

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURÓ STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1103

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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,103

Witness

Denis F. Madden,
Queen's Road,
Tramore,
Co. Waterford.
Identity.

Intelligence Officer Waterford Brigade.

Subject.

- (a) Irish volunteers, Tralee, Easter Week 1916;
- (b) East Waterford Brigade 1917-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

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W. S. 1,103

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STATEMENT BY DENIS F. MADDEN

(District Court Clerk, Waterford)

Queen's Road, Tramore, Co. Waterford.

I was born on 18th October 1882 at Barrack St. Cork City. The house was then a provision shop; it is now a chemist's shop, and near what we used call "The Cross of the Green". My father died when I was three years of age and I was sent to live with my aunt, Mrs. Margafet Dorney at Ballinlough, the city end of the parish of Blackrock, where I lived until I reached 17. My father was a farmer's son from "Madden's Cross" near Waterfall Co. Cork, about 4 miles from the city, old road in.

At Ballinlough, all the old people spoke Irish, when they wanted to carry on a talk which they did not want us to hear especially. But a great many of them seemed to carry on in Irish because, apparently, they had a better knowledge of it than of English. I remember when an old sea captain used come home he always visited an old neighbour, they talked in Irish all the time. A group of old people used carry on discussions in Irish - it was "Sinn Fein - "Sinn Fein".

One of my uncles, Denis Murphy, who was teacher in the city, went out in '67. He had to clear out of the country when that movement fizzled. I remember my people talking about it, and especially to the effect that the men were not properly armed.

I went to National School at Ballinlough till I had gone 2nd Sixth. The teacher, John Dennehy, was a good Irishman. I remember he told us that we should be ashamed if we did not know "Who fears to speak of Ninety Eight". It would be about 1896, he told us he would give us a lessons in Irish after school hours if we stayed on. The British did not allow Irish to be taught during school hours. We attended, enthusiastically I think the teacher was only a few hundred lessons ahead of us -

he was not a native speaker. We continued for some time, but, evidently, the teacher got fed up. The old people used criticize our pronunciation.

We had an invincible hurling team in Blackrock that time. They won, on their own, several All-Ireland championships. At that time matches were played in the Open Park, by the Marina, now Ford's property. There was no enclosure then, and the sideline was kept by a posse of young boys coming along and throwing sods at the in-bulging crowds. Things changed shortly after and enclosures were made. There were some champion step-dancers in the locality and we, schoolboys, learned several steps - especially off the right foot.

This was before the 1903 Land Purchase Act. Very few holdings were purchased under the Ashbourne Act, but there were Fair Rent Courts where tenants got protection and had their rents fixed. Food was very plentiful and cheap and so was drink. Fighting on the streets, after closing hours on Saturday and Sunday nights was a usual feature. The 'Peelers' had their hands full on such occasions.

I remember the Parnell split - indeed I saw Parnell in Cork shortly before he died. I remember his pale face. The anti-Parnellites, led in Cork by William O'Brien, were stronger in numbers than the Parnellites. I remember huge election meetings in the city when cordons of Peelers stood at strategic points to prevent crowds clashing. Volumes of abuse by the leaders of both sides. I remember William O'Brien saying: "I know William Redmond for the past 30 years. The body may have got a little older, but the head is in the same nursery condition". Criticising Gussie Roche, who was on the Redmondite side, William said of him: "For parliamentary incapacity and parliamentary imbecility, Gussie Roche need not give way to any man". On a subsequent occasion, after the split period, William said of Tim Healy (they had fallen out)

"Tim Healy is a disgrace to human nature". Healy replied: "Listening to William O'Brien is like leaning over the Liffey at ebb tide". That was the atmosphere at the time. Peelers were in attendance at all meetings, and you would see an occasional British soldier passing along and not thinking it worth his while to give even an amused look in their direction.

The start of the Gaelic League was a historical occasion.

I had been attending the Christian Brothers' School at North Monastery after leaving the National School. There was no Irish taught there. An oldish Brother (Walker), who seemed to have some supervisory authority, encouraged rugby etc. He said that the boys would hear too much bad language at Gaelic games !! Some of us started a hurling team. In fact, Billy Dill of Fair Hill, who was the secretary, recently told me he still had the minutes and that he saw my name in them.

I went to a shorthand etc. school later, and in 1901, I got a job as clerk in the office of Anthony Carroll of Fermoy. He became Crown Solicitor some time after. I stayed there till 1906, when I got a better job with I. Thornton & Son Solicitors, Waterford.

While in Fermoy, I used read Arthur Griffith's "United Irishman" and later "Sinn Fein". I attended the Gaelic League class while there. The late Padraig MacSuine taught us. Tomas McDonagh attended our classes. He was teaching French, etc. in St. Colman's Collage. I remember when he saw "Sinn Fein" with me, he was particular to assure me - why, I don't know - that Arthur Griffith was against physical force, as an impossible cure. From family knowledge of the '67 fiasco, he need not have told me that.

Padraig Pearse came to an Irish concert at the Assembly Rooms, Fermoy, about 1904. He may have been editor of "An Cliamh Soluis" at that time. He had a fine audience. The patriot priest of Meelin - Father Kennedy, C.C., Fermoy -

presided. Pearse's lecture was something entirely new to me. I had been listening to the eloquence of O'Brien and the others including John Redmond, for a long time before this. Here was something different. His delivery was perfect and what he spoke was original. It was on the language revival. When he finished his address, Father Kennedy, a very able man, praised it. He said: "Sparkling as it was with genius and with wit".

Reading Griffith's papers was something entirely new too. "Sinn Fein" was a magical voice to us young people. It seemed to bring back, to the more intelligent young people, a call which had been heard long ago. Fermoy was then a stronghold of British army, but even here, under the shadow of the military barracks, we were asking questions. The unanswerable one was: "Why have not the Irish people as much right to freedom as the English, or any other people". The politicians were fighting verbal battles on the floor of the British House of Commons. They were losing ground. It came to this in the end, that Redmond assured the British Parliament that "separation was unthinkable" and Dillon and others referred to "our army and our navy". The worst thing Redmond ever did was to tell Asquith after the 1916 Rising: "Whatever about the leaders, spare the rank and file". The worm was just telling them to execute the leaders.

I left Fermoy and came to Waterford city in 1906. I was disappointed in Waterford. It was a right seóinín town. The ascendancy class seemed to dominate everything. While I was employed as clerk in leading Conservative solicitors' office I had full opportunity of seeing how it was from the inside. The Corporation were a flunkey lot, mostly. Redmond was our "incomparable leader" according to - Lo and behold! - Edmond Downey in the "Waterford News".

I attended the Gaelic League here and hurled with the Gracedieu team. I joined the Sinn Fein Club as soon as it was

started. Seamus Upton was secretary. He did some freelance journalism and wrote the best Gaelic Athletic news in Ireland. Peelers used watch us going into the club. The leading members of the Waterford Corporation referred to us as a "parcel of boys". We got the late George Bishop elected on the Board of Guardians. At one of his first attendances he made some sarcastic remarks to the Chairman, David Hyland. The latter would not stand it, so Bishop and himself came to grips and they both rolled on the floor.

We helped the late Senator P.W. Kenny to get elected to the Corporation. The latter was a highly educated, able man and he soon turned the Corporation inside out. We carried on an anti-recruiting campaign by distributing leaflets and posting bills. We also broke up the strong anti-G.A.A. crowd who wanted the Gaelic Athletic field to be used for foreign games. We certainly were aggressive. To show the kind of intelligence on top in those days, I can give an instance of the said David Hyland presiding at a Police Court here. A man was brought in for stealing something. He insisted on cross-examining the witnesses, but Hyland said: "Enough of thig, it only confuses the Court". He pronounced it "Coort". "Three monthx in jail".

When the Home Rule Bill came along, the Orangemen, led by Carson, started to drill and arm. Read "Unconquerable Ulster" by Herbert Moore Pim, to see what that movement was like. If it had not been for the Orangemen and Carson we would never have armed. After the start of the Volunteers - I think it was in 1913 - I attended parades of Volunteers in Waterford. We drilled in the Market House; an ex-British soldier instructed us. The Sinn Feiners were in a small minority amongst the Partyites, but we kept going. I left Waterford early in 1914, and went to a Tralee firm of solicitors - H. & C. Downing - a dyed-in-the-wool paid or Castle Catholics. They looked like two Mongolians. Look at

some of their families in Tralee and Killarney and you will see how they fit that description. I joined the Volunteers there. Soon Austin Stack swore me in as a member of the I.R.B. Sinn Fein was entirely stronger in Tralee than in Waterford. We drilled constantly and had route marches. When the split came we had a prior meeting of I.R.B. in a large room over the Licensed Grocery shop of P.J. O'Donnell, member of Co. Council. I was rather surprised to see so many there and who they were. When Redmond openly recruited and told the Volunteers at Woodenbridge that their place was at the front, a crisis occurred. At the Rink, Tralee, we all assembled to decide which way to go. The late Tom O'Donnell, M.P. for a Kerry constituency, had been on British recruiting platforms all over the county. He attended at the Rink and claimed a right to address us. There was a sprinkling of old men there. We started singing "The Rising of the Moon". Shouts at O'Donnell "Put him out". He demanded a right to address us and said: "Who will put me out?" Stack said: "I will" and he and others made a rush out of the ranks towards O'Donnell. The Rev. Joe Breen, C.C., said to O'Donnell "Come outside and I will discuss the matter with you". They went out and O'Donnell did not come back. When we divided only a scraggy few went out. O'Donnell recruited a company of National Volunteers which did not long survive. We had rifles and kept all arms. O'Donnell was a dastardly wretch. He continued on recruiting platforms and abused us under the protection of the garrison and he was recognised by all the ascendancy for the first time in his life.

We continued drilling and preparing. Pearse came twice to Tralee. The first time he lectured at the Rink to a crowded audience. It was an inspiring address. Shortly before the Rising we had a rally at the Sports Field. Pearse addressed us. I remember he said: "I have hopes which I dare not mention". Again I emphasise, if it had not been for Carson and his

Volunteers, we would not be parading with arms in our hands and drilling openly. On Saturday nights we spent several hours manoeuvring. I was secretary of A/Company. Bill Farmer still living, was captain. I don't believe that Stack or Paddy Cahill, next in command, had any military training or competence. An ex-British soldier named Slattery drilled the Tralee Battalion. Cotton had been ordered out of Tralee at this time. He was a Northern and had some considerable military training.

My (deceased) wife was president of Cumann na mBan and used to give the Volunteers lessons at the Rink on Morse code. That body gave the Volunteers a lot of assistance, organising concerts and dances to raise funds. Some weeks before the Rising, when at the Rink on a Sunday night, Stack asked me if my wife would go to Dublin to bring an important message to Tralee. I told him that she was going to Dublin for an operation, but that he could ask her. She agreed and Stack, Cahill and Father Joe Breen came to my house at Moyderwell, where we discussed the matter. I thought Stack used to do things too openly. For instance, anyone would know that getting his letters addressed to Dr. O'Connell, Solicitor, his employer, was not safe. I suggested that as my wife was too well-known in the movement, her sister, Kathleen O'Brien, Clonmel, should meet her in Dublin when she went for the operation, and that Kathleen should bring the message to Clonmel, and next day to Tralee. I was told it was most important. They all agreed with this and things were so arranged. My wife stayed at Miss Geraghty's Hotel at Parnell Square, Dublin. Stack recommended it as reliable. They were told not to go near Clarke's shop, and they were instructed to get a large supply of bandages and iodine. They got these and young Heuston, who was executed after the Rising, brought them a large lamp, and said he hoped he could get a second.

He did bring a second one later. My wife and her sister parcelled them up - they were not covered. Kathleen O'Brien brought them along to Clonmel the Monday before Easter Week. A detective named, I think, Larry Ryan, was on duty at Clonmel, and she signalled him to help her with her luggage to a car. She came along to Tralee, either on the Tuesday or the Wednesday, and the same detective helped her with her luggage into the train!! I remember she telling how he said: "You are travelling soon again". As her train came near Limerick city she got into chat with a British soldier and he obligingly shifted her luggage on to Tralee train!! When she came to Tralee she waited till the train was about to start for Killarney. A detective, Neezer, used be on the watch, but he had left. She brought the two lamps to my house at Moyderwell. With Con O'Mahony, editor of "Kerry News", who was staying with us, we examined the lamps. They were two feet high at least. There was a red slide on one and a green slide on the other. I ran off and told Stack. He sent Volunteers O'Connor and Hogan, who took them away. They were for signalling the German load of arms. These were delivered, at latest, to Stack on the Wednesday before Casement arrived.

We all got mobilisation order from Stack days before the Rising. It was as follows:-

"Sunday 23rd April '16.

"Parade at Drill Hall at 2.45 p.m. with full camping equipment and twelve hours rations. Absence from parade without permission will be strictly dealt with. Following articles are necessary:- Blanket, mess tin (or mug or plate), knife, fork, spoon, overcoat, knapsack, ground sheet, waterbottle; also towel, soap, candle, matches, spare shirt and spare pair of socks.

By order.
A. Stack,
Commandant".

Bill Farmer told me that we were to go to Fenit Pier on Sunday to get arms off boat.

What happened to Casement and German arms is well known. We did not know that it was Casement was arrested until he had been removed from Tralee. Stack was arrested on Good Friday. I remember Easter Saturday morning at daybreak looking down Moyderwell, when a company of Dublin Fusiliers, with fixed bayonets, swung round from the main thoroughfare into Moyderwell. I had a full clear view of them from my bedroom window. I thought to myself, if I had a machine gun I would sweep those off the street - they were such a right cockshot. Irishmen, God help us! Stack was taken off that evening.

We were called out several times by Paddy Cahill, who then took command. We paraded at the Rink. I think Cahill lost his head. He had no military competence. We had Monteith in the Rink under Guard. He was a tough looking subject. I saw two revolvers with him. There was a Co. Kerry mobilisation on Easter Sunday. We assembled at the Sports Field. Afterwards we went back to the Rink. There were Volunteers from all over the County there. A fine lot of fellows. Some had walked all night from Ballyferriter. Hay was spread in the Rink and they rested and slept. It rained very heavily that evening and about 40 of us, fully armed, were detailed off to escort Monteith out with Ballymacelligott Company. It was Kathleen O'Brien suggested to Cahill that they should put him among the Ballymacelligott boys and with a bandolier and haversack, same as the rest. All this happened and when we reached the Mile Height we left them off. That was how he got away. I had considerable experience at rifle firing and had very keen sight and was a good shot. I had only 40 rounds, but others had much less and they had little experience.

When the news of the first shots in Dublin were fired to make Ireland free, we were very disappointed. The surrender was a keen disappointment. The pro-Britishers were on tip top Downey's sacked Michael J. O'Connor and myself. I was idle

for about a year and a half, except for a small job I got from an auctioneer in Kilmallock. While in Kilmallock in 1917 the prisoners was released. I remember going with John O'Keefe, ex-N.T.Kilmallock, to meet de Valera. We drove towards Rosstemple. We met de Valera coming along in a pony and trap. I think it was his uncle and young Leahy from Charleville were with him. Just as we came near Bruree, driving after them, they went into the labourer's cottage where Dev. was reared. We were asked in, but refused, as we thought it better not to butt in on such an occasion. A meeting was then held in Bruree. A good number assembled. Dev. made a long speech. He was a rather picturesque looking foreign type and went down well with the crowd, although his speech was halting. Leahy was more fluent. After this meeting I went to Kilmallock station to meet the train bringing Stack, Tom Ashe and Lynch. We had a chat with them there. Dev. went to contest the Clare election in the next few days. I went from there to Middleton to a solicitor, but returned to Waterford to Thornton's in August 1917. I contacted the Volunteers here, and Sean Matthews, who had some command, sent me word not to parade, as I had got knocked out enough. I did turn up to D/Company parades at Williamstown, but at that time we were busy organising the Sinn Fein Club H.Q. at old Waterford Arms Hotel. John Redmond died in early 1918. We put up Dr. Vincent White against Redmond's son, William. We were beaten. There was a general election at the end of 1918. The franchise had then been given to all at 21. This must have been the fiercest election ever fought in Ireland. The pro-Britishers, ex-soldiers, their wives, etc. came out flaunting small Union Jacks. Drink was flowing. 75% of the citizens were against us. To see that fanatical, separation-money mob, one could not help thinking what Daniel O'Connell thought when he said: "You should know the animals

I was supposed to make a nation out of". We had several fine meetings, but had to bring in Volunteers from all parts of the country to keep the mobs at bay. As the Club had no money, I had to do all the legal work for the candidate, Dr. White, a very brave man, who faced up to the mobs and defied them.

In the Corporation and local elections in 1919 we elected the majority and got White elected as Mayor to solace him for his defeat in the two 1918 elections.

I continued to drill with D/Company after the elections. At the end of 1920 things were beginning to get hot. I believed that the Sinn Fein passive resistance movement would now cripple British rule in Ireland. Ghandi proved this to be so. But Dan Breen started, and things developed. America would not recognise our Republic, although we had elected an almost complete majority, except in N.E. Ireland.

At the end of 1920, Major Paul, our then brigadier of Waterford No. 1 Brigade, asked me to organise an intelligence branch for the brigade area. I set about it, as Michael Collins urged. I had men appointed in the three battalions and men in each company. Weekly Report forms were sent out by me and I got agents to act in firms, shipping companies and the railway, etc. etc. It was not easy to get people to act here. The Redmondites were still in a majority, although losing ground. I sent in my reports to "Mr. Preston" at Gladstone St. Post Office. It was not then a post office. This was arranged with Paul. I had several in the G.P.O. helping. The late Joe Neiland, Tommy Mountjoy, Harris Slattery - all deceased - and Michael Foley, now of Tramore. Harris Slattery's son, Seamus (now an officer in Cavalry) used get copy of British military code messages, slip them into his tie and bring them to me. Others brought some of them too. I tried to read those with keys supplied, and dispatched them anyway to G.H.Q. I got reports of police movements, also military, every week,

and sent these in. I got bundles of police letters from G.P.O., which I opened and read. The R.I.C. used send in reports of patrols which they never made; they were getting demoralised. I was held up and searched a few times. It was essential, and I told my men so, that there be no talking. They were to report anyone offending in this way. I remember using the bedroom of Rev. Father O'Connor, superior of the Friars, for typing my dispatches. I used see the Black and Tans and the Peelers going across at the back from Lady Lane station to Peter St. while I was working. There were several raids on the Post offices here, but Bob Whelan, the Battalion I.O., was looking after this. These raids were mostly irregular, and they got nothing but money. Some of those doing them were sent for trial by Volunteers after.

I have a big number of letters from G.H.Q. still, and a bundle of code messages. I had a covering address - it was a Miss Healy, Manor St. John Power, the Tramore railway station master, used keep all my papers on the wall under the roof at the station, where he used put them at night.

In January 1921, there was an ambush at Ballynatfin Cross near Tramore. It was well planned. The column kept in the background and the Cross was well covered. I interviewed one of the Devons who was in it and got wounded. Himself and his comrade came into Thornton's office to make a claim. I asked Mr. Wiley, solicitor in the firm, to let me take instructions and I got it all out of the wounded Devon. The night in question there was an attack on Tramore police barracks. The Devons went out the main road towards the ambush venue. When they got about half a mile of the spot, a shot went off (a Volunteer named Morrissey from the city, who had some drink taken, in fumbling, left off a shot. (I verified this with Paul). The Devons came along and deployed down on the ambushers. We lost two killed and a few wounded. The

ambushers were ambushed, all because that clown left off a shot. I asked the young Devon: "What was your officer's opinion of the ambush?" He said they had a narrow escape. If it were not for the shot they would have run into it. It would have been the biggest ambush of all.

Some of the Volunteers after this behaved badly. They started robbing - pretending they were British forces, putting on accents. We tried a few of those. Unfortunately, except one, we had to try them in their absence - they had flown.

We had the spies and anties fairly well spotted here, and the bitterest of them was afraid. An R.I.C. man named Greene was found shot at Peter St. barracks and it was suspected that the Black and Tans shot him. I could never get this right. He was sympathetic. Taking them all round, the police were very hostile, but were afraid, and they were then afraid also of the Black and Tans. Again, from what I could hear, I think the people in the country were as much afraid of the I.R.A. as of the R.I.C.

When the Truce came I asked P.J. Paul and Col, James McGrath to let me know the strength of the brigade at the truce. It was less than 400. The area covered included a line from Carrick - across to Mahon Valley, out to the coast and back to Dunmore and into the city, and included the city.

I got report from Richard Walsh, then a clerk in the Prison, that the military were to raid the Asylum that night. Two of our men (Whittle and Wiley) who were wounded in Tramore ambush were hiding there. I sent word at once and they were removed. The search was made that night.

I asked this Richard Walsh, just after the Truce, to find out from the I.O. of the Devons, who used visit the jail there (there were many prisoners) what the British intended to do if the Truce broke down. I had already tapped a code message showing the word they would circulate if Truce broke down.

I was aware that British officers and men were kicking against being made targets of in the streets, and that no army would stand for this long. Walsh brought back report. They were to bring in 30,000 to 50,000 men with all modern equipment, build block-houses at strategic points and MAKE REAL WAR on us. As far as I was concerned, I could not plead ignorance. The best men would be wiped out in a week and there would be little quarter. Those fellows loose through the country!! For me it was only a question of what was the best that could be done for Ireland for the time being. If we reversed the position, what would an Irish army do if they were peppered at as the British were from all quarters. They would not leave a hen alive. The North of Ireland people had got their Parliament for six counties. Was it likely that Britain, victor of the Great War, would let down the Northerners? Lloyd George threatened terrible and immediate war and, after the Treaty, Churchill said he was sorry we did not get a good beating before we got so much, and added: "did not you know we were a race of conquerors?" What protection could the I.R.A. give the people if the British did make real war? They were able to give very little protection to Cork City when it was burned and looted by a drunken, disorderly British mob.

If only the I.R.A. had kept together after the Treaty, they had the 26 counties in their hands. More than half of the are gone now - and many under most distressing straits - deserted by those they helped to make. Imagine making that dastard, O'Donnell, a Referee. Who did it?

"A stepping stone" said Collins. "No more final than that this is the final generation" said Griffith. I don't altogether despise the attitude of the Northerners. Pity they are not on our side. When all is said and done - Britain is the enemy. Who gave the Northerners the Parliament they didn't ask for, and who put in Tyrone, Fermanagh and Derry City into

the Northern Parliament, and on what grounds? They left out three counties of Ulster. If the Irish were united enough everywhere, they could talk a language to Britain (now in steep decline) that Britain would comprehend. If the Irish everywhere were able to hit the scales against, that would take effect.

Gandhi proved that passive resistance got all it wanted, but the Irish, a nonsensical race, could not have the enduring patience to try. The proper time to try was when Britain went into the first war - in defence of small nations - save the war What we see now is all the able-bodied going across to John Bull - this will solve the question, if not stopped.

Signed: Donnisi P. ASMADAM
 (Donnisi P. ASMADAM)
 Date: 17-7-25
D. P. ASMADAM

Witness: 

SUPPLEMENTARY TO MY STATEMENT.

Major F. O'Donoghue, writing in "No Other Law", referring to the attitude of certain people to ^{Liam Lynch} ~~the~~ during the Truce, ~~was~~ ^{quoted Liam Lynch as saying:-}

"I don't give a damn about these people. When it comes to praise or notoriety, and they are making the hell of a mistake if they think I forget their actions during the war, I remember at one time in the best areas where it was next to impossible to find a bed to lie on".

James Connolly came to Tralee some months before the Rising, and addressed a meeting at The Square. It was conscription threatened time. He said: "Let those who have a stake in the Empire go and fight for it. I belong to a class which does not own as much of it as would sod a lark". Also, "They may make us fight, but it will rest with us to choose where we will fight".

"Trust Ireland's sons today,
Her truest strength is still
The rough and ready roving boys
Like Rory of the Hill".

These were the last words of his speech.

Bill Partridge also came from Dublin as a labour organiser. He said, when going to Dublin before the Rising, "You will find that Partridge will die game".

Sean Milroy lectured at The Rink. He was in bad health then and just came out of prison. Pierce Beasley also gave an address.

Michael J. O'Connor, now wellknown in Dublin business circles, acted as secretary for Connolly's meeting. He was sacked by Fras. Downing, solicitor, his employer, the next day. The latter was a Catholic loyalist. A poor specimen anyway. He sacked me the Monday after the Rising. That type had a lot to thank the civil war for. If there had been unity in the

Volunteers these could be kept in their proper place. In their jubilation they thought we were all done for after the surrender. They were really an ill-bred lot, who flunkeyed to the Castle and all it stood for. This lot kept in close to the Bishop and Dean.

A few of the clergy in Tralee went on recruiting platforms. One was a Father Lyne. A Father Riordan was also pro-recruiter.

Dean O'Sullivan was rather sympathetic, but was circumspect. He received Pearse at the Dean's residence when he attended the parade at the Sports Field, some months before the Rising.

Stack was a strong supporter of Arthur Griffith. He said to me on one occasion: "I would not approve of the methods of the Invincibles" - referring to the Phoenix Park killings. I have on my file a letter from him acknowledging receipt of balance of expenses re my deceased's wife's expenses re. dispatch of signalling lamps for Germans and Casement's arrival before Easter Week. On one occasion a Miss Perolz came to Tralee because she had been sent by Countess Markievicz who was to have lectured, but was stopped by British Order. This lady spoke, I thought, rather too freely that there was to be a rising soon. I went to Stack's lodgings and complained to him that this kind of thing was not good enough, and he had better get her to shut up. Stack used get his Volunteer, etc. correspondence addressed to him under cover of his employers letters - Dr. O'Connell, solicitor. It struck me as not what I would do. He was a very likeable kind of man. I wonder how he felt with such a number of men under his command, and he having little or no military competence, and up against trained enemy. His father suffered in the Fenian times and Austin was bitter. I wonder why he took that job of collecting income tax for the British.

A Nurse Coleman from Cork gave first aid lectures at the Rink, Tralee. She had a good attendance.

Miss Lily McCarthy of Dungarvan lectured at the Rink. She gave a very high-spirited address. A lady addressing a big crowd, and her address was inspiring, must have had a gingering influence on any weaklings.

When I came back to Waterford in August 1917, the place was seething with pro-British flunkeyism. The separation money, and all the relatives at home, and the overall influence of Redmond and his A.O.H. bosses. Drink was cheap, and was flowing day and night. The Peelers gave the blind eye to all the aggressions of the Party rabble. Degeneracy reached its crescendo during the General Election 1918. Money was spent on drink and the mobs were inspired to throw bottles and stones. "Bottle for bottle and stone for stone" said Peter O'Connor off a Redmondite platform, Our men were perfectly orderly and there was no blackguardism from our side. It took all the efforts of imported Volunteers to get any kind of fair play for the voters. The Ballybricken pig-buyers were the ring leaders in mob violence.

During the pre-Truce time, 1921, British planes dropped propaganda leaflets around Waterford. I got one from Frank Bergin which was dropped in Tramore. I sent it on to G.H.Q.

In Tralee in pre-Easter weeks, the Volunteers used go to outside places recruiting. On one occasion we went to Castle-island. We formed up in the centre of the place, and there was a line to R.I.C. men carrying rifles standing by. The Fianna boys lined up in front of the Peelers and their officer shouted "Three cheers for the Keyzer" which was lustily replied to. Desmond Fitzgerald (deceased) said: "I hate British rule in this country and all it stands for, and I shall never rest satisfied till I see them out of this country - down to the last miserable Peeler" - pointing to the Peelers.

Another occasion we went to Dingle on a Sunday. Terry MacSweeney was to have addressed the Volunteers from surrounding country. He did not attend, for some reason.

It was rather amusing on our route marches on Sundays to see a plain-clothes Peeler named McKenna (from Waterford) 'escorting' us. Piper Foley at the head of us used to play "The Peeler and the goat".

The O'Rahilly's wife came to my house and had tea with my wife on one occasion. One of her children was attending the Irish College. Frank Fahy was married to a Tralee lady. He was at one of our parades.

We had Pearse down twice altogether.

Signed: _____

Donnchad S O'Mahada's me
(Don't know)

Date: _____

17.2.55

Witness: _____

T. O'Gorman

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
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