious action by the British authorities. They felt that they had made a mistake in not executing the whole of the rebels in Easter Week and, in that way, rid the country of the sedition now prevailing. Indeed, some of their supporters in Dublin were expressing similar opinions. But now they tried different methods and near the end of December, 1916, it was announced that all interned prisoners would be released from the English

internment camps. On the 22nd December, 1916, James J. O'Kelly, M.P. for North Roscommon died. (The National Aid Fund figure now stood at £72,441.0.0).

During Christmas Week the Frongoch Camp internees were released. In the first week of January 1917 a reception meeting was held for the released men in the Mansion House, Dublin, at which there was an enormous attendance and an overflow meeting filled Dawson Street. Later in the week a statement published from Trinity College referred to these released men as the 'Mansion House Criminals.'

The British Government now announced a system of compulsory tillage in Ireland. The food situation in the country was good up to this, but the German submarines were sinking food ships and consequently a shortage of food in England was being felt. The large farmers and ranchers responded enthusiastically. Large tracts of land were ploughed and even the deer-parks were cleared and made available for tillage.

At a meeting of the R. D. S. it was decided to call on Count Plunkett to resign Curatorship of the National Museum. The voting being 236 for and 58 against. Count Plunkett was a Papal Count and his photograph appeared in the press wearing his Papal decorations. It was announced at the same time that he would stand as a candidate for the vacancy in North Roscommon caused by the death of James J. O'Kelly, M.P. for that constituency. An election address was issued. The National Aid Fund was £81,900. The Sinn Féin organisation firmly refused to take part in the election. They did all they possibly could to prevent Count Plunkett going forward. But better counsels prevailed and if Dublin took no part in this election, Father O'Flanagan would still go on with it. Rory O'Connor and the people working with him had different ideas from the Sinn Féin party. They

found out in advance what the opinions of the people were and as for the men who were working with Rory O'Connor, or the committee which he had now formed in Fitzwilliam Street, their work was not political. It was part of organising the new resurgence which was growing up in the country. We were not politicians, although we were now well initiated into the game of politics.

When men were released from camps and prisons in England they were in no hurry to start reorganising. In fact a number of them were greatly surprised that there was any such possibility but, after a while, they fell into line again and so the work went on.

The politicians were different from the Volunteers. They saw no hope of recovery on Republican lines. They were preparing to go back to their old political policy of action. Passive resistance was their programme or, as Mr. Pimm called it later on in the year, Constitutional Sinn Féin. The released men, who held republican views, and those of them who were in favour of the principles of Easter Week, had a difficult enough time. The passive resistance sentiments do not apply to all the ex-internees, but to their political leaders. Men like Mick Collins and various others who formed the Headquarters staff of the Irish Volunteers at a later period were different. They threw themselves into the reorganising of the new volunteers with vigour and they found their task simple enough. They were without jobs and were able to devote their whole time to reorganising work. But their allowance from the National Aid funds kept them in comfort for a period.

When the surrender took place in Easter Week it only applied to the men carrying arms, and those who escaped and those who had no opportunity of taking part in the fight were preparing for a new war. Yes: they were already

preparing while the British executioners were at work in Kilmainham Jail. This new war would not apply to Dublin and a few scattered districts through the country, but to the whole of Ireland. Here again, I must repeat Rory O'Connor's words which he said on Tuesday, Easter Week:- 'Send them home. We shall want them again'. But the politicians were troublesome. They did not countenance another fight.

CHAPTER VThe Roscommon Election

This is not a history of the Roscommon election. It is just the story of the part played in it by some of the men of K Company. There was no organisation whatever. With the exception of a small amount of money given to Father O'Flanagan by a few friends to defray initial expenses, we had no funds with which to contest the seat. After a long consultation with Rory O'Connor and I must say without any instructions, only 'Do what you think is right'. I had no previous experience of electioneering, but I knew the intrigues of the I.P.P. Captain T.J.Cullen had gone to Boyle, Co. Roscommon, as advance agent for Rory O'Connor in that area. I caught the late train for Dromod St. on the Saturday evening preceding the opening of the campaign on the next day. The snow was very deep and when I arrived in Rooskey late at night, I met a few forlorn sympathisers: Flynn, the school-teacher, John O'Farrell and a few more. They were not expecting me or anybody else for that matter. They knew that they would get no assistance from Sinn Féin. They did not want to leave the platform for the I.P.P. who, along with an Independent candidate, were contesting the election.

I had never spoken in public prior to this occasion but they insisted that I should speak after First Mass the next morning. The snow was now about one foot deep, but I was on the spot as arranged. The local curate, Father Lavin, was very cautious and was biding his time. He did not like turning down the I.P.P. and he was anxious to be friendly with both sides. Tom Smith, an I.P.P. M.P., was on the Bill and, as he was going to Slatta Chapel to speak after last Mass, he took the curate with him in his car. Arrangements

we made so that I also could travel with him. The curate introduced Smith after First Mass in Rooskey. He was received in silence by the people. I was not introduced but when Smith had finished his speech I mounted the steps - 'How would I start? What would I say?'. All the people present were either friends or relations of my own. At any rate, I got going and the people told me afterwards that I had said very strong things. Smith, who was listened to in silence while he was speaking, started to interrupt. Of course this interruption helped me. Later, when Smith became aggressive, the men moved in his direction in a threatening manner. There were just a few members of the local A.O.H. present but, as far as the election in this district was concerned, the Count had won there that first Sunday morning of the campaign. When the time came to start off for Slatta Chapel, the curate then told me that Smith refused to take me in his car - I was becoming popular.

With my mother, my brother and a local man, we had driven into Mass in Rooskey in a horse and trap, a distance of two miles, and my mother insisted on walking home in the deep snow so that I could drive to Slatta Chapel. When we arrived about a mile from the chapel Smith's car was stuck in the snow on the side of the road. The curate, Fr. Lavin, and himself had to walk the balance of the way. Smith could have saved himself the journey for in this rural district in the Kilglass Hills, in which Tom McDonagh's father taught school for a short time, he had only one supporter and the people would not allow him to speak at all. My meeting was over before he arrived and it was most enthusiastic. With one exception, Count Plunkett got all the votes in this district.

On this, the opening day of the Campaign, Fr. O'Flanagan and Larry Ginell addressed meetings in Boyle and Elphin, and their long tramp in the deep snow, which made the roads impassible, is still spoken of.

In preparation for the campaign the I.P.P. held their convention in Boyle to select a candidate. Delegates from the A.O.H. in Tarmonbarry - these delegates were Joe McGuinness' neighbours - the adjoining parish to Rooskey, attended this convention in Boyle and without any authority they proposed Count Plunkett as a candidate. This proposal was ruled out of order, as the Count was not eligible. A large number of delegates, including the men from Tarmonbarry, left the convention. These men and their associates at home formed themselves into a committee and worked for Count Plunkett throughout the campaign. The nominations took place on the 26th January 1917. There were three candidates nominated. On January 30th an appeal for cars for polling day was issued from 26 Upr. Fitzwilliam Street - Count Plunkett's home. A local friend in Rooskey had a motor car and I made all possible use of it. In most places cars were unable to travel as the snow was too deep and it had drifted in great heaps at several places, but, somehow, we managed to get along.

The day before the Count arrived in Roscommon we had a public meeting in Rooskey, at which Fr. O'Flanagan spoke. During the progress of the meeting Mrs. Nugent arrived in a car from Dromod station. Rory O'Connor had sent her all the way from Dublin with a message to the effect that Count Plunkett was travelling to Carrick-on-Shannon on the following day and to notify Fr. O'Flanagan. I was to meet the Count at Dromod station. Mrs. Nugent had only time to catch the evening train back to Dublin. Rory would not trust the post or telegraphs in these days: he refrained also from giving information to the press. The Freeman's Journal was, as a matter of course, backing the I.P.P. The Independent would publish any news about the Count if the Censor would allow them. No news was

better than censored news. Jasper Tully, the Independent candidate, had his own paper, The Roscommon Herald. It carried columns of vitriolic language against the Count but we had the largest newspaper ever printed in any part of the world: we had the snow. For the greater part of the campaign the children refused to go to school. They were printing a newspaper and posters. They were writing slogans and patriotic poems in the white sheets of pure snow.

When the campaign opened some friends of Father O'Flanagan told him that he could not win the election as he had only the women and children to help him - the women, at that time, had no vote. He replied, 'All right: give me the women and children and I will win the election'. The children of Roscommon were his printers and press correspondents and they did their work well. At one meeting he stated that 'from Curraghroe to Corriggeenroe, and from Knockglasheen to Cloghglasheen, we have lighted a flame that will spread all over the whole of Ireland and will never be extinguished.' I saw these words printed in the snow in several places throughout the constituency.

I met Count Plunkett at Dromod station. He was accompanied by Miss Plunkett and Fr. Conlon, a brother of Martin Conlon. They were the only occupants of the carriage. I gave the Count a general outline of what was happening and how the campaign was progressing. I also impressed upon him the certainty of victory. He was rather bewildered as it was not easy to believe these statements unless one saw for themselves. He was soon to see. On our arrival in Carrick-on-Shannon there were enthusiastic crowds to greet him. After a short visit to the hotel a procession was formed and the people marched across the bridge into Co. Roscommon, where his first meeting was held.

The Count was now a new man in every movement and gesture. He saw for himself the true feelings of the population. Fr. O'Flanagan made, I might say, his greatest

speech that day in welcoming Count Plunkett to North Roscommon. This speech was never published. The snow was deep and the weather was icy cold. He had been speaking at meetings days and night. His lips were broken and although the blood flowed freely from them, he went on and on with his speech that day. The people were electrified. Count Plunkett also made a great impression on his listeners and when the meeting was over he was more than satisfied as to the result of the election. My own few words that day were to inform the people round Carrick-on-Shannon how the campaign in Rooskey, Tarmonbarry and Kilglass was progressing and, of course, I had a very encouraging story to tell them. I was well aware that when the news of the Rising reached these districts, that men were gathered in groups and were saying that if they had had any means of taking part in the Rising, they would have done so.

Count and Countess Plunkett, who had previously been interned in Oxford, were released on the 30th January 1917. The Count arrived in Dublin on the 31st January 1917 and proceeded to Roscommon the following day.

After the meeting in Carrick-on-Shannon, the Count and his party went on to Boyle. This was the only real stronghold of the opposition parties in the county. It was an old British garrison town and, consequently, contained a good number of families receiving separation allowances from the British Army. This type of opposition was very rough: their methods were difficult to overcome: they attacked whenever an opportunity presented itself: they tried to seize republican flags, and so there were always disturbances in Boyle. I was not in Boyle during the election and am not in a position to give a really accurate account of the events there, but the two opposition candidates were both natives of the town. They were very popular with their own supporter,

but they were fighting a losing battle.

The Count arrived in Roscommon on Thursday: he had spoken in Boyle and Carrick-on-Shannon on the same night. On the following day, Friday, he spoke in Elphin. On the same night he addressed a meeting in Strokestown. This was the last meeting in the election campaign and the only opportunity he had of addressing the people. Polling day was on Saturday and when people say that this was not a Republican election, they say wrong. The principles of the men of Easter Week were shouted from every platform. From the crowds attending these meetings came the cries of 'Up Dublin'. Everywhere in the constituency the Republican flag was displayed. During the last week of the campaign Sinn Féin began to wake up. They had reports of what was happening in the constituency. The Irish Independent was publishing lengthy reports of the enthusiasm prevailing there and now they started to flock to Boyle and other districts so that they could take some credit for the victory which was making itself apparent. They filled the hotels and ran up expenses without any consideration as to who was to foot the bill. The Labour Party were also anxious to be in on the victory but they started earlier than the Sinn Féin Party. About ten days before the polling I had to return to Dublin for a few days and Tom Lawlor, P.T. Daly and some other members of the Party called on me and asked me to lend them my Ford delivery van for the purpose of travelling to Roscommon to take part in the election in the interest of Count Plunkett and move around freely. This was a tall request and of course was not granted, but they got there and were in for the victory.

The Count left Boyle for Elphin on Friday where a meeting was held. He was late in getting there as everywhere along the road there were groups of people out

to meet him and he had to say a few words to them. He was due in Strokestown early in the evening for the final rally. The I.P.P. had arranged a meeting for the same day and place but they could not get an audience. Their speakers who intended to address the people kept marching up and down the square, while a number of speakers held the platform for the Count's meeting. The town was crowded despite the cold and snow. McCrann and Ryan and Sharkey and a few more kept on addressing the people so as not to give the I.P.P. men a chance. I retired for a short time with a young man, a local farmer, whom I had not previously met. He talked a lot and told me all the local complaints. I said, 'You must get up and help us to keep the meeting going until Count Plunkett arrives'. He protested that he could not make a speech. I told him to get up and tell the people all the things he had just told me. This young man, who was well known locally, spoke for over an hour and held the crowd. At last a torchlight procession was seen in the distance: the Count was coming.

The gathering was big for a country town and most enthusiastic. Miss Plunkett got lost in the crowd and some of the local women took possession of her and she was certainly well cared for. It was her first experience of what real Irish hospitality meant, and she enjoyed it.

On the morning of the polling in Rooskey, men were vying with each other as to who would have the honour to vote first for Count Plunkett. They were saying that they had got no chance of shooting in Easter Week and now they were going to fire their 'shot'. When the polling opened we had no personating agent. Their papers had not arrived. Mr. Gough, Solicitor, Elphin, was election agent for the Count. We were unable to travel by car from Rooskey to Elphin on account of snow drifts, and we did

not know what had happened. I wired the County Sheriff and early in the day he replied that our personating agents were to be admitted to the polling booth. The I.P.P.'s agents and Tully's agents had their papers in order and were admitted to the polling booth. Tully's agents deserted him and agreed to act in Count Plunkett's interest until our own agents were admitted. When the telegram from the sheriff arrived and our agents were allowed in, Tully's agents left. Our two impersonating agents were the two delegates who had attended the I.P.P. Convention in Boyle and proposed Count Plunkett as the candidate. Up to this time they were members of the A.O.H. The A.O.H. organisation in Tarmonbarry had a hall. At this hall on the day of the polling the local voters met in a body. They took out the A.O.H. flag and burned it and hoisted a new Republican flag and behind this they marched over four miles in the deep snow to Rooskey to vote for the Republic. They were joined by others on their way and they made an impressive sight when they arrived in Rooskey village. Ireland was marching again, young and old.

Our transport was bad, but we succeeded in getting every voter to the poll. Old men were carried by young men across fields and along laneways where cars awaited them. A number of these old men were members of the Fenian Movement, and was this a coincidence? They who were unable to get away in the snows of '67 and now in another heavy snowstorm were able, as they themselves described it, to strike a blow for freedom in their old age. They were all my father's friends, who was also a Fenian, and failed also owing to the snow to escape. My father was dead and these conversations were sad ones, but they were a living link with the past. These old Fenians wanted all the information about the fight in Dublin and were very anxious about the future of the

country. And, strange to say, they had little interest in the war in France.

Polling day passed off with few incidents. There were no rows of any description. Beer was scarce and whiskey was almost impossible to obtain. When the voting finished and the boxes were sealed, the police took possession of the ballot boxes and took them on an outside car to Strokestown. A man named Byrne from Dolphin's Barn, Dublin, who was a member of the Sinn Féin Party, came to Rooskey village that day. O'Mullane from Sligo (a brother of Bridie and M.J.O'Mullane) was working with his Ford car during the day in the Rooskey polling district. Saloon cars in these days were few, and travelling in a car with side screens was very uncomfortable in cold weather. But we started off after the ballot boxes. They were precious and we would not depend on the police for their safety. Byrne travelled with us and when we arrived in Strokestown there were other parties with ballot boxes on their way to Boyle. As there were a number of cars following these boxes we remained in McCranns for some time and later we started for Boyle, and driving through that famous snow tunnel - this tunnel was on the road between Strokestown and Boyle. The snow had drifted on to the road and made an enormous drift. The local men dug a tunnel through this snow drift and made the road passable for traffic - was very cold. We arrived in the hotel both cold and hungry. Dan McCarthy had taken charge of arrangements and when we entered the Commercial Room he got a tray with a bottle of whiskey and a syphon of soda. He filled out drinks and then shook hands with the three of us. The room was good and warm and we were soon very comfortable. When we were about to retire for the night a young man came into the room with an armful of bedclothes, including a mattress, and made up a bed. I enquired who he was and

I was introduced to Mick Collins for the first time. I had heard of him previously, but had not met him. But from that night and for many years afterwards we were very good and confidential friends. Dr. Walsh of North Frederick Street was working with his car in the election campaign in Count Plunkett's interest and I travelled back to Dublin with him on Sunday morning after the polling. I was the only one. All other workers remained over: they were anxious to be present when the result of the election was declared. We carried the Republican flag all the way to the borders of the city of Dublin and we could observe the reactions of the people as we passed along. In Leitrim they were great - the people waved as we passed. In portions of North Longford, it was the same, but when we passed through the town of Longford we were ignored. In other towns the people waved and, in places, the people ran after the car. Dr. Walsh stopped: the people were ^{as} anxious/to the result of the election. When I arrived home in Dundrum the house was full with people. Mrs. Pearse and Miss Margaret Pearse and several others were there. They were terribly anxious and, when I told them that we had won and that we would have a majority over the two candidates, Mrs. Pearse said that she would be satisfied if Count Plunkett won by only one vote. Even she found it difficult to believe that the Irish people were right at heart: that they were not West Britons.

This was the first and least expensive of the bye-elections. In the polling district of Rooskey there were no expenses incurred and the only help we got from the election committee was O'Mullane's car for election day, and this was voluntary. The result of the poll was announced in the evening papers on Monday. Count

Plunkett had a majority of 627 votes over the combined vote of his two opponents. There was consternation in the ranks of Sinn Féin over Count Plunkett's statement that he would not go to Westminster when the result was declared. None of the Republican Party expected that he would go. We knew in advance that he would not and it was not mentioned in any speech that he would. The people were asked to vote for the principles of the men of Easter Week and that was plain enough. Speaking at Ballaghaderreen, the Count stated that the Volunteers would be recreated and constituted.

In a few days the Kilkenny Corporation conferred the Freedom of the City on the Count. The Sinn Féin Party in Dublin were in favour of the Count attending the House of Commons and they were protesting against his refusal to attend. Rory O'Connor asked me to go down to Roscommon again and find out what were the opinions of the people in connection with the Count's declaration that he would not enter the British Parliament. I did go: I was told that they did not vote for him to go to Westminster and that if there was another election he would be returned by a larger majority.

Neither the British Government nor the I.P.P. took a serious view of the result of this election and it was reported that the Irish Guards Band were coming to Ireland on a recruiting campaign. Colonel Moore announced at this time that a convention of the National Volunteers would be held on Easter Monday. In the middle of February 1917 Lord Mayor Gallagher of Dublin was knighted by the King of England. This was a compliment for the work he had done for the British Army in Easter Week 1916. In the town of Youghal 20 rifles belonging to the National Volunteers were seized by the British military. They were later returned and stored for safety in the Market

House. They were removed from here by the Volunteers and could not be traced. The National Aid Fund was now £88,150.

After Easter Week 1916 Gaelic hurling and football matches were banned by the British military, but now the Association were arranging tournaments. The Bishops of the different dioceses issued their Lenten Pastorals and there was a clear divergence of opinion in their references to Easter Week. The Irish Guard's Band was announced for a recruiting meeting in Kilkenny, but their posters were covered with Easter Week literature, and in parts of the country men were courtmartialled for buying rifles from British soldiers. It is still February 1917 and whilst some men were released from prisons and internment camps in England, others were being arrested and imprisoned in Ireland without any charges being preferred against them. 30 men were arrested in Dublin and other parts of the country including Seán T. O'Kelly and Sceilg.

A new Lord Mayor of Dublin (Larry O'Neill) was elected and at this meeting of the Corporation Alderman Tom Kelly opposed a vote of thanks to the outgoing Lord Mayor (Sir James Gallagher) on account of his attitude towards the men of Easter Week and the help which he gave to the British military. Seán T. O'Kelly intended to propose this motion but, as he was arrested the previous night, he could not do so. Myself and Captain Cullen wrote three lengthy reports of our activities during Easter Week, including our visits to the Mansion House. One of these we gave to Rory O'Connor. He passed it on to Seán T. O'Kelly so that he would have a full detailed account of the Lord Mayor's activities. But this document was seized, as was also the second document. This second document we had given to Hugh McNeill (a brother of Eóin McNeill) for

safe keeping. He intended placing it in the Corporation safe but he was arrested before doing so. They must be still in some archives, either at home or in England.

Some men were now tried by courtmartial for singing seditious songs. The songs in this charge were 'The Green Flag' and 'The Soldier's Song'. The concert at which these songs were sung was held at 41 Parnell Square, and a third batch of prisoners were deported to England. The press in England and in Ireland was stating that conscription was about to be applied to Ireland - this time without any conditions. Carson would, of course, agree to this. Those of us who were members of the National Committee of National Volunteers and who had worked in the Roscommon election for Count Plunkett were now under the suspicions of the I.P.P. Captain Cullen and myself were in an independent position. We were on the Committee as members of Colonel Moore's military staff, and not representing any political section. We therefore could not be accused of what they called treachery. We continued our demands for a National Volunteer Convention and we were successful in getting in more arms and ammunition.

When Count Plunkett arrived at the Broadstone Station on his return from Roscommon, there were dense crowds of people there to meet him, and the enthusiasm among men, women and children was unbounded. Something new with which the people were delighted had happened. Republican flags in plenty were carried and the police were helpless to interfere.

In the first week of March a concert and reception for Count Plunkett was held in the Mansion House, Dublin. Again, the enthusiasm knew no bounds. The Round Room and all the approaches were packed and

thousands were unable to gain admission. Some detectives occupied seats, having gained early admission. When some men of the Citizen Army recognised them, angry scenes followed and demands were made for their expulsion. National Dublin had come to life again. British rule was being defied everywhere and, at the same time, there was no serious crime. The courts were empty only for minor or political cases.

CHAPTER VI.Re-organising Volunteers and Political
Work early in 1917.

The I.P.P. in the British House of Commons were now trying to save their faces. They were being attacked and abused by every section of English politicians and, thinking that they would regain some of their lost popularity at home, they one day walked out of the House of Commons in a body. But they did not return home to Ireland. They were back again in the House in a few days and their agents at home were on the British recruiting platforms as usual. They had become 'more British than the British themselves'.

The Press censorship was very strict at this period but the few of us who were in touch with the I.P.P. and their agents in 44 Parnell Square were getting the true facts. The English Army in France and elsewhere were virtually on the run. These stories we would be told in a most sympathetic way: often we were asked to quit our foolish opposition to British interests and enter seriously into the work of the Party, and that we would find it a paying proposition.

The National Aid subscription (of which Captain Cullen and Fred Allen were still Hon. Secs.) amounted to £100,000, and the men of K Company and my company in Dundrum and also the Boys' Brigade in Dundrum were carrying on the good work.

These boys had a very good military training and the difficulty was to keep them out of trouble with the police.

In the early part of March 1917 the ceremony of presenting Count Plunkett with the Freedom of Kilkenny was marked by great rejoicing. There were large crowds

of people in the city and various public bodies took this opportunity of presenting the Count with addresses of appreciation. Father O'Flanagan spoke at this ceremony and received a great ovation. The censored report of this demonstration of public opinion was contained in a few lines. Russia was by this time out of the War and Germany were able to transfer troops to the Western Front. There was great fear in the minds of the British supporters in this country: they knew that the situation was serious and showed it in all their conversations. These were amusing items to be reporting to Rory O'Connor and other republican leaders. At the same time, few people in Ireland wanted to see the downfall of England; if she could leave us alone, we could be good friends, and we were not, as we were commonly called, pro-German. We looked for no outside master but we were grateful and friendly with any country which was prepared to give us assistance in obtaining our freedom. But British persecution went on as usual and at a court martial in Cork P.J. Fleming was sentenced to 5 years penal servitude for buying rifles from British soldiers and having seditious literature.

The Freedom of the Borough of Sligo was conferred on Count Plunkett. This was another great National demonstration of public feeling. Arthur Griffith spoke at this meeting and showed divergence of opinion to that of the Count.

In the first week of April 1917 those of us who were serving on the National Committee of the National Volunteers were getting large space in the public press. Principally ⁱⁿ the Independent. Whole columns and, in some instances, several columns were published. We were pressing for a National Convention: we had been promised that it would be held on Easter Monday, but this promise.

as well as others was not kept and the Volunteer funds, which were our main objective, were being squandered every week. We gave press interviews on several occasions and anything which we said could not be contradicted, but the I.P.P. and the A.O.H. tried to justify their attitude in refusing the convention.

One Mr. Rooney, a Parliamentary member of the Committee, wrote to the press defending the Party attitude and asked them 'Have you convinced yourselves that these gentlemen are concerned only for the welfare of the National Volunteers.'

Our stand was definitely for the welfare of the Volunteers, but not for the Volunteers as Mr. Rooney or the I.P.P. visualised them. The Convention was not held and our agitation continued. We still had the serious threats of conscription hanging over us. Recruiting meetings, at which there was continuous trouble, were still being held, and the members of the tottering Parliamentary Party and A.O.H. were on these platforms beseeching Irishmen to join the British Army and fight for Britain. The men of K. Company were working hard to help to counteract this anti-Irish campaign.

Count Plunkett now issued a circular explaining the true situation in Ireland. This circular got full publicity in the press, but later on, when men were arrested and this document was found in their possession, the military and police treated it as illegal literature: although the censor had allowed it to be published in the press, these men were sent to jail.

A Parliamentary vacancy now occurred in North Longford. J. Phillips, M.P., died on the 3rd April 1917. The I.P.P. and the A.O.H. were in a desperate position

politically and as a last straw they made an attempt to capture the Gaelic Athletic Association as, owing to the military ban on this association, activities were not as strong as in normal times. Some members of the C.J. Kickham Club in Dublin saw fit to find various faults with the working of the G.A.A. These men were good members of the A.O.H. The C.J. Kickham Club was one of the strongest and most popular G.A.A. clubs in Ireland and these men tried through connivance and propaganda to get control of the organisation, but they forgot that they had men in their ranks like the late Paddy Walsh and others and this attempt failed hopelessly. Captain Cullen was not a member of the G.A.A. but I was, and members of the A.O.H. asked me for my help in this dirty effort.

It was very difficult in dealing with these intrigues to keep one's temper, but orders were orders and who were we not to obey. The National Volunteer publicity continued in the press.

About the 6th or 7th April 1917 the U.S.A. declared war on Germany. This entry by America into the war on the side of England gave us a setback here in Ireland, particularly in rural Ireland. Many families who had no friends or family connections in the British Army would now find their sons or relations in the American Army, and, naturally, their sympathy would be with them. But as they were pro-German only to the extent that they were fighting England, they soon discovered that they could still maintain their anti-British outlook and were only concerned with the progress of the Yankees in France. The British military had issued a proclamation prohibiting processions during Easter Week. These were busy times during the first week of April. Work was actually tumbling on top of work-that is, for those of us who were willing to do it.

The politicians were lazy enough and took things as they came. In fact, some leading men were spending too much time in hotel lounges and public bars and the easiest place to find them if there was something of importance to report for publicity was downstairs in the Bodega: or in the Lounge Room in the Bailey.

Joe McGuinness, who had fought in Easter Week and who was imprisoned in England, was selected as Sinn Féin candidate for the North Longford constituency.

On Easter Monday wild scenes were witnessed in Dublin, Cork and other populated districts. Crowds thronged the streets. Republican flags were flying again and, when the police interfered, the people beat them off the streets.

The Morning Post, in criticising the Government in Ireland for what that paper considered carelessness, stated that the Roscommon election was an eye-opener.

A bogus circular, endeavouring to discredit Count Plunkett, was posted to several people: the origin and the author was soon traced.

The National Aid Fund was now £107,069. A concert in aid of the funds was held in the Mansion House. These functions were taking on a national flavour. All the Irish songs and anti-British sketches were served up: the men from Frongoch were very much to the fore in these entertainments....A general meeting of the National Aid Fund was held at this time.

From the time that Captain T.J.Cullen and myself were appointed to act on the committee of the National Volunteers as members of Colonel Moore's military staff, our objective was the importation of arms. We always

tried to keep down expenses, in order that funds would be available for this purpose. The money, however, was being squandered continually. A small weekly paper was published at a cost of £25.0.0 per week for printing: this money was paid to the Freeman's Journal and the editor of the weekly paper, who was an employee of the Freeman's, was paid a salary. Big fees were also paid for articles. This paper was just scissors and paste and had no circulation worthy of the name. As our members on the committee were too few, we were unable to stop this waste, but continued our efforts for a national convention. We kept this agitation going at every meeting, and when we resorted to the press, the Independent was only too anxious to help, and we availed of the opportunity.

Captain T.J.Cullen and Fred Allen for some time prior to this had been in daily touch with Mick Collins. Mick was working on the National Aid Committee and at this early stage of his career he showed a keen interest in gaining control of the National Volunteers' property and funds. We also had Rory O'Connor and other prominent Irish Volunteer officers working with us, so that all our actions had a solid backing. We held a series of meetings in the Mansion House. A number of the men who had been in Frongoch attended in good numbers. Eamonn Fleming usually organised a good attendance at these meetings. We succeeded in getting some of the I.P.P. to attend what we recognised as the convention. At this meeting there were two motions which, if passed, would give us control of the funds and property. The first motion was proposed by Colonel Moore and, after lengthy discussion, the I.P.P. saw that they were going to be defeated on a vote. They appealed to Colonel Moore to modify his resolution which he did and this left us as we were. Captain T.J.Cullen had a similar motion but when the modified resolution was

passed, the chairman ruled Captain Cullen's proposal out of order. Had the Colonel persisted (as he promised he would) in his original resolution, we would have won on a vote, and the trustees, Canon A. Ryan and Mr. Governey of Carlow, would have handed over the funds and property to a new committee. And now we had to start all over again.

This time we were to have a fusion of all Volunteers. A National Convention would be called and the trustees would hand over the funds and property to their rightful owners. We knew this for certain but the work had to be done in legal form, and we set out once more to do it.

On April the 19th 1917 the most important meeting in the fight for freedom was held in the Mansion House, Dublin. This was known as the Plunkett Convention. The amount of work which had to be done for a length of time prior to the holding of this convention was enormous. Sinn Féin as an organisation had few branches outside of Dublin City. But the A.O.H. were breaking up and its ex-members were repudiating the organisation. Their secretaries wrote for permission to send delegates to the Plunkett Convention. In 44 Parnell Square (the National Volunteer Headquarters) we were able to get a list of Volunteer Companies which had partially disbanded. These companies were also invited to send delegates. The members of the I.R.B. who had joined the A.O.H. were now able to bring the greater number of branches in their districts into line with the general break-away. A number of public bodies applied for representation and, consequently, there was a great enthusiastic and definitely intelligent meeting. Two of the principal motions on the agenda were:- Representation at Westminster, and the changing of the name of the Organisation from

that of Sinn Féin to 'Republican Clubs'. Sinn Féin demanded that the resolution dealing with the representation at Westminster should be decided at this convention. (for some time before this meeting, serious trouble was developing between Sinn Féin and the Republican Party). This disturbance developed to such an extent that Count Plunkett refused to send admission tickets to Arthur Griffith and Seán Milroy. But Father O'Flanagan, who was in Dublin, took two tickets from the mantle piece at Fitzwilliam Street and sent them to Griffith and Milroy. When the item concerning the representation at Westminster came up, a Sinn Féin delegate proposed that Sinn Féin M.Ps. should attend at Westminster. There was pandemonium for some time and it looked as if the convention would break up in disorder. Father O'Flanagan who was on the platform (but on account of restrictions placed on him by his Bishop was not allowed to speak at public meetings), stood up and explained his position. He asked the meeting, 'Does this Convention want eighty-four Larry Ginells or eighty-four Count Plunketts?'. This was the number of M.Ps. attending the British House of Commons at the time and Larry Ginell was an ex-member of the I.P.P. and was now attending as a Sinn Féin candidate. Fr. O'Flanagan asked the delegates to give him 15 minutes with two of the Sinn Féin members and two delegates from the Republican Party, and that he would settle the dispute. The convention agreed to this proposal and in less than the time asked for, they were back on the platform with an agreement.....No representation at Westminster. This decision was given a wonderful ovation and was unanimously accepted by all present.

Count Plunkett's motion for the changing of the name Sinn Féin to that of Republican Clubs was discussed

at length. The Sinn Féin members objected to this change and Count Plunkett was so satisfied with the success of his first motion that he withdrew the second and agreed to carry on under the old name of Sinn Féin. But now a new Sinn Féin organisation was born with a new constitution. The King, Lords, Commons and representation at Westminster was gone. A new provisional committee was appointed as follows:- Count Plunkett, Fr. O'Flanagan, Arthur Griffith, Seán Milroy, Jas. O'Mara, Cathal Brugha, Ald. Tom Kelly, William O'Brien and Countess Plunkett.

This was a very unfortunate selection and those who were working hard in the Republican movement outside knew nothing of the scenes which were taking place at the committee meetings in 6 Harcourt Street. The old Sinn Féin members wanted their old policy of passive resistance, and naturally Count Plunkett or Cathal Brugha would not agree to this; but Fr. O'Flanagan was a great peacemaker and the committee carried on, and the man - Rory O'Connor - who had done most of the organising work for the convention never appeared on the scene. He was almost unknown.

The apathy towards the republic adopted by the leaders of the Sinn Féin movement, after their release from British internment camps and their veiled opposition towards this movement, developed into what can be termed open hostility at the Plunkett Conference and was revealed at elections and public meetings afterwards.

While these men were interned, deported or imprisoned, as they were from time to time, the republican propaganda progressed, but when they were free they always tried as far as possible to damp this enthusiasm and, at times, with a large amount of success. And, lest the British should discover any signs of

discord, the republicans were compelled to agree to a lot of arrangements to which they were morally opposed.

Father O'Flanagan often told me that the members of the new provisional Committee would never agree and that political progress internally was at a standstill. But with the general public progress was taken for granted and the strong man behind the scenes, Rory O'Connor, was as busy as ever and the Volunteers were coming back to life.

These directly opposite opinions between two parties working for the freedom of the country as a supposedly united party had their sequel when the treaty was signed in London and when the vote of ratification of that treaty was taken in the National University Buildings, Dublin, on January 7th 1922. That night I was standing on the foot walk at Stephen's Green with a very prominent reverend ecclesiastic when Arthur Griffith was surrounded and linked in arms and was hurried along to some hotel as a conquering hero by a number of the older members of Sinn Féin. They had got their King, Lords and Commons: the comment of my reverend friend was caustic. He is still alive, thank God, and doing well.

In the middle of April 1917 a gift sale in aid of the National Aid Fund was held in the Mansion House, Dublin. The sales on the first day amounted to over £2,000. In Cork City, Miss O'Donovan Rossa was fined £1.0.0 under the Defence of the Realm Act. She refused to pay the fine and went to jail for 14 days.

At a meeting of 54 officers of the National Volunteers held in Dublin Colonel Moore paid tribute to the men of Easter Week. (There was only one Company of National Volunteers at this time and they were the men who formed the A. O. H. Coy. in the A. O. H. Hall, Parnell Square). But at the Plunkett Convention we had been able to induce

a number of old officers to remain over for the officer's meeting. The balance of the officers was made up from our own companies: there were several officers present who had been released from Frongoch. A demand was made for a National Convention. We were still trying to get control of the funds. These funds were the property of the Volunteers and were being spent for the I.P.Ps. political propoganda, but we could get no such convention. One man who consistently attended all our meetings (except our Nat.Vol.committee meetings) was Eamonn Fleming and he was an Easter Week man. He was sent by Seán McDermott to blow up the embankment at Portlaoighise when the Rising started. He worked with us always from this time onwards. He was not known by any of the I.P.P. members; but he was the connecting link with the Irish Volunteers.

Count Plunkett made an announcement stating that we must now turn to the Peace Conference and depend upon our own resolve for liberty. At this time many reports were current about attempts to settle the Irish question.

Republican flags were now flying all over Ireland, and the police were active in pulling them down. The I.P.P. were still making a fight for their existence and the A.O.H. had begun to suspend its members who had joined Sinn Féin. The revolt was spreading. The Clubs were going over in a body to the Sinn Féin movement. John D. Nugent and Joe Devlin were known from this time as the 'Great High Suspenders.'

A monster meeting in the Mansion House demanded that Irish prisoners in British jails be treated as prisoners of war. There were wild scenes at this meeting and a determined demand was made for the

removal of detectives who had gained admission. Some Volunteers were about to remove them when the Lord Mayor, Larry O'Neil, intervened. This was the occasion upon which he referred to the Mansion House as 'My house'. Large crowds were gathered around the Mansion House and Dawson Street which was full. The British military were called out but the meeting ended peaceably. The next day the I.P.P. organ, The Freeman's Journal, asked for the release of the prisoners, so as to stem the rising tide.

In the first week of June Count Plunkett refused to address a Sinn Féin meeting in Cork City. This refusal was in the interest of the advanced republican movement. Cork City was not coming into line as rapidly as other parts of the country, or was it that the people in charge were just the old Sinn Féin type?

On the 9th June 1917 the deaths of Alderman Cotton, M.P. for South County Dublin, and William Redmond, M.P. for East Clare, were announced. There were then rumours of disagreements in the Sinn Féin Committee in Harcourt Street. These rumours were true as A. Griffith and Count Plunkett were at loggerheads, and Sinn Féin did not contest the bye-election in Sth. County Dublin.

Chapter VII.

Longford and Clare Elections.

Longford Election:

The Longford election to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Phillips was in full swing. For two weeks we worked hard in this campaign. I had a Ford car and took it along. I carried many Republicans to and from Dublin. The Sinn Féin committee were in charge of the campaign with Dan MacCarthy in control as Director of Elections. (Dan was a great man to get work done). When I was starting from Longford for my first meeting on a Sunday morning in Bornacoola with Mick Collins and Eamon Fleming, we received instructions to the effect that the Republic was not to be mentioned. This was a different campaign to that of Roscommon when everyone was free to say whatever he wished. Here in Longford were men who had fought in Easter Week ordering men who had also fought in Easter Week not to mention the Republic. Longford was a difficult district. It was an old garrison town. There were people still living there who remembered Orange processions being held in the town on the 12th July. Although the first battle in Ireland in 1798 was fought near the town the national spirit of the people was very poor. The A.O.H. had a strong grip of the people but after the Roscommon election they were changing generally. On the Leitrim border the people were very good. Eamon Fleming was organiser for the northern portion of the

constituency and he did his work well. There was an A.O.H. hall beside Paddy McKenna's home in Drumlish. (He was an I.P.P. candidate). The members of this A.O.H. branch were for the most part young men. Eamon Fleming converted them in a very short time to the Republican fold, and when John D. Nugent and other A.O.H. leaders went to visit this hall they were refused admission. The boys had changed their opinions and were now advanced Republicans. So it can be seen that very good headway was being made in this area.

I had known and worked with Eamon Fleming for some time previously in Dublin. I also knew Mick Collins very well since the Roscommon election but this was the first time we met in a thoroughly understanding way. Owing to the instructions which we had received from the committee, we were able to express our ideas freely among ourselves only, and Mick was no drawing-room don. From that Sunday morning we became fast friends, and when Mick got into a prominent position later anyone whom he trusted he did so with his life. In fact, some of us considered him just a little bit too trusting. But he was never let down.

While the election campaign in Longford progressed there were apparent signs of interest among the people. The population had swelled to such an extent that men and boys slept in sheds - there was no accommodation for them in the town. Men and women flocked into the town from all parts of the country. The widows and relatives of the executed leaders were there and, of course, received

a lot of sympathy. Every voter on the register was canvassed. Some of this canvassing did more harm than good. Men from Dublin and some from Belfast knew little of conditions in rural Ireland and often caused trouble in farming areas. Eamon Fleming, Mick Collins and Harry Boland were doing good work among the young men and, in some instances, among the young ladies. This work was mostly in Volunteer interests and had its reflection in the magnificent fight put up by these boys and girls a few years later.

The "Irish Independent" had their special reporter in Longford during the whole election campaign. He deserves a special word of tribute. He has passed away long since, but he was a great friend. Always when we were starting for meetings he would say "Make a few notes for me but don't let me down". We never did. But most of the publicity came from our own men who attended the meetings. The women and children in two districts of the town of Longford were very rough. There were also a goodly number of young men (roughs) who had not yet joined the British Army. The people here mentioned were in receipt of Separation Allowances. Their husbands (mostly tinkers or militia men) were in the British Army. These people were the violent supporters of the I.P.P. and the A.O.H.

On the Saturday evening before the polling quite a number of M.P.s and members of the A.O.H. arrived in Longford by rail. They were met at the station by a crowd of their supporters, the children carrying small Union Jacks. There was nothing the I.P.P. could do about it.

They had to march to the meeting place behind the Union Jack. A legal gentleman who was doing a lot of Sinn Féin electioneering work managed to get these small Union Jacks in a local shop and he purchased the whole stock. The children were, of course, delighted when they got them. The Sinn Féin election committee were not responsible, but the I.P.P. did not know that and they were very angry. But why should they? It was their emblem. They had deserted all others.

During the progress of the election campaign I was allotted the task of dealing with the I.P.P.'s actions in connection with the Irish Volunteers in the 1916 Rising. On this evening when they were holding their big meeting in the centre of the town I was detailed by the Sinn Féin Election Committee to go down to this meeting and ask some questions. I had a guard in case of attack and there were a number of Volunteers on duty in Longford. John Dillon was speaking when we got down. John T. Donovan, M.P., was on the platform when I suddenly asked: "Will Mr. Donovan admit that John Redmond sent a telegram early in Easter Week ordering him to call out the National Volunteers to fight side by side with the British Army against the Irish Volunteers?". John T. Donovan made no reply. A number of men in the crowd shouted "Then it's true!". The party on the platform were taken by surprise at this unexpected interruption, and particularly as it came from me whom they knew well. We got away without any trouble and walked back to the committee rooms without further incident.

The I.P.P. stated in a short time afterwards that my statement won the election for Joe McGuinness - the Sinn Féin candidate. On the day of polling there were many unpleasant scenes. Our impersonating agents were badly beaten. Dr. McNab told these men that if they had been living in Belfast they would not sleep happy at week-ends unless they received similar knocks.

I was in Dublin on the eve of the poll and when returning to Longford with some others the Evening Herald was on sale. The paper contained a letter from the Most Rev. Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, stating that the I.P.P. had sold the country. We bought all of these newspapers which we could get and distributed them gratis in the town of Longford that night. The I.P.P. were calling us Visioner Rainbow chasers, pro-German and dreamers. They predicted disaster for anyone who supported our policy.

The atmosphere was tense on the streets of Longford the morning of the counting of votes. It was pathetic to see the mothers, widows and orphans of the executed men standing on the footpath opposite the courthouse waiting to see how the people had voted. Had they voted for the justification of the executions of their sons and husbands..... A card was pushed through the window of the courthouse.....YES..... Some women fainted. But immediately a hand came through the window NO..... There was to be a recount. Some smart A.O.H. electioneering agent had changed a bundle of 50 votes cast in favour of Joe McGuinness on to the votes for the I.P.P. candidate. This was soon discovered..... What joy! The majority was

only 37 but we had won. The mothers, widows and orphans of the 1916 leaders could now say that the executed men were right: the people of Roscommon and Longford had said so. The defeated I.P.P. candidate in proposing a vote of thanks to the sheriff said that the blaze started in Roscommon by Fr. O'Flanagan had dwindled to a spark in Longford and would be completely extinguished at the next election..... But we shall see.

Reports were trickling in through a close censorship that the Irish people in the U.S.A. were still with us and were causing trouble for England. Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick, wrote a strong letter to the press protesting against the inhuman treatment of Irish prisoners in English jails. This letter was suppressed by the censor and another statement published in his own words over Dr. O'Dwyer's name. Dr. O'Dwyer protested but to no avail. The original letter and protest was published and circulated all over the country as a pamphlet. When men were arrested and this pamphlet found in their possession, they were sent to jail for being in possession of illegal documents.

Daily reports concerning the Longford election appeared in the press. The A.O.H. now decided that they would have to examine their position in the country. Their suspension committee was busy suspending members and branches all over Ireland. At this period what was known as the Irish convention was set up by the British government with the connivance of the I.P.P. It was composed of men who were supposed to be representative of Irish opinion. Sinn Féin and the Republican Party

repudiated this white-washing attempt to stampede the Irish people. It was only by a majority vote by Sinn Féin that they were not represented at this convention. The English and Irish press gave it great publicity but it ended in complete failure.

Polling day in Longford was May 9th 1917. A special general meeting of the Standing Committee of the Irish National Volunteers was summoned for the 25th May 1917. All members were urgently notified to attend. After a lot of recriminations Colonel Moore was asked to remove me from his military staff. This he refused to do. He stated that I had as much right to take part in an election campaign as any other member of the committee. But they had been called together for a definite purpose. Stephen Hand proposed and Joseph Devlin, M.P. seconded that Capt. Laurence Nugent be formally expelled from the committee of the National Volunteers for having assisted the Sinn Féin campaign in Longford. This motion was carried by a majority vote. We knew in advance that this was going to happen, and when I look back and around that table I say without reserve that with the exception of our own men on the committee, the balance were a poor lot. We were particularly surprised at Joe Devlin's attitude.

Some of the interviews published in the press were not given by us. One interview which appeared in the 'Irish Times' angered him greatly. He complained to Colonel Moore. The Colonel assured him that we had not given the interview and Devlin later apologised personally. We thought at the time that there was some good in him.

Early in June an organising meeting for Sinn Féin was held in Kilkenny City. At this meeting Arthur Griffith was referred to as "President". He was president of the old Sinn Féin organisation but now we had a new one. The old members who were working on the committee were still trying to cling to their old policy, and Kilkenny City was one spot in Ireland where the old Sinn Féin movement was particularly strong and where they held on to their old ideas.

Demands for the release of the prisoners from British jails were pouring in from all parts of the land. The Freeman's Journal, the I.P.P. organ, was in favour of their release but the Irish Independent was undecided. On June 12th a protest meeting against the treatment of Irish prisoners in British jails, arranged to be held in Beresford Place, Dublin, was banned by the police. An attempt was made to hold the meeting and great crowds were present. The police immediately set out to arrest the speakers when they attempted to address the people. Count Plunkett, Cathal Brugha and four others were arrested. The crowd attacked the police and Inspector Mills, D.M.P., was struck with a hurley stick and died in the early hours of the morning. On the 16th June an announcement appeared in the press stating that the Irish prisoners in British jails were to be released. There were then 118 men in these jails.

The National Aid Fund now amounted to £117,840.

At this time there was considerable difficulty in organising on account of disagreements between Count

Plunkett and Cathal Brugha on the one hand and Griffith and Milroy on the other. When a meeting billed for Limerick City was proclaimed by the police Count Plunkett and Cathal Brugha were in jail and no one had the courage to go to Limerick to address the meeting. At this time also de Valera was unanimously selected as Republican candidate for East Clare. When parliamentary vacancies occurred McNeill was usually mentioned as candidate. The purpose of this publicity was to try to cause dissention in the republican ranks.

Press censorship was now relaxed and the papers were publishing lengthy comments on the Irish situation generally. The 'Independent' expressed the hope that we would have peace and quietness. The Irish prisoners in Britain were released and brought secretly to London. For a time there was no news of them as far as the general public were concerned, but in a short space of time the press published full reports of their movements. They were secretly smuggled out of London and excitement ran high. The report that the prisoners were marshalled on the pier at Holyhead and marched on to the mail boat by de Valera and would arrive in Dublin the following morning was published in the evening papers. On the 18th June, 1917, the prisoners arrived at Westland Row station. They were taken to John O'Mahony's Hotel in Gardiner's Place. There was great excitement among the greater section of the population. Republican flags were carried in street parades. Count Plunkett and Cathal Brugha were released without any charge being proffered against them. The Republican flag was once again hoisted over the G.P.O.

The children broke loose from schools. All over the city were wonderful signs of rejoicing. 'Young Ireland was on the march'. The writ for East Clare was issued on the following day.

The men who entered the ruins of the Post Office for the purpose of hoisting the Republican flag were arrested by the police. They were charged in the police court the following day. The Police Magistrate (Mr. McInerney) refused information and stated that the police tried to create a riot. Some of the officers of the D.M.P. were very officious. They knew that a number of the ordinary D.M.P. men were sympathetic towards the Republicans, and that if trouble started that they would have to defend themselves if attacked. By every means in their power the Dublin Castle authorities tried to cause conflicts between the people and the police.

June 1917 was a month of excitement all over Ireland. While this public excitement was at its height there were also serious things happening behind the scenes. Negotiations were in progress for a length of time as to the most diplomatic way to amalgamate both sections of the Volunteers, and at the same time to get possession of the fund and property. Captain T.J. Cullen and Fred Allen were engaged in these negotiations. The serious disagreements between members of the new Sinn Féin Committee were still evident. Nevertheless Sinn Féin clubs were being established throughout the country. Dan MacCarthy and Seán Milroy had gone to Clare to take charge of electioneering in that constituency. A statement was issued that Sinn Féin was a constitutional organisation. Clashes occurred in the city of Dublin, occasioned by parties carrying or displaying Union Jacks

and parties carrying republican flags and wearing republican badges. A peculiarity of the time was that while the City of Kilkenny conferred its freedom on Countess Markievicz, the Kilkenny County Council elected an I.P.P. man as Chairman. Countess Markeivicz was not released until two days after the other prisoners. (She was also a prisoner in Britain and when she arrived in Dublin the enthusiastic scenes were repeated).

Clare Election:

When de Valera was nominated as candidate for East Clare it was discovered that he was not a member of Sinn Féin. He never joined the old organisation and when the new Sinn Féin organisation was formed he was in prison in England, and now in order to keep to the rules of political organisations a special meeting of the O'Rahilly Cumann in Pembroke was called at which he was elected a member.

The following is the story of my own personal experiences only. Nominations for Clare were fixed for July 2nd, 1917, and the polling was to take place on July 10th. On July 3rd a party of workers started by rail from Dublin to Ennis. I was one of the party. De Valera and Eoin McNeill were sitting side by side in a seat near the door of the corridor carriage. When Countess Markeivicz entered she gave vent to feelings of indignation. McNeill left the carriage and de Valera followed him on to the platform, took him back to the train and he (de Valera) addressing everyone in the carriage said "There must be no recriminations". From

then onwards peace prevailed. So many republican flags were displayed in the procession from Ennis station to the Old Ground Hotel that it appeared to us who were marching at the rear as if the road was one great blaze with the falling sunshine on the orange of the banners. De Valera gave a short address outside the hotel. A deputation headed by T.V. Honan welcomed him to Clare and assured him of their active support. On Sunday morning meetings were held after all Masses in the constituency. I was sent out with Martin Conlon to one of these meetings. Again we were cautioned to avoid mention of the Republic.

The first big meeting of the campaign was held on this Sunday in Newmarket-on-Fergus. Great crowds and several bands attended. During the course of his address de Valera declared for a free and independent Republic. The audience were electrified. The drums sounded, the people cheered long and loud and it was a considerable time before he could resume his speech. Constitutional Sinn Féin was finished for the balance of the campaign in Clare and speakers now found themselves free to speak their minds. The Sinn Féin members of the election committee were very annoyed, but they were not prepared to come to grips with de Valera, and if his action was commented upon at a committee which followed the public were not aware of any disagreement. And so the campaign continued with the greatest enthusiasm. The press generally boycotted this meeting in Newmarket-on-Fergus, or perhaps the press censorship was not yet sufficiently relaxed and the report of the meeting was not

published.

During the course of the campaign a very sad incident occurred. Mrs. Thos. McDonagh, widow of Thomas McDonagh executed after Easter Week, was accidentally drowned while bathing at Skerries, Co. Dublin. Rory O'Connor, Fred Allen and Fr. Albert of Church St., Dublin, made arrangements for the funeral. The general public showed the greatest sympathy and respect at the funeral. Four thousand Volunteers marched in the funeral procession.

The town of Ennis was packed out. Republican leaders from all over Ireland were there. On the Saturday before the polling J.K. O'Reilly (the man who wrote the Green Flag) and myself were sent to Limerick to speak at meetings on the following day. These meetings were the grand rallies in the election campaign. On our arrival we went to the committee rooms in William St. Our two names were included in the list of speakers for the next day. This list contained the names of Count Plunkett, Arthur Griffith, Joe McDonagh, Larry Ginnell and some local men. Neither myself nor J.K. O'Reilly liked the idea of speaking from a public platform with this company. We were not platform speakers and we were looking for some excuse for escape when Mick Collins arrived. He also had been sent from Ennis but his name was not on the list of speakers. Seán Ó Murthuile was one of the Limerick committee. Mick Collins and he were not always good friends. Mick gave vent to his feelings as he alone knew how. I said that I would be able to fix

the omission. I took out my pen and crossed out my name and inserted that of Mick Collins. J.K. said "Scratch out mine too". Mick left the room without speaking to any member of the election committee. This was his first big day on an election platform. His previous speeches were made at after Mass meetings on Sunday mornings. J.K. and myself went out to Cratloe to hear that famous priest and equally famous Irishman, Fr. Wall, address a meeting there, and so we had a very good day.

Back in Ennis for polling day: I got the job of attending to the wants of the agents and personating agents at the courthouse Ennis. (Diarmuid Lynch attended to the agents in the Town Hall). I saw to it that the men wanted for nothing during the day. When the polling was finished and the ballot boxes were in from the outlying districts, de Valera posted Volunteer guards on the courthouse and in other parts of the town. The Volunteers in Ennis were then very young but very keen. When the posting of the guards was completed de Valera returned to the hotel. I was standing with a number of others in the hall when he walked in. Without addressing anybody in particular he said "I want a quartermaster for the night". (On account of my work during the day I was called the Food Controller). Seán O'Duffy, of camogie fame, said "The Food Controller will do it". Dev. said "Do you know your duties?". I said I did. He just said "Quartermaster for the night". He passed down to the committee rooms. I followed him and told him that in order to carry out my duties

properly I wanted him to do something for me. He asked me what it was I wanted done. I told him that I desired the bar closed. He asked me where it was. I said "Just here". I opened the door and walked in. He said "Now boys we are closing up" and to the barmaid "Give me the keys, Miss". Every man in that bar walked out or was helped out. He locked the door and took away the keys. It was well known that at this period, and for a long time afterwards, quite a number of high-ranking politicians were drinking too much. Their numbers were small, but this failing meant insecurity. The great majority of republicans were sober and a good many of the leaders were T.T.s. Those of them who were in Ennis had long since gone to bed. The men who were in the bar that night and who were ordered out, never forgave him. He was unconscious of this and perhaps never knew it, but I knew and, of course, I was to blame. Late in the night I visited the Commercial Room and discovered that a number of men were very sick. It was no part of my duty to look after them, but I knew them all. Paul Cusack who was all right, appealed to me to do my best to get something for the sick men. The staff in the hotel had not retired and I persuaded the barmaid to get the keys as the cash was still in the bar. She succeeded and I got a quart bottle of whiskey. When I returned to the Commercial Room with the bottle under my coat Paul Cusack shouted "Look at the big bulge". Paul was a very good boy.

Another incident occurred later in the night. Some of the guards thought they had seen a light in the courthouse and de Valera was called out. On investigation

it was discovered that the light was only the reflection of a lamp from a distant farm house.

Before the counting of the votes finished next day, when J.J. Walsh and myself discovered that de Valera's majority was going to be big we went to the Post Office and wired our friends, with whom we had made arrangements. Our telegrams got out before the press news, and later we got the train back to Dublin. During the journey from Ennis to Limerick I travelled with Tom Ash. I had known him well for many years previously in G.A.A. circles in north Co. Dublin. He visualised eventual success in our fight for freedom, and when it came his wish was that he might be appointed Headmaster at St. Enda's College, Rathfarnham.

During the first week of July Tom Barry and P. Higgins were on hunger strike in Cork.

The figures for the Clare election were Dev. 5010

Lynch 2035

At a victory demonstration in Ballybunion on the night of the declaration of the poll, a young man was killed. The jury found a verdict of murder against two R.I.C. men.

at
At the end of June/a demonstration in Cork City to celebrate the homecoming of the Irish prisoners from British jails, the military were called out and ordered to use their bayonets. One man was killed and a large number were injured. Several of the police were injured, including D.I. Swanzy. Union Jacks were pulled down and the jail was attacked. At a public enquiry later it was found that the police and separation allowance people had caused the riots.

C H A P T E R V I I I

Seizure of the Volunteer Hall, 44 Parnell
Square, and Further Activities.

About the middle of July 1917 P. O'Brien, M.P. for Kilkenny City, died. This meant another bye-election.

Wild scenes of excitement marked the result of the Clare election. The people were forgetting all earlier trouble and let themselves go. All this time the men of K.Coy. and other Volunteer Companies were working behind the scenes. The I.P.P. and A.O.H. activities had still to be counteracted. They were not yet convinced that they were a beaten party. Larry Ginell announced at a meeting in Mullingar that he had quit Westminster. The Kilkenny People newspaper was dismantled by the British troops. William Cosgrave was selected as Sinn Féin candidate for Kilkenny City.

About the middle of the month the British military closed a hall in North Frederick Street, Dublin. This hall was owned by the A.O.H. American Alliance. These men belonged to the Republican Party and had no connection with the A.O.H. Board of Erin who were linked with the I.P.P. The Headquarters of the American Alliance was in the U.S.A. +

On July 20th 1917 the Irish Independent published a news item under big headings:-

NATIONAL VOLUNTEERS.
Dramatic developments.

'Hall seized by section of the Volunteers opposed to the I.P.P. The seizure of the Hall at 44 Parnell Square has aroused keen interest in Dublin and much speculation as to future developments. The premises are held by strong contingents day and night.'

The seizure of the hall was well planned. It was

in cooperation with the Irish Volunteers Executive the Q.M.G., Irish Volunteers, was present. The Director of Intelligence remained on duty with the guards for several nights. The guards did not know who this man was. The guards were comprised of men from the Dundrum, Sandyford and Dublin City Companies. Each of the companies thought that this man belonged to one of the other companies.

The reason for the seizure of the hall was on account of our repeated demands for a convention. These demands were always delayed, postponed and eventually refused; and the funds were still being squandered. The principal object behind the seizure was to call a convention of our own and demand control of the funds and property.

Having toured the country in the recent bye-elections we knew from contact with the old Volunteers who had fallen away that their old companies were prepared to send delegates and back our attempt for legal control. We knew that if we got the majority at a convention that Canon Arthur Ryan and Mr. Governey would hand over the funds to the Volunteers whose property these funds were. We had the Volunteer register and were preparing to send out admission cards for a convention in the near future. Negotiations for this purpose were all settled with the Irish Volunteer Executive, as also were the arrangements for the reorganising of the Volunteers. Colonel Moore knew nothing of these arrangements.

After the occupation of 44 Parnell Square we had to maintain a strong guard day and night. No funds were available for this purpose and the arrangements caused Captain T.J. Cullen and myself a lot of money. We removed all books in connection with the organisation and we removed all arms and ammunition to places of safety. Hereunder is the list of rifles and ammunition removed:-

50 Rifles .303
 50 Rifles .22
 A quantity of .303 ammo.
 Almost 250,000 Rnd. of .22 ammo.

The .303 rifles were stored for the night in a stable on the opposite side of the lane in which Liam Pedlar was carrying on business. These rifles were later placed in the care of Cathal Brugha. The cases of small rifles and ammunition were taken to my garage off Ely Place, and later transferred to 22 Upper Baggot Street and elsewhere. Had we not seized the Hall, the British military would have removed all arms and ammunition in the place. We got the safe opened on the 28th July in the presence of J. Eckersley, L. Nugent and Thos. J. Cullen and others. This safe contained cash (gold) £18.10.0. Documents relating to house including assignment and lease. Total number of papers - 48: one gold Cup: various cancelled cheques and one cheque book. Among the seized documents was the famous Devlin letter. We called a meeting of Volunteers for the Mansion House on Sunday 5th August: 176 Companies were represented. A motion declaring allegiance to the original objects of the Volunteers was passed. A Committee was appointed to open negotiations with the Volunteers with a view to the reunion of the Forces, and to begin a general reorganisation and opening the organisation to all Irishmen willing to pledge themselves to the original declaration. The calling of this convention was for publicity purposes and we got it. The arrangements as stated above had been completed sometime previously, but now it was time to make these arrangements public. We had been continuously pressing for the importation of arms, and this annoyed Devlin. A letter was read marked 'Private' - this letter was found in the safe at 44 Parnell Square, dated July 7th 1916 and signed Joseph Devlin:-

Copy.

My dear Rooney,

We do not want any arms in Ireland and we

will not have them, considering them a danger to the nation. Instead of getting them in we want to get them out of the country. When this is done, we will see what further action shall be taken'.

Mr. Rooney was a solicitor and an enthusiastic member of the I.P.P. He was also a member of the National Volunteer Committee.

We got a lengthy report of this convention in the press - passed by censor. The report served its purpose. Correspondents writing to the provincial papers wanted to know where were the National Volunteers. They did not know of any and, of course, there were none. The Irish Independent were challenged by the I.P.P. for publishing a letter marked 'Private', but the Editor defended his action by stating that the letter had already been read in public to a large audience. He consequently considered himself justified in publishing it. Colonel Moore said that he did not know of the existence of this letter until it was read at the meeting.

The election campaign had now opened in Kilkenny. It was decided to make use of the 'Letter' for propaganda purposes. It had been read in the Mansion House on Sunday and it was now sent on to Kilkenny to be read off the platform by De Valera on the following day. At Kilkenny De Valera, having read the letter, said that he understood that arrangements were being made for the merging of the Volunteers, and that he did not agree with all of these arrangements. He said that the Irish Vols. would not join the National Volunteers but that the National Volunteers could join the Irish Volunteers. This statement had a very detrimental effect on the reorganisation of the Volunteers. The proposal to hold the convention had to be abandoned and the funds amounting to £5,000 slipped through our fingers as we had no legal chance of recovering them. All we had left now

of the old organisation was the house which was held at the expense of a few of us, but which was used by the Irish Volunteer Organisation and the I.R.B. as their H.Q. We were in the Hall on the Monday night and De Valera's statement in Kilkenny got great prominence in the press - the Censor would not miss a good thing. Mick Collins, who was then progressing in popularity, had his eye on the Irish Volunteer Organisation and was furious. Being a good judge of what finance meant, he recognised what it meant to lose the funds. Anyone who knew Mick personally would have some idea of the things which he said. I had seen him vexed at times, but never as mad as on this evening. The whole of the Irish Volunteer Organisation were annoyed, but the damage was done and we had to carry on.

De Valera was not long enough back from prison to be fully informed as to all arrangements that were being arrived at in the Volunteers. Also, he found such disunity in political circles that his time was fully occupied in that direction and the person or persons who gave him what must have been half truth information was or were of the type who were so narrow-minded as to believe that no Irishman, whoever he was or what he had done since or before the Rising, was not to be trusted unless he was one of the Garrison of the G.P.O. or Boland's Mills or of any of the other posts held by the Volunteers. It does seem strange that De Valera made this statement without fully acquainting himself of the true facts but, then, it must be remembered that all his speeches at that time were impromptu and that, at times, he had no hesitation after having spoken himself in getting up again while another speaker was addressing a meeting and stating something which he had forgotten to mention in his original speech.

There were a large number of the old Volunteer Organisation in many districts throughout the country where no Irish Volunteer Organisation previously existed. These men had long since started to organise the new movement in their districts. They were working against local aggression and British propaganda and now a number of these men took De Valera's statements as an insult and a good many of them never took part in any further organising work. Consequently, it took over a year to reorganise the Volunteers which, under the proposed new arrangements, would have taken place in a few months. Considering that Cathal Brugha was a party to these arrangements one would imagine that De Valera would have consulted him. The men of K. Coy., up to this were acting as a G.H.Q. body. In order to put them on a regular military basis, a meeting of the men was held in 44, Parnell Square. T.J. Cullen was elected Captain. Dick Mulcahy, Chief of Staff, presided at this election. We continued to act as a G.H.Q. Unit and proceeded with our training at 44 Parnell Square.

The air-raids over London were very heavy during this time. The Irish in the U.S.A. were backing the Republican movement in Ireland. The Freeman's Journal stated that the British military authorities in Ireland were trying to force the Government to impose conscription as a means of dealing with the present unrest.

The members of the National Volunteers whom we had evicted from 44 Parnell Square were now writing to the press asking for a convention. If they would come along with us and bring their funds with them, they would be doing a good day's work for the country but they had a long road to travel before they learned their lesson. A new British military order was published prohibiting the wearing of uniforms or the carrying of arms. Severe

restrictions were imposed on the use of petrol. It was only allowed to be used for commercial purposes. No private cars were permitted to use petrol except for electioneering, and the amount was exceedingly small.

A short time after the surrender in Easter Week, but during the period that the National Aid was still in Exchequer Street, a British officer friend of Captain T.J.Cullen, who was sympathetic to the Republican movement, gave him a long list of names: there were no addresses. This list had been in the Intelligence Department, Dublin Castle. The I.Os. at the Castle knew nothing of its meaning: at least, they paid no attention to it. This happened to be the old register of the I.R.B. Captain T.J.Cullen gave it to Mick Collins and from this list the new I.R.B. was formed. Cathal Brugha refused to rejoin, as did De Valera after his release from prison in 1919. Each of these men stated that there was no longer any necessity for a secret society in Ireland. Another document which this officer gave to Captain T.J.Cullen was Thomas McDonogh's speech from the dock. This was a genuine transcript of the speech. I knew Thomas McDonogh personally in St. Enda's and as a customer in my business. In private life he gave no thought to public opinion. He wheeled a perambulator accompanied by his wife along the footpaths of Lower Baggot Street, Stephen's Green and into Grafton Street, sometimes wearing kilts. And, if my shop were fairly empty, he would come in with the pram for a little chat while Mrs. McDonogh was giving her order to an assistant.

Who, nowadays, can visualise what agony a family man of this type must have felt in making his speech from the dock or when facing the firing squad. Others

of the executed men had family ties also, but I had not the same opportunity of knowing them as I had of the Pearse Brothers and Thomas McDonogh.

It may be asked why these documents were given to Mick Collins at this early stage. He was only known to the small section with whom he had come in contact, but he was the official Secretary of the National Aid Association: a trusted friend of the Plunkett family and of Rory O'Connor. He was almost the only available enthusiast in the reorganising of the new army and he was always at hand. There was never any trouble in finding him at any time. Another trait in his character was that it did not matter about what one did in the past - 'If you are prepared to do the right thing now, you are the man I want'. It was this attitude which raised him above suspicious men in the estimation of the men of the new army. We knew he was ambitious, but he was a man of action and that was what mattered.

In the first week of August 1917 Seán McEntee was arrested again and no charge was preferred but he was kept in prison.

A letter trying to whitewash the Devlin letter was published over the initials 'L. J. K.', stating that a 'stand to' order was issued to the National Volunteers two months after the date of Devlin's letter. No such order was ever issued and L. J. K. knew this well.

In the British House of Commons questions were asked as to the connection between the National Volunteers and Sinn Féin. Mr. Duke, Chief Secretary for Ireland, replied that there was no connection. It was further stated that on August 8th 1914 a permit was granted to John O'Connor, M.P., to ship rifles from Belgium to Ireland for the Volunteer Organisation but

without ammunition. This permit was signed 'F.D. Ackland of the Foreign Office.'

William Cosgrave, the Sinn Féin candidate, was elected for Kilkenny City by a majority of two to one. A Sinn Féin victory meeting was announced to be held in Westmoreland Street, Dublin. This meeting was proclaimed by the police but the meeting was held in James's Street.

Owing to our activities in the seizure at 44 Parnell Square I was not in Kilkenny for the election. But when the election was over a crux arose which made it necessary for me to go there. Peter Deloughry, a garage proprietor in Kilkenny and a prominent member of Sinn Féin, supplied a large quantity of petrol during the campaign. As he had no permit to do so, the amount of petrol used had to be made good or he would find himself in serious trouble with the British authorities. Dan McCarthy, Director of Elections, asked me to send my Ford van to Kilkenny with a load of tins of petrol. My driver, T. Leonard, accompanied by Seán Noonan, started on their journey, but some distance outside of Naas something went wrong and the car was brought back and put into a garage in Naas. When they went to collect the van the next morning they found an empty van: the petrol had disappeared. I had another visit from Dan McCarthy as a result of this. At this time I had a commercial permit for petrol and was not using nearly the amount allowed. A surplus mounted up. I went to Preston's of Brunswick Street and explained the position to a friendly assistant. He told me that my permit entitled me to take delivery of the petrol anywhere in Ireland and that if I went to Kilkenny and took delivery there he would send it by rail in drums. This was arranged. I travelled by train on the day before the petrol was due in Kilkenny. I had

known Peter Deloughery for a number of years. I was well received by himself and a number of others when I arrived. And now, during all these intervening years, people expressed various opinions as to the cause of De Valera's popularity, but here is an example. When bedtime arrived I was taken by Peter Deloughery to the hotel and introduced to the manageress. He explained my mission to Kilkenny. She showed me to my room. 'Now', she said, 'you have taken us out of a lot of trouble and, in consequence, I am giving you Mr. De Valera's room'. 'Well, just why this room?' Willie Cosgrave had just been elected in Kilkenny as the Sinn Féin candidate and all the prominent leaders of the organisation occupied rooms in the hotel during the progress of the campaign. 'Why not one of their rooms as a compliment'. But De Valera's room was the only one that counted. Similar instances occurred with others in different parts of Ireland. De Valera was not looking for popularity: it was the people who made him a favourite.

K. Coy. were working day and night in organising, policing and garrison work. My Company in Dundrum were still carrying on their training under an ex-British Sergeant-Major and the Boys' Brigade were most willing students.

De Valera, speaking during the Kilkenny election, was reported as having said that Devlin's letter showed what the I.P.P. thought of the Volunteers. The country had now documentary proof that these men were out to sell the Volunteers. He would like to know what Mr. Redmond had to say about the £7,000 subscribed to him for the purchase of rifles for the Volunteers.

revolt
The A.O.H./continued to spread. Their halls were now being used by Sinn Féin clubs and for organising Volunteer companies. The Freeman's Journal published an

article stating that the I.P.P. had surprises in store for those who thought it was done with. De Valera in a speech stated that the political war now being waged was against the I.P.P. The Sinn Féin paper 'Nationality', dealing with the Freeman's article, stated that we had not long to wait for these 'surprises': for, on the following morning, British military raided with 'exactness' every place where National Volunteers had arms stored. Thus, Mr. Devlin's wishes were carried out but, for a long time before these raids, the National Volunteers saw to it that any arms in their possession were well concealed. So the raids were abortive.

Sixteen Cork prisoners were removed from the Cork detention barracks to Cork jail for refusing to submit to the treatment they were receiving at the hands of the military. A hunger strike started among the prisoners in Mountjoy and all over the country men were being arrested for taking part in drilling and the organisation of Volunteer Companies.

After the occupation of 44 Parnell Square a guard was maintained there day and night. This was costing too much in money and men so the guard was gradually reduced. The caretaker, who was living in the top of the house, was a billiard-marker in the A.O.H. Hall in Parnell Square and, as he had a wife and family, we allowed him to remain on when we took possession of the house. When we had reduced the day guard to only one man, we made an agreement with this A.O.H. billiard-marker that he would act straight and in no way was he to assist in the recapture of the hall. But on Monday 27th, when he was coming in for his dinner as usual, a number of men from the A.O.H. Hall came with him, including Stephen Hand. The men forced their way in and seriously assaulted our man on duty (Charlie Shannon).

They broke his teeth and ejected him from the hall. He reported the incident to us and that Monday night K. Coy. met in Pembroke Street with some of the Volunteers from Dundrum and arranged for the recapture of the hall the following night. The next morning (Tuesday), while some of our men were making observations they saw some police in the house with the A.O.H. men. This, however, did not deter our determination to recapture the hall. About 40 of us met in a house in Seville Place and marched in small bodies by different routes. We timed ourselves to reach 44, Parnell Square, at 3 a.m. These arrangements worked perfectly. Captain T.J.Cullen was in charge: the main body attacked the rear of the house and myself and J.F. O'Donnell were posted at the front. We kept knocking loudly at the hall-door but received no answer. Just then, two policemen on duty intervened but on the production of two revolvers they changed their minds and looked on. There were also police on duty at the back of the hall. These men were taken completely by surprise and when a few armed men took charge of them for a short time they remained quiet and made no effort to interfere. In about ten minutes the front door was opened. The Hall was recaptured. The A.O.H. garrison inside were all well armed with revolvers but no shots were fired. The garrison retired to the top of the house in an attempt to escape over the roofs but they did not get time but were captured disarmed and flung out. Next day the caretaker, his family and his property left. John McCluskey, who was a married man with a family and was adjutant of K. Coy. and one of the original garrison at 44 Parnell Square, was put in as caretaker - we will meet McCluskey later. We were not interfered with again but the expense of maintaining the garrison continued for some time. One of our men was injured accidentally during the attack and two were arrested on their way home, but were later released without

any charge having been preferred against them.

On the evening following the recapture of the hall I was talking to some of the boys outside when a police inspector arrived and asked if he could speak to me privately. He said he was not interfering in what he considered a dispute between two political parties but, as we had done our work surprisingly well on the previous night, we might now help him to get the A.O.H. register by raiding their hall. In this we would have the connivance of the police: none would be on duty in the district. All he wanted was the Register and we could help ourselves to any political information which we might require. He told me that the police were aware that some of the young men of the D.M.P. and of the R.I.C. were members of the A.O.H. but they had no proof without the register and dare not attempt to get this themselves. This piece of police intrigue came to me as a great surprise. I asked him to call next evening when Captain T.J.Cullen would be there and we could discuss the matter further. We met on the following evening and he again explained what he wanted done. We told him that we would consider the matter and let him know but we had no intention of carrying out this proposed raid.

Dick McKee was at this time O/C Dublin Brigade and attended meetings in 44 Parnell Square almost every night. When we told him this story he was very annoyed. He said that the time had now passed when it was necessary for Irish men to spy on each other but we were to keep this inspector on a string for a time.

Dick was by far too honest and trusting in his opinions of his countrymen. We sent a report of this attempt at intrigue by the police to 6 Harcourt Street, but it was never published.

At a meeting of the Dublin Corporation a motion was passed demanding the release of P.J.Fleming and P. O'Keefe from Maryboro jail. P.J.Fleming was earlier sentenced to five years penal servitude but he immediately demanded to be treated as a prisoner of war. His fight in Maryboro against prison regulations is a lengthy story in itself and is published in a book entitled 'Maryboro and Mountjoy'. He is a brother to the late Eamonn Fleming, who it will be remembered worked with us in our campaign against the I.P.P. and A.O.H. and in the reorganising of the Volunteers.

Austin Stack was tried by courtmartial for wearing a uniform and for making seditious speeches. He refused to recognise the court. He had been arrested in Dublin by Detective Hoey and was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment.

At the end of August Joe McDonogh was arrested in Dublin.

CHAPTER IX.

Hunger Strikes. Death of Tom Ashe. Conscription.
 Sinn Féin Convention. Cavan Election.
 Scarcity of Food. Volunteer Organising.

Recruiting meetings for the British Army continued to be held all over the country, particularly in Dublin City. Disturbances and obstructions were usual at these meetings. The reorganising of the Volunteers was, at the same time, in full swing. Cork was declared 'out of bounds' to the American Army. Free fights were taking place between them and the British soldiers. The separation allowance people backed the British and the agent provocateur was working hard in an effort to prove that these clashes occurred between the Americans and the general population and so to discredit Irish popularity in the U. S. A. The facts were that the Americans were well received by the Irish people while the British soldiers were ignored. This caused jealousy and free fights followed as a result.

British Courtsmartial were sitting every day: in some cases prisoners were defended by counsel and in others they refused to recognise the court. We had no settled programme in this direction so far. The prisoners decided themselves whether or not they would recognise the court. Thomas Ashe was sentenced to 12 months by courtmartial on the 11th September 1917 for a speech made in Ballinlea. He refused to recognise the court. J.J. Walsh was on the 17th September sentenced to 12 months and the hunger strike continued in Mountjoy.

At a meeting of the Dublin Corporation the Lord Mayor protested against the arrests and sentences and, in cases, imprisonment without trial. Near the end

of the month we heard reports of serious trouble in Mountjoy jail over a demand by republican prisoners to be treated as prisoners of war. About 40 republican prisoners were in Mountjoy at that time and the reports were that they were out of control and on hunger strike. Day to day news of the hunger strike was published: it was reported that forcible feeding was resorted to. Great meetings of protest took place concerning the treatment of these men. De Valera and Cathal Brugha spoke at a huge demonstration in Smithfield.

On September 26th the press published the following report:-

DEATH OF THOMAS ASHE IN MATER HOSPITAL,
at 30 past ten p.m. Tues. night 25th. 10. 1917.

He had been removed from Mountjoy prison by the authorities when they saw that he was about to die: they did not want the death to take place in the prison. The remainder of the prisoners were offered certain concessions, but refused any privileges less than their original demands to be treated as prisoners of war. So the hunger strike went on.

Great meetings of protest still were held all over. Thomas Ashe's funeral procession from the Mater Hospital to the Pro-Cathedral was enormous as was the procession to the City Hall for the lying-in-state, where Volunteers in uniform kept guard. Over 30,000 viewed the remains and all festivities were called off. The funeral of Thomas Ashe was of very large dimensions. Volunteers marched in uniform and carried rifles with bayonets fixed. The public houses were closed. The British military were confined to barracks and the police were not to be seen on the streets. A firing party at the graveside in Glasnevin fired the usual salute, the Last

Post was sounded and an oration was delivered by Mick Collins as follows:-

"Nothing additional remains to be said. The volleys which we have just heard is the only speech which is proper to make over the grave of a dead Fenian."

Most Reverend Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, sent his carriage officially to the funeral. The Fire Brigade was also in attendance; in fact, everything possible in the city took part in the procession. But the I. P. P. and the A. O. H. ignored the whole proceedings. The police courts were empty next day. The hunger strike continued in Mountjoy with Austin Stack in charge.

An article in the Daily Mail deplored the fate that prevented 200,000 or 300,000 young bloods who marched in the funeral procession from fighting in France. The Duke of Marlborough in earlier years also deplored the fact that the Irish Brigade who were fighting for France were not fighting in the British Army. Eóin McNeill, speaking at a meeting in Swinford, Co. Mayo, said he knew that when the leaders went out in Easter Week they knew that they went to the sacrifice. The Thomas Ashe inquest opened on the 8th October and continued for about three weeks. The verdict was a condemnation of the British Government for his death.

About the middle of October arrests took place at Rathfarnham, Milltown, Donnybrook and Rathmines, for drilling and wearing scout and volunteer uniforms. The men were all released later on except one man.

Near the middle of October Liam Mellows was arrested in the United States and Doctor McCartan was arrested in Halifax. These arrests took place for supposed anti-British activities.

What was known as the Irish Convention was still sitting in a room in Trinity College and in the British

House of Commons the Chief Secretary stated that there were 200,000 Volunteers now drilling in Ireland. On the 26th of the same month a Sinn Féin Convention opened in the Mansion House in Dublin. There were 1,700 delegates present. De Valera was unanimously elected President.

A number of arrests took place in Cork, including MacCurtain and MacSweeney.

A Sinn Féin Food Committee was now in existence. I was a member of this Committee. Circulars were sent out to the various business concerns to conserve food. There were now over 100 Volunteers in prison, tried and untried. The Volunteers held manoeuvres on the Dublin mountains; men from the City, Dundrum, Ticknock, Clondalkin and Rathfarnham, took part. Detectives followed the various marches, but no arrests were made. Forty summonses were issued for illegal drilling near Crumlin some weeks previously. Thirty-seven of the summonses were served but there was no attendance in Court. Warrants were issued for the arrest of the men. Drilling and arrests and refusal to recognise the court, were now a daily routine. The military asked law abiding citizens to hand in their arms but this was only in preparation for the collection of these arms. An order was issued to the Irish Volunteers to collect sporting or other arms in their districts, which were not already in their possession. K. Coy. made a very good collection of arms in their area.

The result of the election for the National Executive of Sinn Féin was as follows:-

President De Valera.

Vice-Presidents: Arthur Griffith, Father O'Flanagan,
Count Plunkett.

Hon. Treasurers: W.T. Cosgrave and L. Ginnell.

Hon. Secs: Austin Stack and Darrel Figgis.

24 Members of the Council:

Eoin MacNeill	Joe McDonagh
Cathal Brugha	Rev. M. Ryan
Doctor Hayes	Rev. C. Wall
Seán Milroy	Mrs. Tom Clarke
Countess Markievicz	Diarmuid Lynch
Countess Plunkett	David Kent
Pierce Beasley	S. T. O'Kelly
Joe McGuinness	Dr. T. Dillon
Finan Lynch	Mrs. Joseph Plunkett
Harry Boland	Seán MacEntee
Doctor Kathleen Lynn	Ernest Blythe
J. J. Walsh	Michael Collins

This was a good working Committee as it gave about 20 members who could be relied upon as good republicans.

By the middle of November 22 prisoners on hunger strike in Mountjoy and Dundalk were released under the Cat and Mouse Act. On the following day 30 more prisoners were released and nine sentenced to various terms: the hunger strike continued in Mountjoy. Twenty-one prisoners were released from Dundalk and only one held - Ben O'Hickey. In a few days all prisoners were released and there were demonstrations of welcome and volunteer marches. The hunger strike was on in Maryboro' for some time and now the prisoners were released, including P.J. Fleming, who was sentenced for five years. Mountjoy was now empty of political or volunteer prisoners.

A food campaign meeting was held in the Mansion House. De Valera, Father O'Flanagan and Countess Markievicz and Pierce McCann spoke. The order was to hold the food. The Sinn Féin Food Committee was working hard in this campaign.

New prison rules were now published stating that prisoners would be treated as political prisoners in future.

There was now a general outcry against the export of foodstuffs, but the British had their Food Controller here. Sugar was the only item rationed but was almost unobtainable. People were using saccharines for sweetening. The price of butter was fixed but not rationed and the fixing of the price was for the purpose of keeping down the price for English consumers. Cheese was not allowed to be made, only from skim milk. We still had bread but did not know when it would run short, and all round we were in a precarious position.

Now back to our companies, both in Dundrum and in K. Company in the city. Intensive training was continued and the companies took part in all parades and demonstrations in the County and City. In 44 Parnell Square the boys of K.Coy. were there every night, and we started an Irish Class with Prionnsias O'Sullivan as teacher and we held céilidhes on various occasions, but drilling and rifle practices were the principal work. We took part in organising in other districts and when South Co. Dublin was being organised I took part in those operations. The Dundrum Company was the first on the list and prior to the organising meeting a number of us met and decided to elect Liam Tannom Coy. Officer. I was about to remove into the City and, in consequence, I refused to go forward for election. Liam was elected unanimously and, with the number of young men from the Boys' Brigade who were eligible, he had one of the best trained companies in Ireland. I also attended organising meetings in Sandyford, Stillorgan and Brides Glen with Commandant O'Connor and Liam Tannom, and said goodbye to the Dundrum Boys and removed to 22 Upper Baggot Street,

Dublin, but I was destined to meet them again before the fight was over.

Mick Collins was for a long period Secretary of the National Aid Association and, in consequence, Captain T.J.Cullen, who was one of the original Hon.Secs., was free to devote all his spare time to Volunteer work.

When I moved from Dundrum to the City I joined up officially with the K.Coy. and was appointed Q.M. In all the crowded events during Easter Week and on to the end of the fight for freedom there was no more efficient officer in Ireland than Captain T.J.Cullen. He was in daily touch with H.Q. and his advices were sought for most critical decisions: in fact, he had his finger on the nerve centre of the organisation. When Collins was elected Secretary National Aid in Exchequer Street, we were in daily touch with him and I can safely say we knew him as well as any other individual in Dublin, and perhaps better. We were independent in all our actions and Mick, while not always enjoying this attitude, adopted us as friends and relied on our advice and recommendations. We got to know him and his ambitions and at this early day in the Volunteer movement we discovered that there were two Mick Collins - the jolly, rollicking, friendly, trusting Mick and the ambitious Mick. But we remained fast friends, although we were not on his H.Q.Councils, but there was nothing happening in official circles of which we were not aware, and parties to various decisions.

When the arrangements for the merging of both sections of Volunteers were agreed on in July, the decision was that Joe O'Connor was to get command of the Dublin Brigade and Captain T.J.Cullen was to be appointed Commandant of the 3rd Battalion. Joseph O'Connor refused to take command of the brigade, so these

arrangements fell through. Captain T.J. Cullen was elected O/C of K. Coy. and from now until the end of the year our H.Q. was in 44 Parnell Square and we were acting as a H.Q. Coy: until the end of the fight for freedom the Company took part in all activities carried out by H.Q. in the city. In fact, we were H.Q. Coy. and at all times some of our members were in close contact with Mick Collins and H.Q. and this applies to Captain T.J. Cullen and myself.

By the middle of January, 1918, there were three Kerry prisoners on hunger strike in Mountjoy who were being forcibly fed, and Austin Stack issued orders to Volunteers to make the Prison System impossible.

An incident now occurred in Nenagh which I will refer to later in this story. In a raid for arms by three men an old man was accidentally shot, and two brothers named O'Brien were charged with murder.

A Public Meeting was held in Beresford Place to protest against the export of food. The food committee with Diarmuid Lynch as Secretary was very busy, and shops in all districts were visited and census taken of the amount of food in stock. Shops were advised and warned not to sell food to strangers for export. When the discussion arose about growing more wheat Mr. James O'Rourke, who was a member, stated definitely that Irish grown wheat was not fit for grinding into flour.

Near the end of January a Parliamentary vacancy occurred in South Armagh. Dr. MacCartan, who was then in the U.S.A., was selected as Sinn Féin candidate.

I had a private car and I lent it to Austin Stack with a driver for the election campaign. I was in Dundalk for the first Sunday morning meetings and Dan McCarthy sent myself and J.K. O'Reilly out to an after

Mass meeting to a district beyond Mullabaun.

This was a change from Roscommon, Longford and Clare. In Longford we were attacked only by the roughs of the town, but here in South Armagh we were attacked by the population generally. After Mass J.K.O'Reilly started to address the people and immediately we were set on with stones and sods by men, women and children, in a truly wild mountain district, where people in Ireland are noted as being friendly to strangers, but were it not for one local man named McPartland, who interfered on our behalf, we would have received serious injury. He advised us to abandon the meeting which we did and glad to get the opportunity: these were all A.O.H. and were instructed how to act.

Later a meeting was arranged for Silver Bridge and when we were entering the village in the car, some friendly people waved us on. No meeting could be held there either. The A.O.H. would have none of us, and this was Northern Ireland, but the A.O.H. held sway, and they treated us as Orangemen.

The political position in the North at this time was Orangemen versus Hibernian. Nationality or the freedom of the country was not considered. It was not so bad everywhere. In Forkhill we were well received and a family named Donnellan in Mullabaun were grand people.

I went out one day canvassing with Joe McGuinness, Joe Dixon and Shaun O'Muirthuille. Shaun was a bad canvasser: he was too abrupt and if he met opposition there was trouble immediately. So myself and Joe McGuinness took it easy and what was the use anyway. The school children would not even take our literature. They were afraid. We had to leave leaflets on heaps of

stones along the roadside, with a stone on top so that they would not blow away and, in this way, the children picked them up. At this period the A.O.H. organisation had the roots of partition planted deep in the ground and had created a serious suspicion in the minds of Northern Nationalists of the Southern population.

An interesting item occurred during our visits to a farmhouse. Joe Dixon and Shaun O'M. went into this house, occupied by two brothers and a sister: they were at their dinner. The two men had been threshing oats in a barn with flails and when myself and Joe McGuinness saw the situation we entered the barn, took off our coats and started threshing. We had previous experience of the use of flails. A row started in the house and our two friends came out followed by the two farmers who were badly abusing them. One of the farmers returned to the hose and the other came over to the barn. He enquired who we were. He watched us for some time before he spoke. I said, "It does not matter about me but this is Joe McGuinness, M.P. for Longford", and, then, in his Northern accent - "What! A member of Parliament, threshing in my barn and knowing how to do it: it never happened in these parts before". We were invited into the house and were glad to partake of a good dinner of bacon and cabbage. These people promised to vote for our man before we left and took us to two adjoining houses where we were also promised their support. A car was sent for them on the day of polling and it was believed at any rate that they voted for McCartan.

After our delay in this farmhouse we travelled on to find our friends and discovered O'Muirthuille in a wordy battle with an old brother and sister - the lady was known as Kate the Tailor. As we neared the parties the old man quoted Columcille's prophecy and went into the house to

bring it out to read quotations from it, in order to prove to us that his opinions were correct. But O'Muirthuille's want of diplomacy and a bucket of water from the old lady compelled us to make a hasty retreat and we missed the prophecy and we were very sorry.

Irish Volunteers were drafted into Armagh from various places and K. Coy. sent a big contingent who remained on duty during the progress of the election. Volunteer officers wore uniform: Harry Boland was in charge and there were clashes at times, but nothing serious happened. I was called back to Dublin before the end of the election.

The reason why I had to return to Dublin was on account of trouble which we encountered with the British Food Controller and the police were nosing around. While they did not attempt any search it was likely to happen at any time and all the small arms which we had removed from Parnell Square were stored on the premises. Mrs. Nugent succeeded in having these arms removed to safety. But there were other items such as buried petrol in drums and some small arms ammunition, the property of K. Coy., which had to be protected. We were not raided. The I.P.P. had the satisfaction of winning a bye-election. They considered that they were not yet beaten. I met some of the A.O.H. bosses in Armagh and they certainly were vindictive on their own ground. Were it not for the number of Volunteers on duty, the Sinn Féin party could not hold any meetings or do any electioneering. Sinn Féin lost the Armagh election, February 4th, 1918.

In the early part of February of 1918 Diarmuid Lynch and some few men seized a number of pigs which were being exported to England and had them slaughtered and sent to Donnellys of Cork Street for curing. He was

later arrested and sentenced to two months imprisonment and as he was an American citizen he was deported. But the Food Committee continued its activities with Phil MacMahon as Secretary.

There were now fifty prisoners on hunger strike in Mountjoy and there were various protests and large bodies of volunteers marched to the prison. In a few days the prisoners were released.

John Redmond died at this time. His death caused a vacancy in Waterford which Sinn Féin contested and were defeated by 478 votes.

A number of men were arrested for drilling in North County Dublin and sentenced to 2 months in prison.

In March 1918 Eamonn Fleming was arrested in Athboy for drilling and sentenced to six months and an attempt by the local volunteers to rescue him failed. Larry Ginnell was sentenced to six months in Mountjoy.

In March a Parliamentary vacancy occurred in Co. Tyrone which Shaun Milroy contested as a Sinn Féin candidate. He was defeated ^{by} 580 votes. A Parliamentary vacancy occurred in Offaly: at this time Dr. MacCartan was the Sinn Féin candidate. A number of meetings were held in the constituency but he was returned unopposed. The I.P.P. knew that they had no chance of winning an election in this constituency. On April 9th conscription for Ireland was introduced in the British House of Commons - age limit 50 to 55 years, including clergy. The Irish Parliamentary party fought this Bill in the House of Commons and the only concession they got was that the Bill would not apply to the clergy. Excitement now ran high in all parts of the country. The Bill was passed by the end of April and the Parliamentary Party left the House of

Commons and returned home to Ireland.

John Dillon and others joined with the Lord Mayor of Dublin, De Valera and Arthur Griffith, and formed a protest committee. They went to Maynooth and met the Bishops and so a united front was shown to the British Government. The Mansion House Committee remained in existence for a considerable time. They had control of the funds and when the conscription threat passed, the money was returned to the subscribers wherever possible.

The A.O.H. organisation arranged for the signing of the anti-Conscription Pledge and the taking of subscriptions at their own halls. A circular was sent to the various secretaries, advising them to keep funds in their possession and not to pass them on to the Mansion House Committee.

They tried to explain away this attitude later when challenged, but it went to prove that some of them were not over enthusiastic in their fight against conscription.

On the 29th July the Parliamentary Party were back again in the British House of Commons. An interesting item in the fight against conscription was the closing of all colleges, lay and clerical. The boys all went home.

The men of K.Coy. were on duty every night, training and planning and charging grenades and distributing them. Every Sunday they marched to the old castle near the Hellfire Club for shooting practice and grenade practice; for signalling and keeping lines of communication. On occasions when we could be seen from the Phoenix Park, an aeroplane would be sent over to try and find out what we were doing. We would see the plane leave the Park and Captain Cullen would have the men so arranged when the plane came over that she could not find us, and so we carried on.

We expected the military would try and trap us so Captain Cullen, on a particular Sunday, sent four men with instructions to get to our usual training ground from the four directions and back the same way. One man (Murphy, a Cork man, K.Coy. men want to know what happened to him as they wish him well) was caught on the high road near the Hellfire Club but he had no incriminating documents and was released, and so we carried on our training and escaped arrest.

In April Mick Collins was arrested for a speech he made in Longford: he was charged and remanded on bail. Kiernan of Granard signed the Bail Bonds, but Mick did not appear in Court again. In a short time afterwards Noel Lemass was remanded on bail and although he was ordered to appear in Court, he refused, and M. Brooks and Tom O'Connor had to pay the Bail Bonds.

While the conscription threat was being fought by the country in general and by the Mansion House Committee, a Parliamentary vacancy occurred in Co. Cavan. The Parliamentary Party tried hard to arrange a truce and have no contest: they wanted to retain the seat but Sinn Féin would not agree, and Arthur Griffith was selected as Sinn Féin candidate. On Sunday April 28th De Valera spoke in Cavan, opening the Griffith campaign. On April 29th the Parliamentary Party were home and again asked for a truce in Cavan.

On April 30th Shortt was elected Chief Secretary for Ireland. On May 8th the British Government proposed to put the Home Rule Bill into operation and then enforce conscription but of course Carson would not agree and the anti-conscription cry was still heard all over Ireland.

On Friday May 17th the famous German plot was announced and most of the prominent Irish leaders were

arrested and deported to English prisons without trial. Lord French was appointed Lord Lieutenant or Military Dictator. There was no truth whatever in this German plot statement: it was merely an excuse for arresting the Sinn Féin leaders. The new Sinn Féin Committee elected at the last Árd Feis were working at any rate in apparent harmony and while De Valera was in the Chair this was sure to continue and England would not be able to divide and conquer and so what was published as a German plot turned out to be an English plot and, as happened, it was unsuccessful.

P. J. Fleming was arrested in this raid, and taken to Maryboro to finish his five years sentence. His operations there and later in Mountjoy are already published. (See Maryboro and Mountjoy).

As there were always men ready to step into the breach and it was from this period that Mick Collins practically took control, both of the Irish Volunteers and political party. Myself and Captain T. J. Cullen were in 44 Parnell Square when he came in the evening after he escaped arrest and told us the story of Shaun McGarry's warm bed.

When Lord French was appointed Military Dictator a new recruiting programme was put into operation with Colonel Lynch, M.P., as principal recruiting agent and the threat now was that conscription would be enforced unless a certain number of men joined voluntarily. So we had a new British recruiting programme at which there was plenty of trouble and few recruits. The Cavan election campaign continued after the leaders were arrested and on the following Sunday Father O'Flanagan drove over from Roscommon and made a famous speech at a very large meeting.

This speech was not published in the press but was later printed and circulated as a pamphlet. Father O'Flanagan was suspended by his Bishop for speaking at this meeting; now he was free to continue the campaign. All the leaders were in prison and he was now free to take their place. Reverend Dr. Padhraig Brown of Maynooth also came to Cavan and took a leading part in the campaign and with two such stalwart workers the enthusiasm grew and the issue was never in doubt. Reverend Dr. P. Browne escaped the censure of his superiors as he had permission to speak in this campaign.

I drove down to Cootehill in a car. We had to smuggle it in by back roads but Shaun Farrelly, who travelled with us, knew the way. Motor cars were not allowed to work on the day of the polling without a permit but when the police started to stop the cars they found they all had the same number I.R. 1916 and so nothing happened, and Griffith was elected by a large majority, June 20th 1918.

This was the last of the bye-elections and why I dwell so much on them is that as far as we Volunteers who took part in them were concerned, we were not acting as politicians, but blazing the trail of the new Army.

The study of a map of Ireland published by An Toglac August 15th, 1920, showing where military operations occurred, will show that there were considerably more attacks on the enemy in the districts where those bye-elections were held than elsewhere, and so our work was not in vain. When the men came to vote at the Roscommon election they said they were firing their shots and wasn't it preached from the platforms in those elections - sell your cow and buy a gun.

CHAPTER X.

I.R.A. and Politicians. Anti-Conscription Campaign. General Election. Extracts from "An tÓglách".

The Cavan Election with Griffith as Sinn Féin candidate took place in May and June. Petrol restrictions were still very severe and only small quantities were allowed for election purposes. I still had my commercial allowance and took my car to Cavan. This of course was illegal, but we got away with it.

During the course of this Election campaign, there were certain rumours about the supposed indifferent attitude displayed by the Volunteer organisation towards the political organisation and, in order to disprove this suspicion, G.H.Q. decided to take action.

Larry Ginnell was doing a term of six months imprisonment in Mountjoy, and it was known that, when his term had expired, he would be deported to England; so a party of H.Q. Officers decided to rescue him as soon as he emerged from Mountjoy. The Police procedure in similar cases was that the prisoner was released and allowed outside the gates, and then re-arrested. But on this occasion L. Ginnell was re-arrested inside and taken away in the prison van, and the Volunteer Officers waiting outside were deceived. When the Intelligence service was tightened up later, an incident like this could not occur.

Some days prior to the attempted rescue, Dick Mulcahy, Chief of Staff, called to see me at 22 Upper Baggot Street and told me the arrangements made up to that point, and where Ginnell was to be taken. He was

to be placed in a taxi; his destination was Terenure College. The taxi could only be taken part of the way and would I do the balance of the transport - of course I would.

I knew all these roads and by-roads perfectly, but the Chief of Staff wanted a map of the roads I was to take. I had a large scale map of South County Dublin and, when he examined it, he was satisfied as to the route to be taken. I arranged with the "Bird" Flanagan to allow me to put my car in his yard at Walkinstown in the early hours of the morning arranged for the rescue. As previously stated, motors were not allowed on the roads without a permit. Tom Leonard had my car in Stillorgan and we arrived at Walkinstown in good time. I was to join the taxi at the top of the Crumlin Road and send it back to the city by a different route, when we contacted our own car. This would save the taxi driver if questioned afterwards and we could have taken Larry Ginnell safely to his destination, but he did not arrive; he was still a prisoner. We got the car safely back to Stillorgan and this ended what might have been an interesting episode.

When the conscription threat seemed to become a reality, "K" Company were still training in Parnell Square but, as we were a 3rd Battalion Company operating on the South side of the City, our Company H.Q. was transferred to 6 Harcourt Street, but we continued our training in 44 Parnell Square. Recruits were now pouring in and these had to be trained, and in "K" Company we got some of the best boys in Dublin in the County. Boys like Bird and Miller and various others, those boys

could not get work enough every night. They wanted something dangerous to do. We had good supplies of gelignite, and grenades had to be filled and taken to places of safety. In 44 Parnell Square it was usual to see several sticks of gelignite being cut with a wooden knife and packed into grenades. We never had an accident. When the decision to make grenades was taken, suitable metal had to be found. My van drew large quantities of this from Stillorgan; more than ever was used.

My place at 22 Upper Baggot Street was a small arsenal, during these troubled times. Most of the stuff was under cover, but not all of it as it was changing hands from day to day.

The new men had to be trained to shoot and, in consequence, they had to travel to the country. Captain T.J. Cullen took charge of this as he was keen that every man should be able to use a gun properly. On one of these Sunday morning visits to Templeogue we had an unfortunate accident, April 21st, 1918. James Gallagher (a brother of Frank Gallagher who was also a member of "K" Company) was accidentally wounded and died later in the day. Jim Gallagher was a big loss, not alone to "K" Company but to the Irish Volunteers generally. He was most exacting over training and it was this cost him his life. A target got slightly displaced and it was in the act of putting it straight that a bullet accidentally went off. When we sympathised with his father on his arrival in Dublin from Cork for the funeral, he just said, "He is the first casualty in the new fight for freedom and please don't sympathise"; and so the training and recruiting of the Irish Volunteers

continued.

In the determination to fight against the imposition of conscription, the 3rd Battalion took very extensive measures. The area was divided into blocks and these were to be defended by Volunteers living within the blocks. A Commander was appointed for each block and he got a list of all Volunteers in his command. He was to make his own arrangements as to the best method of defence. He was aware of the names of the Commanders in adjoining blocks, so that there was a complete link up of the whole area.

In this division of areas into blocks, Captain T.J. Cullen played the principal part. Being an architect, the matter came easier to him than to an ordinary individual. The amount of work he put into this proposed operation was enormous and exacting. It occupied a large amount of his valuable time. The Block Commanders met in 41 York Street night after night and were well instructed in the duties which they were intended to carry out. As the men of "K" Company lived in various districts, the greater portion of them were Block Commanders. I was living in 22 Upper Baggot Street and had command of the Block - Upper Baggot Street, St. Mary's Road, Northumberland Road and Haddington Road. This was a big area and contained a hospital, a nurses' home, the Catholic Church and a convent.

I made my survey of the area and interviewed all Volunteers living in the area, and instructed them how to act. Instructions in a general way had already been given them at their usual Company parades. Part of the

campaign was the signing of the anti-conscription pledge and the taking of a defence fund outside all churches on April 21st, 1918, Sunday morning, before or after Masses.

The ladies of Cumann na mBan had these arrangements in hands. Dr. Donnelly, Bishop of Canea and Assistant Bishop for the Diocese of Dublin and Parish Priest of Haddington Road, was living in the Presbytery on St. Mary's Road, and on the Friday night, at 8 p.m., preceding the signing of the anti-conscription pledge and the collection of funds, he summoned a meeting of what he termed his principal parishoners, with a view to preventing any signing of the pledge or taking of subscriptions in the precincts of the church.

I was not invited to the meeting, but about a half an hour before the time arranged for the meeting I was told the whole story, and a few minutes before the time arranged I went round to the Presbytery. There was confusion when I succeeded in gaining admission, but in a few words I told his Lordship that I was aware of his intentions and that I was the Irish Volunteer Commander of this area, and that, if the British insisted on imposing conscription, we would fight; that no matter what decision he and his friends arrived at that night, the arrangements already made for Sunday morning would be carried out. I walked out and in a few minutes the gentlemen whom he summoned to the meeting left. There was no meeting held. It was well recognised in Dublin that Dr. Donnelly was a great British imperialist and was in favour of conscription.

The collection at Haddington Road and the number of anti-conscription pledges signed was almost a record

for the city, and got great publicity as the late Judge O'Connor who was then Attorney-General for Ireland signed the pledge and subscribed to the fund.

The arrangements to fight conscription had its effect on the British Government, and the menace passed. We of the Volunteers had to keep on the alert and it was not until the end of the war in November that these commands were abandoned.

On April 23rd, Labour declared a one-day strike as a protest against conscription, and business of all descriptions was completely suspended. The Post Offices and Schools were closed. Had the British attempted to impose conscription, there would have been great slaughter as every man of military age would have fought with whatever means he had at his disposal, and the women would have made a good showing in the fight.

On July 3rd, 1918, Sinn Féin, Gaelic League, Volunteers, Cumann na mBan and all public meetings were prohibited, and 41 York Street was closed. The Volunteers were using this hall to advantage but this did not stop their operations.

During portion of this month there was a lull in political activities, but the Volunteer organisation was working in full swing. A large number of recruits came in during the conscription threat and they continued to join up, and they had to be trained, so that these operations kept all the older men busy every night.

Now will a younger generation look up to the Dublin foothills and, in other parts of Ireland, to other hills and ask themselves why did our fathers and

grandfathers tramp to those hills when the day's work was done (and on Sundays when they could otherwise have enjoyed themselves) - in order to become well trained soldiers. For in the years 1917 and 1918 and 1919, we of the Dublin Brigade made use of every opportunity to fit ourselves for whatever was to come and, when it did come, the earlier training had its decided effect - in efficiency, courage, discipline and loyalty to one another, and in all this intensive training, "K" Company never missed a parade.

Colonel Lynch was very determined in his recruiting campaign and now the Volunteers started to take a hand in counteracting his activities. "K" Company had already been working in opposing the Colonel, and at a big meeting (recruiting) in James Street they succeeded in getting the Colonel and other speakers off the platform and handing it over to Frank Gallagher. These operations were carried out without disturbance and made a very good impression on those attending the meeting. Similar affairs occurred in Portland Row and in Kildare Place, and at other meetings, so that recruiting became a farce. The threat of conscription still prevailed, so that we had to continually keep on the alert.

In September and October the war in France was going against the Germans, and it was apparent that it could not last much longer. A general election was expected. Bob Brennan, Dan McCarthy, Harry Boland and James O'Mara were working out details with Father O'Flanagan. There was a large number of drums of petrol buried for some time; this was lifted and taken away to my yard at 22 Upper Baggot Street and, when the polling was about to start, cars came from various parts of the country for supplies.

After the Cavan election, Father O'Flanagan spent most of his time in Dublin and lived with us in Baggot Street for long periods. He was kept busy in 6 Harcourt Street, as he was then Senior Sinn Féin officer outside the jails.

The War in France ended on the 11th November, 1918, and on that day 6 Harcourt Street and the Mansion House were attacked and damaged by British soldiers. They did not get off lightly as the Irish Volunteers were on duty and the soldiers got many hard knocks and were routed.

The Directors of Elections, Bob Brennan and Dan McCarthy, were arrested and Harry Boland, James O'Mara, Father O'Flanagan and members of the I.R.B. were free. Candidates were selected and Father O'Flanagan travelled all over Ireland attending conventions for their ratification. It was often amusing when he returned from these conventions and told us who were the candidates. Most of them were strangers to the district for which they were selected, Harry Boland, Roscommon, Skellig, Louth, and so on. I attended one convention in Trim. Motor

cars were still banned, but on a Sunday with Father O'Flanagan, Miss Margaret Brown (now Mrs. S. MacEntee) and Eamonn Duggan, the proposed candidate, we set out in the car and the order was, "Don't stop!" When we got near Trim, the local Irish Volunteers met us and took possession of the car. We attended the meeting and arrived home safely. The story of that famous general election is well known. Father O'Flanagan travelled all over Ireland in my car, a Ford, and on one day he spoke at two meetings, one in Co. Antrim and one in Co. Cork. It was still illegal to use the car, but he was held up on one occasion only on the way to Enniskillen. When the summons was sent on to Dublin for service, Superintendent McGarry, D.M.P., came to me and asked me to try to keep him out of the way as he did not want to serve the summons. There was no trouble in keeping him out of the way for, when the elections were completed, he went into Mrs. Ford's Nursing Home in Baggot Street for a rest.

On the night before polling day a grand rally was held in O'Connell Street, Mrs. Nugent engaged a 'brake' for herself and the family and arrived at Parnell Square early. This brake was used as a platform from which Fr. O'Flanagan spoke. When he arrived, Mr. P.J. Little was also in the brake and he asked Mrs. Nugent to preside. But no presiding was necessary for, when the crowd recognised Fr. O'Flanagan, the welcome was indescribable. The gathering was enormous. All the side streets were filled with good humoured people. What a contrast to a few years previously when British guns and incendiary bombs had reduced O'Connell Street to a mass of rubble; and the platform was only a few yards from where Pearse surrendered in Easter Week.

The people were marvellous, being completely defiant of British rule. What a pity this spirit could not have been maintained.

In this election there were 105 seats, of which the Republicans got 73, and, outside of Ulster (six-counties), only two seats went to the opposition, one being a Unionist (Sir M. Dockrell) in Rathmines, and Captain Redmond, I.P.P., Waterford. Ireland had overwhelmingly declared for the Republic. But the British Government were busy setting up new republics and dividing up various countries all over Europe. And all the promises that had been made from the recruiting platforms were ignored. Thousands of Irishmen who had joined the British Army were sent home and left to depend on their friends for existence. And their famous recruiter, Colonel Lynch, M.P. for Galway, was ignored by English society and became a nonentity. One good thing happened, however. The insidious influence of the A.O.H. was smashed in southern Ireland. And so our years of fighting in public and behind the scenes was not in vain. They were not, however, completely banished. They had up to this filled most public positions with their own members and so they were still key men. And as vacancies occurred, they were in a position to fill them with their own supporters, and in a few more years they were able to come before the world as standard bearers of the Empire.

The contest in the 1918 election had many amusing incidents. Local men held meetings on their own initiative; and some of the speeches, if they were available, would certainly be worth recording. For instance, at Rathangan, Co. Kildare, Alfie Sweeney said

"If Czecho-Slovakia can have an Irish Republic, why can't we have one?": At a meeting in Co. Wexford the chairman, in announcing the next speaker, said, "Now, my friends, I want to introduce a man who fought and died for Ireland - Shaun Etchingham!". Shaun Etchingham often told me this story afterwards.

The passing of the conscription threat gave no rest to the Volunteers. As was mentioned earlier, "K" Company were on duty in Pembroke and elsewhere during the election. Now they had to turn their full attention to the Mansion House. When the Volunteer Companies were re-organised in Dublin each Company was allotted a certain patrol area.

CHAPTER XI.

Pembroke Election. Meeting of Dáil Éireann.
Re-opening of Armed Hostilities.

A wonderful amount of work was done in the Pembroke Election, 1918, and splendid meetings were held every night. A consistent canvas of every voter was carried out throughout the district. Irish Volunteers reported the result of their canvas nightly. Miss Margaret Brown (now Mrs. Seán McEntee) and Miss McHugh (now Mrs. Ernest Blythe) had charge of the canvassing. They worked in the committee room all day and up to late hours at night. I was Director of Transport and I engaged twelve cars from the Southern Garage. These cars were owned by individuals and the Committee at 6 Harcourt Street had a dispute with them over insurance and would not employ them. I settled this matter with the owners and had the cars insured with MacDonagh and Boland's, including twelve ponies and traps. Dr. Davitt lent me his own two-seater car and driver for the day.

The county districts were finished early. In Sandyford and Ballyboden voting was complete at twelve noon, and I was able to switch the cars over to Gavan Duffy in the South County Dublin and to P.J. Little in Rathmines.

There were two candidates in opposition to Desmond Fitzgerald, John Good, Unionist, and O'Neill, the Irish Parliamentary Party candidate, and Fitzgerald had a majority over the combined vote of his two opponents. An interesting item in this election was that the absent soldiers' vote showed a similar result. The soldiers

were still in France and were not certain what was the correct thing to do. Most of them having received their papers, certified by their Commanding Officers, left the voting space blank and posted the paper to their people at home. They voted Fitzgerald and this caused much surprise. I was present at this count. On the day of the polling "K" Company were on protection duty outside the polling booth and guarding the boxes at night. Joe Hyland and his brother, Batty, drove their own cars in the Dundrum area in this election. There was no necessity to show them where to go as they were natives and good workers as well. On the morning of the voting I brought the twelve cars to Breen's Garage at Donnybrook and they made a fine show.

I was a member of the O'Rahilly Cumann in Pembroke. This was a Parliamentary constituency at this period. It included Dundrum and Sandyford. We had difficulty in finding a candidate. Nearly all the men in jail were selected. And James O'Mara and Harry Boland, who were directors of elections, were not keen on nominating any prominent men. They believed that they could not win such a Unionist constituency. With Alfred McLoughlin I had visited No. 6 Harcourt Street on a few occasions without result. We suddenly remembered that Desmond Fitzgerald, who had resided in Sandyford, was not yet a candidate. And so he was selected and elected.

I have given details of the subscriptions to the National Aid Fund from its foundation. As well as the relatives of the men executed and killed, compensation was also paid to wounded men and to those people who

were dismissed from their jobs, civil service or otherwise. And the men who formed G.H.Q. of the I.R.A. and were giving all of their time to this work, were able to live on the amount given them from the National Aid until such time as there was sufficient money to pay them from Volunteers funds. Later in 1919 when the Dáil Éireann Funds were available, they were able to carry on their whole time duties as an Army organisation. This, of course, was not as easy a matter as may seem. Offices had to be occupied and meetings held in different rooms from time to time, as the British military and police were still raiding halls, offices and private houses; so that our many and dangerous papers had to be protected. They were protected; they are now in the military archives. In future years the coming generations may read of the difficulties and hardships under which the new Volunteer organisation was moulded into a great fighting machine, and built up as a strong, disciplined and most courageous army. If at times this new army was ruthless, was it not dealing with an enemy whose ruthlessness the men of this army were only too familiar with? Nevertheless when the war of independence was over, I have yet to hear of any I.R.A. man who had taken revenge on his enemies, no matter how much he may have suffered from their utter savagery during this war. And indeed a few did suffer.

On January 21st, 1919, Dáil Eireann held its first meeting in the Mansion House, Dublin. "K" Company were on official duty. This first meeting was very interesting. There were thirty-two T.D's. in British prisons out of seventy-three Republicans, and now the Republican Government were in session for the first time. The re-affirming of the proclamation of the Republic in Easter Week was easily dealt with. But when the question of the oath to the Republic was discussed, there were some objections. Sceilg objected but later in the discussion when he agreed, he stated that, if he took the oath, he would keep it. Alderman Tom Kelly objected. He was sitting in the back bench at the barrier and, when the oath was being administered, he came outside the barrier and thus avoided the taking of the oath. I was standing beside him and I often wonder if any other person witnessed that little incident. The first meeting passed off quietly. Now we had an Irish Government, even if it were a "fugitive" government.

Meantime other things were happening. The Volunteers were getting uneasy and in country districts the police were giving a lot of trouble. The agent provocateur was at work again. Volunteers everywhere were being arrested and imprisoned. They were beaten up and their homes destroyed. And with the announcement of the meeting of Dáil Eireann came the news of the attack on the police guard at Solohead Beg. Some of the police were killed and gelignite was seized. The infant Government now found itself at war with England.

As heretofore stated, the war started in 1916 was continually in operation, even if the use of arms had been suspended. The Irish Volunteers were always active and were at all times preparing for the offensive which had now come in a very definite manner for, once the shooting started, there was no stopping it. The Volunteers had no intention of remaining passive all the time. Most of the men in Dáil Eireann did not want fighting; at least not yet. They were eager to await the result of the Peace Conference and to depend on passive resistance. But the men of the Irish Volunteers had no belief in either. They knew by this time that there was only one way to real freedom - battle.

Earlier an attempt to rescue de Valera and others from English jails was put into effect. Fr. O'Flanagan and Mick Collins were working with Harry Boland on this scheme. Part of the plan meant that de Valera, if he got out, was to have a new heavy overcoat. After a long search, Coen of Athlone found a 'model' for measurement - John Cunningham of Ballinasloe. This man came to Dublin and Harry Boland made the coat. Cunningham stayed with us in Baggot Street on the night before he crossed to Holyhead with the coat.

De Valera escaped on February 2nd and returned to Dublin within a few days. On March 6th Pierce McCann died in Gloucester Prison.

This was still a very busy time for the Volunteers. Guard duties, funeral marches and, of course, training took up a considerable amount of their time.

The British Government announced the release of all Irish prisoners in British jails.

Eamonn Fleming was released at this time and was not caught again, although he had many narrow escapes. But being such an important man and knowing all the secrets and inside information of the workings of the movement, he had very special orders not to be caught. This was not an easy thing to do, but he managed to keep clear of public places and displays. As a result of this effort, the British spies lost track of him. It was in this way that most of the men who were directing operations escaped detection. Eamonn had been very busy publicly up to the finish of the collection for the Dáil Eireann Loan in 1919 but, when this job was finished, he was in charge of the administration of these funds and consequently, like a lot of others, he had to disappear from the public eye as far as parades and meetings were concerned.

CHAPTER XII.

Seizure of Rifles at Collinstown.
 De Valera's Home-coming.
 Mountjoy Escape. Military Raids.
 Armed Attacks by I.R.A.
 Cathal Brugha Declares War.

When the Hall at 44 Parnell Square was taken over by the Volunteers in 1917, the Secretary to Colonel Moore then was John Eckersley. He decided to relinquish this position, for which he was being paid. He remained on guard with us and took part in the many operations in connection with the house. By this time the British had started work on Collinstown Aerodrome. Colonel Moore was again friendly disposed. He knew the Colonel in charge of the construction work at the Aerodrome, and John Good was the contractor. The contract was on a time and material basis. A difficulty in book-keeping arose, and Colonel Moore succeeded in getting Eckersley a position in the office as book-keeper. There was a lot of unemployment in the city at this period. Mr. Eckersley's two brothers-in-law were also appointed in the capacity of time-keepers. 44 Parnell Square was used as an employment bureau for idle Volunteers. We gave these men a note and they were taken on immediately. In fact, most of the men on the job were Irish Volunteers. Eckersley and his two time-keepers were members of "K" Company (Tony and Christy O'Malley). But now a crux arose. Before Eckersley took over the position, the books were in a very bad condition, and Board of Works accounts are very complicated. He had to have someone to help him in putting the books right

and completing the accumulated accounts in a short space of time, or the job would have to close down. Colonel Moore came to me in Baggot Street one day in a great fuss with this news. Could I do anything? It was now about lunch hour and Wyse-Power's of Henry Street was about the best place to find responsible Republicans at this hour. On my way there I met Joe McDonagh and Sean T. O'Kelly at the Bank of Ireland. I explained the position and they sent me to Jack Cotter who had an office in South William Street. He had been an Executive Officer in the British Civil Service and had been dismissed for refusing to take the oath of allegiance. He had a strong objection to doing any work for the British Government at this time but, on account of the number of men who would be thrown out of work and also considering who these men were, he agreed to help. We got a taxi out to Collinstown and he was taken on. He remained there until the arrears of work were completed and then left what was a very good job. When, therefore, in March of 1919 the Volunteers captured a great number of arms and ammunition at Collinstown Aerodrome, it was the men of "K" Company who had made the way clear for the operation. On the Sunday following the seizure of these rifles and ammunition, Fitzgerald, official transport officer for the Quartermaster General, delivered a good deal of the seized equipment with my delivery van.

When de Valera's home-coming was announced, the Dublin Brigade were mobilised. All men were ordered to carry arms. But, as it was expected that the British military would attempt to prevent any demonstration of welcome, these arrangements were cancelled. The

Volunteers were very disappointed. It was de Valera himself cancelled these orders.

On March 9th, 1919, the escape of prisoners from Mountjoy Jail gave the British authorities in Ireland another shock. P.J. Fleming was in charge of the escape. He had been transferred from Maryborough and was now a prisoner in Mountjoy. About twenty minutes after the escape, Liam Tannam, one of the escaped men, came to us in Baggot Street on a punctured bicycle. Plans were earlier made for the accommodation of those who got away. In a few days we had more of the escaped men, including P.J. Fleming, Tom Malone and some others. It was now necessary to have these men taken out of the city. A clergyman friend of Fr. O'Flanagan was about to travel to the U.S.A. and it was decided to send P.J., disguised as a clerical student, with him. A high official in Dublin Castle was a party to this. I.R.B. Headquarters would not allow him to travel in this garb, in spite of the fact that his health was greatly impaired following his fight in Maryboro' and Mountjoy prisons. Mrs. Nugent and the clergyman friend then undertook to take P.J. and Kevin O'Higgins to Knockbeg College in Batty Hyland's car. On their return they drove into Dublin Castle to see our friend. There was consternation. Mick Collins' car in the Castle Yard! Both Batty and Joe Hyland were then recognised as Mick Collins' official drivers. Mick was terribly annoyed, but he soon appreciated the humour of the situation and also the safety of it. On another morning Mick, with some other Headquarters Officers, assembled some more of the escaped prisoners at the rear of 22 Upper Baggot Street and sent them off in cars to

the country. Upper Baggot Street was selected as a rendez-vous on account of its proximity to the Hospital where a large number of cars would not cause suspicion. On this particular occasion the cars containing the ex-prisoners joined in with a funeral which happened to be leaving the Hospital at the time, and no notice was taken of them as they drove through the city.

On April 9th a Sinn Féin Ard Fheis was held in the Mansion House, Dublin. This was followed by a meeting of Dáil Eireann next day. At all of these meetings "K" Company were on duty. On April 13th the Republican dependants fund (now controlled by Cumann na mBan) was raided by the military at 44 Parnell Square. The house and furniture were damaged but the raiders found nothing of value. On May 4th the American Delegates, who had been working in Paris with Seán T. O'Kelly in an effort to have Ireland's case heard at the Peace Conference, arrived in Dublin. Apartments were engaged for them in Mrs. McGarry's house in Fitzwilliam Street. And two prominent members of the I.R.B. acted as waiters to the Delegates and naturally reported all items of interest to the I.R.B. Headquarters. These Delegates, when travelling around with de Valera and Fr. O'Flanagan, were undecided as to which was the most popular with the people. And as Mick Collins, who was not getting the publicity which he felt he was entitled to, said he would soon show them who was the most popular. On the day of the famous reception of the delegates in the Mansion House, he dressed in the uniform of an officer of the Irish Volunteers and entered the Mansion House. In a short time the military came to arrest him, but he was gone. He had nevertheless gained some of the popularity which

he was looking for. He was not yet satisfied, however. For, on the following night Captain T.J. Cullen and myself were called to 144 Brunswick Street (Pearse Street), Headquarters of the 3rd Battalion. The Commandant told us that a certain individual had informed the British military that Mick Collins was in the Mansion House in uniform, and we were told to investigate the charge and certain punishments were to be inflicted. If Mick knew that we were investigating this case, he would not allow us to do so; he was well aware that we knew that the whole affair was purely personal propaganda. I knew the accused man for many years. My findings of the investigation were that under no circumstances could the accused person have given the information. He had not in fact been to the Mansion House that day. He had been busy all day, and indeed this man would not have given the information anyhow. We reported 'Not Guilty'. Our findings were accepted but with regret. Mick was ambitious and we knew it. The event made no difference to us and we continued to be good friends. He trusted us. And why not? Had we not played our part in putting him in the position which he now occupied (Minister for Finance in the new Government)? And, although Cathal Brugha was Minister for Defence, Mick was the man who was looked upon as the head of the new Irish Army. He was also the only man who could be seen any time there was anything of importance to report or questions of activities to be decided.

Raids were now taking place all over the country. Many arrests were made and newspapers were suspended. Shootings occurred in Limerick and I.R.A. prisoners were rescued at Knocklong Railway Station where some police were shot.

In June it was announced that there were 40,000 British troops in Ireland.

During the first week of June a Connolly memorial concert was announced for the Mansion House. This concert was banned by the police. The crowds gathered for the function and trouble started. Four D.M.P. men were wounded as also were two civilians. It is known that it was the police who caused the disturbance.

Harry Boland had gone to America some time previously and now it was announced that de Valera had arrived in the U.S.A. on June 23rd. De Valera's visit to the U.S.A. had a twofold purpose. One was to raise an Irish Republican Loan of £2,000,000, in which he was successful; the other was an effort to gain recognition for the Republic.

McPhearson, Chief Secretary for Ireland, in reply to questions in the House of Commons, said that policemen were being murdered in Ireland without cause. These questions and replies in the British House of Commons were purely propaganda and given on privileged occasions. The British Government knew that the American people resented the shooting of police in their own country, but it was never stated that the police in Ireland were part of the British military force here. They were armed with rifles and revolvers. Their policy was to promote crime and, as often happened, to commit crime and have

the blame placed on some unfortunate local person. There are many cases of this kind on record, but the House of Commons would not make them public.

Fortunately, the number of agent provocateurs in the R.I.C. were few in comparison to the number of men in the force (10,000 to 12,000), but they were to be found in every area in Ireland.

Cathal Brugha sent a reply (in his capacity as Minister of Defence) to McPherson, which was published, as follows:-

"Irish Republican Army.

Its existence and reasons for its formation.

To the Editor, 'Freeman's Journal'.

A Chara,

With regard to Mr. Ian McPherson's strictures on the 'so-called' Irish Republican Army, I would ask you to insert this letter. The Irish Republican Army does exist and for the stated objects of:-

- (1) Securing and maintaining the rights and liberties common to the Irish people;
- (2) To train, discipline and equip for this purpose an Irish Volunteer force;
- (3) To unite in the service of Ireland Irishmen of every creed and of every party and class.

In its short lifetime it has shown that, when it undertakes any action towards these

ends, it can carry it through vigorously and valiantly.

If its objects were to 'secretly plot murders and outrages against people and property or to assassinate unsuspecting policemen and other loyal persons' known to be deliberately plotting against the lives of individual Irish men and women as a whole, taken with the well known vigour of the I.R.A. in all its work, should provide a fine crop of daily murders.

It cannot be denied that warfare of the character that usually precedes major conflicts is now going on in Ireland. The British military authorities utilise the police to gather information as to personnel, plans and organisation of the I.R.A. and to discover and seize arms, etc. The danger that necessarily exists of local conflicts between, on one hand, police and military forces given over to systematic aggression, and with lawlessness on the other

A population, partially armed, is obviously very great and the impartial onlooker will attribute the comparative fewness of these conflicts to the existence of a widely spread organisation of well disciplined and well controlled men.

The English 'Daily Mail' tells us that "the one thing that may be needed to make everyone believe anything is precisely that it should be officially denied by McPherson". In like manner, it may be held that the one thing to prove that

"anything is false is the fact that it has been vouched for as true by McPherson.

When the Commission of Inquiry demanded by the Irish-American Delegates is appointed, the charge they have made will be proved. If at this time Mr. McPherson sees fit to repeat his strictures on the 'so-called' I.R.A., these strictures will then be shown to be on a par with his other lying statements.

Mise, Cathal Brugha.

22nd June, 1919."

This letter was accepted by the I.R.A. as a declaration of war and it was the first time that the Volunteers were described as the I.R.A. 'An tOglach' continued to refer to them as the Irish Volunteers. When the Irish-American Delegates, who were in Paris assisting Seán T. O'Kelly in his effort to have Ireland's case heard by the Peace Conference, came to Dublin, they travelled through various parts of the country and found out for themselves how the country was being treated by the British military and police. They published the information both here and in the U.S.A. and they demanded a commission of inquiry, which was never held, and it was in reply to these charges that McPherson, the British Chief Secretary, made charges against the I.R.A. in the British House of Commons. An announcement was made that Inspector Hurst had been shot in Thurles. Hurst was directly responsible for the death of I.R.A. men.

On June 25th the military raided for J.J. Walsh but he made good his escape. Mrs. Nugent got an S.O.S.

from Mick Collins and sent J.J. to her sister in Harolds Cross where he remained for some time in safety. We saw him often afterwards while he was on the run and, if he were to write his own story for that period, it would be very interesting indeed. During the period while J.J. was on the run in Dublin I often heard discussions on the Sinn Féin industrial policy. He was one of what might be described as the most robust in these discussions. He was in favour when the time arrived of raising a loan of forty or fifty million pounds and putting the whole scheme in operation at once. The greatest difficulty would be that we would not have sufficient labour after allowing for farming work, and labour would have to be imported. He favoured Italian labour. Time has proved that this would have been a wise policy.

The Peace Treaty was signed in Paris on the 25th June. Ireland was left out, but the British military started to celebrate in Dublin. Some shots were fired and a British lorry was burned. 76 Harcourt Street (Dáil Department) was raided. A few members of the staff were arrested, including Dan O'Donovan, Chairman, National Health, and Manager, County Dublin.

CHAPTER XIII

Swearing in of Volunteers.
 Temporary Sinn Féin Offices.
 The 'Irish Bulletin' Secret Office.
 List of British Authorities.
 The Code Word.
 Shooting of Detectives.
 Attacks on Newspaper Offices.
 Jury Packing.
 Seizure of Mails.
 Raids, arrests and Hunger Strikes.
 The Food situation.
 Dublin Dockers refuse to unload military supplies.

Following the Dáil meeting and the appointing of Cathal Brugha as Minister for Defence, the Volunteer Companies were sworn in as soldiers of the Republic. "K" Company, having transferred from 44 Parnell Square to 6 Harcourt Street, now went to the Hall in Camden Street. In this Hall Dick McKee, Brigadier, Dublin City Brigade, administered the oath of allegiance to Dáil Eireann and to the I.R.A. We then had about eighty good men who were available at all times. And after Cathal Brugha's declaration of war in June, the general training in the 3rd Battalion was intensified. Captain T.J. Cullen was transferred to the Battalion Staff as Captain and Technical Advisor, and was placed in charge of the guard system. Lieutenant Frank Gallagher was transferred to the Adjutant's Department as Assistant Adjutant, and I was transferred as Assistant Quartermaster and Small Arms Instructor. This position called for my services at least three nights per week. At regular

periods during the day I had calls from the Company Quartermasters for some business or other. The other two or three nights were taken up with small arms classes.

There were eight Companies in the Battalion. Each Company was divided into four sections with a section leader. These sections acted as units for patrols and other duties. They generally had their own instructors, as a man from each section was sent to my class so that he would be able to train the men in his own section. Training in the care and use of revolvers was very difficult as we had to work with a 'dry' gun. These guns were so varied in type that it was not unusual to have eight or nine different specimens. The automatics were very difficult. It took a lot of explaining to a man to convince him that an automatic would not fire the same as a machine gun. It is known that some Irish Volunteers lost their lives through making this mistake and likewise a few of the enemy escaped in the same way. The men were under the impression that the gun would continue to fire so long as the trigger was pressed; if it did not do so, they then believed the weapon to be jammed. On the nights when I held my class, Captain Willie Rowe held grenade instruction in the same room with a somewhat similar number of men from the different Companies. After one particular ambush I measured the distance of 70 yards at which a Volunteer hit a moving target with a revolver. I was satisfied that my instruction was showing results; and Captain Rowe in his grenade training compelled the Tans and Auxiliaries to put wire netting on their lorries. (The people nick-named them 'Dirt-Birds'.)

The boys were so well able to throw the grenades that they usually exploded in the lorry. I generally kept about four guns for training purposes, including a 'Peter The Painter'. (If we had only enough of these, or even a small quantity would have made a big difference.) I had several interviews with Peadar Clancy during this training period. He was very keen on having men properly trained and often paid me a visit, and sometimes came with Conor Clune. (Conor was a constant visitor.)

I rarely carried guns to or from my classes. One of my daughters and Annie Lucas (an assistant in our business) brought the guns to within a safe distance of the class-rooms and called at the appointed time to collect them. Trouble now started as I had to go on the run myself and could not stay at home. When the guns were brought back from the classes, Mrs. Nugent had to take charge of them until I could call for them sometime next day. But we never did lose anything, in spite of many raids and careful searching by the military. When curfew was imposed, it became necessary to start our classes earlier in order to fit the time; and so the work went on.

First-aid and signalling courses were also carried out in the Battalion area under somewhat similar conditions. And, while these classes were being held, Captain T.J. Cullen had his guards and scouts posted. Our class-rooms were never detected, although for a long time we were operating within shouting distance of Dublin Castle. The men attending these classes were eager and intelligent students and soon became excellent

instructors themselves.

A big victory parade was arranged by the British military at which ex British soldiers were to take part, but 3,000 of the Dublin men refused to march. The attitude adopted by these ex soldiers gave us in the I.R.A. what amounted to a new alliance. We knew that from now on they would at least be friendly, and this was a great advantage to the I.R.A. on patrol duty. These patrols were carried out by different Companies in their allotted areas. The patrols were on every night, each section taking its turn in rotation under the charge of their section leader. They were inspected regularly by the Company Officer. The amount of arms in the possession of any Company was only sufficient to arm the nightly patrols so that few men were able to keep their own gun.

Sergeant Smith was shot around this time. The shooting of these detectives was an absolute necessity as they were trying by every means at their disposal to endanger and even take the lives of I.R.A. men, and they had been responsible for the lives of a good many Volunteers. It was only men of Smith's type who were shot. The ordinary policeman went about his day and night duty with little interference.

Fr. O'Flannagan was now reinstated by his Bishop and returned to Roscommon.

The collection for the new Dáil Éireann loan was now in operation. Eamonn Fleming was appointed organiser for the collection of the loan for Leinster.

Mrs. Nugent had him fixed up in safe digs in Pembroke Road and he remained there during all the trouble period. I must say a few words about the house in which he was staying. The lady who owned it, Mrs. Cullen, was the widow of a D.M.P. man who had joined the British Army and was killed in France. An ex British officer, his mother and sister occupied a flat in the house, and Mrs. Cullen had only her niece, Miss King, living with her, so what could be safer. At this time the stables (coach house) at the rere of the house became vacant. When I saw the position of these stables I at once applied to the Commandant to rent them for an arms and ammunition dump should the necessity arise. After a while he agreed on condition that only two of us should know the position, the Q.M. and myself, so I became the tenant and while Eamonn Fleming was living in the front, he knew nothing of what was happening in the rere. But that must wait until later!

There were conflicts now in many parts of Ireland between the British military and the I.R.A. A young boy scout named Murphy was shot by the military in Clare. Dublin was now proclaimed a military area (martial law). No. 6 Harcourt St. was smashed up. A number of the staff, including O'Keefe, Seán Milroy, Miss Fitz (now Anna Kelly), Kavanagh and some others continued their work in a room at 22 Upr. Baggot St. Many men all over Ireland will remember the winding stairs leading from the shop to these rooms. Terry MacSwiney in conversation with Mrs. Nugent asked her if anybody died in the house how would we get them out. I have more difficulty in trying to remember the people who did not come to Baggot St. than I have of remembering

the people who did. Some of the greatest Irishmen of all time have climbed that old winding stairs.

At the end of August the press censorship was withdrawn but the Defence of the Realm Act was still in operation. These orders and counter-orders meant nothing to the I.R.A. They just carried on and took no notice.

On September 10th Dublin city and county was again a proclaimed area. Dáil Éireann was also proclaimed.

On September 12th Detective Hoey was shot outside the detective office in Brunswick St. The town of Fermoy was wrecked by British military. Newspapers were suppressed all over the country and the R.I.C. were supplied with hand grenades. Revolvers were supplied to the D.M.P. All the British police in Ireland were now armed.

Seamus Burke, T.D., arrived in New York about this time. He had stayed with us in Baggot St. for some time before leaving for the States. J. Mahon O/C Offaly Brigade, also stayed with him. Donoghue, the man whom we called the "Liverpool Sailor", came with word that S. Burke's ship was ready. Donoghue had previously brought messages but these were generally in enclosures and we passed them on. These messages contained references to other passengers going to America or elsewhere.

By the end of September Mountjoy prison was the scene of serious trouble. The prisoners were on hunger strike. They/^{were}mostly untried men and were demanding political treatment. They were simply arrested and no charges were preferred against them.

In the month of July 22 Upr. Mount St. became vacant. A furniture auction was held there and Fr. O'Flannagan and Mrs. Nugent bought some of this furniture. The lease of the house was not expired and the caretaker, who was friendly, allowed Fr. O'Flannagan and Mrs. Nugent to leave the furniture there. The Dáil Publicity Department were in a bad way for accommodation so I agreed to take the house. We moved in to Mount St. for safety before the Dáil Publicity Department established its office there. Desmond Fitzgerald was then Minister for Publicity. Bob Brennan was manager of the Department and Frank Gallagher Editor. The staff consisted of Miss Fitz., Frank Kelly, Barney Mellows, M. Noonan and Miss McKenna. Frank Gallagher was in Mountjoy prison, but was able to get out his articles for publication from "The Man in the Iron Cage". The hunger strike in Mountjoy was giving the prison authorities serious trouble and the people were protesting vigorously.

A Sinn Féin Convention arranged for the Mansion House, Dublin, was prohibited. The police and military held all the approaches.

On the 19th October all the I.R.A. prisoners in Mountjoy were released. I remember Frank Gallagher running up the steps in Mount St. He had rusty red

whiskers. Mrs. Nugent took him to Gouldings of Ballinteer and he was back at work in a few days.

On the 20th October 25 men were arrested in Dundrum. A spy was shot in the area later. The story of this man's activities shows how serious the spy system was for the I.R.A. men.

Dublin Castle had now their Publicity Department with Basil Clarke in charge. They published a list of what they termed murders, and the Dáil Publicity Department replied with a list of atrocities committed by the British in Ireland as follows: From May 1st 1916 to September 30th 1919 - 58 murders, 2,076 deportations, 431 armed assaults on unarmed citizens, 5,859 raids on private houses etc., 1,998 sentences, 292 proclamations and suppressions, 51 newspapers suppressed, 524 courtmartials. This Publicity Department was now producing the "Bulletin" and sending it to selected individuals and to foreign countries. Frank Gallagher was editing this paper and it aroused the attention of the world press.

One of the best kept secrets of the I.R.A. was the code word. It is doubtful if the inner working of this portion of the I.R.A. activities was ever known by the British authorities in Ireland. My experience of this secret operation was that I happened to know personally an individual in the British Service who received this code word from London and sent it to various military and police posts in these areas. This person called to see me at the end of 1919. I did not

know at the time of the call that the individual was such an important person and, in consequence, the reception was cool. The I.R.A. Intelligence Department which, apparently, knew most things, knew of this particular visit, and in a few days I had a note from Mick Collins (with an enclosure) telling me to write to this individual asking that the enclosed request be carried out. Joe O'Reilly brought this note. For certain reasons I asked him to call back in an hour or so, and after a long consultation with Mrs. Nugent I wrote as follows: "Dear - This letter will be handed to you by - and if you are prepared to carry out the instructions conveyed to you in the enclosure, the contents of which I am aware, the only recompence you may expect will be the protection of the forces whom you are serving. Mine - L. Nugent". Mick approved of my note and it was handed to the individual as arranged, and the instructions were faithfully carried out at a terrible risk but in a very safe way. Only three men in a Brigade area knew of the code word, the Brigade O/C, the Brigade Adj. and the Brigade I/O. I met the Brigade O/C of an area where my friend gave the code word, and he told me that on almost all occasions he had the code before the military or police in his district and he was able to tap the wires and get the orders intended to be carried out by the military or police, and so he was able to protect himself and his men. This arrangement was carried out in every Brigade area in the country. The battle of wits was on the side of the I.R.A., and the people who were in the British service and helped

the I.R.A. in this very important manner will never be known only to a few with whom they were operating. The officers or rank and file of the I.R.A. were not supposed to know anything about this code word, but on one occasion a Comdt. from the midlands sent a dispatch to G.H.Q. enclosing a number of code telegrams captured in the course of delivery to the R.I.C. barracks in his district. He stated that there were a number of these telegrams and that he did not know what the meaning of them was, and that he understood there was a code available for deciphering the telegrams and would H.Q. let him have the code. He got a reply giving him the wording of the telegrams, which had a reference to local police duties, but G.H.Q. demanded how he got to know of the code word and that he was to keep to his Battalion duties and not to interfere or mention the matter again.

But there was portion of the operations of the British Forces where the code did not operate, and that was where the Army or Black and Tans and Auxiliaries sallied out without orders and committed all types of crimes, murders, burnings, lootings and attacks on old men and women. When these attacks took place there was no previous warning, so that the men of the I.R.A. had to be continually on the alert in order to meet these attacks. It will be very interesting when the dispatches are published. Some of them will read - we tapped the wires at and discovered that four lorries of Black and Tans were coming from to on We had our men in position and when we opened

fire the Tans surrendered and we captured all arms and ammunition and burned the lorries. We released the Tans. The code word is coming through regularly. This is only a sample of hundreds of these dispatches from all over Ireland. The code was not of much use in Dublin as tapping of the telegraph wires would be a very difficult operation, but the information came direct from Dublin Castle to I.R.A. H.Q.

In the raids in Dublin on the 11th November, 1919, nine of the Dáil Éireann Staff were arrested, including Dan O'Donovan, Chairman National Health Insurance and Co. Manager Dublin. They were later sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

I have mentioned earlier in this story the case of the O'Brien Bros. of Tipperary in a raid for arms. A man was accidentally shot and these two boys were charged with murder. On the first two trials the juries disagreed. Then the Dublin Castle authorities moved to have the case tried in Derry City. This application failed and the trial ^{was} fixed to be heard by a Co. Dublin special jury. I was on this jury panel, and when the panel was called in the Four Courts there was a very large attendance of jurymen. When the call was complete the presiding judge told us that the case was not being proceeded with that day, but that we would be notified when we were required again. The trial was fixed for a later date but only a small number of the special jury panel were notified. I got no notice. A Mr. Brady who lived two doors from me was not notified, Mr. Wm. Davy in the same street was

not notified and Mr. Epstein (a Jew) of Elgin Road was not notified. The same applied to jurymen all over Co. Dublin, and so when the new jury was empanelled the Dublin Castle authorities succeeded in getting 12 Freemasons on that jury but found to their dismay that all Freemasons in Co. Dublin were not prepared to obey their orders. The special packed jury failed to agree and O'Brien was free. Only one man was put on trial for the third time. The case against the other man was withdrawn. This was a special sample of British justice in Ireland and the length they would go to get convictions against Irishmen who disagreed with their rule.

On November 11th Wharton (Detective) was shot in St. Stephen's Green. Later in the month Johnny Barton was shot. The boys were certainly removing all obstructions. Barton had not been long on what the British called "political work", but when he did take it up he became very active. He tried a disguise but the Dublin newsboys recognised him on several occasions in the streets. Early in December the British government issued the famous motor permit order. This order put practically all motor cars off the road as the drivers refused to obey the conditions imposed. The conditions^{were}/enforced for a while and eventually were relaxed and cars began to appear on the road once more.

The Mansion House, Dublin, was again raided as well as a number of private houses. Some men were arrested and imprisoned without trial.

On December 19th 1919 Lord French was attacked

at Ashtown and Martin Savage, an I.R.A. man, was killed in this action.

The "Irish Independent" having attained its ambition in smashing the I.P.P. now started to work on the I.R.A. operations and published a serious attack against the republicans. Next day its printing machinery was smashed up by armed I.R.A. men. Martin Fitzgerald bought the Freeman's when the I.P.P. were unable to keep it going. This paper now adopted a friendly attitude towards the I.R.A. Pierce Beasley was a leader writer, and a good deal of publicity was given to Mick Collins. It also published a good account of the happenings in the country, and when the I.R.A. smashed up the "Independent" the British military decided to break up the Freeman's Journal. The proprietor and editor were prosecuted although censorship had been withdrawn. The British military smashed up these offices on other occasions.

Dublin Castle authorities now issued an appeal to its civil servants to join up as special constables in the British service.

We in the I.R.A. were on edge, waiting, waiting. K. Company were patrolling their area every night and doing guard duties. The Dáil Cabinet met from time to time and K. Company men were often selected for duty in the vicinity of these meetings, and it was seldom that they knew exactly what duty they were on except that it was armed duty. Capt. T.J. Cullen and Capt. Harry O'Farrell were in charge of the guards.

Cork, Kerry and Clare were now attacking and the country was now in the grip of open warfare. But the men of Dublin were not allowed to act; they were kept as it were on reserve.

Municipal elections were held in January 1920 and Sinn Féin gained a majority on nearly all councils. Commissioner Quinn, D.M.P., was asked to resign his position and Redmond replaced him. He was brought from Northern Ireland and had long experience in the R.I.C. Up to this time the D.M.P. and R.I.C. were operating as separate forces. Redmond was now arranging to combine the two forces into one unit. I.R.A. men coming from country districts to Dublin were fairly safe as they were not recognised by the D.M.P., but now Redmond was bringing in his R.I.C. detectives and the murders would soon start. But he did not get time as he was shot in Harcourt St. on January 21st 1920. He already had murders to his credit.

On February 8th 1920 Peadar Clancy raided the British Army and Navy Canteen Board and military garage in Bow Lane at the reere of Aungier St. Two of K. Company men were on this job (the brothers Jones). Peadar asked me for two men who understood loading. He was very thorough. The Jones boys were furniture removers so I sent them along. That job was very well done. Cars and large quantities of material were captured and removed to safety.

On February 13th Capt. T.J. Cullen's residence

in Mt. Pleasant Square was raided by the military and his father and brother were arrested. He was not at home himself and from now on he was "on the run". He went to a house in Haddington Road and escaped arrest. The British military made several desperate attempts to capture him at his offices in Suffolk St. His profession work had to be brought to him outside although he often worked in his office during curfew hours.

On the evening and night of 19-20th February 1920 a raid for arms was made on the stores of the British and Irish Steam Packet Company. (The information about these supposed arms was not correct). I was in charge of part of the operation that night. We had two commandeered police cars in the garage at the rear of 22 Upr. Mount St. I had to be there when the cars were been taken out and had to be present on their return. Now the dump or coach at the rear of Pembroke Road came into operation. The entrance to this garage was such that cars could drive straight in and there was a wall on the far side. I put young Fitzgerald in charge of this garage (poor lad, he was killed in action afterwards) and everything went according to plan. The raid was almost fruitless, as the only articles found were some military equipment and field telephones. The McGrath brothers were on the raiding party and they came back to Mount St. in one of the cars. I advised them about the safest way to go home but they went through the city instead and took part in the shooting at the junction of Grafton St. and

and Nassau St. Two policemen were wounded and one of the McGraths (Paddy) was badly wounded. Next day curfew from 12 midnight until 5 a.m. was imposed in the city and suburbs of Dublin.

The British army in Ireland was now 65,000 strong. Armoured cars with search lights patrolled the city and districts at night flashing their lights in all directions, but the I.R.A. carried on as usual.

Bob Brennan was raided by the military in Rathmines but was not at home. He was in at work on the Bulletin next morning just the same.

On March 3rd a raid was made on the General Post Office in the Rotunda Rink by the I.R.A. Mails addressed to Lord French, the Prisons' Board, the Inspector of Lunacy and the Labour Exchange were taken. A member of K. Company was working in this department and was able to point out the particular mails to be taken. These mails were later censored by the I.R.A. and reposted.

The amount subscribed for the Dáil Éireann Loan was very successful. This was now a source of great worry to Dublin Castle. They instituted an inquiry with Alan Bell as investigator, but the Irish banks gave very little information.

When K. Company left 44 Parnell Square John McCluskey, a K. Company man, was in charge of the house. Mick Collins found him to be a trustworthy man and trusted him implicitly. McCluskey was arrested at

Parnell Square by the British military and sent to prison. On his release Mick Collins put him in charge of 96 Harcourt St. - the Dáil Éireann department. When the Land Bank was established later McCluskey was appointed caretaker and bank messenger. That was Mick's way of working. When he found the man he wanted he clung on to him. The same applied to the Hylands, Batty and Joe. Batty was a member of my Volunteer Company in Dundrum. So the K. Company men were in action in many ways in a trustworthy capacity by the I.R.A. and the Dáil Éireann departments.

On March 23rd the British soldiers again ran amok in Dublin. They did considerable damage to 6 and 76 Harcourt St. (the Dáil Éireann principal office).

On March 26th Alan Bell was shot in Ballsbridge. Within a few hours of the shooting a lady who had been a militant suffragette and who had done terms of imprisonment in Dublin, came into the shop in Baggot St. to celebrate. She actually brought a bottle of champagne. She was not satisfied with the shooting, however, as there were two more men of the legal profession whom she considered deserved the same fate. She had discussed the Dublin Castle spy ring which these men were organising among civil servants and Castle officials, with Mrs. Nugent previously. I think she was of the opinion that I had been connected with the shooting. I was not, but I had a drop of champagne just the same. Mrs. Nugent and myself often picked up valuable information through meetings such as these. Eamonn Fleming would call in every day on his way back

from lunch to see if we had any news of importance. Joe O'Reilly also called every day on some errand or other. (Joe was Mick Collins's official messenger). I have his statement to the effect that from the date of the German Plot in 1918, he rarely missed a day without calling to 22 Upper Baggot St. on some mission for Mick Collins.

The Cumann na mBan ladies were constant visitors. Despatches for the Bulletin offices were usually left at Baggot St. and we transferred them to Mount St. This helped to keep the crowd away from the secret office in Mount St., which office as few people as possible in the Republican movement were allowed to visit. No maid was kept. Mrs. Nugent, with our daughters and one other helper (Annie Lucas) did all the housework and attended the door for visitors. This was a big responsibility for them as one never knew when some unknown person might call.

On March 27th Capt. T.J. Cullen's house was again raided and his father and brother were arrested once more. Capt. Cullen did not oblige. His office in Suffolk St. was also raided by the military. His papers, including professional documents, were damaged and thrown about the place.

On March 27th Lieut. Frank Gallagher, editor of the Bulletin, was again arrested in Wilton Place. He was taken to Mountjoy without any charge or trial. He was again able to send out his articles from the "Man in the Iron Cage."

144 Brunswick St., H.Q. 111 Battalion, was again raided but nothing was found.

On April 3rd the British military held up and searched foreign journalists in the streets of Dublin. The military often made these mistakes, but they were useful as far as Republican activities were concerned.

On Saturday night April 3rd 1920, the Income Tax offices in Dublin were burned. K. Company were on the Dawson St. job. Two offices were burned here.

I was out with the car as a few tins of petrol were needed for the operation. The work was completed in a very short time and all the papers were destroyed. One boy who knew something about filing systems was able to find his father's papers and made certain that they were burnt. This was an excellent piece of work and caused serious inconvenience to the British. All personnel engaged escaped detection.

The hunger strike in Mountjoy jail had again gripped public opinion. One hundred prisoners were on strike and a few of them were very ill. (Lieut. Gallagher was one of the strikers). Thousands of the Dublin citizens knelt in the streets near the prison praying for the sick men, while British armoured cars and tanks patrolled the city. A general strike was declared. All work ceased. Punchestown Races were called off. (There was no way of getting there as there were no cars or trains to carry the public). Then on April 14th the hunger-strikers were released and the strike was called off.

Again the raids started. A big raid took place in the south city area where some arrests were made. On April 15th Capt. Cullen's office was raided twice and the streets were cordoned off for most of the day. They were very anxious to get him, but once again they failed. His office and papers were seriously damaged, but he was still at liberty.

The food situation in the city was still bad. Essential foodstuffs were very scarce and prices were prohibitive. Still the exports to England were increasing. Then on April 17th the dockers at the North Wall refused to load foodstuffs for England. This action relieved the scarcity in Dublin. The food position in Ireland during the years 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920 and most of 1921 was really bad. Butter, eggs, bacon, sugar and other foods were almost unobtainable. At the same time great quantities were being shipped to Britain under the British food control orders.

During this period of the fight for freedom the Dublin and Irish working man or artisan, shop assistant or small farmer's son had no allegiance for any party only the independence party. These were the men who carried out the fight, often under great hardships and privations to themselves and their families. The I.R.A. was composed from them. How they existed during the lengthy strikes and long stretches of unemployment, along with the exorbitant prices which they had to pay for food, is still a mystery, but they

carried on and never complained. When fighting became serious recruiting for the I.R.A. was suspended. We had not enough arms and no time for training recruits. Odd men were taken on who had good recommendations.

After the murder of McCurtain, Lord Mayor of Cork, the coroner's jury brought in a verdict of murder against: - Lloyd George, Lord French, Ian McPhearson, Acting Inspector Smith, Acting Inspector Claxton, Acting Inspector Swanzy and some unknown men.

The announcement stating that all hunger strikers were released from Mountjoy jail was soon discovered to be false. Some of the prisoners were detained. The strike went on and in a few more days these men were set free.

Dublin Castle was at all times using provocative measures. They entered into agreements and broke them within a few hours. This happened on many occasions in the case of political prisoners or prisoners of war.

I.R.A. prisoners in Belfast threatened hunger strike action unless released unconditionally. I.R.A. prisoners in Wormwood Scrubbs in England were on hunger strike. Between May 8th and 13th all I.R.A. prisoners were released after 23 day strike.

During 1919 when the British were about to collect all arms in the possession of private individuals for safe keeping, Capt. T.J. Cullen had information that the Provost Marshal in Dublin Castle had a quantity of arms at his private apartments in Haddington Road.

He decided to take possession of them. At this time raids for arms on private houses or elsewhere were not permitted by the Volunteer Headquarters without first getting their permission. But Capt. Cullen decided to raid first and get permission afterwards. It was also against the regulations for one Volunteer Company to carry out a raid in another Company's area. These orders were very complicated and were generally ignored. Capt. Cullen mobilised a number of men from K. Company. He took a car and drove to the address at a time when the Provost Marshal was in the house. He told him that he was Sergt. O'Brien of the G. Division and that he was collecting the arms for safe keeping. The arms were willingly handed over, and the Marshal also gave him a present of a German helmet, a souvenir from the war. When the arms were loaded in the car they were brought to 22 Upper Baggot St., where they were loaded into a pony and trap brought by Jack Darmon and taken to a place of safety. This raid caused a lot of trouble to the police authorities, and an order was issued that all detectives must carry identification cards in future. Station Sgt. Fennessy of A Division Garda Síochána was a member of K. Company at this time and his father was a warder in Mountjoy. Recruiting for the D.M.P. was very poor. Fennessy was eligible for this force and his father was asked by the police authorities to get him to join up. Fennessy came to me and I got him permission from I.R.A. Headquarters to join. He surrendered his gun to me. When his police training was completed he was posted to Kilmainham Barracks, a very useful post from which to get information. Station Sergt. Fennessy was a very good Intelligence officer up to the signing of the Truce

in 1921.

Another interesting raid was carried out at a later period by Capt. Harry O'Farrell and members of K. Company in 1920. A British officer from the Curragh was staying at a private hotel in Lr. Baggot St. This officer had served in France and had some revolvers and ammunition in his possession, as well as field glasses and military instruments. He was to leave the hotel one morning and one of the maids sent me the word and giving me full details of the lay-out of the place. I passed on the information to Lieut. J. Bird who got in touch with Capt. Within a few hours of the receipt of the information the arms and instruments were removed and Capt. O'Farrell afterwards applied for permission to carry out the raid. These instruments were very useful to the I.R.A.

In the city of Dublin and also other towns and rural areas, it was usual for information of this kind to be passed on to the I.R.A. It was surprising how many people knew the correct place and persons to give this information. News as to the intentions of the British military was often placed at our disposal. I saw girls whom we had never met before come to our place in Baggot St. with very valuable information. These people had their own friends. They talked among themselves but never for the benefit of the enemy. The general public were very careful in those days.

On May 13th Det. Sergt. Rex ~~was~~ was shot. He had been guilty of the murders of I.R.A. men.

A number of vacated police barracks in the country were destroyed, including one at Ballybrack. One Volunteer was accidentally killed in this action. Some members of Dáil Éireann received threatening letters. These letters were typed on paper seized on a British military raid on 96 Harcourt St. (Dáil Éireann offices).

On May 21st dockers at the North Wall refused to unload military supplies from the boats. The British military were forced to do this work themselves.

C H A P T E R XLV.

Alfred Cope appointed Under-Secretary.
 Republican Courts. Arrival of the Black and Tans.
 Train Crews refuse to carry Armed Military or Police
 or Munitions. Curfew Changes. Dublin I.R.A. kept
 on Reserve. More Official Mails seized. More
 Shooting of Spies. Archbishop Mannix not allowed to
 land in Ireland. Arrival of Auxiliaries.

Two Under-Secretaries were now appointed by the British Government. Prior to this there was only one. Now, Sir John Anderson and Alfred Cope of the British Ministry of Pensions were appointed. Cope was given a roving commission. He was instructed to make efforts to bring about peace. He was only a short time here when he set about this mission. Of all the British authorities in Ireland, Cope was the shrewdest. No crimes could be placed to his credit and so he escaped. Republican courts were now functioning all over Ireland, while the British courts were almost empty. Many of these courts were held in our house in Baggot Street. It was difficult to hold these courts as the British were doing their best to prevent them. Fergus O'Connor told me of the difficulty in holding them and we allowed him to carry on in Baggot Street - Fergus was Republican Court Registrar. So the courts went on and the orders issued from them were strictly obeyed. The population were recognising the Republic and the orders from these courts were always considered fair.

An interesting item in connection with the Republican Courts was the Lord Mayor's court or what was known as the court of conscience. This building was in South William Street and was the property of the Dublin Corporation. It had been out of use as a court for a great number of years. When it was in use its principal function was the recovery of small debts up to the amount of £2.0.0 and court expenses were very low. The Republican Government re-established this court and appointed Mrs. Tom

Clarke as Justice. I wonder if she was the first lady to occupy the position of judge or justice in Ireland or elsewhere. She carried on the court for a considerable time and her decisions were never disputed. She certainly gave everyone a fair trial and the number of cases heard was considerable.

At the end of May the Black and Tans arrived in Dublin. The dockers at the North Wall still refused to unload equipment. The attack on military stores and police barracks continued all over Ireland. These attacks were showing good results. In cases where the attacks failed the barracks were usually vacated within a few days and the I.R.A. destroyed them, so that attacks were always successful.

On June 1st the Military guard on the Kings Inns was held up and a quantity of arms and ammunition taken. This capture included some machine-guns. There were no casualties. A member of K. Coy. was on this job (Stephen Coates). The raid was very well planned and very successfully carried out. Operations of this type were a source of great annoyance to the British authorities and it was amusing to listen to the talk of some of their supporters when they thought they were speaking to another supporter.

Attacks on British barracks were getting more frequent. Frank Gallagher, who had been released from Mountjoy after his second hunger strike, was again working successfully on the Irish Bulletin. It was amazing how Frank produced the strength to carry on his work following two very exhausting hunger strikes. He would turn into the office early in the morning and I have seen him at very busy periods sipping tea and perhaps nothing to eat for the whole day. Following his work on

the Bulletin he would proceed to the Adjutant's Department in the I.R.A. office at Brunswick Street for 2 or 3 hours at night; but that was how the fight was carried on. Men such as he doing an enormous amount of work and the public rarely heard their names mentioned. On one occasion, while Frank was sipping his tea and at the same time studying his papers, my daughter Bridie said to him, "Frank, what is propoganda?". While he was considering his answer she said, "Oh, I know. Its letting on." She was only a little school girl then but the children were taking an interest in what was happening.

Thousands of extra British soldiers were arriving in the country daily. But the I.R.A. took no notice. A few thousand more or less would make no difference. The determination to carry on the fight persisted. The more soldiers they brought in, the more difficult it became for the Army authorities, as the barracks were already overcrowded and the question of billeting became very acute.

Local council elections were held about this time. The Republicans had big majorities everywhere. The Republican party had control of all the local councils and the Corporations outside of the Six Counties. When the large numbers of British soldiers began to arrive in the country the train crews all over refused to drive the trains on which armed military and police were travelling. An almost complete standstill took place on the transport systems. Curfew hours were now changed from 12 midnight to 5 a.m. to the new hours of midnight until 3 a.m.

In the first week of July the Mutiny of the Connaught Rangers in India was reported. This news caused uneasiness among the British loyalists in Ireland. They feared for the Empire and some of them who had been shouting for Irish

blood were now calmly suggesting peace.

In the early part of July Harry Boland arrived home from U. S. A. John Devoy and Judge Couhalan, chiefs of the Irish Revolutionary parties in the U. S. A., were jealous of De Valera's popularity. I saw Harry Boland sitting at the table in the Propaganda Department in Mount Street. He wore that big open smile as if he were pleased with himself and with all the things that were happening in the country. He was back again in the States in a short time. His trip home was for the purpose of finding out the true facts of the state of affairs at home and to report first hand what was happening in the U. S. A.

It might appear from these notes that the I. R. A. in Dublin were inactive. They were at attention all the time, waiting for the word 'go', but it was the policy of the G. H. Q. to avoid a conflict with the British military in Dublin City, and up to this period the British military had given sufficient provocation. They were raiding, searching and holding up areas throughout the city. They had reduced themselves to the position of second-rate police. The officers did not like their position but they had to obey orders.

When I refer to activities in the country I am to an extent departing from the intention for which this story or the activities of one particular company is written. But the activities of the members of this company were so varied that it is difficult to disassociate them from the general operations, and I shall show later that, although we were far away from activities outside of Dublin, we were directly concerned with the men actually engaged in them. We preserved the records of their actions for future historians. And men with whom we had previous contacts in Dublin were now operating in the country areas.

On July 15th the British Government official mails were again seized at the Rotunda Rink - this was the temporary G.P.O. A man from K. Coy. was once more on the job and was able to point out the required mail car. In this case the I.R.A. men just drove away the van containing the British Government Official Inward Mails. As before, the mails were censored and reposted by the I.R.A. Intelligence Office.

On July 19th Inspector Smyth of Listowel fame was shot in Cork City. He had been responsible for the murder of I.R.A. men. It was he who had proposed to put I.R.A. men on a ship which would never reach port. Curfew from 10 p.m. until 3 a.m. was now imposed in Cork City.

The town of Tuam was wrecked and the military were carrying out reprisals all over the country. They destroyed creameries, burned farmhouses and farm produce. They shot and maimed animals but the I.R.A. were hitting back with all they had. They were continually on the offensive.

Frank Brook, Chairman of the Dublin and South Eastern Railway was shot at Westland Row Station. Another director was warned and he sent a letter asking for mercy, stating that he was not guilty of spying. This request for leniency came through a Jewess, Miss Zigmen in Upper Baggot Street, who was a private cigarette manufacturer. The second director was a customer of hers. Nothing happened to this man but the shooting of Frank Brook smashed up another attempted spy ring. Men of Brooks type were part of the British garrison in Ireland, and in times of British atrocities they were never satisfied: they cried out for more blood. The British Government was too lenient and if these men got the opportunity, they

would take the law into their own hands. This was the second attempt at forming a spy ring. First Allan Ball and now Frank Brook; but the days of the arrogant bullies were numbered.

On July 29th eleven British military police were disarmed in College Green. The military guard at the Bank of Ireland opened fire and civilians were wounded. A quantity of ammunition and explosives was captured by I. R. A. men at Harcourt Street Station.

Most Reverend Dr. Mannix was about to visit Ireland from the U. S. A. The British Government refused him permission to land here. This action caused a deal of controversy and gave a good opportunity for Irish propaganda.

On August 12th Terry McSweeney, Lord Mayor of Cork, was arrested and imprisoned in England. He went on hunger strike immediately. His arrest took place while holding a Republican Court in the Town Hall, Cork. The plaintiffs in the case were the Prudential Assurance Company (a purely British Company).

On August 14th a quantity of mails were seized at Westland Row Station. K. Company had a man working here - Sergeant Jack O'Connell.

The Kildare Street Club was now enclosed with barbed wire. This club was in K. Company's area. The members were taking no chances but they were quite safe as long as they continued good citizens of the Republic and kept out of the spy rings.

Inspector Swanzy was shot at Lisburn - Cork justice travelled a long way.

On August 27th it was announced that P.J.Fleming had arrived in the U.S.A. He had been sent there by the I.R.A. Headquarters for health reasons and also for general propaganda work in cooperation with De Valera and others.

In the first week of September a new type of British soldier arrived in Ireland. They were known as the Auxiliaries. It was generally supposed that they were all ex-British officers. Whatever they were they were certainly a bad lot. A number of them were released criminals from British jails, as were also the Black and Tans. They wore black uniforms and sported a Glengarry cap. From the time of their arrival the looting and murders increased. The British soldiers carried out raids in the townships without result.

On September 9th 1920 the Black and Tans were seen on the streets of Dublin for the first time.

Chapter XV.

Belfast Boycott, Hardy the spy, Kevin Barry,
 Death of Terry MacSwiney, Seizure of Dublin
 Corporation books, The Bulletin escapés,
 The Pressmen of the world, British
 Military establish their own spy
 system from London, Elimination
 of British spies on November
 21st 1920, Peace Talks.

The boycott of Belfast goods was now complete in Dublin and in the country districts. This boycott gave the I.R.A. a lot of extra duty, but the work was efficient and some of the Belfast factories had to close down. Southern Ireland was their best customer.

A gentleman named Hardy was now posing as an advocate of peace and pretending to show a partiality to Sinn Féin. In the course of his supposed peace efforts he succeeded in contacting a number of Sinn Féin members. The I.R.A. Intelligence Department were not sure of Hardy's position but they suspected him, and it was arranged that Arthur Griffith would ask him to address what was supposed to be the Inner Circle of Sinn Féin. The Inner Circle was really a collection of foreign press representatives who were in Dublin for some time reporting to their papers on the conditions prevailing in Ireland. Hardy fell into the trap,

and while he was addressing the supposed Inner Circle of Sinn Féin Mick Collins had arranged with Capt. T.J. Cullen to capture Hardy's private papers. Hardy was staying at the Parkgate St. Hotel. Capt. T.J. Cullen and Conor McGinley got Peter Corrigan to drive them up in his car. I went up in the tram. Capt. T.J. Cullen and Conor McGinley went into the hotel. Capt. Cullen said they were detectives. The manageress said that they were not, as she knew by Capt. Cullen's accent that he was not a policeman. He then told her the truth. He said that they were I.R.A. men and that a number of men had the house surrounded. The manageress handed over Hardy's brief case which contained, among other things, his committal order to Maryboro prison for a serious offence for five years, his order of release after five months and his authority and instructions as a British secret service agent from Whitehall, London. It also contained his cheque book. We came away from the hotel unnoticed and the papers were taken to a house in Palmerston Road. In a few days Arthur Griffith was able to reassemble what now amounted to a 'Press Conference' and produce the evidence of the methods of the British secret service in Ireland the the type of men which they had employed. When Mick Collins saw the papers he said that Hardy was a prime boy. The press gave a lot of publicity to this affair for several days. When Hardy got back to his hotel and found his papers gone, he left that night on the boat for England. Numerous press reports appeared in connection with this case on account of the many foreign

correspondents present in Dublin. The British military authorities dare not interfere with this publicity as the foreign pressmen had played a big part in the detection of Hardy. The Freeman's Journal published one of their famous cartoons of Hardy with Lloyd George after he returned to London. But the detection of Hardy did not prevent the British from sending other spies. These were also discovered. I have often heard the question asked "Why was Hardy allowed to escape"? He was allowed to escape because he had not been responsible for any murders in Ireland, and no British spy was executed by the I.R.A. unless he had murders to his credit or as in the case of what happened when the British were preparing for wholesale slaughter.

In an attack on a military party in Nth. King St. Kevin Barry was captured, courtmartialled and later executed. The hall now known as The Kevin Barry Memorial Hall was originally The National Volunteer Hall, 44 Parnell Square. It was the scene of many exciting events in the history of K. Company, the I.P.P. and the A.O.H. from 1915 to 1919.

Balbriggan was wrecked about this time. Both the Auxies and the Tans played their part in this work.

On September 21st a session of Dáil Éireann was held.

There were now four different types of British soldier to contend with (not including the secret service) :- The Military, the Auxiliaries, the Black and Tans and the R.I.C. But we carried on successfully.

Father O'Flanagan was arrested in Roscommon and released. Seán Treacy was shot in an attack in Talbot St. by the British military. The Irish bishops at their meeting in Maynooth condemned British atrocities in Ireland. On October 25th Terry MacSwiney died on hunger strike in a British prison.

News was now circulated about the fight in Ballinalee, Co. Longford. The Dublin Corporation objected to the auditing of their books by the British Local Government Department, but some of the Corporation officials were about to hand over the books for auditing when the I.R.A. stepped in and removed the books to a 111 Battalion dump at the mere of Fitzwilliam Place.

The railways were almost at a standstill. The engine drivers, firemen and guards refused to work the trains whenever armed military or police attempted to travel on them. In consequence food was running short in Dublin.

The British authorities announced that Cumann na mBan were being trained in the use of arms. Of course they were being trained, and some of them could use a gun as well as the men. And when one considers

the type and indiscipline of the men comprising the British Army and police in Ireland, it was very necessary that women who considered their safety should be able to protect themselves, and for this purpose Cumann na mBan were learning the use of arms.

When the Irish Government Publicity Department started to work in 22 Upr. Mount St. as stated previously, Mrs. Nugent, myself and the family moved there from the same number in Upr. Baggot St. (a lucky coincidence). For a period of about fifteen months the department was able to carry on undisturbed. Desmond Fitzgerald as Minister for Publicity, and also Erskine Childers, were in the habit of bringing press correspondents from all parts of the world to these offices to let them see that the Irish government were able to do their work in a business-like way. Childers brought pressmen on a hackney-car on a few occasions. He thought this was a safe way, but when I pointed out to him the dangers of travelling in Dublin in this fashion he stopped coming on the hackney-car. Desmond Fitzgerald made one mistake in giving information and interviews, but it passed unnoticed. A Swedish journalist visited the office and he published a lengthy report in his Swedish paper about conditions in Ireland. Desmond's mistake was in giving him the address of the secret office in Dublin. He posted his paper in Sweden and addressed it to: Desmond Fitzgerald, T.D., 22 Upr. Mount St., Dublin, Ireland. The paper was delivered safely and no notice was taken of the name or address. And now a word of appreciation for these pressmen of the world, including the British pressmen

who were then visiting Dublin, from one who saw what was happening during this period of tense excitement and feeling, and from one who tried all the time to play safe and who saw from day to day serious danger in these visits. I say every man of them was a credit to his profession, including the 'man from the Daily Mail', and thorough gentlemen. The British secret service were straining every nerve to find this secret office, but they never got the slightest hint from these world pressmen, and for this Ireland is grateful.

The publication of the Irish Bulletin was made necessary by the circulation from Dublin Castle of official statements misrepresenting the situation in Ireland, and by the fact that the Irish government were not permitted to contradict officially these deliberate lies. It was published also to acquaint people outside of Ireland with the cause for independence. Its aim was the truth, and this country never asked for any more than the truth. It was published secretly and distributed secretly and successfully, and it was violently denounced by the British government. Frank Gallagher, an officer in K. Company, was its editor.

On one occasion on my way back to business after lunch in Mount St., Paddy Lynch, K.C., told me that he suspected a man who was hanging around for a couple of days. He described the man and I went back to the house immediately. I told Mrs. Nugent and gave her a

description of the man and she went directly to Mick Collins. The man was not seen around again, but we asked no questions. Mick was grateful to Paddy Lynch and he said so. The people working in the office knew nothing of this affair. It would not have served any useful purpose in telling them.

By the end of October 1920 it was good-bye to the Bulletin and its staff. On one night the British military raided 22 Upper Baggot St. for me personally. They made no search for arms or documents and two officers were in charge. I was not in Baggot St. and the Cramptons who occupied the upper portion of the house, told them that I was in Scotland. This they were not inclined to believe, but they had some vague information about Upr. Mount St. and so they came along. In a raid lasting over two hours, and which I was watching, they searched every house in that street with a "2" in its number with the exception of 22. They never connected the coincidence in the numbers. And so on the following day the Bulletin started to move to Molesworth St. We were able to find room for accumulated papers in the house in Pembroke Road, the house where Eamonn Fleming was staying. It took several days to move, and the office and staff were only a few days gone when the British military arrived, but they drew a blank. At this time there were two commandeered police cars at the rear of the house, but the stables were not searched. On the night of the first raid the military picked up a D.M.P. man who was on duty in Er. Baggot St. and took him along.

This was a usual procedure of the military on these raids. This man knew me well but he did not give me away. He remained on in the police force when the new government took over. He never got beyond Station Sergeant but I understand that this was his own fault. And so the good work went on.

I now had to go on the run and I stayed some nights with Eamonn Fleming in Pembroke Road and others with my brother-in-law on the South Circular Road, Kilmainham, and I escaped to the end. Being on the run did not mean one had not to be on service. It made no difference, the work had to be carried on. I met Capt. T.J. Cullen almost every night on some parade or meeting. He was still compelled to visit his office during the night and have his work brought to him where he was staying while on the run. This night work and irregularity was having a serious affect on his health and eyesight. He was losing weight rapidly. During all this period I carried on my small arms classes and my work as Assistant Q.M., and none of the boys with whom I was working knew that I was acting as a secret service agent for G.H.Q. They knew that I knew the whole of the G.H.Q. staff but that was all. And while I held no recognised rank, they accepted me as an I.R.A. officer and strictly obeyed my orders as such. (The position of I.R.A. Special Service Officers at this time was undefined).

The railways were still almost idle, the railway men refusing to carry armed military or police or even army equipment. Food was getting scarcer

and very dear in Dublin. The Belfast boycott was a success and the I.R.A. were keeping a close watch on any attempts to import goods from that city.

In the month of November the British Military Intelligence in London decided to establish their own spy ring, all attempts by the Dublin Castle authorities in this direction having failed. This new spy system was well thought out. The districts decided upon for the housing of the spies were well selected. These areas were as follows: Mr. Mount St., Upper Mount St., Mr. Baggot St., Upper Pembroke St., Earlsfort Terrace and Donnybrook. A reserve of men were housed in a hotel in Exchequer St. In these districts no notice would be taken of well dressed strangers and so they were able to move around freely. These spies had worked out a scheme of contacting messenger boys and other callers to their various houses, including the charwomen. They made a particular point of getting introductions to the servants and maids in as many houses as possible. They were to pass as I.R.A. men on the run. If they succeeded in establishing themselves as they intended, we of the I.R.A. would have been rounded up in a very short time and put on board those famous ships of Inspector Smyth that were never to reach port. Another system they proposed was for one of them to stand on a canal bridge from day to day in the company of a well paid agent who would point out supposed I.R.A. men to them. Colonel Montgomery was in charge of this spy ring, and while the I.R.A. intelligence were warned of this

new departure, they had not yet got full details of the system. One of the first contacts which Montgomery made was with a business friend of Mrs. Nugent and myself. This lady (who is now dead for a number of years but for family reasons I am not at liberty to mention her name; in later years she was well known to a number of I.R.A. officers) was Irish and a widow. She had been married into a high ranking British military family. She appeared to Montgomery as an ideal agent to start working with. He explained to her the system which he intended to work. She was to engage a few extra maids right away. Good introductions to his men were essential. Money did not matter, and I may here mention that this lady was not at all well off and money would be very useful to her. But Montgomery forgot that although this person was well thought of in British official circles (I am sorry I cannot say how well) she was Irish and had been reared among the Irish people in rural Ireland. She was more genuinely Irish than a lot of people who called themselves Irish. Well, when Montgomery made his proposal she acted with diplomacy. She was non-committal. She came directly to us in Baggot St. and told the whole story. That night Mick Collins had full details of the spy system, and the Company I.O.s in the district were reporting the activities of the spies to Headquarters. These spies succeeded in getting introductions to servant maids in some houses as I.R.A. men on the run and as I.R.A. men who had to leave England on account of their activities in that country. They also contacted messenger boys and handed out money. This was a mistake

as even the messenger boys knew that I.R.A. men on the run had very little money. But the stories they were telling about themselves and the questions they were asking and the places they were enquiring about, aroused the suspicion of the people whom they were questioning and also the introductions which they were seeking. This information was in numerous cases conveyed to the I.R.A. Intelligence Officer through the I.R.A. men who were told these stories by the people so questioned. These spies forgot that they were working in a strange country and among people who were now suspicious of all strangers and who would take no one for his word until they found out otherwise. But a number of the spies went too far in the information which they gave to people whom they thought would give all information asked for. They told these people how well off they would be when the I.R.A. was wiped out, and they told how they were to be wiped out. All this information was in the hands of the I.R.A. Intelligence Officer. He succeeded in having every man of them identified and was successful in getting their proper names. Then action was taken to eliminate them.

On Saturday night November 20th arms and grenades were served out for special operations on the following Sunday morning. These arms were issued out from the dump which I originally rented at the rear of Pembroke Road. The Q.M.G. got to know of its location and took possession of it. I served out the arms to K. Company from this dump. I slept with Eamonn Fleming that night in Pembroke Road. Although we did not discuss the matter

very much, we knew that the coming operation was to be a serious one. I may mention that nearly all the men engaged were 3rd Battalion men including K. Company as it was in their Battalion area, with the exception of the Gresham Hotel. (It is only fair to state that it is generally believed that a mistake was made in this case. McDermott was not one of the official spies). The men did not like this operation, but orders were orders and had to be obeyed. The life of every I.R.A. man in Dublin was at stake. Nevertheless it was difficult to get details of the action as the men would not talk. Three men of K. Company never returned to duty after the operation. One K. Company man, Jim Boyce, was courtmartialled for the Baggot St. action, but he proved an alibi and was discharged. In any case he was not in Baggot St. that morning.

During the whole day on Sunday the military, Black and Tans and Auxiliaries were running amok around the city and suburbs. They fired on the crowds at a football match in Croke Park and a large number of people were killed and wounded. Eamonn Fleming went to that match and returned safely.

An incident of the operation on Sunday morning was the action in the hotel in Exchequer St. A number of the spy organisation were living at this hotel. The I.R.A. had a list of their names, but when they examined the hotel book they found the names all right but there were no room numbers after them. The boots refused to give the numbers, and in order to execute the spies they would have to shoot every man in the

hotel. And so the spies got off, but they left Dublin on the first available boat, and so the battle of wits was won by the I.R.A. Intelligence Department against the great British Secret Service, and it was a serious blow to British prestige. All I.R.A. activities were called off for a short time.

The military operation carried out by the I.R.A. on what was often called Bloody Sunday was not decided upon in a hurry, nor was it carried out for any personal or collective motives. It was done for the purpose of saving the lives of the men and women constituting the I.R.A. and Cumann na mBan and their various sympathisers and helpers and indeed their families. None would be spared when the fury of the Black and Tans and Auxiliaries, supported by at least 70,000 soldiers, was turned loose during curfew hours on a practically defenceless people. Large numbers of the police and military had already committed murders for the sake of murder. And that was the intention of the people in Whitehall when they sent their special secret service organisation to Dublin, acting independently of the military and police. And indeed it was doubtful if any of the British authorities in Ireland knew of the existence of these spies. If they did know they would have given them some protection, for when the Dublin Castle authorities heard of the executions they were dumbfounded. They could not understand what had happened, and it took them several hours to put their military and police on the street, and so, with one exception, the I.R.A. men who carried

out the executions had no difficulty in getting away. In this case some of the spies were not in bed and put up a fight.

A number of people in Dublin referred to these executions as murders. As one who took a humble part in the preparation for the operation, I definitely repudiate any such suggestion. It was an act of war duly carried out under orders. True the I.R.A. men did not like their job, but does any firing squad in any army like its job. That is a question which should be considered by critics. And the proof that they were executions and recognised as such is, that when the men who executed Montgomery in Pembroke St. entered his room and told him who they were, he asked that his wife be allowed to leave the room. This request was granted. He then stood to attention and said "I know your mission, boys, do your duty". I knew most of these boys and as ordinary citizens they were quiet and inoffensive, but as soldiers they obeyed orders. Further it has been said that these spies got no trial. True they were tried in their absence and condemned on their own instructions to their agents, and their information to these agents included their intention to commit thousands of unofficial murders. And again, were not their countrymen in the army and police murdering people all over the country without trial? Did the Lord Mayor of Limerick (O'Callaghan) get a trial? Did the Lord Mayor of Cork (McCurtain) get a trial? Did Father Griffin get a trial? Did hundreds of others who were found dead on the roadside or in their homes get

a trial? Would we of the I.R.A. whom they proposed to put out in ships which would never reach port, get a trial? I have already mentioned the case of the O'Brien brothers of Tipperary. That was trial by jury, but British trial by courtmartial was a mockery. They put up witnesses who were ready to commit perjury with impunity, as in the case of Whelan and Paddy Moran and a member of K. Company who was able to prove an alibi. The perjured evidence against this man was glaring. And then the admission of their Under Secretary, Sir Alfred Cope, that it was only necessary to prove that a man was a member of the I.R.A. to have him executed even though this man might never have carried a gun. But apparently there were and are people in this country whose sympathies lie towards England and who were prepared to shout murder if a Black and Tan or Auxiliary or even a dangerous spy lost his life by any means whatever at the hands of the I.R.A. in the war for freedom. At the same time when men of the I.R.A. were murdered or illegally executed or tortured, or when private citizens were murdered or when degrading acts against young girls, women and children were published, these imperial minded people would say that if the people remained at peace these things would not happen. We were to perpetually accept British rule and all would be well. Fortunately people of this type were not numerous.

As to the success of this operation! In a few days Lloyd George commissioned Bishop Clune of Australia to come to Dublin to talk peace. Bishop Clune was on

holidays in London, and in nine days after the executions he was in Dublin on a peace mission. He met Mick Collins on the 1st December 1920.

On Monday evening November 21st the British military and Auxiliaries and Black and Tans held up a big portion of the south side of the city of Dublin. Houses were searched and people were stopped in the streets and searched. Barricades were placed on the canal bridges and the public were not allowed to cross in either direction. This happened at 6.30 in the evening. I had made arrangements during the day with Liam Lucas to collect some arms and grenades that had not been used the previous day. I was anxious to protect them. He did not arrive at the appointed time and this nearly cost him his life, as when he arrived at the rear of 22 Upr. Baggot St. the British military were in occupation. A D.M.P. (Jack Dooley) was on duty in the lane and he just said "Skip it Lucas". He skipped down another lane and dumped the arms and got away safely. Had he been caught the rope was waiting.

I left off work about 5.30 and the shop closed at 6 p.m. The moment the shop was closed two military lorries drove up and the soldiers burst into the shop and held up the staff which consisted of five girls and one man - Mr. Courtney - an accountant. Mr. Courtney had no political affiliations, but he was arrested and interned in Ballykinlar. On the premises at the time were the books taken from the Volunteer Hall at 44 Farnell Square. They thought that they had stumbled on to something great. They carried out most

of the goods in the shop and loaded them on to the lorries. More goods they tried to give away to the children in the back lane. They were disgusted when these were refused and the goods thrown away. Anything which they could not get rid of in this way they destroyed. They also removed the account books. I had a very valuable library and these books were packed into sacks and taken away. Some of the account books were later returned but not all. I was looking on from the top of the street when the lorries pulled up, but got away safely to South Circular Road, Kilmainham. The business was destroyed, and as goods were very scarce and expensive it was very difficult to renew business again; it was ruined for all time. While this destruction was going on in the shop the girls were held up for over four hours. This is only an example of even worse things which happened all over Ireland during the War for Independence. Two of the girls in the shop were able to get home in good time as they had not to cross the canal bridges, but the other three, two daughters, Carmel and Una, and an assistant, Annie Lucas, had to cross the bridge and were again held up for a long time. While they were there only the military were allowed to cross. Now to their consternation Eamonn Fleming walked up to the barrier and was allowed to cross. This was, of course, good tact on Eamonn's part. Several of us in the D.R.A. practiced this scheme on previous occasions and it rarely failed. If one succeeded in contacting the outside soldier on duty and impressed on him that you were a friend, you were

allowed to pass and the next man asked no questions and you were away. Mick Collins got away in this manner from tight places, so did others, but it took some nerve.

The barricades were removed at a late hour. I had to remain in close hiding for a few days, but one gets tired of this and so I went back to duty when the order came to renew activities.

Two men were executed for their supposed part in Sunday's action. They were condemned on perjured evidence. Paddy Moran was an old friend of mine and so was Whelan. Neither of these men were on this particular operation, but the British had to have their revenge.

Curfew was now from 10 p.m. until 5 a.m. Peace rumours were being circulated and peace emissaries were arriving in Dublin from time to time, but all stating that they were unofficial. British authorities in Ireland were being talked of all over the world and Lloyd George was anxious for peace, and he said so from time to time. But the rank and file of the I.R.A. in Ireland took no notice of these talks.

Griffith and McNeill were in Mountjoy prison and there were rumours that they had had discussions with some of the British emissaries. In Bishop Clune's talks with Lloyd George before coming here, one of Lloyd George's claims was that the I.R.A. should surrender their arms (he was not asking for much). On another occasion he said that Ireland could have peace

on terms, and Fr. O'Flannagan sent him a telegram asking him were his terms. At this time Fr. O'Flannagan knew of the rumour about Griffith and McNeill discussing terms in Mountjoy and knew that Mick Collins had had discussions with Bishop Clune. So he tried his hand at peace making, but he was sorry. He met Lloyd George on January 11th 1921 and he did not think much of him. Still the I.R.A. took no notice. Rather they intensified the fight.

December 12, 13, 14 Bishop Clune published a statement that Lloyd George would agree to a truce on the surrender of arms. Dublin Castle waived the surrender of arms but Lloyd George said no.

On the 13th December Cork city was on fire. Martial law had been proclaimed on the 11th, and during the curfew hours the British military and police set fire to a great portion of the city.

On the 18th December a detective named O'Sullivan was shot in Henry St., Dublin. He was getting near Mick Collins's office in the street and he was already a convicted man.

The British military in armoured cars were patrolling the streets at night with searchlights and many people were arrested during curfew hours. This night work was keeping the British army on wartime conditions and gave them little rest, and in the daytime when the Black and Tans were attacked in the streets the military were called out. By the end of December

it was announced that the British Cabinet were changing their opinions about peace in Ireland. Irish propaganda was being widely read in many countries all over the world, and English men were being questioned about atrocities in Ireland and a large section of the English people were demanding peace. But the war in Ireland was getting more serious and Dublin was only beginning to strike seriously.

In December 1920 de Valera was home from the U.S.A. and peace talks were getting publicity.

The Black and Tans were now carrying hostages in order to protect themselves from attack. These hostages were usually well known people, and the reason they were carried in the military and Black and Tan lorries was to prevent these lorries being attacked while the hostages were in them.

On January 13th J.J. Walsh was arrested in Cork city. J.J. stated early in the fight that when Cork started to fight they would show the way, and they did and he was with them.

On January 2nd there were armed attacks in Nassau St. and Merrion Square on British Forces.

A meeting of Dáil Éireann was held early in January after de Valera's arrival home.

Towards the end of December 1920 when K. Company was on patrol near Butt Bridge, a young lad who was following them around for some time was challenged by Billy Byrne as to why he was doing this. He said "Oh,

in case one of you drop a gun. I want to be around to pick it up". The Company adopted him and from that time onwards he was the most useful scout in the city of Dublin. He could time cars to within a few minutes leaving the various barracks. He was most useful to the Company, the Battalion and to the A.S.U. His name was Freddy Lawlor. The boys of K. Company called him "Bonar Law". He had been well known to the men of the Company previously but they considered that he was too young for active service, but from now on he was one of the K. Company men.

Chapter XVI.

Purchase of arms in England,
 K. Company attack on British military,
 List of British atrocities published in the Irish Bulletin,
 Cope offers peace terms,
 Lord French replaced by Lord Edmund Talbot,
 G.H.Q. dump in Pembroke Rd.,
 G.H.Q. intrigues,
 Continuous attacks by I.R.A. in Dublin city and county,
 Peace talks continue, Burning of the Custom House,
 K. Company complimented by Chief of Staff,
 Truce.

In the early part of 1921 the 3rd Battalion were poorly armed and an effort was made to try to purchase some. For this purpose each Company was asked to raise £50 or more per Company. The eight Companies promptly responded. I was treasurer of this fund which was separate from the Q.M.'s department. As a number of men in the Battalion knew a couple of men in Manchester who might be able to procure these arms, four of us - Mick Chadwick, McNeill, Kirby and I - were detailed to travel to Manchester. I was sent to see that the young boys did not get into trouble. We met our men in the Midland Hotel, but we were not as successful as we wished. We found that G.H.Q. had agents there already, and that the Cork Brigades were paying any price asked for arms or ammunition. There was not much room for a third party. The boys got a few revolvers and our friends arranged to get us revolver

parts, hammers, springs etc. These turned out very useful. We arranged for shipment of rifles, but they did not arrive up to the time of the Truce. It was at any rate an effort and we got home safely.

In the first few weeks of February 1921 K. Company brought off a big operation in the Merrion Square area. This was the only operation carried out by one single Company in Dublin. There were about 60 men on this job under Capt. Harry O'Farrell. The information was that a number of Auxie lorries would leave Beggars Bush Barracks at a given time. The Companies were mobilised and the guns had to be borrowed from other Companies. Every precaution was taken to protect any men who might be wounded. A hospital was established on the north side of the city and first aid was available. When the lorries arrived at the junction of Merrion Sq. and Er. Mount St. fire was opened and continued until after they had passed the Kildare St. Club. Fire was returned by the military, but the casualties were two doctors who were entering a house in Merrion Sq. No member of K. Company was hit, although every man was exposed in the open - there was no cover. The British military casualties were never announced, but they were believed to be heavy. The attack on the military as such in the streets was not intended by G.H.Q. It was the Auxiliaries who were supposed to be in the lorries, and it was upon them that the attack was intended. But the lorries came along and it made no difference to the men of K. Company what section of the British Forces they were attacking.

The Irish Bulletin published a list of atrocities carried out by the British military and police in Ireland as follows:

1. Torturing of prisoners.
2. Assassination of men and boys in their homes and on the streets and in prison.
3. The murdering of women, children and clergymen.
4. The seducing of Irish women and girls.
5. The flogging and maltreatment of groups of civilians taken in the villages and countryside.
6. The issuing and enforcing of crawling and suchlike humiliating and degrading orders.
7. The taking of men from their work and forcing them to do military duty or work at military labour as slave gangs.
8. The burning and looting of factories and creameries, shops and dwellings. The destruction of farmsteads and farm produce. The killing and maiming of livestock.

A full list of these outrages for a whole year was published.

Alfred Cope, British Under Secretary, was busy trying to arrange peace terms; that was what he was appointed for. He was a quiet worker and avoided the spy rings. Through Judge O'Connor, who considered himself a good Irishman but was a better imperialist, he was able to make contacts. He contacted Mick Collins easily and met him in Martin Fitzgerald's house in Ardnalea, Dundrum. Mick Chadwick who was an I.R.A. officer operating in this area, got to know that Cope was visiting Ardnalea and asked permission from G.H.Q. to attack. He got orders to do nothing until he got a written order. Martin Fitzgerald was owner of the

Freeman's Journal and Piaras Beasley was leader writer on that paper and Mick Collins Publicity Agent. Some of the rooms over Martin Fitzgerald's business premises in Abbey St. were used by sections of the I.R.A. G.H.Q and, so far as Mick Collins was concerned, contact with Cope was easy and vice versa. But he was not satisfied with meeting Mick Collins and tried other channels of approach. He wanted to meet Cathal Brugha, or as he called him "the man with the quare name". It was strange that Mick carried on these talks on his own as both Dev. and Cathal Brugha were available. But neither of them were members of the I.R.B., and it was the I.R.B. who decided whatever peace was to be made, and men were being executed and losing their lives during these negotiations.

Judge O'Connor knew Mrs. Nugent for some time, and he found out by some means that she could make contact with others of the Government party besides Mick Collins. And when she met him (Cope) in Judge O'Connor's house, it was then that he mentioned "the man with the quare name". But contact with Cathal Brugha at this or at any other time was a difficult matter. He could not be found in a short space of time and so no one bothered. It is doubtful if he would have taken part in these proposed negotiations. Mick was always available and that was the type of man the I.R.A. wanted, and so the Minister of Defence was forgotten. Verbal messages passed from Cope through Mrs. Nugent. One of these messages she got through to de Valera. This message offered full fiscal autonomy and various other tempting phrases. De Valera replied on a typed slip that until these terms were put on paper his

attitude would remain dormant. Mrs. Nugent brought back this message and Cope put the offer in writing. This offer and Dev.'s typed slip were the only items of negotiation which I saw. I was taking little interest in them and I saw little hope in them. I just said "You may try to make peace but I have to carry on making war."

On March 4th 1921 curfew was changed to 9 p.m. and on March 21st to 8 p.m. Dáil Éireann held another session in the second week of march.

The Belfast boycott was intensified. Very little goods of any description were coming in from the North.

K. Company were not idle where spies were concerned. On one occasion Liam Lucas and some of the men in his section arrested an Englishman who was acting in this country as a "Soap Box Orator". They searched him and saw by his papers that he was a British spy. It was late in the evening when this happened. They sent word to the proper quarters but got no instructions up to curfew and, consequently, they released the prisoner but retained his papers. On another occasion they arrested a man in a public house in Upr. Baggot St. They went through the same procedure with the same result. It was discovered in the Intelligence department next day that this was a dangerous spy for whom they had been looking. He was later followed up by two Intelligence officers to London and back to Westland Row station where they lost him. He was a disappearing artist. This man applied for his

papers during the Truce period and they were returned to him.

On one occasion the Company dump in Erne St. was not considered safe, and for the purpose of transferring it to another place they got an ass and cart and loaded up the arms and other military material. On their journey to the new premises they ran into a British military hold up. The military were searching an area between Upper and Lower Mount St. Lucas and another man from his section were in charge of the ass and his load, and when the military stopped them and were about to make a search, the ass refused to obey orders, and the military instead of searching helped the boys by pushing and pulling the ass until they were clear of the area of the British operations. The stubborn ass was useful on this occasion.

On March 14th in an attack on the Black and Tans in Pearse St., young Fitzgerald was killed and a man named Traynor captured and later executed.

At the end of March the British military stumbled accidentally on the Irish Bulletin office in Molesworth St. None of the staff was arrested but the office equipment was removed to Dublin Castle, and Basil Clarke, the British propaganda agent, having got the addresses to which the Bulletin was usually posted, started publishing this propaganda paper as if it were still being published in the ordinary way. But he was not a smart propagandist and he made a mess of it. He soon gave it up as a bad job. His first

publication was discovered as a fake by those to whom it was sent, and the real Bulletin was in working order in a day or two.

On April 2nd it was announced that Lord French was being replaced by Lord Edmund Talbot. This was the first time in the history of British rule in Ireland that a Catholic Lord Lieutenant was appointed by England.

There were now 76,000 British soldiers in Ireland, including Cavalry, Tank Corps and armoured cars in great numbers.

Curfew was again changed to 10 p.m. until 5 a.m. These curfew hours made it difficult for the carrying out of evening attacks on the British military and Black and Tans as most of the members of the I.R.A. were working in business houses and various other occupations, and if early attacks were ordered they had to leave off work early in order to take part in these operations; but orders were always obeyed. We still carried on our classes and special services without interruption.

Some people have written lengthy stories about Mick Collins, his movements and escapes, but I have not yet seen any mention of the house in St. Mary's Road, Ballsbridge, (Andy Woods bought this house for Mick Collins in his (Andy Woods) own name) or the fact that he enjoyed an early morning drink and also that he depended on the public for his safety. Mick and many other important men had special protective guards, but he was the only one who succeeded from time to time in

escaping from his guards. This caused a lot of trouble. Another man whom it was easier to protect was Kevin O'Higgins. He slept at times in Dundrum with a string tied to his toe and the guards were sitting on the railway bank ready to give the signal in case of danger. As a result of these guards a number of men were kept on long stretches of duty without any recognition for their services. On the morning of Mick Collins's escape in Mespil Road, John McCluskey had his children waiting at points in case Mick came along. These children knew him well.

When I was on the run in 1920 and 1921 I often met Mick cycling along Mespil Road to Miss Hoey's house. At odd times he might stop for a moment, but one morning when I got to Baggot St. Bridge I found John McCluskey on guard in order to stop him in case he came along. I relieved McCluskey and he was able to go elsewhere. Mick was warned and did not arrive. The Auxiliaries were in occupation of the house waiting for him, and by a clever move Miss Hoey was able to get word to McCluskey at the Land Bank. This was proof of the trust which he had in this man. How well this trust was repaid, and John McCluskey was a member of K. Company.

Another one of Mick's movements which I have never seen mentioned was when he was in occupation of the house in St. Mary's Road. He had no hesitation in walking out of this house in the morning in his bare head and coming up the lane at the rear of Upper Baggot St. and into Morony's for a drink. On a few occasions he was before time and I gave Morony's front window a tap as a signal to open the back gate.

On April 29th 1921 the outgoing British mails were captured at the G.P.O. These mails were censored by G.H.Q. I.R.A. Intelligence Department and reposted. A great amount of information was gained from the captures of these mails.

One night in the early part of April two D.M.P. men were on duty in Pembroke Lane, the rear of Pembroke Road. One of them found the small door leading into what may be called our famous dump, open. Mrs. Cullen had fowl in the garden, and it was suspected that some robber or robbers had got in to steal the fowl, and when they discovered where they were left in a hurry and forgot to close the door. These two D.M.P. men went in and found themselves in what they recognised as an I.R.A. workshop. The machinery for doing special types of work was installed there. Portion of the machinery was used for cutting .303 ammunition and converting it into .45 ammunition for revolvers. (We were certainly poorly armed). The D.M.P. men closed the door, and next morning one of them who knew Mrs. Cullen personally and had been a comrade of her late husband, called to see her and told her that the back door was opened on the previous night. She treated him to a drink and told him that everyone had enough to do these days to mind their own business. She came to me at once and I reported the matter to the Q.M.G. He considered that the place was no longer safe and had all the machinery and equipment removed to another stable in the same lane. This new place was discovered in a few weeks, and indeed the discovery was not a great loss.

The converting of the .303 ammunition into .45 ammunition was a complete failure. The charge was too powerful and was damaging the revolvers and injuring the wrists of the men who had to use them. I saw several cases of damaged guns and swollen wrists at my small arms classes.

When the equipment was removed from the dump a quantity of papers which were also stored there were left behind, and when I examined the place to see that no traces of the purpose for which it had been used were left behind, I discovered the bundles of papers. On examining them I discovered that portion of them contained unsold editions of An tÓglach. The balance of the papers made up the official correspondence and despatches between I.R.A. G.H.Q. (including the Intelligence Department) and the Brigade O/Cs, Adjutants and I.Os. There were also the application forms from every I.R.A. Company in Ireland for registration, containing the names of Company Captains and all Company officers and N.C.Os. It was well these papers were left behind when removing, as if they had been taken to the new dump they would surely have been captured and trouble would follow. The British authorities only wanted proof of membership of the I.R.A. in order to execute. When I met Cope later and I challenged him about the execution of Paddy Moran and Whelan, he said it was only necessary to prove membership to execute. Paddy Moran was executed on perjured evidence and by a photograph taken of himself in Volunteer uniform.

I brought Eamonn Fleming in the evening to the dump. When he saw the papers and realised how serious it would be if they were captured, we decided on burning them, but Mrs. Cullen who was present said that if we burned them there the smoke so caused would draw attention to the place and that we should burn them in the range. But they were not burned. Mrs. Cullen said she had buried them and had forgotten where. For years we considered them to have been lost. In March 1937 Mrs. Cullen sent for me and told me she had found the papers. She had placed them in her husband's police box and buried them. When she removed from her original home in Pembroke Road she dug up the papers and brought them with her. She put the box in a greenhouse to act as a bench and there they remained for 16 years. The greater portion of them are in a perfect state of preservation.

Some people who have been in the habit of writing books and stories about the early operations of the Volunteers state from time to time that all records were lost. They are not all lost as these documents date up to October 1920 and give full details of the simplest operations and the general activities of the Volunteers all over Ireland in preserving law and order when the R.I.C. were beaten out of many parts of the country. I was working on them for a few months in a room in Griffith Barracks by arrangement with Colonel (Ginger) O'Connell, needless to say without any remuneration. After a period of work carefully sorting out and connecting damaged papers, I went away

for some months on business and when I returned I found that the papers had been removed to the archives. I sincerely hope that the government will not allow any historical muddler to have access to them. Only the men who took an active part in the fight for independence are able to give a true interpretation of the meaning of their contents. Also, quite a number of these papers cannot be published for a great many years. The I.R.A. had their own internal troubles, and the activities of a few really good men who are still alive would be misinterpreted, but the coming generations will have plenty of good reading about the actions of their forefathers in the fight for independence.

I saw Eamonn Fleming after the discovery of these documents and he was delighted that they had escaped. He then told that Mick Collins had sent papers to me at a later date for safe keeping, but I never received them. Apparently there was a hold-up by the British military and the messenger had left them somewhere. I tried every possible place but failed to find them. If ever they are found the official documents of the whole period will be complete, and a member of K. Company was responsible for the preservation of these historical documents.

While peace talks were in progress the Central Council of the I.R.B. were anxious to get Austin Stack out of Dublin. He was definitely opposed to any

backdoor negotiations. He also refused to agree to decisions which were being discussed as to what terms would be accepted short of complete independence. The I.R.A. had a man in the Auxiliaries' office at Beggars Bush Barracks (a very dangerous position). A Dublin lady who was well known to both myself and Mrs. Nugent and who also knew Austin Stack, was supposed to have written a letter offering to point out Austin Stack to the Auxiliaries for £100. This letter was abstracted by the I.R.A. man in Beggars Bush Barracks, and its contents were believed to be genuine by most people connected with the I.R.A. or Cumann na mBan. This lady claimed that the letter was a forgery. She discussed the affair with Austin Stack later and he was satisfied that it was a forgery. She demanded the production of the letter but no notice was taken of this demand. I believe that this letter is still in existence in the archives and could still be proved to be right or wrong.

In the early months of 1921 the fight, which was being waged with fury in most parts of Ireland, developed into open warfare in Dublin city and county. Successful attacks were carried out on the Black and Tans almost every evening. The Active Service Unit, under the command of Paddy Flanagan, carried out daily operations, and the evening jobs were done by the various Company patrols. The streets from George's St. to Portobello Bridge were known as "The Dardanelles". Attacks were made on Black and Tan lorries almost every evening. When these attacks occurred the lorries

picked up speed. They were never known to stop but drove straight to the nearest military barracks and reported. Then the military came out and held up the district and searched people and often made arrests, but they rarely got one of the attackers. I.R.A. men engaged on these attacks were for the most part working men and men engaged in offices and business houses. It was nothing unusual to see a boy working behind a counter in a public house suddenly throw off his apron, put on his coat and tell the boss that he would be back in a few hours. This boy would have just received a mobilisation order to be on duty at a given place. The boss passed no remarks when the boy returned. This was a daily occurrence in every walk of life in the city. Every man obeyed orders when he got them and the bosses took no notice. These men were all good workers, honest and straightforward, and they were recognised as such. And so the fight went on. G. Company patrolled the Harcourt St. area. In an attack at Harcourt St. Station they lost some men owing to an error in tactics. I mention G. Company because two of their boys, Alfie Sweeney and McCormack, usually left their guns in the care of Mrs. Nugent when going off patrol and called for them later.

On May 5th de Valera had a conversation with Sir James Craig in Dublin in connection with peace proposals. On May 13th a general election was held in the 26 counties and 124 republican candidates were returned unopposed out of 128 vacant seats. There were no contests and the other four seats went to Trinity College

members. In a few days after the declaration of the poll in the general election for the 26 counties, Lord Edmund Talbot, the new Lord Lieutenant, called a meeting of Parliament for Leinster House. The 128 newly elected members were summoned but only four attended; these were the four members elected for Trinity College, a British institution. The republican members ignored the summons, which was issued with the hope of causing a division, and at the same time peace negotiations were being pressed forward by the English agents. The English government who for years refused to put the Home Rule Bill into operation, now tried to force a parliament on the people of the 26 counties against their unanimous decision in the general election. The gun had done its work where talk failed. There was nothing done at this supposed meeting of Parliament, it lasted only a few minutes. The general public took no notice of this supposed important event, and in a few days K. Company brought off a successful ambush in the immediate neighbourhood of where it was intended to hold this Parliament, and at the same period the Custom House was burned. The I.R.A. were not listening to talk, they were hitting hard.

Curfew was now from 10.30 until 4 a.m. but we were able to carry on the war.

Some of the American pressmen were now taking part in the peace talks. They met Lloyd George and also interviewed de Valera. They stated that Lloyd George was anxious to meet de Valera. A meeting of Dáil Éireann was held in the second week of May.

On the 24th May K. Company brought off a successful attack on the Black and Tans in Merrion Row. This attack was well timed and none of the attackers was injured, but there were heavy casualties among the enemy.

On the 25th May the Custom House in Dublin was burned. The 2nd Battalion with the A.S.U. were responsible for this operation. Most of the Dublin Brigade were 'standing to' on this day. K. Company were ordered to hold up the Fire Brigade at Tara St. so as to prevent them from turning out to the fire. This was not a difficult job as far as the Fire Brigade was concerned, as there were members of K. Company in the Fire Brigade in Tara St. (Jack Darmon and Lieut. Bohan). K. Company had men in a number of useful positions. When the Custom House was well alight they got into some ambulance and drove to Pembroke St. where they were disbanded in safety.

On June 27th K. Company brought off another successful ambush on the Black and Tans at the junction of Westland Row and Lombard St.

When the Dublin Brigade started their offensive in a very definite way against the enemy in the streets of Dublin, the British military erected armour plated huts on the Loop Line railway over the Liffey. These huts were occupied by British sentries for a considerable time, but as the huts were of no military value they were eventually dismantled and the armour plating was placed on a siding at George's Quay Railway Station. The I.R.A. Headquarters decided to capture this plating

as it could be put to very useful purposes, even for the construction of our own armoured cars. The amount of plating was considerable.

K. Company was selected for the job of removing the armour plating to a place of safety. The men first removed the material to ground level until transport, which was promised, arrived. This transport did not arrive, but the K. Company men had other reserves. They opened up a local carrier's stables and yoked up the horses and lorries and moved off with the plating to a place of safety. The Company Officer in charge of the operation (which was carried out during curfew) Harry O'Farrell, received a letter of special commendation from the Chief of Staff of the I.R.A. for the careful and thorough manner in which this action was carried out. K. Company were the only Company in the Dublin Brigade to get such commendation from G.H.Q.

On June 27th de Valera was arrested in Blackrock and released next day.

On June 22nd Lloyd George sent an invitation to Sir James Craig and de Valera to meet him. But the fight never slackened in the city, county or in any part of Ireland. 'The Dublin I.R.A. Reserve were in action'.

When the first attacks on the police convoys took place in the country in 1919, a good many members of Dáil Éireann were not pleased with the attitude of the Irish government. They were to give the Peace Conference a chance. But there were men in Ireland who had as

much reliance on the Peace Conference as they had on British promises, and so the attacks continued and any attempt to stop them was useless. And indeed they were getting plenty of provocation from the police, and this attitude continued until Cathal Brugha issued his declaration of war in June 1919.

In Dublin control of the I.R.A. activities was easier. Orders for the week were read by the Company O/C at the weekly parades, and these orders had to be obeyed. And it was not until the Black and Tans started to parade the streets and provoke the public that G.H.Q. issued orders for attack. Even at that these attacks were intended to be confined to the Black and Tans and Auxiliaries. Attacks on the ordinary military were not encouraged except where they could be relieved of their arms without shooting. But when the Dublin boys, both city and county, got on the move, they made up for their long period of waiting. Their attacks increased daily until for a long time before the truce every Company in the city and county of Dublin had their almost daily attacks in their patrol areas. And the Active Service Units were striking harder and harder each day in every part of the city and suburbs. The enemy never knew where the next attack would come from. They expected one from every street corner. And as may be seen from various reports of successful attacks, the Dublin boys were showing their paces when the Truce came.

During the War of Independence the National University students were a great source of help to the

I.R.A. They were members of the different Companies and some of them were sent as officers in several parts of Ireland. These students in the many and varied I.R.A. positions which they held, gave distinguished service.

On July 4th de Valera had a meeting with Lord Middleton, Sir Robert Woods, Sir Maurice Dockrell and Andrew Jameson. These men represented the Unionist minority in Ireland and also the Protestant minority. When this meeting was reported it was apparent that peace negotiations were being discussed, but the active men of the I.R.A. took no notice. They carried on their attacks as usual. The British military in Kerry at this time tried to arrange a truce with the 3rd Brigade in Kerry. This request was refused.

On Saturday July 9th, 1921, a Truce was signed in the Mansion House to take effect on Monday 11th July at 12 noon. And so came an end to the greatest and most spectacular fight which Ireland ever made for her independence. There were great men who took part in this fight whose names rarely appeared in print. A man like Rory O'Connor working behind the scenes all the time; no one heard of him. Capt. T.J. Cullen about a week before the truce found himself in hospital completely exhausted. Then there were the I.R.A. Headquarters staff and women of Cumann na mBan; women who were not of Cumann na mBan. In the country districts particularly, the men of the I.R.A. could not possibly have carried on without these courageous women. They carried their despatches. They fed and

housed the Flying Columns. They protected men on the run. In the gallant operations carried on by the women of Ireland, I can include in many cases the good nuns of the hospitals and convents. The men were always grateful, and in referring to this great help they always say 'God bless them'. The monasteries and colleges also played their part. There was always food and rest for our tired men. I remember one particular case very well. Brother Joachim in Dominic St. Priory always had a good meal ready for Mick Collins or for any of the G.H.Q. staff who found it difficult to go elsewhere. In fact any of the men on active service were always very welcome. During the whole period when many men were on the run, in the country districts the door was always open, and in Dublin and other cities there were always houses where the I.R.A. were welcome. And a most surprising thing was that the children never talked about strange men staying in their houses. And again what a pity that this great spirit in the country should come to an end. The people were now talking peace and disputing among themselves, but the friendly feeling still prevailed.

CHAPTER XVII.

Discussions on the Republic and Industrial Development.
Execution of Sir Henry Wilson. Official Despatches.
The Irish Doodles. Recruiting during the Truce.
My Talk with Cope.

I have mentioned Reverend Dr. P. Brown's part in the Cavan Election, when he came out on the public platform when all the Republican leaders were imprisoned in England and the only able speakers left were himself and his friend Father M. O'Flanagan.

But coming out in the open at public meetings was not his principal work in the Republican movement. He was a Professor in Maynooth College. This work left him free at weekends and during holiday periods. With his sister, Miss Margaret Brown (now Mrs. McEntee), he occupied a flat in Pembroke Road and he was usually to be found there at weekends. This flat could be described as a Salon of Intellectual Republicans. With Miss Brown's University friends and Dr. Brown's friends and others of a trustworthy type, these weekend reunions were of great assistance to the movement generally, as all matters relating to the general conditions of the country were freely discussed without fear or favour. These discussions were of great value to the people in charge of propaganda and military operations. Frank Gallagher, who was editor of the propaganda Irish Bulletin, was a regular visitor. Father O'Flanagan was often to be found there as were also members of the Army H. Q., including Seán McEntee. He often called to Baggot Street to see if the way was clear: like other important men he was advised to escape arrest and one never knew when a house might be raided. (An interesting item of these troubled times was the MacEntee-Brown wedding in University Church, St. Stephen's Green. Curfew was from

8 p.m. until 3 a.m. and, as Seán MacEntee was a wanted man, a daylight wedding was not safe, so the wedding party entered the church before curfew hours and remained during the curfew period).

The discussions were not always on military matters. The establishment of a Home Government was taken for granted. Once the new Republican campaign started after 1916 and the Sinn Féin programme of Industrial Development was generally discussed, the financial position of the country got serious consideration and the opinions expressed from time to time were of great assistance at public meetings. The Army H.Q. took little notice of these talks. There was hardly an industrial minded man among the whole staff: they gave their whole attention to the Army. These industrial and financial discussions were carried further when the Republican Government was operating after the 1918 Election. They set up an Industrial Commission of Inquiry with Darrell Figgis as Secretary. This Commission travelled to various centres all over the country and they collected a large amount of information. Another item which got serious consideration after the 1918 election was a new constitution. Larry Ginnell wanted the Brehon Laws. There was a lot of time devoted to the wording of the Constitution and so, while the Army organisation was doing its own work, there were others who, while deeply involved in Army operations, were giving serious consideration to the general welfare of the country under a Home Government. It was early decided that the old Sinn Féin industrial policy of "as good and as cheap" would have to be changed to one of General Industrial Protection.

As already stated, after the supposed German plot,

when most of the Republican leaders were arrested and deported, Mick Collins assumed a commanding position both in the Volunteers and in Sinn Féin. He eventually succeeded in establishing himself in this position to such an extent, particularly in the Volunteers, that he was accepted as the man in control. When he issued orders they were never questioned by the officers or men, and although Cathal Brugha was Minister for Defence and laid down definite rules to the effect that no executions were to be carried out without his sanction, Mick in a few cases ignored these orders. In one case, three British I.Os. were executed in Cork. A man whom I knew personally was sent down by Mick to see that these executions were carried out. The cruelty of these men certainly called for the death penalty but Cathal Brugha would not sign the death warrant for any individual unless he was proved guilty of the murder of individual Irishmen or Irishwomen. These men were tried by courtmartial in Cork and sentenced to death. These were the men who tortured Seán Hales and one of his comrades. The tortures in this case were really revolting. The finger nails were pulled out with a pliers and the pliers were used on other parts of the body. Hales survived but his comrade was driven insane. The leader of the torture gang pleaded for mercy when his hour arrived but orders were orders. The spy, Quinlisk, was another case. This man was a member of the Casement Brigade in Germany. He afterwards joined the I.R.A. in Dublin and was attached to the Intelligence Department. He was a paid man but he was not satisfied with the amount he was receiving and decided to augment his earnings from the British Secret Service, from the knowledge which he had gained in the I.R.A. Intelligence. He was afraid that his treachery would be discovered and admitted to

the I. R. A. that he had been in communication with the British, but that it was only for the purpose of gaining information and that his service with the I. R. A. would continue honourable. This man was already suspected and a trap was set for him. He was sent to Cork to work in the Intelligence Department there. He was to report to a certain address at a given time. He was given the names of the men in the Cork Intelligence Department with whom he was to work and who were to meet him at this address. His movements from Dublin were carefully watched: he did not go to the address as arranged. Needless to say the Cork Intelligence did not go either but the British military did. They were waiting for a great capture. This man had told the British authorities the whole story and he was foolish enough to go to Cork where he was arrested by the I. R. A. and executed. My friend also travelled to Cork to see this execution carried out.

Another instance of Mick's individual orders was the shooting of Sir Henry Wilson in London. This man was in control of the British Army and was consequently in a very powerful position. His attitude towards Ireland was well known. He was strongly opposed to any form of freedom in Ireland and was an ardent supporter of the Six-County Orange Party in their opposition to Home Rule and later was opposed to the Treaty which was signed in London. He gave public expression to his opposition. He was engaged in a secret movement to attack Southern Ireland from the North whenever an opportunity presented itself, and, considering the difficulties of the Border, it would be simple to find such an opportunity. The opponents of the Treaty in the South were giving him hope and at the time when serious discussions were taking place between the Four Courts' executive and the Free State Executive Council, large numbers of British troops were moved to Derry and Fermanagh border. Mick Collins

then decided to send a party of Free State soldiers to that part of the Border. The rifles in the possession of the Free State Army at the time were rifles purchased from England and would be recognised as such if captured. The Four Courts executive decided to lend Mick a number of rifles for this expedition. Whatever mistakes occurred, the Free State party were captured and disarmed. These rifles were lost to the Republican Party. Mick had by this time a full account of Wilson's intrigue to attack the south and smash the Treaty and, as happened in the Curragh Mutiny, the British Government would find an excuse for his actions: but Mick decided otherwise. He ordered the shooting of Wilson. The men who carried out this job were captured and later executed. While awaiting execution, an attempt was organised by the I. R. A. in London to rescue them. The details of the proposed rescue were well planned and would most likely have succeeded were it not for the fact that one of the men had only one leg. This would impede his movements to such an extent as to make it impossible to rescue him. Paddy Flanagan, late of the Dublin active service unit, was in London on business at the time. He was asked to remain over to take charge of the proposed operation. When the situation was carefully surveyed the attempt was abandoned. Paddy returned to Dublin. The Four Courts attack was on in Dublin at the time of his arrival. When he reported for duty he was suspended by his Commandant, and that was the reason why Paddy Flanagan took no part in the fighting in the Civil War.

Official Despatches.

The official despatches now in the military archives will be of great interest whenever they are published. They will show the true conditions

prevailing in Ireland during the reorganising of the Irish Volunteers after the 1916 Rising. Following the surrender after Easter Week, men who were not arrested or interned continued to train. The greater number of these men in Dublin composed what was supposed to be the National Volunteers and, as such, were allowed to continue their training activities by the British Government on account of their association with the I.P.P. and, as may be seen from other parts of this story, were allowed to import a limited number of arms and ammunition under permit up to the early part of 1917.

After the return of the Irish Volunteers from the internment camps in Britain they gradually reformed their old companies. This was not such an easy matter as there was again a difference of opinion in the ranks between the men who had fought in Easter Week and the men who obeyed McNeill's orders. But new men were joining up and soon they were on the march again. The Roscommon, Clare and Longford election gave encouragement to the movement. After taking possession of 44 Parnell Square from the A.O.H. and I.P.P. and with the fusion of all the sections of the Volunteers, the ground was ready for the formation of a new army which eventually developed into the I.R.A. When 44 Parnell Square was seized it became the Headquarters of the new army now in process of formation. It was the meeting place of Dick McKee, Peadar Clancy, Seán O'Muirthuille, Mick Collins, Liam Tobin, M. Staines and others who, in later years, became the heads of the various army departments. It was also the meeting place of the central branch of the reorganised I.R.B.

K. Coy. were continually on guard in these early days. Mick Collins was official secretary of the

National Aid Association. There was a keen contest for this election. Paddy Belton was also a candidate for the position but the Plunkett influence elected Collins. With those who did not know him well he was not at all popular. He was inclined to be aggressive and impatient in his manner and he had no time for anyone who wanted to delay over the reorganising of the Volunteers. He enjoyed a good drop of whiskey and while he was acting as secretary of the National Aid in Exchequer Street his favourite bar was The Stag's Head, where there was a whiskey barrel known as 'Mick's Barrel'. If you met him there you would meet the genial, good natured man, gushing with friendship. I met him frequently on matters dealing with arms during this time and under these circumstances certainly he never drank to excess. When he was finished his work in the National Aid he took up the reorganising of the Volunteers wherever H.Q. were holding their meetings. On account of his forceful attitude at these meetings and his great energy for work, the other men of the Army Headquarters stood aside and allowed him to practically take complete control. There were many other men who were then better known and who could have taken command - men like Cathal Brugha or Dick McKee. When we took the rifles from 44 Parnell Square to Liam Pedlar's yard, Cathal Brugha took possession of them and we saw him no more. Others eligible were Austin Stack, Thomas Ashe and a few more. Dev. was too much occupied with the political issue to devote his full time to the army but the reorganising of the Volunteers went on smoothly. The various companies met and elected their officers. When the number of companies increased application forms for company registration were printed. These forms were filled in with the names of the company officer and junior officers; the adjutant and Q.M. The completed forms were returned through the Battalion

or Brigade to G.H.Q. This is where the official I.R.A. documents of the I.R.A. begin.

Later in 1918, as may be seen in other pages, Mick Collins sent out receipts for the various companies signed by himself and, as far as these companies were aware, Mick was the Head of the Army and he was accepted as such. In this capacity he acted as Adjutant-General, Chief of Staff, Director of Intelligence and Q.M.G. Despatches coming into these different departments were replied to by Mick as chief of any one particular Department. There were men engaged as heads of these Departments and these men did their work, but Mick Collins signed the replies as coming from himself and indeed most of them did. As activities increased and lines of communication became more difficult, and when the movements of heads of departments, including himself, became more restricted, the work was left in the hands of the heads of each Department and names were no longer signed: it merely stated Chief of Staff, Adjutant-General, Director of Intelligence, etc. The same applied to despatches coming from the different Brigades when a prearranged signature was used.

Names were frequently used in the case of despatches and as happened on many occasions in the case of courtmartials, all names concerned were used, including the names of the officers constituting the Court. The findings of these courtmartials were given in detail. There were cases where Brigades were suspended and here also the names of the individuals were given.

But to the Volunteers the interesting items are the local activities in the Brigade areas. The reports of attacks on military and police barracks make very

interesting reading. One particular case is worth recording: it was an attack on a large barracks in Co. Kerry. This despatch was forwarded by one of the Daly brothers. In giving details he stated that five number 9. grenades were thrown into the barracks when the police refused to surrender. These grenades failed to explode. The attackers then succeeded in setting the building on fire and the police surrendered, leaving their arms behind them. A number of the Volunteers then rushed into the building and secured the arms and ammunition. I.R.A. men never got medals corresponding to the Victoria or Iron Crosses or other decorations for bravery. If they did, this action is one case where they would surely have earned such medals. Five unexploded No. 9 grenades in a burning building left it a most dangerous place. To enter that building for the purpose of getting a dozen or more rifles and ammunition certainly called for 'guts'. But the guns were there and these boys saw to it that they were saved at a very definite risk to their lives. Adjutant Daly asked in his despatch why the grenades failed to explode and the Q.M.G. in his reply stated that it was the fault of the striking pin which was needle pointed, and that on account of the type of cap used it required a blunt striker to explode it. I was particularly interested in these caps as they were part of the ammunition seized at 44 Parnell Square. There were very large quantities of them and they were used successfully throughout the fighting for the purpose of manufacturing grenades and mines. They were originally intended for practice in a room with what were known as aiming rods. I never knew of one failing to explode when properly used. Brigadier Seán Connolly of Longford had trouble over the manufacture of poteen whiskey in Co. Leitrim. It was being distributed in his area and he asked for permission to

have its manufacture stopped. Liam Lynch wanted a stop put to emigration. Seán Wall had a similar request, but the greatest difficulty arose over the punishment of crimes. G.H.Q. were unable to find a definite direction in these cases and the Brigadier had to make his own decisions. Republican courts were sitting in all parts of the country and the I.R.A. men had to protect these courts and see that their decisions were obeyed. All local services came under the control of the Volunteers. All this administrative work added to their military operations kept the men in charge busy, and they had their own internal troubles. One Brigade Q.M. objected to any armed attack being made on the enemy forces unless the men making such an attack were able to protect the civilian population afterwards from reprisals. This dispute arose after the burning of Mallow but the Brigade officer in reply to G.H.Q. stated that any time the military attempted reprisals in his area they were driven back to barracks. And so the dispatches went on and in some future generation, when these things are published, they will run into dozens of volumes, and men who are already dead and partly forgotten and the men who will be dead when these publications take place and who are unknown today outside of their own areas will become great in the esteem of future generations. And great men they were, from the youngest recruit to the Brigadier.

The Brigade I.O. occupied a very difficult position. He was rarely known to the ordinary Volunteer. His education should be above that of the average countryman. He had to decode messages quickly while the wires were being tapped. The same applied to the Brigade Adjutant and Brigadier. But this was the I.Os. job. He knew the political opinions of almost all the people in his area. In many cases he moved around with what

may be called the best society and, in consequence of this the Volunteers became suspicious of him. The despatches in this department are very interesting and the Director of the Intelligence Department of the I. R. A. easily outwitted the British Intelligence Department.

A very interesting despatch came from Eoin O'Duffy. He wrote to Mick Collins stating that he found it impossible to continue as Brigadier in the Monaghan area owing to the local military and police activities and to appoint another Brigade O/c. He said that he would be in Dublin for a while on a certain date and that he would call to the New Ireland Insurance Office in Dawson Street and would Mick meet him there. Mick replied and told him that he was not to meet him there as that place was receiving a lot of attention of late. He suggested that he should call to Bachelors Walk and see Tom Cullen and he would deal with the matter. Tom Cullen was one of Mick's principal deputies. He was known as 'Big Tom'. O'Duffy came to Dublin and was appointed to the G. H. Q. staff as inspecting officer against Mick's wishes. O'Duffy had a big pull in Headquarters and was able to have Mick's objection overruled.

Interesting despatches in these official documents deal with the lines of communication and covering addresses. The covering address was as secret as the Intelligence Officer. The most unlikely people received these despatches by post or otherwise. They were generally ladies. Some correspondence dealing with this address arrangement came from Kilkenny from the Brigade Officer there. An inspecting officer from G. H. Q. was sent there and apparently his report was not satisfactory. Correspondence to this effect

passed between the Brigade officer and G.H.Q. This officer defending himself in one despatch stated that the inspecting officer on his return to Dublin sent him an important communication to his covering address, but that neither envelope was closed. The lady who received them was so annoyed that she refused to receive any more despatches and that none were to be sent until he found a new covering address. Another despatch from Kilkenny dealt with the proposal for the destruction of a court-house. In this case the property was owned by a lady who was well known to the I.R.A. and who would not apply for compensation. She would be deprived of the rent and this was largely her sole means of support. This lady wrote to Mrs. Kent and her letter was forwarded to G.H.Q. with a letter from Mrs. Kent and copies of this correspondence were sent to the Kilkenny Brigade officer. He wrote back saying that his Adjutant was a Leitrim man and that he also owned similar property and what would his position be if it were decided to destroy his property.

Seán Connolly, the Longford Brigadier, had a very good line of communication - the engine drivers, firemen and guards, reliable almost to a man. In these cases despatches were left with Miss Pilkinton in the Booking Office and she handed them over for delivery in Dublin to whatever man found it convenient to deliver them at an address in Dominick Street.

On one occasion despatches were delivered at a wrong address but Dublin was safe and they found their way to G.H.Q. in due course. Despatches from Dublin were sent in the same way: collected in Dominick Street and delivered to Miss Pilkinton in Longford.

Difficulties arose over correspondence coming by train from Derry and other stations on that line. The

men working on the trains usually left off work at Dundalk. They found at times that they could not easily dispose of them at this station but McQuill, who was the local Intelligence Officer, got over this difficulty. These men working the trains on all railway lines did great work during this difficult period. I heard it stated years after that there were difficulties over despatches. This only applied in Dublin. At no time was there any interruption in the lines of communication to or from Dublin.

After our first raids in Baggot Street and Mount Street by the British military the raids became more frequent by the military, Auxiliaries and Black and Tans. For a while customers were afraid to come into the shop and if a lorry load of military or Black and Tans was seen in the district the word went around "Another raid on Nugent's". These raiders were usually accompanied by armoured cars at both the back and the front of the house. No account of these raids ever appeared in the press. We were instructed by Headquarters not to report them. During the War of Independence, besides the £2,000,000 Dáil Éireann Loan which De Valera raised in America, a large sum of money known as the White Cross Fund was also raised in the U.S.A. The purpose of this fund was to compensate people for the destruction of property by the British military and police. This fund, while very large, was not nearly enough to pay for the damage. Consequently, business people principally, who suffered serious damage to their property and business, were in a great many cases ruined. Their business was completely destroyed. Debts were incurred. There were consequential losses which were never taken into consideration and so a great many families who, before their business and property were destroyed were in a very sound way of living, found themselves derelict. And in later years, when the

Government passed a Damage to Property Act, these people were only allowed a miserable compensation for damages to brick and mortar. Young unmarried men with no responsibility were in a far better position if they had to go on the run or, if they were in active service units, they lived free and were not in debt when the fight ended. They were able to find jobs through influence in Government Departments and in the Army and a great many of them made good. But for the man who lost his business there was little sympathy.

When recruiting for the I. R. A. was suspended there were a good many young men who had not joined up for various reasons, but the most of whom were sympathetic. And when fighting developed to a serious extent they were anxious to take part, but there was no room for them in the I. R. A. There were no arms and no opportunity for training them and so they had to remain outside the ranks and take apparently no active part in I. R. A. action. Quite a number of older men and some girls found themselves in the same position. The young girls were not members of Cumann na mBan and they were also compelled to remain outside. They thus found themselves in the peculiar position of wanting to help and not being allowed to do so as their position debarred them.

We have all heard of the 'Yankee Doodles'. Now we had Irish Doodles. Washington found himself in a somewhat similar position to that in which the I. R. A. found themselves in 1919-1920 & 21. His armies were badly armed and equipped and had not sufficient arms for all his men who were prepared to use them. But the young men were not idle. They hung on to the flanks, front and rear of the army. They pretended to be careless of what happened in the war. They attended

dance halls and public bars and on account of this apparently careless attitude they adopted the British called them 'Doodles', and the British Army bands played 'Yankee Doodle' in derision. But when the British surrendered at Saratoga they were compelled to play 'Yankee Doodle'. They discovered that the Doodle was the Secret Service of the American Army and when the surrender was taking place he took no chance for it is written that -

'Around Saratoga the Doodle waits
While the English surrender to General Gates.'

And the men and women of Ireland who were not officially attached to the I.R.A. acted in a somewhat similar fashion to the Yankees. They became the secret agents of the I.R.A. and, as is well recognised, we could not have carried on the war without their active help. The young women who were not members of Cumann na mBan were not suspected. The same applied to the men who did not belong to the I.R.A. and the greater number of them escaped attention.

In the official despatches between G.H.Q. and the Brigades, appeals were made by Brigade Commanders to have these girls in their areas officially recognised as active participants because their movements were not suspected and while no one can criticise the great work done by Cumann na mBan, it was often safer to have a dangerous message delivered by a girl who was not suspected and to allow the authorities to continue to watch the people whom they knew to be active. And, in the case of the men - a man who was not recognised by the British as an I.R.A. man was a safe person to take charge of the gun of an active member in case of searches which were frequent. We had a great number of such people in Dublin and their work was grand and so the

'Irish Doodles' did their work well and when the Truce came they joined up in thousands in preparation for any possible future action.

On the night of the Truce I was in 41 York Street and continued my class as usual. The house was crowded with I.R.A. men, most of them delighted with themselves, but some very glum. Paddy Flanagan was there and he was in very bad form. Some time previously a proposal had been made to him re the formation of some form of Guards. This proposal he refused (Paddy was Commander of the Dublin Active Services Unit) and Paddy Daly had been appointed Guards Commander. From the formation of the Active Service Unit all the men in this Unit were given a weekly allowance as they were wholetime men and on this, the evening of the Truce, Paddy was given the usual weekly pay by the Brigadier for himself and his men. He was told that this would be the last payment and that he was to report back to his own Unit. This was certainly poor recognition for one of the finest body of fighting men in Ireland: but this is not their story.

From this time onwards I continued with my classes almost every evening. As mentioned earlier, recruiting had been suspended during the War of Independence. But now recruits started to pour in and men were accepted. K. Coy. found that in about two weeks they had doubled their strength and Paddy Millar, who was a Lieutenant in K. Coy., was given charge of the recruits which formed a new company. Other Companies had like experiences. Noel Lemass and other junior officers got new companies and now that we were permitted to move freely wherever we liked, training became more intensive. From now until Four Courts Week I could not call a night my own. There were now from 12 to 14 hundred men in the Battalion and to every one of these I gave an individual small arms

lesson, including the Battalion officers. Cumann na mBan were anxious for small arms instruction and applied to the Commandant for permission for me to give them lessons, but I could not be spared and George Lawlor, one of my pupils, took on this class. I was still Assistant Battalion Q.M. and this work also took time, possibly two nights per week or more.

While the delegates were being selected for the London conference, Mr. Cope was very busy trying to find information as to what terms would or would not be accepted. He asked Mrs. Nugent if he could meet me but I refused to see him and he apparently made some representations to G.H.Q. and I was ordered to see him and told to be careful as he was a trained detective. I was told that he would try to place me at a disadvantage as regards to light. He would sit in the shade and endeavour to place me with the light shining in my face. I cared little for these instructions. I could only talk to him as the man in the street. I had no authority from G.H.Q. only what appeared to be an order. One night, when I returned from my class in York Street, I found Cope waiting for me in the sitting room in 22 Upper Baggot Street. He appeared to be the ordinary type of Englishman but he came to the object of his visit rapidly. I, of course, told him that he could place no reliance on anything which I might have to say, as I had no authority except the opinion of an ordinary individual. He said that that was just what he wanted. Would we insist on the Republic? I told him 'Yes'. He then explained the reasons why his Government could not agree to this. We would be a new Government on their front door, starting off without a penny of debt. I pointed out to him that England would see to it that we had a debt and quoted the actions of previous British Governments in starting civil war in France and in the U.S.A.

and elsewhere (all Britishers refer to these incidents as past history). But he said that on account of our freedom from debt our income tax would be only a small fraction of their income tax and that people in England who were living on small incomes would transfer their residence to Ireland. The same as some of them had done in earlier years when they went to countries in Europe where taxes were very low; and that no British Government, no matter what party it belonged to, could possibly agree to an independent Ireland on account of this tax question alone. I said I could not see any chance of agreement on any terms only independence and that we would have to start the war all over again. He said that that would not happen as the prestige of British diplomacy was at stake: that whenever England entered into a Truce or Armistice with any country with which she was at war, she always succeeded in making peace. He then mentioned Northern Ireland and what would happen to the Northern Parliament. Would we fight each other? I said 'No': that I was aware of the partition claim for a number of years and that if any such agreement was reached and that the British Government left Northern Ireland to itself without any British support, they would come into the Southern Parliament in a very short time without a shot being fired. That ended the conversation and before I went to bed I wrote a detailed account of our conversation and gave it to Countess Plunkett next morning. I discussed the whole affair with Count Plunkett afterwards, but whether it ever got to Headquarters or not, I do not know.

Cope was in Baggot Street on one other occasion. He wanted to talk with Father O'Flanagan before he left for America and Mrs. Nugent made the appointment through Judge O'Connor. Cope and Fr. O'Flanagan talked in the

dining room while in the front room were a number of other visitors. It was Sunday night and we had P.J. Fleming, Eamonn and Andy, their father. There was Andy Woods and Countess Plunkett, Jane Kissane, K. Brady, Paddy Brennan and a number of others. None of the visitors knew of Cope's presence. Father O'Flanagan was aware of my previous talk with Cope and whether or not he was satisfied with his talk with him, he did not say. But before he left for America we were discussing the general situation. He told me that the I.R.B. had decided by a majority vote to accept the best terms they could get from England.

Visit to Roscommon with Count Plunkett.
Signing of the Treaty. Some terms of the Treaty
and the Oath of Allegiance. Dev. repudiates the
Treaty. Definite break in Republican ranks.
Treaty approved by small majority. Attack on Four
Courts. Death of Mick Collins. Other Episodes of
the Civil War.

When the delegates left for London Count Plunkett decided to visit his constituency in North Roscommon. Rory O'Connor asked me to go with him and arrange for his meetings and visits, etc. Before I left he told me to watch whatever events were happening locally in Volunteer circles. We left for Boyle on a Saturday evening from Broadstone. In our carriage to Boyle were Martin Conlon and Diarmuid O'Hegarty.

We stayed in Boyle on Saturday night, and we attended Mass the following morning. Father Paddy Sharkey was there to meet us and it was very noticeable in this old imperial stronghold how coolly the Count was received. There was not one invitation to a meeting or reception of any sort, although we walked around and visited places of interest convenient to the town. There were a number of good Republicans in the town, such as the Ward family, but they were in the minority. The remnants of the old Irish Parliamentary Party still remained in the town and the A. O. H. were still numerous.

I have the War map of the I. R. A. operations before me and while this map, dated August 15th, 1920, shows that more I. R. A. attacks took place in the immediate area of Boyle than in any similar area in Ireland up to this period, not even one attack took place in the town. But when the news of the Signing of the Treaty in London arrived, the town was shouting "Accept", without even reading the terms. When the car arrived to take us to

Strokestown, we were glad to get away from this town that cold-shouldered Republicanism. We stopped in Elphin on our way to Strokestown where the Count got several invitations to return again before he left for home. A great welcome awaited him in Strokestown, which we made our Headquarters. One district which we were unable to reach and for which I was sorry was Whitehall, Tarmonbarry. It was here, beside Joe McGuinness' home, that the first A.O.H. break occurred, when the members took out the A.O.H. banner and burned it and hoisted the Republican flag and marched to Rooskey in the deep snow to vote for Count Plunkett in the Roscommon Election, 1917.

WE were adopted by the I.R.A. organisation who paid all our expenses. When the Count and myself left for Strokestown, M. Conlon and D. O'Hegarty went to Hillstreet, where a meeting of Brigade and Battalion officers of the local Brigade Command was held, and offers made to all officers who were prepared to continue to serve whatever type of Government was established. Nearly all officers agreed, but Ryans of Strokestown, who was a Battalion Commandant, refused. He would serve only a Republican Government. Ryans told me of this meeting on his return to Strokestown but we decided to keep the matter quiet and watch developments. The local Gaelic League availed of the Count's visit for a scheme of reorganisation and various meetings were held. The Count visited almost every district in the constituency and the receptions were held in the local schoolhouses. He got a great welcome wherever he went. Father Paddy Sharkey accompanied us in all our tours, and Father Tom Flanagan had a great welcome for the Count.

He opened the first County Home in Ireland in the town of Roscommon. The old workhouse in Strokestown had been closed for some time previously. The Count

avoided any criticisms of events then taking place in London. The delegates were debating with the representatives of the British Government and he would not say anything that would hamper these negotiations. But at a Gaelic League meeting in Croghan, Father Malachy Brennan referred to a statement of De Valera's - that if he were offered the language or the freedom of Ireland, he would accept the language, and then we had a rather heated discussion. When the Count put his own interpretations on this statement, Father Malachy was well informed on all current events and was aware of the meeting in Hillstreet. While he was all Gaelic in one voice, he was in league with a new party which was for a time at any rate more British than Gaelic. This was another sign that there were disturbing events on foot.

On the Sunday night before we left for Dublin an entertainment was given in honour of the Count in the old workhouse in Strokestown. There was a very large attendance. Father O'Flanagan was there and Seán McKeon and a number of his officers in uniform. During the night a number of the Brigade officers arrived. They did not appear to be in a very disciplinary mood. I then told Father O'Flanagan and the Count of the meeting in Hillstreet. The Count said he would have these matters put right when he returned to Dublin, and then a message came from the hotel that the Auxiliaries had returned to the Castle. They had previously evacuated the town. They were known as a bad lot and the Manageress of the hotel was anxious about Count Plunkett's safety. I could find only three armed men in the town to do guard duty for the night in the hotel and I remained with them until the morning. I reported these events fully to Rory O'Connor when I returned to Dublin.

The Count was received with the greatest enthusiasm and respect during this tour, but when the Treaty was approved by a majority vote in Dublin and most of the people were clamouring for its acceptance, the Count again proposed a further tour. I opposed this until we had full information as to how he would be received. I wrote to Miss Sharkey of Strokestown; Ryans, Strokestown; Joe Cox, Ruskey and Dr. O'Dowd, Elphin. All replied, "Don't allow the Count to come; he will be insulted."

I intended extending my holiday at home but I was called back for the 3rd Battalion parade in Donnybrook. I held my small arms class as part of the parade - K. Coy. were, of course, on parade. We were reviewed by De Valera and now we were on view if the fight started again. Every man would be recognised and nothing would save us only open warfare and we had no arms for this type of fighting and so we continued training.

One of the conditions of the Truce was the release of certain prisoners. The British quibbled over Seán McKeon who was sentenced to death and refused to release him, and De Valera sent a statement that he could not accept responsibility for proceeding further with negotiations. This statement was published on August 8th and McKeon was released on the 10th. Cope rang Mrs. Nugent on the phone about McKeon and she told him that the fight would start all over again unless he was released immediately. He said that the Prime Minister was in France and to ask the people concerned not to do anything rash until he got word from him, and that he was recommending McKeon's release.

On August 18th there was a meeting of Dáil Éireann. On September 14th the Plenipotentiaries were appointed:

on October 8th the Plenipotentiaries left for London. On October 27th a Sinn Féin Convention was held in the Mansion House. It was at this Convention that De Valera said he was not a Republican "Doctrinarian": a number of delegates were surprised at this statement and the feeling was that there would be no republic. On December 6th, 1921, at 2.15 a.m. the Treaty was signed in London under a threat of immediate and terrible war. On that night the Dublin Brigade were on the streets. We expected hostilities to start again but before 12 midnight we were dismissed. In the morning we had the principal terms of the Treaty which included:

Liability for Public Debts and Payment of War
Pensions and the Oath of Allegiance as follows:-

"I....do solemnly swear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the Irish Free State, as by law established, and that I will be faithful to H.M. King George, his heirs and successors by law in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain and her adherence to the membership of the Group of Nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations. So help me God."

There was the question of the ports and posts to remain in occupation of the British Army and the question of the Governor General.

The appointment of a Governor General as portion of the terms of the Treaty was very obnoxious to any republican who was not prepared to accept any terms which it pleased the British to impose on us. Our objection to the Lord Lieutenant in all our propoganda for a great number of years, and indeed the objection of the general population to this individual as a symbol of oppression for over seven hundred years was well recognised. The Lord Lieutenant was, up to this period, appointed by the British Government. He represented the King in Ireland and now the terms of the Treaty accepted this individual under a different name and, while he might be an Irishman, he could not be appointed without the sanction of the British Government.

He was still the King's Representative; no Minister of State could be appointed without his consent. He had the right to summon or dissolve the Dáil and he sanctioned the commission of all military or police officers: in fact, he was a dictator in the interest of England any time he wished to use his powers in that direction. Was it any wonder we fought?

On December 8th De Valera repudiated the Treaty. The terms were not submitted to Dáil Éireann as per instructions. Griffith said he stood by his decision. A number of the Active Service Unit and other Volunteers were about to go to Dunlaoghaire to shoot the signatories of the Treaty, but Cathal Brugha stopped them, and now the battle of words was on. The Volunteers were still training and we hoped there would be no break. During this month of December, 1921, a definite break was taking place, both in the army and among the people, and politicians. On January 7th, 1922, the Treaty was approved by a small majority at a meeting of Dáil Éireann held in University Buildings, Dublin. The Debate on the Treaty was adjourned for the Christmas holidays and it was generally believed that if the vote was taken before the adjournment, the vote would be for rejection. People in parts of the country bombarded members of the Dáil in their houses to vote for the Treaty and these people were not all Republicans at any time.

For several weeks prior to the attack on the Four Courts, I was engaged making an examination of the arms held by the various companies of the 3rd Battalion. I examined the arms on parade nights or Sunday mornings, and I issued a report to the Commandant after each examination, but at this period the arms were divided between the Four Courts garrison, which was held by the Republican forces, and various companies. The Four Courts garrison consisted

of a number of men from each company in the Brigade and when these men reported for duty to the Four Courts, they took some of the Company arms with them. So the report was - so many arms available in possession of the Company, and so many in the Four Courts. This arrangement left the various companies who were operating outside with a greatly reduced supply of arms. Also, for a long time during the Truce, the Company Quartermasters were not keen on procuring arms: the same enthusiasm did not prevail as in the Tan War. The Four Courts Executive were getting some revolvers at £5 each and no ammunition. This was not very encouraging but we were getting a small supply from other sources. The Black and Tans, Auxiliaries and the Military were still here and we were getting a small supply from them at a reasonable price. A most peculiar position developed now. During the war, the Battalion Quartermaster sent a list of arms in his Battn. to the Brigade Q.M. every week and he, in turn, sent this list on to the Q.M.G. But when the Q.M.G. took over the new army in Beggar's Bush, he asked the Batt.Q.M. to send him the list direct. This we did not do. We just continued to send him the old list without any additions. All Volunteers at this time were supposed to be members of the new regular army and any man wishing to join the uniformed army could do so by applying to his Commandant or Brigadier and he got his transfer. While the Brigadier was signing transfers for the uniformed forces he gave me a cheque for £100 for the possible purchase of arms from the Auxiliaries in Beggar's Bush Barracks. While engaged in this pursuit I was ordered out of Beggar's Bush one day by Major Swan, the Auxiliary Commander. The Free State Army took over next day and I was ordered out under guard by Shaun McMahon, Q. M. G.

I had the key of a room where arms were hidden by an Auxiliary and in the hope of getting in, I kept close to

the area, and the first day Colonel Ginger O'Connell went in I met him outside: he was taking over command. Paddy Daly was assistant Q. M. G. but he knew nothing about the purchase or quality of food for an army. The Colonel in a certificate to me in years afterwards admitted that Q. M. Department was their weak point. He asked me to go in and take Daly's job and that he would fix him up elsewhere. I said I would let him know later but I never did, and he gave the job to Leo Duffy who was well qualified for the position.

We were not at cross purposes. No one knew what would happen next. I had very tempting offers for other positions if I would accept. Mick Collins was very anxious to have all his old friends around him. He sent Eamonn Fleming several times to me to try to induce me to take up a lucrative post in the new Government but my mind was made up and I continued on with the Republican Party,

The key of the room in Beggar's Bush Barracks was given to me by an Auxiliary, a native of Cork. He handed out arms over the wall to the I. R. A. while he was stationed at Beggar's Bush. He was well known to W. Carroll of South Lotts Road and to Martin Molloy who was then Manager of Ryan's public house near the Barrack gate. (Martin had taken part in the 1916 Rising). I bought revolvers and ammunition from this Auxiliary and I would have got the balance of the arms which he had stored away were it not for the fact that he was demobbed earlier than he had expected. I sent this man in a taxi to the hotel in the North Wall when he was leaving for England. We were grateful to our friends, no matter what uniform they wore.

The pogrom in Belfast in 1922 was the result of eight years of Orange propaganda in opposition to the proposal for Home Rule in Ireland. Carson and other

Orange leaders held marches and counter-marches in an effort to show their strength in Belfast. They were so keen on this public display that, on one occasion, they kept marching in a ring and the same men passing the saluting base several times. A peculiar item of these Orange displays is the "Drumming." The Drummer beats the Drum with two cane sticks and the more blood he spilt from his hands and wrists, the better the Drummer. He is proceeded by a man blowing into a tin whistle. The Drummer beats the Drum: the whistler blows the whistle: there is no music: they both dance around and, outside a Lunatic Asylum, there is no such foolish display. The Irish population who never saw this silly display think that this drumming is part of a properly organised brass band, marching in order but, no: it is just as I explained. But there is a very serious side to this drumming business and the British Government have been a party to it down through the years. For a short period prior to the 12th July, short-term prisoners in Belfast and Derry Jails, who are members of the Orange organisation, were released so that they could take part in the procession or drummings, and it rarely happens that at this period every year there is a single prisoner in either jail but Catholic prisoners. These prisoners were in jail for various crimes and when the drumming season arrives they send petitions to the Governor for release, and in most cases the petitions were sent in from the Orange Halls and, in many cases, fines were paid by people who were anxious to see good drumming and fifing and good cursing of the Pope. Money and drink is freely dispensed and the prisoners who get their freedom will see to it that they give good value to their friends, by attacks on the Catholic population. A number of them will be back in jail for some crime or other in a short time, but they know they will be free again for the 12th July, and this is the type of people for whom the British

Government insisted on the partition of Ireland. They keep a large army of occupation in the Six Counties, and the British taxpayer pays them. During the terror in Belfast, a large section of the Orange population who were living in the same districts as Catholics decided on transferring to other districts in which their friends were in the majority. They got various types of vehicles on to which they loaded their possessions and selected whatever house they wished, which was occupied by a Catholic. The occupants of this Catholic house were ordered out by the Orange mob to park their furniture on the street and the Orange family moved in. There were upwards of two thousand such cases in a short space of time. All this was done in the open light of day with the British military and police looking on and enjoying what they considered the fun. A large number of Catholic families so displaced were able to occupy houses vacated by the Orangemen but numerous families were left homeless and had to fly from the City. One glaring incident of the police and military calmly looking on at a public house belonging to a Catholic being looted in the city took place in the middle of the day. The house was closed, the Orange mob came and smashed in the doors and windows and drank and carried away everything in the house. Women carried away bottles of whiskey and wine in their aprons and while this looting was taking place, there were four British soldiers and six police looking on. This was British law for Orangemen. There were many clashes between Orange and Catholic elements in the city. When the Treaty was signed in England, the fighting between both sections became very serious. The Catholics, being in the minority, were not the aggressors: they had to do the best they could to protect themselves. The police, instead of keeping the peace, were assisting the Orange mobs. The people living in the Catholic areas devised a means of warning each other

when they were about to be attacked by these mobs. They started to "Rattle the Bins" - these were the dust bins - and when the mob were about to make an attack on a street, the bins were rattled. This device was very often successful in warding off the attacks. And so "rattle your bin" became the watchword in Belfast, but when the Treaty was ratified in London and in Dublin, the fury of the Orange mobs knew no bounds. Catholics dare not go to work and their districts were attacked day and night. The police, when not taking part in the attacks, looked on. Hundreds of Catholics were killed or wounded and their homes destroyed. A large number of publicans were compelled to leave the city and their licensed premises were burned out. Four members of one family were shot dead in their own home by uniformed police, some of whom were identified, but no one was ever arrested or brought to justice for these crimes. I had all the information covering this case and have been in the house where these brutal murders were committed.

It was during these pogroms that hundreds of families whose homes were destroyed and who, for other reasons, fled to Dublin for safety and were cared for by the Republic Forces in the Four Courts. The new Executive Government took no notice of them until the attack on the Four Courts took place: then most of the refugees joined the Free State Army and the new Executive Government sent the women and children home. I assisted Matt Connolly in the billeting of these refugees. He sent some of the poorest of them to Percy Gussen's house in Herbert Street and other similar houses in the city. He called from day to day to see that they were being well cared for. This billeting on prominent Belfast Orangemen and Unionists in Dublin had the effect of preventing further pogroms. Matt Connolly did a good spot of work.

During the occupation of the Four Courts the disputes developing between the Four Courts Executive and what was then the Executive Government under the Treaty became very serious. Various posts were occupied in the city by the Republican forces. We had the Belfast refugees in the Kildare Street Club and the Fowler Hall in Parnell Square and in the Masonic Hall in Molesworth Street with Captain Harry O'Farrell in command. When these people had to be fed Matt Connolly, acting for the Four Courts Executive, had charge of the catering, and he fed them well. The Belfast women with babies were housed in the Kildare St. Club. They insisted on having milk hot from the cow morning and evening. In order to get this my two sons, Larry and Donal, were out in the early hours of the morning collecting the warm milk from the Dublin Dairy men. The same applied to the evening delivery. But Matt had no money to pay the bills. I supplied goods to each of these posts and I did not get paid for about 14 years.

On the formation of the Free State Army the men of the Belfast refugees joined up. "They bit the hand that fed them", and their women and children were welcomed back in Belfast.

While carrying out my examination of arms for the 3rd Batt. some parades took place in 41 York Street. While there, I saw men being paid off on a few occasions. These men were part of the garrison of various posts. They were unemployed men and had been getting some allowance for their time, but when paid off, they seemed very dissatisfied and a number of them went down to Beggar's Bush Barracks and joined up the regular army. I explained this position to Countess Plunkett but there was no notice taken. (When I mention Countess Plunkett on occasions, it is

because she was in touch with Rory O'Connor, and speaking to her was the same as speaking to Rory).

From the date of the Truce up to this period, there were serious differences of opinion between various sections of the population, but the true state of affairs was that on January 21st 1919 Dáil Éireann ratified the Establishment of the Republic and ordained that its Parliament alone had power to make laws binding on the Irish people, and later decreed that the Army as well as the Deputies should swear allegiance to the Republic, and in fulfilment of that oath the Army waged war for two and a half years on the British Army of Occupation. In this war large numbers of I. R. A. men as well as large numbers of the British Army lost their lives. During the Truce period the I. R. A. continued their training as soldiers of the Republic and the greatest harmony prevailed among the rank and file. But on December 6th 1921 the delegates appointed by Dáil Éireann to negotiate peace terms with the British Government in London and violating their instructions not to sign any agreement until it was submitted to the Dáil Cabinet. The five Delegates signed a Treaty, as explained elsewhere. The Army still remained firm and acted as disciplined soldiers of the Republic. Then, on January 7th 1921 the Dáil ratified this Treaty by 64 votes to 57. The great majority of the Army remained true to the Republic. Dáil Éireann was still the Government of the country and after the ratification of the Treaty it elected Arthur Griffith President and it must be clearly understood that so long as we had an elected President, the Republic still lived, and this state of affairs was never disputed at any meeting of the Dáil. Disputes arose over the control of the Army: as a result of these disputes, a number of Republican officers formed an army executive. They wanted to make sure that the existing Republic would continue to function. They

occupied the Four Courts and other posts in the city. A good feeling existed between M. Collins and the Four Courts Executive, in consequence of which they lent him rifles for the Border Trouble and they had more rifles packed for despatch to M. Collins' men in Donegal when the Four Courts were attacked.

An Agreement was reached over the various small posts and these were voluntarily vacated by the Republican garrisons, but there was no question at any time, either in the Dáil or outside, about the evacuation of the Four Courts. No demand whatever was made to the Republican Army Executive. This was the position on June 16th 1921 when a General Election was held for the purpose of electing a new Dáil. The result of this election was that the Treaty Party lost six seats, leaving them with only 58, and they were now a minority party. Churchill became alarmed at the result of the election, evidently fearing the re-election of De Valera as President, and he sent an ultimatum to the Provisional Government in Merrion Street, demanding the suppression of the Irish Republican Army. This demand was obeyed and two days before the new Dáil Éireann was due to meet (June 28th 1922), the Four Courts was attacked by artillery fire from two points and the Civil War was on. Or was it a Civil War? Or the continuity of the War of Independence against England? The general feeling among the Republican Forces was that we were fighting the same old enemy who were trying to destroy the Republic.

The most serious objections to the Treaty were the Oath of Allegiance, the liability for public debts, the liability for pensions. This meant that Ireland would pay pensions to the Black & Tans and Auxiliaries. The British occupation of Irish posts and other military posts. Men who had fought through the war from 1916 and lost all they possessed were furious and tempers became very frayed. The

Free State Army were already armed with British rifles and ammunition and when the decision was taken to attack the Four Courts they supplied the artillery and a G.P.O. for each gun.

There were a number of men from each Company in the Dublin Brigade who joined the new Free State Army, and now old comrades were pitted against each other. "K" Co. found itself in the same position as all other companies: about fourteen men joined the Free State Army, and about seventy remained with the Irish Republican Army. These men were early on duty in 41 York Street - H.Q. of the 3rd Battn. When I arrived at H.Q. I found Staff Captain T.J. Cullen and Lieutenant Frank Gallagher (Adjutant) on duty, and early that morning Séamus Grace took a number of men who were on active service to Mrs. Nugent for their breakfast and a rest.

Civil Wars as we knew them in other countries, such as England, France and the U.S.A. and elsewhere, were different. Their civil wars were internal: ours was against a régime which was being imposed upon us by a foreign power against whom we had already been at war and whose army was still in occupation of the country.

On the Sunday morning of the signing of the Treaty our old opponents, the A.O.H., came to life again. These bitter enemies of Sinn Féin and the republican movement mounted the steps outside many churches in Ireland after Mass and advised acceptance of the Treaty, and the old British garrison in Ireland were also in favour of its acceptance. For them, there was the Oath of Allegiance to the King of England and this was fairly satisfactory, and many people who gave no thought to the terms only that they meant peace, accepted them. But, in a few years, when they discovered the humiliating position in

which the country was placed politically, a great many changed their minds and came over to the Republican principle; and men who had joined the Free State Army feeling that they were doing the right thing mutinied, and many resigned.

Some men who fought on the Republican side in the Civil War and those who supported the Republican movement at that time are anxious even at this late stage to try and make believe that the Civil War was a great mistake. It was a tragedy certainly, but no mistake, for had it not taken place we would never have got from under the complete rule of England. All the degrading articles in the Treaty would have remained and after the start of the War in 1939 the country would have been turned into a regular shambles and the army here would have been fighting on the side of England. Apart from the failure to win the Republic under arms, those of us who fought on the Republican side did so because we could not accept the degrading terms of the Treaty without protest. Great men lost their lives in the Civil War and though we have not yet gained all the principles for which we fought, the claim for the fulfilment of these principles still exists. We never accepted the terms imposed on the country under the threat of 'immediate and terrible war'. As for my own attitude (and the same applied to those with whom I was operating), I was not at any time prepared to accept the Treaty and I continued to train men during the Truce for the purpose of preventing it coming into operation.

And this attitude personally was no easy one, for when I left the house to take up arms in 41 York Street on the morning of the attack on the Four Courts my wife and nine children were at home. Mrs. Nugent was as much engaged in operations as I was, and so indeed were

some of the older children.

A great many young men, professional and otherwise, who took part in the Civil War, found themselves in difficulties when the question of appointments arose. In some cases the old A.O.H. were still in control and in other cases the posts were filled by members of the Treaty party. A republican reputation was a black mark in going forward for most appointments, and when a supposedly sympathetic government came into power there was no change in procedure. Unless in the case of personal appointments by Ministers of State, which were very few, the young men who were students or more advanced and who had taken part in the Civil War on the Republican side, found great difficulty in procuring public positions: and the same applied to all concerned.

On arrival at York Street I took up duty as Q.M. and continued at this duty during the week, and during the fight for independence and up to this time the Q.M. knew more about how the fight was progressing than most officers. The continuous clamour for arms was nerveracking but there was little we could do. We had now a large number of men on duty for whom arms could not be procured and there was little to be done about it. Some small quantities were coming in but these supplies were very small. We had a grenade factory in Kevin Street Technical Schools, and for the first time even during the war of independence grenades were completed in the one workshop. Joe Martin was in charge and Jack Stack and Maurice Creegan of the IVth Battn. came to do the moulding and fitting and they did their work well. Captain Willie Rowe was in charge of the guard in the area. K. Coy. were operating in the Dame Street, College Green, Grafton Street, Stephens Green and Westland Row area. Captain Noel Lemass was operating with

K. Coy. He liked men who knew their job. The Company to which he was appointed O/c failed to report and he was left on his own. K. Coy. had some engagements during the week. They lost one man, Jackson, killed in Dame Street. Joe Sullivan was wounded in Bass Pce. They attacked an armoured car in Fleet Street: they occupied some business premises during these operations but everything was left as they found them. The company was on continuous duty during the week, one party handing over their guns to the party who came to relieve them. At one stage they were on their way to relieve the men in the Four Courts when they were recalled and on the evening we were disbanded, six men of the company were sent in an open Ford car to attack Oriel House, which was held by the Free State Army. When the car with its men turned into Lincoln Place they were recognised by the men on duty in Oriel House. These men, instead of firing on them, waved them on with their rifles through the top windows. Fortunately, they were the men of K. Company who had joined the Free State Army and would not shoot down their own comrades. Father Costello of Michael & John's Church visited K. Coy. during the week as Chaplain.

During the first few days in York Street the atmosphere was rather monotonous. The Four Courts was being bombarded from two points and while men were prepared to attempt an attack for their relief, they were not allowed to move. Then the outlying posts were called in and we expected the relief attack, but it never came. As I stated earlier, we had not the arms, but the men were prepared to act with what they had. I was on day duty and not being in a fighting department I was debarred from using arms but, on arrival for duty one morning, I found that the Q.M's Dept. had been removed to Camden Row and now some boys were sniping the Birmingham Tower in Dublin

Castle. The Black and Tans were still there and were using the Tower as a transmitting Station. A great many men who took the side of the Republicans were anxious to have the British attack us. If this happened, the majority of the men in the Free State Army would rejoin us and the Government in Merrion Street would fall. So I took a few snap shots at the Tower. This was discovered by the I.R.A. authorities and, were it not for the presence of Captain T.J.Cullen, I would have got into serious trouble - and so to Camden Row and the Q.M. Dept. again.

I stayed in York Street one night listening to stories from Rev. Dr. P. Brown, Seán Etchingham and Brian O'Higgins.

After a week of fighting we received the order to secure arms, go home and await orders. A number of the men came to the Q.M. Dept. to leave their arms for safekeeping. Among these were Seán McGlynn and his son, Fergus, with a basket of grenades. They were about the last of the IV. Batt. left to carry on the fight. On my way home F.W. Nally told me that Mrs. Butler Burke was prepared to go to France. She could procure arms free from a friend. I passed this message on and also told P.W. where he could leave the information, but nothing was done. P.J. Fleming told me afterwards that there would have been no difficulty in landing arms on the Wexford coast while he was in command there at that time.

Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities in the Civil War Colonel Moore called to see me in Baggot Street. He was very excited over the trouble, but was very one-sided. He was anxious for peace but at the time was unable to meet any of the Republican leaders. He asked me if there was any possibility of stopping the

fight. I told him that I was sure there was some way: that if the Free State Government gave Dick Mulcahy (who was Chief of Staff) full powers to negotiate terms with Liam Lynch (who was Chief of Staff of the I.R.A.), the Republican forces would abide by whatever terms were arrived at. I said that there should be a public announcement that the Free State Government would abide by their terms. Each of these men should have full authority from the people whom they represented. The Colonel said that the proposal seemed a good one and that he had an appointment with Mulcahy that day and would talk the matter over with him. But I did not see the Colonel again for at least a year and then he told me that his proposal had been turned down. There might have been opposition to this proposal by Rory O'Connor and Cathal Brugha, but I believe the balance of Republicans would agree.

Following about a week of inactivity I had a visit from Paddy Flanagan (Paddy was the late Commander of the Active Service Unit), and why he took no part in the operations during Four Courts Week is another story. Paddy was anxious to form another fighting column and the object of his visit was to ascertain the amount of arms available in the Batt. When I gave him the details he gave up the idea: he was arrested in a few days afterwards and interned in Maryboro' Prison.

After a few quiet weeks I received instructions to issue orders to the Co. Officers 3rd Batt. to rearm and await further orders. It was no part of my job at any time to issue orders to the Coy. officers and, in case of any misunderstanding, I signed my name to these orders. This was the first time that either myself or Mrs. Nugent ever put our names on such documents. All our messages were verbal and we let someone else do the writing. My

daughter Una and Annie Lucas delivered these despatches. And, then, consternation: when they came to a house in Richmond Street they could not find the message. They thought that they had lost it and were aware of the fact that my name was on it: but they found it after a search and, in a short time, the 3rd Batt. were under arms again.

There was very little fighting in the Batt. area during Four Courts Week. The Easter Week tactics of occupying houses was again resorted to (these were not the successful tactics of the War of Independence). There was one unfortunate ambush in Leeson Street: E. Coy. were in occupation of a house in Harcourt Street. This house was attacked and they were forced to vacate it. G. Coy. were in possession of the Swan Bar in Aungier Street and there were several fusilades between them and passing armoured cars, but there were no casualties. During this week Jack Darmon, K. Coy., an ambulance driver at the Tara St. Fire Brigade Station, removed an important individual from the Four Courts as a casualty. This person was not wounded. When the premises occupied by Cathal Brugha and others of the I. R. A. forces in O'Connell Street was on fire, the Tara Street section of the Dublin Fire Brigade were on duty. Two of the Firemen smashed some doors with hammers. One of these men was Lieut. Bohan, a member of K. Coy. He states that when the door was opened Cathal Brugha came out with a revolver in each hand and commenced firing on a party of Free State soldiers who were in the lane. The fire was returned and Cathal Brugha fell mortally wounded. The firemen lifted him up and he said, "Firemen, I'm finished". The remainder of the men in the building surrendered and the Brigade were called elsewhere and saw no more of this incident. It was difficult now to know who was who, and for a few weeks the city was fairly quiet.

I had a visit from Miss Broderick of Sandycove, from the Republicans in Blessington. She was looking for supplies: she had a car and I filled it with petrol. This was the only connection I had with the men who were supposed to be coming to our assistance in Dublin.

In a short time after the rearming of the 3rd Batt. a meeting of staff officers was held at Peter McCormack's residence, Sth. Gt. George's Street, to make arrangements for the destruction of bridges in the outlying districts around South Dublin. I strongly opposed this proposal, but the decision was taken and the operation had to be carried out. It fell to the Q. M. Dept. to get the explosives and other material to safe places on the south side of the canal. This ended our part in the operation. The whole Batt., armed and unarmed, were mobilised. The operation was to take place at a given time on a Saturday evening but on Friday evening Liam Clarke, a Headquarters officer, was captured in Rathfarnham with a map showing the bridges to be destroyed, and on Friday the Stanly Street workshop of the Dublin Corporation was raided and picks taken away. Also, the Free State Army authorities had had information that the operation was about to take place. The officers in charge of the proposed destruction of the bridges were warned, but they insisted on carrying on and, when the various companies arrived at the scenes of action, the Free State soldiers were waiting for them. Some succeeded in escaping but they were nearly all captured. The Republican section of the 3rd Batt. were almost wiped out. There were about seven men of K. Coy. left and they formed a fighting column of their own. I was able to get them a safe place to stay and the Republican H. Q. paid for their keep. One of them, Peter Keating, was attached to Republican Intelligence Headquarters and after the cessation of hostilities, he was arrested and badly wounded,

but he lived on.

Another outstanding member of K. Coy. was Lieutenant Liam Lucas. He was originally a member of the Irish Volunteers in Tullamore and on account of his activities in that town he was in danger of being arrested and was advised to get out of the way. He was then at business with Williams. He came to us in Baggot Street and I introduced him to K. Coy. During his time in Baggot Street he was aware of most of our activities. He knew that the Sinn Féin organisation were working for a time in a room there. As he was living with us, he came with us to Mount Street when we transferred there. He knew that the Irish Bulletin was being printed in the house and the necessity for secrecy in this matter. He was also aware of the communications to and from Headquarters. His sister, Annie, delivered some of these messages from time to time. So it can be seen that he was better informed about the general working of the organisation than the ordinary volunteer, but he took little interest in what was happening around him in the general control of Republican activities. The army absorbed all his attention. He was only a short time in K. Coy. when he was promoted to Section Commander and, while a Section Commander was only a minor position, it was one of the most responsible in the I. R. A. The Section Commander carried out most of the ambushes in the City of Dublin and he had to be always prepared to take the initiative under difficult circumstances. In one raid in Mount St. by the Auxiliaries Liam had a nasty time with 'Igo'. He was asked where he kept his '48, but he did not fall into the trap. He was cool enough to be able to avoid arrest. We had other raid experiences, but he always managed to escape. He took part in all company activities.

Towards the end of hostilities Seán Guilfoyle of the 3rd Batt. staff was arranging for an important action and he held a meeting of section commanders in a house in Fenian Street. The house was raided by the British military and all were arrested except Guilfoyle, who picked up a baby and pretended that he was the man of the house. Liam Lucas was interned at the Curragh and when the party in his hut were released after the Truce they were disgusted. They would have escaped that night through a tunnel which they had succeeded in making. This tunnelling business was very ingenious: the men worked in shifts during the night and hid the clay under beds and floorboards, and carried it out in their pockets the following day and scattered it around while at exercise in the encampment. A number of men escaped by this method.

On his release from internment he resumed his training with his Company during the Truce. When the Four Courts were attacked he reported for duty with the Company who were operating on the side of the Republicans. He and Captain Noel Lemass did some operations on their own. In fact, they were pals during that troubled period and afterwards. He was arrested with two others in a raid by the Free State troops on 22 Upper Baggot Street: he was interned in Gormanstown and here he attended the School of Commerce conducted by Seán MacEntee and Seán T. O'Kelly. He was a very industrious student. In fact, he made commerce a hobby and it served him well in building up a business in later years.

Death of Mick Collins.

I have mentioned Mick Collins' dual personality. The 'two Mick Collins'. Further to this statement, when he visited Tralee on a tour of inspection during the Civil War he was in a hotel lounge there when his old friend, Brother

Joachim of Dominick Street Priory who was in Tralee at the time, called to see him. Mick was dressed in the grand uniform of a General. He rose to meet and shake hands with Brother Joachim, but the saintly old man turned away and said, "Ah, no, you are not my Mick". Brother Joachim told me this story himself and I have no doubt as to the truth of the statement. Mick was drinking too much - he had "turned on the tap". Mick, during this period, was a visitor to the hotel in Greystones and, on one occasion, the local Volunteer Commander could have made a successful attack. Mick had only a few of his associates with him but the attack was not permitted by the Republican H.Q. In about four weeks (on a Sunday) after his death, there was a gathering of members of the Free State Government and Army officers in the same hotel. Again, they had very little protection, as they considered this area safe, but the local Republican officer had made effective arrangements for an attack and this time he expected he would be allowed to carry out his operations as planned. Paddy Brennan, then O/c 2nd Dublin Brigade, was waiting in 22 Upper Baggot St. for orders from H.Q. It was not a very pleasant situation: we knew most of the men who were in the hotel and we knew the loss of life would be serious if the attack took place. It was a great relief when a despatch came from H.Q., calling off the operation. The men in command of the Republican forces were not "killers". Of all my varied experiences during the Civil War, the tension of these few hours waiting for orders on this Sunday was the worst. I knew a number of the men personally before there were any volunteers, and I knew their good work during the War of Independence and, if the operation took place, a number of them at least would have lost their lives. But reverse the position - had we been discovered, they would have no mercy for us. I expect

that is the way of all Civil Wars: some men on one side do not like killing their opponents if it can be avoided, and in the case of the Republican H.Q., and the same applied to the rank and file, they had no desire to take life. They were not killers. That is definite, and as an individual I knew more Republican Volunteers personally than most people, so that when I say they were not killers, I know it to be true. We were defending a principle and we remained on the defensive.

When Mick was killed in action in Cork, accusations were widely circulated that he was murdered and men who have written of this event have tried to prove this statement, but in a very unconvincing way to anyone who would stop to study the situation. Who will believe that two well known girls were allowed to leave the village in order to warn the Republican Forces in the mountains that Mick was in the village, and how would these girls know when, and by what route, he would leave, even if the story is true? The truth is that the Republican forces had no knowledge of who was travelling in convoy. If they did know, it would not have prevented the attack: there was a war on and why should it.

I was very sorry for Mick: we had been very good friends for a long time and I enquired from every possible angle in both Dublin and Cork as to the way in which he lost his life. The Cork men knew nothing of Mick's presence and from the position which they held a long distance into the hills, how could they hit in failing light a man in the back of the head who was supposed to have taken cover? There was no post-mortem or enquiry as to the cause of death, and no one ever knew what type of bullet killed him? The whole regrettable incident definitely points to accident.

CHAPTER XIX.Various episodes of the Civil War

Following what was known as the 'night of the Bridges' when the 3rd Battn. was wiped out as a fighting force, the 2nd Dublin Brigade found themselves in a somewhat similar position. The H.Q. office was no longer safe. Mrs. Woods called to Baggot St. and told us of the situation, and could we help. Yes; we had previously arranged for an important member of the fugitive government to go to a certain house, but he did not consider this house safe, and so to the lady who had told us the Montgomery spy story. We sent the H.Q. staff of the 2nd Dublin Brigade and their O/C. was Paddy Brennan, the boy whom Mrs. Nugent had made Captain of the Boy's Brigade in Dundrum formed in 1915. With Paddy Brennan were Seamus Fox, Bartle Hickey and the Q.M. another Boy's Brigade boy. This house was kept very secret and we in 22 Upper Baggot St. were the only people who knew of it. In fact it was never discovered even in later years. And the greater portion of the despatch work was done from here and from our house in Baggot St. Both houses were in close touch with the Chief of Staff. When De Valera and Stack left Dublin for the south it was through the lines of the 2nd Brigade that they passed and returned safely the same way. At times people came to Baggot St. wanting particularly to see the O/C. But no: We sent their message and got back the reply in a short time, and they had to be satisfied with this arrangement. Paddy Brennan brought his sister to this secret house. My daughter Bridie was also there. Both of them acted as despatch carriers. But the principles in this despatch business were the lady of the house (whose name, as I have already stated, I cannot mention), and Miss Louisa Nolan. This lady called with and for despatches every day. She systematically sorted out the little envelopes for their different districts just like a post office. These two

ladies worked in perfect harmony even though one was supposed to be an imperialist and the other certainly was a Republican. All their despatches got through safely. At this time the difficulties of acting safely was very great; and for the purpose of warding off suspicion I instructed some of the Cumann na mBan girls who called with despatches to circulate a rumour to the effect that the Nugent's could not be depended upon. It was surprising how quick this news got round. It even troubled the H.Qrs. of the 2nd Brigade, the people with whom we were directly working. Fortunately I had told Paddy Brennan of this arrangement earlier. It was amusing in a short time to see some of our old friends shunning us, but this suited our purpose and so we carried on.

Following the occupation of Beggars Bush Barracks by the Free State forces, Sean McMahon, Q.M.G. was still issuing orders to the volunteers who had not joined the professional army. As stated in another page we did not obey all these orders. But on one occasion he issued an order to have a 3rd Batt. dump cleared as the owner wanted the premises. I got orders from the Commandant 3rd Batt. to have this dump cleared. It contained the account books of the Dublin Corporation which were seized in order to prevent the Local Govt. Board from auditing them. I delivered these books to the Corporation offices in Id. Edward St. The balance of the stuff I took to my own place. We had no other stores now. These articles included a rope-ladder, in sections, two brass guns, a quantity of machine-gun drums and some black powder. I had to do this work with my own van. (The new Govt. were getting their work done cheaply). But in a few days after the attack on the Four Courts we were raided by the Free State forces and three men who were working on the premises were arrested. I was questioned as to why I had all the army equipment in my possession. I told them to ask the

Q.M.G. They removed all the stuff. It was of no military use. But they did not recognise the rope-ladder, and although we had several similar visits the ladder was not noticed. I had it for a long time afterwards but eventually it got lost.

As I have stated in an earlier chapter when P.J.Fleming was about to return home from U.S.A. where he had gone for health reasons and where he had done an enormous amount of Irish propaganda, particularly in the Western States, he arranged for a shipment of Thomson guns and ammunition. These guns arrived safely, as could have happened if the proper attempt had been made in earlier years. And even at the period of the arrival of these arms there was an agreed ban on the importation into Ireland of arms between Mick Collins and the British Government. My experience of this agreement was when Francis O'Sullivan had made arrangements to go to Germany as a professor of Irish in a German University. We talked about importing Peter the Painters from Germany. This was the ideal gun for use in this country, as many men who used them here well knew. Gold could then be procured and a few thousand pounds would have been sufficient to arm thousands of I.R.A. men; and my friend was on very good terms with the late commander of the 'Aud' (the German ship which did not land the arms in 1916) and so he was in a position to at least make the attempt and was confident of the success of such an enterprise. I called to see Peadar Breslin (Brigade Q.M.) at Brigade H.Q. and put the proposition before him as was very well known. He was very sympathetic to such a venture. But he produced a typed copy from a drawer and showed me the order from Mick Collins prohibiting the importation of arms into Ireland during the Truce as agreed with the British Authorities. We were marvellous people for keeping agreements.

On P.J. Fleming's return from the U.S.A. he immediately joined up with the Republican forces and gave them his full time. He was closely identified with all the work of the Four Courts executive. He was appointed Div. Commander of No.2

Eastern Div. which covered Wicklow, Wexford, Waterford and Kilkenny. He held command of these areas for a considerable time during the civil war and he was very popular with the people. He came to Dublin on one occasion during hostilities in a car lent to him by the O'Connor family of Wexford. He called to see us in Baggot St. when he arrived and later drove over to the north side of the city where he was challenged about the ownership of the car. After a satisfactory explanation he was allowed to depart and returned safely to Wexford and his command areas. He carried on the fight for a considerable time under great difficulties as arms and ammunition were extremely scarce. Eventually, ammunition having been used up, he was captured by the Free State troops and interned in Kilkenny. While there he made a bet with the Kilkenny commander that he would escape; he did and he made his way to his own home, a distance of 18 miles. But he was again captured and sent to Mountjoy.

With announcements of the shooting of Rory O'Connor and Liam Mellowes, McKelvey and Barrett in Mountjoy as a reprisal for the shooting of Sean Hales and Pdraig O'Maille, there was consternation in Dublin. The people could not believe that such a thing could happen. But early in the day, Eamon Fleming, a brother of P.J., who was at the time working in the Department of Finance in the Free State Executive, called to see me in Baggot St. There was now a coolness between myself and Eamon because he had remained on in his job. His mission was to inform me that P.J. was to be shot on the following morning. The times were dangerous and I told him that there was nothing I could do, that any of the Republican Party whom I knew were all locked up. He then reminded me that it was only a short time since I was in contact with the people controlling the Republican forces. This was a reference to Andrew Jameson and Mrs. Sarsfield's futile attempts to bring both parties together, when the proposed arrangements had to be cancelled. And so it

appeared that the executives in Merrion St. knew that I was active. I told Eamon that I would convey the information but that I saw no hope. This was early in the day, and from now until night both myself and Mrs. Nugent and the assistants and messenger boys in the shop told every one we met that a number of other men were to be shot in the morning. Now while tempers were frayed there were people on both sides who were opposed to the shooting of untried prisoners and the phone to Merrion St. was kept busy. Eamon told me afterwards that every department was rung up and protests made against any further reprisals. Protests were also made in Merrion St. itself among some of the employees who had fought in the War of Independence, and there was J.J. Walsh, a Cabinet Minister, who escaped from Mountjoy with P.J. Fleming. P.J. was the leader of that escape in 1919. On account of his previous fight in Maryboro' and his smashing of Shortt's famous cell in that prison P.J. had got great publicity, and at that time his book "Maryboro' and Mountjoy" was widely read. And then there was the publicity of the Mountjoy, escape which made his name very popular in the city of Dublin and all over Nationalist Ireland. His name was much better known to the general public than any of the four men executed that morning. Liam Malloy was wellknown, but Rory O'Connor was a great silent man. Barrett and McKelvey were not known in Dublin. But now P.J. Fleming whom the people remembered was to be shot at dawn and the protests started. There was no more shooting. Merrion St. surrendered to public indignation.

And now a word about the shooting of Sean Hales and Padraic O'Maille. This was a very regrettable affair. It was also regrettable that the proclamation should be issued permitting the shooting of all men in uniform. This proclamation was on the walls in Dublin. But the Republican army took no notice of it. No man was fired on unless he was fully armed and attacking or about to attack. As for the men who fired on Sean Hales and Padraic O'Maille, they were men who

were returning from the abortive attack on the Donegal-Fermanagh border. They had not made contact up to this time with the men of the Dublin Brigade. Had they been lucky enough to have made contact the shootings would never have taken place and the lives of great men have been saved.

During the progress of the civil war the Directors of Intelligence found it difficult to remain in an office for any length of time, and at a period when they came to a standstill, one of them came to me in Baggot St. and explained their position. I had been in communication with this department previously and the Director who called was an old friend. I knew him well during the war of independence, and I knew of his successful operations during that period, both in Dublin and Cork. We knew that Baggot Street was not safe, but as we had no raids for a considerable time, we decided on taking a chance and so, on a Saturday night, my friend and Mick Carolan, the other Director came to work and sleep in 22 Upper Baggot St. It took them about a week to clear their arrears of work. Mrs. Carolan (then Miss McQuill) came with dispatches and took away dispatches. Other messengers also came with and for dispatches and it was at this period that K.Co. men got burned in the Signal Cabin at Lansdowne Road, and I was able to get an S.O.S. for them to Dr. Joe Brennan, St. Michael's Hospital, Dunlaoghaire. During the progress of their work a large number of papers were burned in the grate and after the work was finished it was surprising the amount of partly burned documents which remained in the chimney, but after a time I was able to destroy them all. This was a week of great anxiety as we had had no means of escape in case of a raid, but we made the most of a difficult situation and at night we had music and singsongs. The danger of detection during the civil war was far greater than in the war of independence and consequently the effect on the nerves was a serious matter while the danger lasted. But on this occasions the compensations were great. The fact of

being able to house the Directors of Intelligence of the Irish Republican Army in our desperate fight for the maintenance of the Republic gave us the feeling that we had done something worth while and then it was grand to have the opportunity of working with two such honourable and straightforward Irishmen; operating with such men gave one a ray of hope though we were at the time fighting physically a losing battle, but we were satisfied we were doing the right thing for Ireland.

Some time prior to the cease fire order Mrs. Sarsfield called to say that Andrew Jameson and 'another' had been approached by members of the Executive Government to try to arrange a meeting between two of their members and Dev. and Stack. We sent on this verbal message. On the following morning Mrs. Sarsfield called again to tell us not to make any arrangements for the meeting as treachery was suspected and that Mr. Jameson would take no responsibility in the arrangements. This message was also sent on.

And for a period before the cease fire order some I.R.A. officers in the south were advocating peace efforts. One of these officers arranged to come to Dublin to meet De Valera and Stack and others in control of the Republicans. The meeting was to take place in a house in Up. Mount St. but at this time the Free State Intelligence H.Q. knew most of the proposed movements of the Republican forces and this meeting was freely talked about in Oriel House (H.Q. Free State Intelligence). During the discussion a man employed in the British Ministry of Pensions, Upr. Mount St. was present. He and others were in good humour. (Beer was plentiful). This man resided in a house in Up. Baggot St., owned by a Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who was herself a British war widow drawing a weekly pension. On his return home this man boasted of knowing what was going to happen next. The military were lying in wait until the officer from Cork arrived and entered

the house in Mount St. and all would be captured. But Mrs. Fitz. was a very safe and useful person during the Tan war and this time told us the story. We sent on the message by Mrs. Kennedy of Percy Place, who was our messenger for city dispatches. She knew nothing of the Dublin No. 2 Brigade office, but she was most reliable and always knew where to go. And so the officer from the south did not call, and when the house to which he was to go was searched nothing was found.

After Thomas Derrig's arrest the Republican army were anxious as to the safety of two men who were supposed to be in a secret chamber in a house in Wellington Road which Mr. Derrig had occupied. The Free State army were now in occupation of this house and it was proposed to attack and release the men. Bridie Clynes, who was then in Republican H.Qrs., called on the Sunday morning and explained the situation. The proposal was to bring a number of men from the 2nd Battn. under Comdt. Byrne to carry out this operation. Would we allow them to come in and remain on the premises until orders to attack were received? This was a very serious proposal. The Free State soldiers were patrolling the streets outside on this particular Sunday and men had already been executed for being found in possession of arms, and curfew was still in operation. We agreed however to the proposal and the men came along, a few at a time, some to the back of the house and more to the front. Their despatch carriers, girls from Cumann na mBan, came from time to time and some of our family met them at the door, just as if a party was in progress, and no notice was taken. Towards evening Comdt. Byrne dismissed his men after the time for attack had elapsed. But he remained on himself with some of his despatch carriers. Later Bridie Clynes with Frank Kerlin arrived and stated that they were going to attack, and an attempt was made to remobilise the men. But only a few could be found and the arms available were hopeless. I then inquired if they knew the number of men who were holding the

house. They did not. Two of the girls were sent to investigate. One of them did her work very thoroughly and in an intelligent manner and reported the situation. She actually got into the house and saw the number of men in occupation. The other girl missed her way but got home safely. The proposed attack was called off. In a few days it was discovered that the men who were supposed to be in the secret chamber were 'safe' in Mountjoy. This was a very terrifying day. But time is a great healer and we carried on as usual.

During the operations of the 2nd Dublin Brigade, an I.R.A. column in Co. Kildare arranged to carry out an operation in Straffan. The Free State authorities were made aware of this proposal and in turn the H.Qrs. of the No. 2 Dublin Brigade got word that the Free State army would be waiting for the I.R.A. men and in consequence the operation was called off. It was usual for a Republican dispatch carrier to wait at a certain point every evening for dispatches for country districts. On this most important evening there was no one waiting to receive the countermanding order. The lady who took it from H.Qr. knew it was important and urgent. Instead of giving it back to the office which would have been a loss of time, she came to me in Baggot St. She knew she could get the address from a certain person but she was anxious to do the right thing. She got the correct address and was able to hand over the countermanding order to the proper person just as she was leaving her house. The lives of these Kildare men were thus saved. The reason why I dwell so much on this incident is because the lady concerned was the same who had told myself and Mrs. Nugent of the British Secret Service organisation prior to the 21st Nov. 1921, and this lady was supposed not to be one of us. I cannot mention her name, and when she died I was the only person outside of her own family connections who attended her funeral.

When the operations of the Dublin City Brigade became very intensive during the war of independence it became necessary to extend brigade control and a new battalion - VI Dublin - was formed. Andy McDonnell, who was an officer in the No. 1 Brigade, was appointed O/C. of the new battalion. I have previously mentioned some of the operations of this battalion. After Andy McDonnell took over command he certainly made things hot for the British forces operating in his area. He harried them day and night and at the end of hostilities his zone was practically cleared of enemy forces; they had retired to the city. Brigade O/C. Andy McDonnell took the greatest care of his men and their dependants. He continued his activities with the Republican forces. He operated in the Blessington and South Co. area and was captured in action and interned.

Another successful action in which we were concerned was the rescue of a wounded I.R.A. man from Baggot St. Hospital. This man was a native of Headford, Co. Galway. He was badly wounded from machine-gun fire and had his leg amputated. He was taken prisoner in action and was in possession of arms, which meant execution. As his wounds were so serious his chances of escape were not considered and he was left unguarded. We were informed that an attempt to rescue him would be made and could be help. We knew Nurse Murphy in the hospital. She was a sister of a Fianna Boy who had been murdered years previously in Co. Clare by the British military. Mrs. Nugent arranged with her about the evening and suitable time for the attempt. Nurse Murphy did not approve of the man being moved as he was a really serious case. But the decision was taken and Capt. Willie Rowe, another man and Miss Phelan arrived to carry out the rescue. We had to hold them until the correct time arrived. The patient had not been made aware of any attempt to rescue him and had to be assured by the nurse that he would be in the hands of friends.

Although the man was in great pain they succeeded in taking him away in an ambulance chair to Dr. Joe Brennan in St. Michael's Hospital, Dunlaoghaire. I believe this man is still alive.

My daughter Una and Annie Lucas collected the guns from Capt. Rowe and the other man who was driving the car, and delivered them next day to Miss Phelan in Wexford St. The guns were collected in view of the fact that there would be no object in putting up a fight if attacked as the wounded man would most likely be shot in the rescue effort.

As stated elsewhere in this book, the 3rd Battalion, City Brigade, was reduced to a few active men after the attempted destruction of the bridges. This left me in the position that my contacts with general activities were confined to intelligence work and providing safe quarters for active men and an odd visit from these men. Now in September 1922, Mrs. Woods called and inquired if we could find accommodation for H.Qrs. staff of the 2nd Dublin Brigade. Paddy Brennan, who was originally captain of the Boys' Brigade organised by Mrs. Nugent at Dundrum in 1915, was an active officer in the 2nd Brigade during the war of independence. When in the first week of July 1922, the O/C. and Vice O/C. of the brigade were captured and interned he was appointed O/C. of the brigade which numbered 500/600 men. A good many of these were captured from time to time, but owing to the shortage of fighting material a great many of them became inactive. Some were killed in action and at the date of the cease fire order he had only about 30 men left, including his H.Q. staff and the battalion staffs. I have already told how well the secret of his H.Q. was kept, and how the meeting was held at this headquarters to decide on the cease fire order, and the order to secure arms by the Chief of Staff (Frank Aiken) on the 24th May 1923. During the period of the occupation of this house, Mrs. Nugent, members of my family and myself

were in continual contact with messages from this house and at times had visits from Brigade O/C. After the cease fire order he was arrested shortly after leaving us in Baggot Street and interned.

The principal boys in the Brigade in Dundrum, organised by Mrs. Nugent in 1915 and who fought through the War of Independence and in the Civil War on the Republican side were Paddy Brennan O/c, Benn Duff, Mick Dillon, Mick Brennan, Dennis Kenny, Seán Brennan (now Commdt. A.D.C.), Dick Doyle and Larry Sweeney, killed in action in the Civil War.

The Staff officers of the 2nd Dublin Brigade during the period of the civil war (after the arrest of O/c and Vice O/c) were Paddy Brennan, Brigade O/c., Séamus Fox, Brigade Adj., Bartley Hickey, Brigade I.O. and Publicity Officer. Larry O'Brien, Brigade Vice O/c., Michael Quis~~to~~, Brigade Q.M., George Gilmore, O/c.Batt.1, Paddy ~~Darcy~~, O/c Batt. 2., Paddy Carroll, O/c Batt.3, Mick Brennan, Vice O/c.Batt.1, Jack Foley, O/c Deansgrange Co. I knew most of these boys in Dundrum when we first formed the Volunteers in 1913. They were then schoolboys. I saw them go through their training and develop into good intelligent soldiers. I had news of their activities during the War of Independence, and I was very glad to give them a helping hand in difficult and dangerous operations which they carried out with great courage and ability and restraint, during the Civil War period. It is nice to look back over the past years and to be able to remember such upright honourable boys as these were.

The men of K.Coy. 3rd Btn. Dublin City Brigade I.R.A. were a determined active lot of men owing to their early training: they were careful of themselves and of their

companions. They acted in perfect harmony and there were never any disputes or trouble in the company. All orders were obeyed without question and their actions carried out according to plan. It is not possible to mention every man individually, but I must refer to Joe Sullivan. Joe came to K. Coy. from Dun Laoghaire in 1917 and when Mick Collins adopted Captain John McCluskey, who was Co-Adjutant, Joe Sullivan was appointed in his place. He had previous military experience: he had been a Sergeant in the British Army and joined the Volunteers when founded in 1913 and continued his services in the I. R. A. to the end of hostilities in 1923. As Coy. Adjutant he made no mistakes: he knew the name and address of every man in the Company and was able to mobilise them at short notice. He also knew the names, addresses of each Battalion officer and, in consequence, the Battn. Adjutant gave him an amount of work to do. He never lost a gun or a scrap of paper, although he was often raided and searched. He was particularly busy after the cease fire order in securing arms and ammunition. I saw a good deal of him during that period. When the Coy. Captain, Harry O'Farrell, resigned after the Four Courts Week, Jim Brogan was elected Captain and continued to operate with whatever men of the Company were available.

An exciting item of the Civil War period concerns Seán MacEntee's tunnel. He carefully planned this difficult operation which he started from a private house convenient to Mountjoy Prison. The purpose of this tunnel was to allow a number of men who were awaiting execution to escape. But, alas: when success was at hand the work was discovered and he and his workmen were captured and interned in Gormanstown.

The night on which the decision to issue the cease-

fire order was reached, the meeting was held in the house occupied by the No. 2 Dublin Brigade. A lady occupied a flat in this house. She looked upon the boys as very industrious students and did not suspect them of any, what she would consider, improper activities. This lady was very anti-Republican. During the Tan war Dan Breen banished her from Tipperary and now there was to be a very big and important meeting in this house and in order to get her out of the way, Mrs. Nugent invited her to Baggot Street. She was a great admirer of the British Royal Family and I happened to have the book 'The Family Tree' and, strange as it may seem, when in business I supplied goods for Edward VII and Queen Alexandra when on their visit to Ireland. So we were able to keep her going with suitable conversation until late in the night and the meeting was not noticed. That was my part in the cessation of hostilities. Next day orders were issued to 'Cease Fire' and secure arms. The securing of arms was a difficult and dangerous operation but it gradually fizzled out and, with it, all our hopes for a Republic for which we had fought. Joe Sullivan and myself were all that was left of K. Coy. The rest were either casualties or in prison, and they were as good a company of I. R. A. men as served in any part of Ireland. I salute them.

Signed:

Laurence Nugent

Date:

Nov 12th 1953

(Laurence Nugent)

Nov'r. 12th 1953.

Witness:

Sean Brennan Lieut.-Col.

(Sean Brennan) Lieut.-Col.

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