ORIGINAL

ROINN COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1474.

Witness

Mr. Eamon O'Duibhir,
Ballagh,
Goolds Cross,
Co. Tipperary.

Identity.

County Centre, Irish Republican Brotherhood.

Assistant Brigade Quartermaster, 3rd Tipperary Brigade.

Subject.

Activities of 3rd Tipperary Brigade and prison experiences of witness - 1916-1922.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File No S.51.

Form B.S.M. 2

ORIGINAL

STATEMENT BY EAMON Ó'DUIBHIR,

Ballagh, Goolds Cross, Co. Tipperary.

Before leaving Reading Jail I had secured the address at which Seumas Robinson would stay in Dublin, plus other addresses, and I also brought with me nearly all the copies of the Jail Journal which had been given to me by Arthur Griffith. Some of those passed into the hands of the owners of the Southern Star in Skibbereen at a later date, and, as far as I can remember, Darrel Figgis also got some from me.

When I arrived home and took up the strings of the work again and also got to work on my agencies, I set about looking around to see if a place could be got which would be suitable as a base for reorganisation work. For that I required a farm with a home on it, so I called to see Mr. O'Ryan, Auctioneer, in Tipperary, and he told me that there was just coming on the market a place which would be very suitable. He did not understand that I wanted it for organisational work, but just as a farm.

A few days later he wrote to me and told me that a place at Kilshenane, Kilshenane House, worked by people named Burke, an outside farm of theirs, was just coming up for auction and was in his hands for the purpose. I called down there to see this place and found that there was a fairly good house on it and the farm was suitable and not too large. The question of getting funds to purchase it then became urgent and I went to Limerick and put my case for the purchase of Kilshenane before Miss Madge Daly, who guaranteed she would give me the sum of £1,000 for this purpose.

The auction came along and I bought the place for somewhere between £1,100 and £1,200. Miss Daly sent on £1,000, and with the aid of the auctioneer I secured the balance necessary from the National Bank in Cashel, plus a guarantee that they would give me money to stock the place and put it working. I then set about putting the place in order. The house at Kilshenane was pretty large. It was a peculiar make of house. It was double storey. In the centre was a large living-room or kitchen, at the southern end a sitting-room, and on the northern end two bedrooms (small ones), all on the ground floor. The upper floor was not carried quite across the house. There was a large room in the southern end and a small one at the northern end, and a stairs ran up from the kitchen and connected both rooms by means of a fairly wide balcony. It looked a lovely place and we got it into good order and got beds and furniture in there in a very short time. The farm was all good dry land, very different from what I had been used to working. I went to live there and my folks remained in the old home in Ballagh. I sent for Robinson and I also got a housekeeper, a Miss Moriarty from near Tralee. I told her if she had a brother or a cousin that she should bring him along with her, and she did so. She brought along a cousin, a man named Dan O'Sullivan. They were quite young people. Poor Dan was a very nervous man who did not stay with us long, and when he went to work with another farmer in the parish of Clonoulty he often used to declare that Kilshenane was a mad place, and I suppose it looked so to him.

Robinson arrived some day in January, 1917, in the midst of a snow storm, and he had with him a small

black travelling bag that we got to know very well and to associate with him. As a farm worker, he made up for his lack of knowledge by his honesty, hustle and zeal. He certainly worked as hard as he could and left nothing undone that he could do, and in addition to all that he was a very gentlemanly man. May Kearney came to work in the place also, handling agency work for me, and as she was elected at that time Secretary of Cumann na mBan she carried on the work of the Cumann from there. Others who came to work there were Michael Kearney and Jim Browne, who then and for years afterwards, and I could say to the present time, were my associates in national work that was, and is to be done. Our plan of working was to pay the usual standard wages of the time, plus any expenses that had to be undertaken to get to various gatherings, and there was an arrangement that someone was always left in charge of the place. We worked the farming end of it very well; it was probably one of the best worked holdings in the locality, and the income from the holding, plus my agencies, kept things going. Later on Miss Daly was repaid this loan with 5% interest, and when the end came in later years the place was free from debt.

In Kilshenane the local meetings of the organisations and meetings of a wider circle were held, and later the Brigade Council meetings were held there for a considerable time. I had become a parishioner of Fr. Matt Ryan in Knockavilla and he was a frequent visitor to the place, and, of course, as President of the local branch of Sinn Féin he was interested in the work of that organisation, plus the work of the Gaelic League which was his greatest love, as it was probably the greatest love of most of us. We had a hall in Ballagh and at this time Padraig McCormaic

was teaching Irish in it, and to this hall, on the class nights, we used to travel from Kilshenane, gathering like a moving snowball crowd as we went, and we often arrived in Ballagh thirty or forty strong. The Volunteers met in this hall also, and, in fact, any others who wanted to have a game of cards or anything social of that kind patronised this hall.

Some time in those early months of 1917 we had our first unpleasantness there with the R.I.C. A concert was about to be held there and, of course, it was very national in its programme. It was decided that the R.I.C. would not be admitted to it, but the owner of the site, who also owned a publichouse across the way, came to me and said he would lose his licence if we would not allow the R.I.C. into the concert, that the place was part of his licensed premises, and he asked me to let them in and not to make any trouble. The concert was due for the following evening and, under the circumstances, I withdrew the ban on the R.I.C. Sergeant Horgan and some other Constable arrived and they stood on a seat at the end of the hall. We glared at them and they glared at us, but our glares were apparently the stronger for they eventually left. I followed them out to argue it out, but they got away very quickly.

The farm at Kilshenane was hardly what you would call a communal farm, but it was working as a base for all the national organisations - the Irish Volunteers, Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League and Cumann na mBan. The I.R.B. Centre used meet there all the time too, and sometimes the County I.R.B. meetings. In a very short time we began the organising of the County on a very large scale. The principal parties in this work were Seamus O'Neill,

Seumas Robinson and myself. We had, of course, assistants from other areas as well. Pierce McCann was O/C of the County Volunteers, and I don't know when he ceased to hold this office but I think he remained O/C until his lamented death in prison.

One of the first big gatherings which we had was held in Rossmore on a Sunday evening. A Mission was being held there at the time and in charge of it was Fr. Laurence and some other priest. We had decided to hold the meeting after the close of the Mission, which we were attending. The meeting was not alone to organise the Volunteers but also Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League and all the other organisations. All were parts of the one movement, or, I should say, they were all parts of the machinery to work for Irish resurgence. Unfortunately, in giving his final sermon, Fr. Laurence attacked the Easter Week men very bitterly. He even went so far as to suggest some of them were informers in British pay, and we listened to what he had to say with very ill-concealed patience. I came out, accompanied by the others, and our conversation was the subject of Fr. Laurence's address. Why he should have made this statement I do not know, and, needless to say, there was no truth in it, and we all were quite aware of that. When we came out on the road there was a cart fixed as a platform for the meeting, and a crowd gathered around us and asked if we were going to hold the meeting, as they wanted to hear our reply to Fr. Laurence. I said we were but we were waiting for our Chairman. Now the Chairman of the meeting was to be the I.R.B. Centre for the area, but apparently he was dismayed by Fr. Laurence's statement and went home and did not wait for the meeting. When this became know, two local farmers, William O'Reilly

(father of Ned O'Reilly), and Mr. Dan O'Keeffe, who was the head of another family who took a great part in the movement, said if we were ready to speak they would go on the cart and call the meeting to order. I said I was quite ready to speak and they urged that I should speak first, for they were expecting me to hit out. Mr. O'Reilly, I think it was, addressed the gathering and said, "You heard lies that have been inflicted on us in a sacred place and now Eamon is going to reply to them" I began my address by referring to the statement of Fr. Laurence. He, accompanied by Fr. Moloney, the C.C. of the parish, were just going out the gateway from the church premises when I made the statement that what Fr. Laurence said was a bald and a damnable lie, and the crowd cheered my words to the echo. Fr. Moloney looked across at me and he smiled as much as to say "give it to him", and Fr. Laurence went away with Fr. Moloney. When Fr. Moloney got to the Parochial House he reported what had happened to Canon D. Ryan, and the Canon was highly displeased and said to Fr. Laurence that the church was no place to introduce politics and especially no place to give a slanderous talk on political affairs, and he said "as long as I am here you will never hold a Mission again in Clonoulty", and he did not. Now that was the meeting at Rossmore and it was very successful as regards getting members for the various organisations and getting the work going on a large scale there, for already we had groups in Rossmore and it was only a question of getting everybody we possibly could into the movement. Our work also during that period consisted of drilling, raising funds and in general planning out the work to be done, and whatever about the drilling, I did a great deal of work in the latter fields.

Sometime later, coming on for the summer of 1917, after having held recruiting meetings at over a score of other centres we decided that we would make a great march right through the hills, starting from Knockavilla and reaching the hills at Iron Mills, and then northwards to Hollyford and to Upperchurch. We left Knockavilla with a small crowd after early Mass and we went on to Dundrum, where some others joined us. We then went on to Iron Mills, where we got some few others, and then we turned into the road through the mountains. By this time many of our friends from Ballagh and Rossmore had arrived to join us, and the Cumann na mBan were there in force too and we halted somewhere near Hollyford whilst they prepared a meal for us by the roadside. The crowd had grown to hundreds, and after our meeting at Hollyford the crowd grew greater. This mountain road saw men and women, some on cycles and on side-cars, strung out over a couple of miles beyond Hollyford. As we moved northwards, reaching other points we got a great reception, and we turned for Upperchurch some time late on the Sunday evening after having branched out off the main road to various of the small centres. It was dark night when we reached Upperchurch, and the pipers met us there with some other bands from the Upperchurch area and with hundreds of torch bearers and am immense crowd. Probably there were three or four thousand people in Upperchurch that night when the meeting began about midnight. Padraig Kinane and Hayes were the principal speakers, as well as the crowd from our group, and some time later, after having done what we thought was a brilliant day's work, we started home out of Upperchurch. Of course, Kinane saw to it that those who had been most helpful

at any rate did not go home dry or hungry, and Robinson, Seamus O'Neill and myself got to Kilshenane in the early hours of the morning.

We next organised a great aeriocht for Ballagh. We had one there in 1915, and now on the other side of the road on the lands of Mr. M. Connolly we had procured a large field and we got everything ready to hold a great aeriocht and demonstration on the 15th August, 1917. Canon Dan Ryan, P.P., gave us the use of the local school to have teas and other refreshments in it, and all the houses in the area helped in that way too. We purchased on hire a huge marquee or perhaps a couple of them, and we had five platforms in the field for the speakers and for the programme that we held. In the marquee we were selling badges of the movement and we had a great pile of books from the various Irish publishers, plus national weeklies and pamphlets. Those were sold that day in hundreds by the Cumann na mBan workers. Amongst the speakers who came to that meeting were Seán Milroy, Darrell Figgis, J.J. Walsh, Fr. Matt Ryan and, of course, any local speakers that we had. Yes, and John O'Mahony, affectionately known as "Big John". Amongst others we had Mrs. S. Connolly, whose husband was killed in the attack on Dublin Castle in 1916, and she sang songs, including "The Three Coloured Ribbon", which was very applicable in her case. Máire Nic Shuibhlaigh, the celebrated actress, was there to help and to give many splendid recitations, as were our friends from Dungarvan and Waterford and many other centres who had helped us before. They came from as far south as the Glen of Aherlow and from all the western hills and from the countryside around, until 17,000 people had crowded into that field on that day in August. Along

with them came 200 armed constabulary, and they drew up in two lines along the roadside and a body of them came to the entrance gate of the field to get in and take notes of what was being said there. On the gateway the group included Andy Mason from Drumbane, who was a prominent man in the G.A.A. He was a small man but full of pluck and determination, and he told the Co. Inspector of the R.I.C. that they could not go in there. The Co. Inspector said that they would, and Mason said, "only over my dead body". A whistle blew for the Volunteers. I came on the scene and I repeated what Mason said and, as far as I remember, I drew a revolver and told the Co. Inspector that there was no going in. He said, "Will any of my men be let in if they pay?". "Well", I said, "that is possible, but mind if they take any notes we will take the note books off them. We are not going to have any dictation from the R.I.C. at this meeting". So they held a conference and they decided they would send in a small group, so we agreed for peace sake that we would let them through so long as they carried in no arms with them, and I told the Co. Inspector again that if they carried in arms they would come out without them. "This crowd will not permit them to be showing off arms in their midst, so it is better leave them on the roadside and come in without them and they can listen away. We will be glad to have the whole lot of you listen, but we will not allow you to come in and bully us or flaunt your force in our faces". That was agreed to and they came in, but they took no notes and went home without further incident.

It was a big day in Ballagh and the night before we had had a meeting in front of J.D. Lysaght's Hotel in Dundrum and it was addressed by some of the speakers who

had come from Dublin. At that meeting we heard that some prisoners were on the train going to Cork or something to that effect. Now it was about the time that the British order came out that Volunteers in uniform would be arrested, and also the ban on carrying hurleys. I had never previously bothered about uniform, but now I got a uniform made and went to Mass at Knockavilla and to the aeriocht in Ballagh in it. I am not able to say what was the result of that great gathering or what sort of financial success it was, for on the following morning when I awoke in Kilshenane I found myself hemmed in with R.I.C. and, I think, military, and I was a prisoner in their hands. I was brought to Cork Jail and after some short time there I was brought before a courtmartial. The courtmartial was held by a group of British officers and they were courteous enough, and those of us who came before them were also courteous and firm. I and the others were asked what had we to say in our defence, and our reply was: "Níl meas madra agam ar an gCúirt seo". An interpreter had to translate it into English, and he translated it by saying "the prisoner said he had not a dog's regard for that court".

I then got my sentence and I was kept for a couple of days further in Cork before being sent to Mountjoy, and so I was once more on the train from Cork to Dublin passing through Tipperary, and a prisoner just as in 1916. The evening I was brought into Mountjoy there was some sort of demonstration in the prison. I heard afterwards that the crowd thought I was kicking up a row about my clothes being removed, but that did not occur as there was no attempt made to put me into prison dress. For the first time now I faced what real imprisonment was, and to an outdoor man every hour in the cell seemed a day long

and every day a week. The food was atrocious and there was an attempt being made to get the hard labour men to do some work.

There were four of us prisoners there on hard labour sentences. First and foremost, Tómás Aghas (Thomas Ashe), Seamus Dunne of Dublin, Frank Shinners of Ennis, and myself. Exercise was carried out for a short period each day in a yard, with a crowd of criminals as company, and all had to keep several paces apart and the rule was that strict silence was to be observed. When we got together for the first time (it would probably be on the 18th September, 1917), we refused to obey this rule, and Shinners in particular got very excited and commenced speaking so high that we thought he could be heard down at Nelson Pillar. There was great excitement in the prison exercise yard and at once the Chief Warder came on the scene, and when we refused to obey the rulings we were escorted back to the cells. There we were visited by Warder Owens, whose job it was to provide us with suitable work, and he brought along a lot of bag-making materials, needles and thread, and began to instruct us on how to make bags. I, and the others I am sure, had no objection to instruction, for it was helpful to us to pass time and prevent us from being lonely in the cells, but it took us a long time even to learn to thread a needle. Owens was surprised that we were so stupid, and, worse still, when we had been taught how to thread the needle we refused to put this needle through the canvas and make the bags. He was terribly distressed and he told us what an awful man the Governor was and how displeased he would be. So he made his complaint, as he had to, and the Chief Warder made his complaint and we were hauled before

Governor Monroe, and in fatherly style he counselled us as to how necessary it was to obey those rulings, we being prisoners, so on and so forth, and he would have to be a little bit rough with us if we were not good boys, and I remember Tom Ashe was pretty sarcastic with him.

We were brought back to the cells again and next day were let out once more for exercise. The same trouble started and, escorted by a crowd of warders, we were dragged back into the cells and Owens came along with his bag-making materials, but now we had got a bit sour and we refused to let him leave the bag-making materials in the cells. As soon as he opened a door and began to shove in this pile of stuff, we booted the stuff out again and there was another scene, and again we were hauled before Governor Monroe. The poor man was mighty displeased. He had his monocle in his eye and it was a bit of a joke to us to see him try to work himself into a fury, or something that we would take to be a fury, but, needless to say, we were parties who were difficult to impress by that sort of thing so that went for nothing. The next day we got no exercise except that we were taken one by one to a secluded part of the prison yard, and, not seeing our comrades there, we kicked up a row, each in turn, and were shifted back into the cells again, and so the fourth day came and we got exercise together again in the principal ring. We got together and had a talk, and I remember Ashe saying to me, "Isn't it a devilish thing to be back again in prison, Eamon. You are not out so long, but it is still a shorter period since I came out of prison". He had been in Lewes Prison up to the general release and we both felt it was pretty tough. Anything was better than putting up with this rule

of silence and this continuous confinement to cells, so we decided there and then that we would make some effort to take the war to the prison authorities. When we went back to our cells again that evening, ~~General~~ Governor Monroe had a further talk with us and he decided that he would begin to inflict some punishment on us. The punishment was the ludicrous one of taking away the Books of Instruction that had been placed in the cells. Now those Books of Instruction were 4th or 5th class school books, and it was funny that those books could contain any instruction for a teacher like Ashe, or for any of us for that matter.

In the prison at the time there were a large number of other political prisoners, including Austin Stack, Fionán Lynch, and Michael O'Brennan of the Clare Brigade, and they were being exercised in a yard apart from the one in which we were exercised. They could walk around and talk and their conditions were a good deal different from ours. On the fifth day, the gateway or doorway leading from our prison yard into the one in which they were exercising was open and we could see that they were talking and having a few songs. Ashe said, "Now Eamon, now Frank, now Seumas, we will make a dash and get through that doorway". There was a warder or two on the doorway, but we shoved them out into the other yard before us and we joined the big crowd who were first division political prisoners. They gave us a great shout of welcome and we held a meeting in the prison yard. We refused to return to the cells. The day dragged on, and bad as the food was, we could have done with some of it, but we did not return to the cells and we had nothing to eat, and I am not quite sure now but that constabulary were drafted in. I have not a very clear recollection of that

matter. At any rate, at some hour that night we were either forced or induced to return to the cells. I should say probably we went there fairly willingly, for we wanted somewhere to sleep and the nights were growing chilly. Back in the cells we got some food, and then an attempt was made to segregate the four hard labour men of us again, so the row began.

We began to barricade the cells and kick up a shindy. Having returned to our cells, the prison authorities could then deal with us one by one. A force of warders came into the cells before we had done much damage or broken up much of the place. They took control and they took off our boots. They took away bed boards and all other so-called furniture in the cells, including the gallon of drinking water, our blankets, etc., and we were left without anything but what we stood in. That must have been well after midnight on the 18th or 19th September; I think it was on the night of the 18th. The 19th dragged on and again an attempt was made to take out all the crowd one by one for exercise, but again that did not work. We created a bit of a din, shouting to one another and smashing with our hands any of the windows we could reach. Any other portables that were in the place were removed and we had no food. We refused to take it that night and Stack, who had now taken over command of the prisoners, passed the word that we would begin a hunger-strike. We began the 20th with a hunger-strike, and I remember waking up that morning of the 20th curled up into a ball like a squirrel in winter, in a corner of the cell and feeling desperately cold. Now began the days of hunger and our first experience of hunger-strike, and that day of the 20th passed without anything being done about it,

but on the following day, as far as I can remember, the forcible feeding began. Each man in turn was brought to a large room in which they had the usual operating chair. We were tied into this chair with bands around the legs and arms, a band around the body and also a band around the neck, and into each man's mouth an instrument was passed to keep it open. The forcible feeding outfit was brought along - a pint of milk, with an egg broken into it, the pump and the tubing. The tubing was passed down through the mouth and into the stomach. I never had any fear of hunger-striking, and that was the first one, but I certainly did not like this pipe being passed down through my throat and I began to have a horror of it. I must admit that I was very much afraid of it, and often in years afterwards I woke up and felt this damn pipe or tube going down my neck like a snake. Everyone of the crowd who suffered this vomited terribly. The days passed with this as the only relief from the monotony of being held in the cell. On the morning of the 25th Warder O'Connor came into my cell. After unlocking the door he turned back and locked it on the inside, and he said to me, "I want to prepare you for bad news and before I tell you the news I want you to drink a flask of wine I have here in my pocket". I said, "I will not do that, for that would be breaking the strike, and I am not going to do it". "That means that you do not trust me", he said, "and it is understandable, but I was with your friend Seán Treacy in his cell already and I showed him something and he agreed that I was trustworthy and he took this wine. I told him what I had to tell, and I have been with Stack and Fionán Lynch and they told me to call on you, and as Treacy was on my way I called to him". "Now", he said, "you have not

accepted that statement from me and I do not blame you. Do you know this handwriting"?, and he produced a note from his pocket. The note was written by Phil Shanahan to say that Warder O'Connor was to be thoroughly trusted. I said, "That is alright, I know that handwriting, it is Shanahan's." "Now you will drink the wine first" he said. I drank the wine and I said, "What is the news?", and he said, "Tom Ashe is dead. He died sometime last night from the effects of the forcible feeding. Apparently the tube went down the wrong passage". I thanked O'Connor, saying it was terrible news, but he said, "You will not tell anybody or pass the word around to anybody else. There is nobody else in this prison knows it except Stack, Lynch, Seán Treacy and yourself. There is another possible exception that I might get orders from Stack to tell the news to, and that is Michael Brennan of Clare". I had seen Ashe the evening before when he was being brought down to the operating chamber for forcible feeding and he was then in first class spirits and health, and now to think he was dead!

We had done a good deal of damage to the cells in that first frenzied struggle on the 18th and 19th, and one could send the news from one floor to the other by shouting through the broken doors. I went to the door of my cell, which I had fairly well fractured sometime before, and I shouted across to the cells in the floor underneath. I knew that Stack and Fionán Lynch were there and it was to Lynch I directed my talk, as I knew, of course, that he was a front rank Irish scholar. I just asked in Irish was it true the gave news that I had heard, and he shouted back that it was but to say nothing for the moment to anybody else. The fear was that our crowd would be

scared and that some of them would break the hunger-strike. It is very doubtful that they would have done so, but that was the fear that Stack and Lynch had. All the prisoners, with one exception, were on hunger-strike, and the only man not on hunger-strike was Richard Ó Colmán from Swords. Ó Colmán would not agree with hunger-striking. He thought it was a suicidal move and in conscience did not agree with it, and, of course, he was entitled to his opinion, as all Irish Volunteers were. They were free agents at all times, and, apart from that, Ó Colmán had already earned fame by his fighting at Ashbourne and in the Mendicity Institute in Easter Week. He was later to die in prison. Whilst on that subject I must say that after the strike was over, some of the Munster men were a bit sore with Ó Colmán and inclined to be offensive to him, but I took them to task and in that I had the backing of Seán Treacy. That finished any slurs being cast upon Ó Colmán, who was head and shoulders in spirit and every other way above anyone that would be casting such slurs upon him. I have always agreed that hunger-striking was a weapon to help in getting one out of prison. Beyond that I did not hold any high principles for it.

That night in the prison the forcible feeding had come to an end, and I should say before going any further that a day or two before that Dr. Kinsella of Portlaoise Prison had come in and taken control, and things were done much better by him. The doctor responsible for the death of Ashe was said to be a Dr. Lowe, but it was a strange thing that Dr. Lowe, like some of our newspaper proprietors and editors, got away with those sort of things and there was never a State trial for this crime against the Irish people. As far as I remember,

there was no forcible feeding on the 25th or thereafter, but I could be wrong in this. At any rate, the news was all over the prison on the 26th that all restrictions were going over board, and the next thing was a statement from the Governor that we were to get special treatment called Prisoner of War or Political treatment. We accepted this special treatment. The prisoners could exercise together and talk. They got better food and then could get plenty of parcels from outside, and there were shoals of visitors coming to see us. I remember Seamus Mulcahy Lyons from Clonmel, our famous poet and patriot, coming to see us and with him was Jack McArdle of Dublin, and somebody else came in and played the war pipes around the prison. Poor Governor Monroe did not know what to say to all this, and our friend Warder Owens began to think that we were not so mad as he thought we were at one time. The hunger-strike was over and we had secured political treatment and things were pretty well alright except that we were still behind the walls of Mountjoy. We confabbed together and made plans for the future. Amongst the Tipperarymen there were Tomás Ó Maoiláin, Seamus O'Neill, Seán Treacy and, needless to say, some others. The Irish Convention was sitting at the time and there were some people foolish enough to think that there would something come out of it. We had the run of the prison and, amongst other places, I remember we were brought to see the execution chamber, and seeing the gallows we just wondered would any other Irish patriots be hanged there again and we thought that it was hardly possible that such a thing would happen anymore, but two years later that thing did happen.

Sometime in November we were ordered to pack up and a group of us found ourselves in Dundalk Prison, and an attempt was made there to put us back on the same treatment that we had in the early stages in Mountjoy. I don"t think they were making any attempts to put the three survivors of us back on hard labour, but, however, we refused to carry out any of the rules or regulations and the row began again. A hunger-strike began in Dundalk and it was damn cold weather for a hunger-strike, but, at any rate, we stuck it out and after some days we were all released. When released we were greeted by the town people. I remember the O'Carrolls, the cigarette people, showing us around their works and entertaining us, and from thence we came on to Dublin where a great reception awaited us. Some lady, whose name I cannot remember but who was pretty prominent then, had organised a crowd of the girls who presented us with flowers as we came off the train at Amiens St., and we were carried shoulder high to Nelson Pillar, where we managed to escape from our admirers, and then it remained to come home and take up the work once more.

Whilst away in prison I was worried about how things might be going in Kilshenane. In the first place it was a new home and in the second place some of the principal men of the movement in the County Tipperary were in prison with me, Seán Treacy and Seamus O'Neill in particular. As far as the organisations were concerned I need not have worried, for Robinson, although new to the place and unknown, had stepped into the gap and with the help of Tadhg O'Dwyer, Michael Sheehan, Bill O'Dwyer and others carried on very well. Robinson, Kearney and Seamus Browne did the farm work and nothing was lost in those

respects, but something else had happened that was to complicate matters for me then and especially in the future, something I thought I had provided against. I mentioned already that we had a housekeeper in Kilshenane. Now when I was taken away and Robinson was left in charge, the P.P. of Knockavilla was not at all satisfied that it was proper to have this young lady in charge of a house with a crowd of young men, some of whom he did not know, in particular Robinson. I am sure Robinson must have been amused at the time over this, because certainly no more proper man could be found than the same Robinson, and if the truth were told he was far more to be trusted than even myself. He was a very good man, but Fr. Matt Ryan didn't see things that way. He, Fr. Ryan, called to Ballagh and saw my sister Mrs. Cussen and insisted that she and my mother should go down to Kilshenane to take charge of the place. Now this was something I wanted to avoid altogether. I did not want an old woman like my mother to be once more in the turmoil that I expected would be there from time to time, for there were bound to be raids by the constabulary. Without acquainting me about what they thought was best to do, they took Fr. Matt's advice, left the house in Ballagh and went to live in Kilshenane. When I heard of it in prison I was worried, but what could I do about it? Miss Moriarty, the housekeeper, got a job locally for some time, and she was satisfied that I, at any rate, was not at fault in the matter. Whilst my sister, with her young children, and my mother, then an old woman, faced up to the issue, they never complained. Still, it was at all times very much of a worry to me to have them in Kilshenane. Mothers and sisters were then very worried about their sons

or brothers, and whilst they made life in the years to come a terrible worry for me, still I did not blame them.

In Kilshenane the work continued and the organisation work continued to go on there. By the end of 1917 the farm was, on the whole, paying its way, and in addition to that, the agencies which I handled were returning a profit. After all living costs were met, there was a surplus to help the movement in general.

That, I think, ends the year of 1917, and now with the new year commencing we were again carrying on with the general work of the place, the general work of the organisations and looking round to see where arms and ammunition could be had. One of the raids from Kilshenane which occurred in that year of 1918 was on a soldier's home. A British soldier on furlough brought his rifle home to Ardmoyle with him, and one night Seán Butler, Michael Kearney and Michael Davern slipped down from Kilshenane and captured his rifle. In something that appeared in the local paper, "The Munster Tribune", an interviewer who talked with Michael Davern got the idea that this soldier, whose name was Michael Maher, became an I.R.A. man in later years. Well that is not so. He was not an I.R.A. man but was very hostile to us.

In Gooldscross one night a British soldier, a resident of Cashel, had his rifle with him and left it on the seat in the waiting-room whilst he knocked around the platform. He had some drink taken. Some R.I.C. men were also there. Some of our boys dropped into the waiting-room, slipped an overcoat around the rifle and walked away with it. There was the 'devil to pay' when the rifle was missed, and the R.I.C. arrested the

soldier and took him to the local R.I.C. station.

We held propaganda and recruiting meetings not only in our own area but up to Mid-Tipperary and the bounds of North Tipperary, with the aid of Padraig O'Kinane, Seamus Leahy, Kennedy of Thurles, the Mahers at Ansfield and several others that I cannot recall now. We organised portion of what became the Tipperary 4th Battalion area, and amongst the meetings we held was one at Golden. Our men and officers were very decent fellows and they didn't like to hold this meeting at Golden without the permission of the local P.P., a Fr. O'Kane. I did not see that such was at all necessary but I bowed to their ruling, and having to do all these jobs, I went to see Fr. O'Kane. He did not receive me very well when he discovered what my business was, and not alone would he not give permission for the meeting but he said if the meeting was held he would bring a crowd and chase us out of Golden. I said, "Very well, Fr., we are holding that meeting and if you bring anybody to chase us out of there we will drop them over the bridge into the Suir and that's that". We advertised the meeting and we had a pretty big crowd there, but nobody interfered with us though the talk was fairly strong. The police took notes and were able to give a statement with regard to what was said at the meeting. The barrack was right alongside where we were speaking.

Probably a week afterwards, Michael Sheehan, at a meeting, told us that there was a big stand of Carsonite arms at Major Edward's place just beyond Golden. Major Edwards had a racing stud and had a great many men employed at his place in Rathduff. He was a retired British Officer. His secretary, as we discovered later, was an Austrian girl.

She became Mrs. Edwards later and is still living, but the Major has passed to his eternal reward long before now. With this news, which looked very good, the decision was made to raid the place, and Robinson, Bill O'Dwyer, Tadhg O'Dwyer, Paddy Hayes, Kearney and some others were lined up for the operation. Eight of us cycled by road and eight others went across the country, and we closed in on the place somewhere about 8 or 9 o'clock at night. I fixed a ring of scouts around the place. Robinson and Bill O'Dwyer went up to the front door and knocked, and this lady or some maid came to the door and they enquired for the Major. Bill, moryah, had hay or turnips to sell him. There was always a ready market at such a place for such wares, owing to the large number of horses kept there. The Major came to the door in his slippers, and the moment he did he was held up and Robinson and Bill O'Dwyer got into the house. When they entered the sitting-room this lady (the secretary) heard the commotion and she reached for a big revolver that was on the table. She swung it at the two and pulled the trigger. She tried every chamber but by good luck it was not loaded. She threw it down and rushed out a side door to the back towards the stables, and she called upon the men there to come to the help of the Major, saying that he was being murdered at the front door. As a matter of fact, he was making some noise. Two or three men with hay forks came rushing up. I arrived on the scene and I presented an automatic at them and said, "Go back". This lady caught hold of me as she thought I was one of the Major's men, and she threw her arms around my neck to drag me on to save the Major's life. When she discovered her mistake I said, "You can come on with me but those men must go back and

throw down their forks and cease acting like fools. There is nobody going to be killed here and the Major is not being injured". I don't remember this lady's maiden name, but she came back to the hall door and the Major was in a bit of a fury at being detained. There was a drizzle of rain falling and I suggested he should go into the hallway and not get cold or wet. He replied, "No Sir, if you are going to kill me you will have to kill me in the open air." I told him, "We are not going to kill you and have no such intention. Your life is quite safe. It is something else we require here and you can come into the hall and discuss the matter with us." "What is your business"? he asked. "We are raiding for arms. We have information that there is a stand of Carsonite arms here and if there is we are going to get them". Robinson and Bill O'Dwyer came on the scene. Robinson said to the lady that when they were making the search he would like if she would accompany them to see that everything was safe, but the Major was in a terrible fury by this time and he turned and said, "Whats that you said?, and I repeated it. He said, "You are adding insult to injury. In the first place I am a loyal officer of the Crown and I have no truck with a rebel like Carson, and in the second place I would like to inform you I am a Catholic also". I said that it did not matter and that there were Catholics aiding the Carsonites, but now that we were there, while it was possible we might be misinformed, we were going to carry out the search. "If the arms are not here you will not be at any big loss, but I may as well tell you if there is anything in the line of arms we are taking them". We got an automatic shotgun, a revolver and there was also a beautiful fowling piece. Some of the boys had brought this fowling piece out and they were looking

at it. It was a costly article and the Major said, "Are you taking that?", and said it was a very valuable fowling piece that cost him £50. I examined it and handed it back to him and said we would not take it. We expressed our regret that we had raided the place and found nothing but his personal property, but needing arms as we did we were taking the others with us. We marched away and next day or the day following, the newspapers were full of the raid and they carried a statement from the lady secretary saying that we were only seeking arms for defence and freedom of our country, and that we were quite a gentlemanly crowd of men, commanded by a tall, military looking officer. This lady wrote to Eamon de Valera complaining about the raid, saying that Major Edwards was not an assistant of the Carsonite crowd and, as far as she was concerned, she hadn't any great liking for England as she was an Austrian German. The letter was opened by the censor and, as far as I know, the net result was that the lady was picked up by the British and retained for some time as an internee.

One morning, a few days later, military and constabulary arrived at Kilshenane and I was arrested about 5 a.m. I was brought to a special court in Dundrum presided over by a Stipendiary Magistrate named St. George. He heard all the evidence against me, that I spoke seditiously in Golden and that it was thought that I was behind raids for arms and a lot of other things, and that it would be better to have me locked up. He turned to me and said, "I have statements here about you and you seem to be regarded as a dangerous man by the R.I.C. dangerous in the way that you are very persuasive and are very earnest in what you have set before yourself to do.

They say also that you are a very honourable man and well liked generally. Now is there any hope of getting you to turn from this course you have set out upon and which can only end in disaster for yourself and your country"?
"I don't agree with you", I said, "those things will happen and I am going on with what I set out to do. There are things I may not do, but in honourable warfare or anything else I would use every means to clear the British Government out of here and have a free Ireland, and I think you should do so, too, as you also are an Irishman". "My God", he said, "are you starting this seditious talk here in Court? I won't listen to you". I got three months' imprisonment or the choice of bails.

For the third time I arrived in Cork Prison, and I went on hunger-strike some days later. For some reason or other, I was quite weak and while in bed in the prison cell a Dr. O'Flaherty, an old man, came in to look me over. He had me turned lying on my face and I got the impression he was doing something he shouldn't be doing in the way of forcible feeding, not in the way it was done in Mountjoy but forcible feeding of another kind. I said, "What are you trying to do?", and he said "I am giving you something to keep up your strength". "Well, my God", I said, "if you continue you may overpower me, but I'll tell you this, whenever I get out, or I will get word out somehow, I will have you killed". I was under the impression he was giving me forcible feeding through the posterior passage. He disisted and said, "I have only been trying to save your life". Most of these doctors then thought that a week's hunger-strike was dangerous. They got to know as time went on that a month's hunger-strike wasn't a danger to a great many men. He said he was

sorry. I said, "That's all right as long as you don't do it". He said, "It is a heartbreak for me to have you here, and if you die on my hands what will I do? Do you suggest I release you and lose my job?". "I have not suggested to you to do any such thing", I said, "and I have not asked you to release me. Don't do anything that will do yourself harm, Dr. O'Flaherty. Don't try anything like forcible feeding, but, at the same time, I will let the hunger kill me before I will give up". A few days afterwards I was released.

I was at home some days, perhaps a week, when I was again picked up and brought to Cork, going back on what was called the "Cat and Mouse Act". This time I received a note through one of the warders, probably it was Pat O'Shea, stating that if I was a bailable prisoner I should give bails, and I was to report to Terence MacSwiney in Cork when I was released and I would get my orders from him. There was nothing for it but to write home to Tipperary. Some of the local people jumped to the chance of dealing with the bails, and, of course, my home people, not yet understanding what was happening, were glad I was released on bail, and I reported to Terence MacSwiney and some other Volunteer officers in Cork. I was told there I wasn't to remain at home but to report to H.Q. in Dublin immediately. I returned home and stayed in Kilshenane that night and the following day and night. I intended to go to Dublin next day, but Kilshenane was hemmed in by a large force of military and constabulary in the early morning. I was taken prisoner once again. There was a military officer in charge and I said, "You are making a mistake, since I am out on bail". "They have seen through that question of

bails", he replied. "There won't be any more bails or anybody released on bail in future. Some have got away, even more prominent men than you". The explanation for all this was the threat of conscription then in the air and which was likely to be in force at any moment. G.H.Q. apparently wanted all the officers that could to be at large, and where they could get out of prison on bail to take the bails by all means. There was nothing wrong in it.

It was the 5th April, 1918, and I was once more on the way to prison. I was brought to the R.I.C. station in Clonoulty. It was in charge at the time of Sergeant Hamilton, and there were two constables by the name of Walsh in the crowd of constables there. One Walsh was a Protestant, his wife being the local Protestant schoolteacher and very friendly to us. Walsh himself was a great friend of ours and helped us in future times. When he was dying some few years ago, he sent for Michael Davern, T.D., and told him that it would do him no harm now as his pension as an ex R.I.C. man was being terminated by death, but he would like his children and all others to know that he had acted at all times like a genuine Irishman. That has been made known long before now. The other Constable Walsh was a Dick Walsh who came from Mayo, and very shortly after this arrest of mine he threw off the uniform and went back to Mayo, where he joined the I.R.A.

When I was brought into Clonoulty Barracks and the soldiers had gone away, Sgt. Hamilton got very fussy and said, "You are being sent to Belfast Prison and you will be going on one of these damned hunger-strikes

again so you'd better eat enough before you leave here". The Sergeant insisted on the housekeeper preparing a whole potful of eggs and said I should eat them all owing to the danger that I would go on hunger-strike, and he also got the housekeeper, Mrs. Keogh, to prepare a currant cake while we were waiting for the train, and he was very disappointed that I did not eat all the eggs and sweet cake.

With a strong R.I.C. escort I boarded the train at Goolds Cross on my way to Belfast. When we arrived in Belfast later on that evening of the 5th April, 1918, the Sergeant said that if I cared to they would wait while I had something to eat at a restaurant. I saw a restaurant near the station, so I said I would go in there and have tea. I guessed before I went in, by the name over the door, that it was owned by a Protestant. I sat down at a table and a girl came along. I asked her for tea and some confectionery. The R.I.C. men seated themselves on the opposite side of the room and she said to me, "Are you an officer in charge of those men?". "Oh no", I said, "I am a prisoner and they are in charge of me". "You a prisoner", she said, "you do not look like a person who would be a prisoner". "Not for crime" I said, "I am one of the Irish Volunteers". She apparently passed the news around as some of the waiters and others came to have a look at me. It was a time when they were not busy. The evening rush had not begun and they came over and talked to me, quite a bunch of boys and girls, and they glared at the R.I.C. They said those mean fellows were always poking their noses into other people's affairs, and it was not fair that a nice man like me should be a prisoner in their hands.

When I was leaving they all shook hands with me and wished me luck. As we came out on the street, Sergeant Hamilton remarked, "Wasn't it well you were able to pick a Sinn Féin restaurant even in Belfast". "That was not a Sinn Féin restaurant", I replied. "They are Protestants and possibly some of them Orange, but now you see for yourself that Orange or Green don't like the R.I.C., so you better get out in time before the storm bursts."

They brought me up to Belfast Prison and wished me the best of luck. It was my first visit to the Crumlin Road Jail. After passing through all the necessary formalities, I was brought up to the "A" wing in which a number of our fellows were already lodged. They were being treated there as prisoners of war, or, as the British would call it, political prisoners, and here I met a good many of my old friends. Austin Stack, greatest of prison leaders, was in command in Belfast - as he had been in Mountjoy and Dundalk, and others there were Ernán de Blaghd, Joe McDonagh, Frank McGrath from Nenagh, Frank Philips from Cashel, and a great many others, including a future Minister for Justice, Gearóid Ó Beoláin. I settled down to a new life in prison. Things were rather quiet and nothing very much happening.

Sometime before, I had secured a position with the Irish National Assurance Society as their Organising Manager and I had been getting a number of agents for them all over the country. I wasn't long in Belfast until I found out that any parties who had business to do, and there were quite a good lot of business men in the crowd, like MacDonagh, had permission to send out their business correspondence from the prison. I wrote to the

Society in Dublin and they sent me on copies of a circular pamphlet which I had composed myself. I sent these out to addresses up and down the country looking for agents, and, strange to say, from this office in Belfast Prison we secured quite a good many agents. It was a funny place to be doing business from, and the literature going out was by no means pro-British. It went through for a long time until the censor passed his comments on it, and then the pamphlets were held up and I could send no more of them. However, I was allowed to carry on the ordinary correspondence of the Society and for a time that went out all right.

The prison control run by us consisted of the Commandant and Vice Commandant. Stack, naturally, was the Commandant, and Joe McDonagh was the Vice Commandant. With them there was a Captain for each floor. There were three floors and these were comprised of double rows of cells separated by a thin strip of wire netting. I happened to be one of those floor Captains. Frank McGrath was another, and E. de Blaghd the third. There were one or two others who were on this prisoners' government of the place, but I cannot now recall who they were. Our business was to see that everything was done properly in the prison, that floors and cells were kept spotlessly clean, that everybody kept themselves spic and span as far as they could, and that there was regular attendance at the baths and at the outdoor games so that the prisoners kept in good health. The outdoor games were mostly rounders, as there wasn't room for any other game in the part of the grounds we occupied. We insisted that all rules should be carried out fully and completely, for the good of the prisoners and for the

keeping of discipline so necessary in a body of men like ours.

I remember one time Hugo McNeill, who has since been a General in the army, and Seán Downey from Golden in this county, had a bit of an argument, ending in a battle with the fists. We had them brought before the council to decide what we would do with them. When he had looked around the council and saw that Co. Tipperary had a majority on it, Downey stated very firmly that he was defending the honour of Tipperary owing to some derogatory remark that Hugo MacNeill passed upon it, and he hoped, of course, that he would get off fairly soft. Instead, both of them got a job to go on their knees every morning for a week to scrub the basement floor of the prison, and that was some job with the crowd coming in and out and having a laugh at them, but they did it all right and they certainly had no more rows about Tipperary and Dublin.

Things, as I said, were rather quiet there, and in addition to the games and any other fun I had, I found great pleasure in having long conversations in Irish with Ernán de Blaghd and I improved my speaking knowledge of Irish. Sometime later, who arrived in Belfast but Seumas Robinson, complete with his well known travelling bag, and Ben Hickey, both direct from Kilshenane and after getting a sentence at a Special Court in Dundrum. I do not know if we had any other prisoners from the place at the time.

The Governor in Belfast Prison was a harmless poor man who would be decent enough in ordinary times, but he was dealing with a tough situation and occasionally made

mistakes which resulted in there being greater rows than there need have been. Amongst the warders was our old friend Owens from Mountjoy, worried as ever and not knowing where to get off. Two decent warders were ex-R.I.C. men, one named Donovan and the other named McCann. The latter was a very fine type of man. Then there was a young warder, a Protestant from the Midlands, who, too, was a very good type, but I cannot think of his name. There was also a warder named Kennedy who was from somewhere around Dublin. The first big row with the Prison Governor in Belfast started on a day in June and it was over a prisoner named Fitzpatrick who came from Cavan and who certainly was not a monument of commonsense. In fact, it was possible that he was a bit half-witted. He did something or other and the warders took him up and reported him to the Governor. The Governor, foolishly enough, decided that he would send him over to the other prison wings and treat him as an ordinary criminal. We objected to that. We had our own Government there and we would have punished Fitzpatrick for whatever he had done, but the Governor did not agree and so the battle began. Stack held firm and refused to make any concession. He would have to get back Fitzpatrick to our wing and he would deal with him, otherwise it was war. Sometime that evening the Governor decided to lock us up, and when he got us in the cells for supper he dictated his terms. He was going to hold on to Fitzpatrick and we would not be allowed out for exercise or anything else unless we agreed that he could punish Fitzpatrick in his own way. Thus the storm burst, and when the order came from Stack we broke the cell windows and tore holes in the side walls between the cells. Our crowd had got hold of big nails and pieces of iron. The centre walls

between the cells were made of one brick only, and when you got one brick loose it was easy to pull down the remainder. We wedged the doors, and then the Governor's trouble was to get us out of the cells before the wing of the prison was wrecked. In two hundred cells this rumpus was going on and the noise was terrific. It was impossible for the warders to force some of the doors as they had been wedged securely.

The R.I.C. and the military were brought into the prison and hoses were employed through the broken doors to flood out the fellows inside and force them to surrender. I was amongst the earlier ones to be captured when my door went down and my fine literature for the Irish National Assurance Company (or Society as it was then) was all made a mess of, along with some books I had. The cell was half flooded with water and I floated or was lugged out. I was brought down to a ground floor cell, handcuffed there and the cell door then locked. The battle raged all night, with some casualties on both sides. Amongst the warders was a man named Dunne, an Orangeman, inclined to get excited on political issues but otherwise a decent fellow. A few days before the row began he had some minor row with McMahon of Clare and there was ill-feeling between them. The night when the row was on he waited, with baton drawn, outside McMahon's cell to have a crack at McMahon. The door of McMahon's cell eventually gave and he came out, but he had an iron bar, wherever he got it, in his hand. Before Dunne could get at him, he laid out Dunne with the iron bar and Dunne tumbled down the stairs the whole way to the next floor. Dunne had no ill-feeling subsequently over it, as he was a decent fellow but just a bit excitable.

The struggle ended on a Sunday morning and we were defeated for the time being. All were lodged in various cells once more, cells that were intact on the basement floor, which had not been occupied by us up to then. Only an occasional shout of ~~defiance~~ defiance and some good rebel songs were to be heard. The cells were unlocked later, and with military with bayonets and warders with batons we were brought to the prison chapel for Mass. With a few exceptions, we were all Catholics. We were brought to Mass in irons and we passed by some of the cells that were wrecked. When passing by the cell lately occupied by Robinson, looking in I saw his famous travelling bag floating in about two feet of water.

Coming back from Mass I tried out the handcuffs and I said to one of our fellows that I thought we could break them. We tried it out and, by judicious movements of the wrists, smashed the ones that were on ourselves. Having smashed them, we got hold of some broken bricks and held off the warders while some others smashed their handcuffs. We were overborne with force again and I was brought back to the basement floor cell to which I had been dragged the night before. Some constabulary men came and after a tussle they got me on my back on the floor. They got a strait-jacket and they set about trussing me in it. A strait-jacket is a roll of leather which is wrapped around you from your neck down to your knees and tied firmly with ropes. Warder Kennedy and an R.I.C. man were on the job of trying to tie me up, and Kennedy was not at all satisfied that I was tied tight enough, but the R.I.C. man said that they had done enough on the poor devil without doing any more. So the row ended for Sunday.

On Monday morning we were brought in twos and threes before a court of the Belfast City Magistrates. This court was held in the Governor"s room in the prison and there were five or six of those Magistrates, all oldish men, there. One of them in particular, I remember, was a small miserable little man with a bald head, and he was so miserable and bad looking I could not stop looking at him. They heard the case against us and how much destruction we had done. They asked us what had we to say for ourselves, and this time somehow or other we had forgotten our Irish or at least very few used it, and so that they would not be at sea as to what we meant we said to go ahead and do their damnedest and that we were not one bit worried about what sentence they would put on us. The sentence was, in all cases, bread and water for 14 days. The cells had been pretty well cleared of everything and there was very little more we could do to injure the prison property. It should be said that at all times we were not people who took pleasure in destroying property. It was a torture to us to destroy any property and it was only the fury of the moment and the fact that there was no other means of protesting in the prison that brought us to destroy the property.

These June days were pretty difficult. We could ramble a little outside the cells when the doors were open and the warders were not too particular. My nearest neighbours were this McMahon man from Clare and a McCarthy from Cork, both pretty good fellows. The difficulty was in drinking this water and eating this bread, not so hard for the fellows with the handcuffs, but with my strait-jacket it was pretty difficult, but I managed it somehow. That bread tasted very sweet. I certainly did not eat

dry bread with any great pleasure elsewhere, but when you are hungry anything tastes good. Those days were very warm, and when a fly perched on my nose I had to go over to the wall and rub my nose against it to chase off the insect. That I had to do very often, as the place seemed to be plagued with flies. In spite of all those handicaps, we managed to break some of the windows in the cells and get an outlook on the world, or at least a place to shout through. Then some bright individual, probably McDonagh, thought it would be a great thing to have a prison choir or orchestra, and the prison choir was formed from the fellows with the worst possible voices in the place. I think I was included. All they needed to qualify was to shout or bawl in a very high tone, and one of the best was a Michael Ryan from Cappawhite. Frank Phillips of Cashel, who was, and is a polished orator, was chosen to do the talking. He had a powerful voice and he directed his talks from the cell window to the young men of Belfast. Those concerts and talks were held from 1 a.m. until 3 a.m. each morning, and the idea was to wake up Belfast and keep them awake to the fact that we were holding the fort at Crumlin Road for the Irish Republic, and, if possible, to do a bit of propaganda as well. The singing, such as it was, was annoyance, but the talks were generally good propaganda and Phillips and the others tried to drive home to anyone they could arouse from sleep, or anyone passing by who would listen to them, all the great things that were done in the Northern city since back in '98 and before it. Charlemont and the Volunteers, Henry Joy McCracken, Munroe, Seamus Hope and leaders of later years, even up to our own time, were the subjects of the talks. The

orchestra was anything that would make noise. So into the poor annoyed Governor complaints began to come, and the principal people to complain were the Rev. Mother and nuns of a convent situated very near the walls. They could not get their students to sleep at all at night, only listening to the noise from Belfast Prison. Officials and R.I.C. Officers came in and they threatened us, but that was of very little use. Stack got offers of some settlement of the case, but he would not make a settlement unless he would get back Fitzpatrick and an apology. The Governor could not do that. He had made the blunder, or perhaps he had to do what he did. After a fortnight of all this, an order came that we were all to parade and the strait-jackets and handcuffs were taken off. On the basement floor of the prison we formed up in two lines. Stack came along and said the dispute was over but that we must be ready to start again if we did not get what we wanted, which was to get our own control in the prison recognised and to get back Fitzpatrick.

Down by our lines, having a look at us, came Chief Secretary Shortt, who was in charge of British Government in Ireland at the time, Larry O'Neill, Lord Mayor of Dublin, and Most Rev. Dr. McRory, who was then Bishop of Down and Connor. He was later, of course, Cardinal. As they passed on they could see all around the pile of bricks from the broken walls and the general wreckage - as if a bomb or several bombs had struck the place. I heard Dr. McRory whisper to Larry O'Neill as they passed, "The Irish Battle Fury". That evening the whole thing was settled and Fitzpatrick was back again, but he had to face some further punishment from us

because what he had done was entirely wrong. The dispute was over and things went back to normal in Belfast Prison. Sometime after that there was a letter from Collins to Stack, a letter through the secret post, in which he asked him if we meant to make the prisons the Irish battlefront. What Stack's answer to that was I do not know.

Amongst discussions we had in Belfast Prison after that were some on the position of the I.R.B. and I.R.A., and the opinion was in favour of dropping the I.R.B., seeing that we had an Irish army which would be regularised in the course of time, and that there was scarcely any need to have a secret organisation as well.

The secret post into Belfast Prison was mainly handled by a friend of mine, a girl from Ballagh, a Miss Mary Ryan, whose brother, Philip Ryan is now a prominent building contractor. She has since become a Mrs. O'Doherty and still resides in Belfast.

I think for important data for the historian of the future it would be well to enlarge further on our discussions on the I.R.B. Those discussions took place in Belfast Jail in 1918. Austin Stack, Joe McDonagh, E. de Blaghd, myself and others took part in the discussions, and generally it was our opinion that the need for the I.R.B. had practically ceased to exist, owing to the fact that the Irish Volunteers were now doing the I.R.B. work, that when an Irish Parliament was set up the Irish Volunteers would come under its control. They, the Volunteers, would then be titled the army of Ireland and continuation of the I.R.B. would not, therefore, be necessary. That was looking ahead somewhat, but that was more or less what happened in the years that followed.

After the great storm in Belfast in June things were quiet there. My sentence was due to expire on October 28th, 1918. On that morning I went around and said "slán agaibh" to Stack, McDonagh, Blaghd, Richard Treacy, Boland, Robinson, Hickey, Phillips and many others. None of them believed that I would be allowed home, and they were quite right. An armed escort was awaiting me in the prison office and I was handed a paper in which it was stated that I had been plotting with the Germans and that I would be sent overseas.

I left Belfast behind me on the 28th October and I was brought to Dublin to Arbour Hill Military Prison. I was all alone there for about a week and I did not feel at all unhappy, even though no letters came my way and, as far as my people were concerned, I had disappeared for the time being. I was again in Arbour Hill in 1921. There were something like one thousand prisoners there then, some from the I.R.A. and Sinn Féin and the remainder the rag-tag and bob-tail of the great city. In 1918 I was all alone there and at the end of the week I was brought to England. I don't know what sort of an escort I had, probably a military one. I remember being brought again across the Black Country for the second time as a prisoner, and this time on my way to Durham. Previously it had been further south to Wakefield. I knew that Durham was famous for its beautiful ancient Cathedral, but I knew nothing about its prison. I expected the worst, but, in fact, I was greatly astray in my expectations. Arriving in the prison, I was treated with respect and brought along at once to meet our fellows, who occupied a small wing of the prison known as "The Debtors' Ward". There I met An Seabhac, Seamus O'Neill,

Frank and Eamon Bulfin, Darrell Figgis, Captain Dan McCarthy, Spillane of Killarney, Fleming from Tralee, Art O'Connor and some others. In all, there were only 13 of us there, with three warders generally in charge.

We had a small yard to exercise in until time to close the cells at night, and we also had a nice garden for exercise out of doors. Some of those prisoners had been there for a considerable time and they were glad to have a new arrival to bring news from the outside world. though indeed very little I had to tell them. A couple of the younger men seemed to have the hope that my coming would mean trouble, because after Mountjoy, Belfast and Cork I had the name of being a trouble maker in prisons. There was no hope of making trouble in Durham because the authorities there went out of their way to avoid trouble. The Governor, a tall, sallow complexioned man, was an ex-Colonel of the British army who had been through the war that had just concluded. The warders were also ex-British army men, who claimed that they had gone out to fight for the liberty of small nations. They were quite friendly too, and, in addition to all this, arrangements had been made before I came there that the female wing of the prison looked after the laundry for all the crowd. The Chief Wardress was an Englishwoman, and with her was a Miss Frazer, a Scottish girl, whose brother was one of the warders in charge of our party. Also there was one of the famous Fitzpatrick family, a girl who was a wardress in the female convict prison of Durham. I expect that it was this lady who arranged assistance to us, not alone as regards the laundry, but we were supplied with cakes and other delicacies as well

In turn, when stuff came to us from Ireland in parcels, we shared it around with them and with those friendly warders. The warders were all supporters of the British Labour Party and their sympathy was entirely with us, and this ex-Colonel, the Governor, showed his friendship very much too. As a result of all that, it was a place next-door to impossible to kick up a row in. The average Irishman finds it hard to kick up a row with anybody that is friendly inclined, and so existence in the prison was very peaceful. Darrel Figgis was the only one that was inclined to revolt, but Darrel, strange to say, was not loved by our crowd either. Why, I really do not know. I always got on pretty well with him, but somehow or other some of the others were scarcely on speaking terms with him, which was a very bad business amongst Irishmen confined in a prison in a foreign country.

Time slipped away there and there was not very much news to tell. We had our talks there, but nothing like those that we used to have in Reading or in Belfast. The crowd, in the first place, was too small, but An Seabhac, of course, was a great help in anything as regards the Irish language. Another man who was a very fine type was Art O'Connor, and there was also Frank McGrath from Nenagh. I was just looking at the Bureau Chronology, in which it said he was released from Belfast Prison sometime in 1918. As a matter of fact, he was and was re-arrested at the prison gate and sent to Durham just as I was.

The only bright period was at Christmas, when we had a concert in the prison. Irish songs rang all over the place. In the wing adjacent to us there were two

or three hundred conscientious objectors confined, and they were stirred and began singing Socialist songs. Things became very lively in the prison, so much so that some of our warder friends came and asked us to slow down or they might have a row on their hands. Shortly before that we had a bit of a clash with the Chaplain of the prison. Whilst at Mass in a room in the prison he thought it well to advise us of our duty to the Crown, and we objected. He was a Canon something or other and, as a result of the row, he ceased to look after our spiritual interests and a young priest came in to take charge.

Whilst in Durham the news came to me of the Soloheadbeg fight and opinion was very much divided amongst the prisoners as to whether the thing was right or wrong. Seumas O'Neill and myself, having a very good idea of the parties that were involved in it, took the side of the Volunteers, but the majority of the prisoners did not seem to think that it was a very good thing to happen, and that apparently was the feeling outside too. When I was released at a later date, I found that there was still a great deal of ill-feeling against the men that had taken part in this attack on the R.I.C. and the local papers had written strongly against the raid. I thought it was time to stop that and I wrote to "The Tipperary Star" on the matter, pointing out that whilst none of us liked to see men killed in any shape or form, yet, on the other hand, those R.I.C. men were holding the country down for England. They had arms in their hands which they were prepared to use and apparently tried to use them on this occasion, and when they tried to use them they were fired upon and killed. Whilst it was regrettable, the

men who did the firing could not be blamed. They were serving the Irish nation and they were fighting for its independence. "The Star" published my letter and Michael Collins got copies of it circulated widely. When Piaras Beasley wrote "Michael Collins and the making of a New Ireland" this letter of mine was incorporated in the section of it dealing with Soloheadbeg ambush.

Around about that period the terrible 'flu epidemic came along and most of our crowd in Durham were down with it. I remember D. Figgis had got all sorts of concoctions with which to ward off the 'flu and the place smelled like a druggist's shop.

News came in that our old friend in Mountjoy, Richard Ó Colmáin, had died in Usk Prison, and sometime later my old friend, Piaras MacCanna died in Lincoln Prison. As a result of their deaths, the jail gates were thrown open again and we were free men once more. I arrived home in that early 1919 to get a great welcome, and all that year crowds came from far and near to help us at the farm work at Kilshenane or to help with the turf cutting. Paddy Kinane and the Meaghers of Anfield, a crowd from Drombane and Rossmore, and Richard Treacy with a crowd from around Tipperary came to help. All our local friends were always on hand to do any work that had to be done, and I took up the lines of carrying on my work in various fields. We then had a Volunteer Brigade Council which met pretty regularly at Kilshenane. It was yet to be a Brigade Council of the I.R.A., but it was representative as it stood of a pretty wide area in South Tipperary. I found when Robinson had come back he had tackled the work again, but after Soloheadbeg he was no longer able to come to Kilshenane except on the

quiet. Sometimes Seán Treacy and he, and occasionally Dan Breen, arrived at Kilshenane and put up either at the old centre or at some of the neighbours' houses, and naturally the Volunteers had guards set everywhere to see that they came to no harm whilst they were in the vicinity. Robinson's work, as far as the farm at Kilshenane was concerned, was now finished. He had to keep "on the run", and we all regretted his departure from the work of the farm and the general work of the movement in the area. Seamus Browne had been captured with ammunition in his possession at Kilshenane and he was in prison. Others were "on the run" as well as Robinson and a good deal had to be done to keep the work of the movement going. I found a good deal to do, but a good deal of what I had been doing had to be turned over to other hands whilst I was away so long. The work went on in the various fields, but now it was more difficult to carry on the Irish classes of the Gaelic League or work of that kind. On the whole, except for the hunt for Breen, Robinson, Hogan and Treacy, things were rather quiet in 1919.

Whilst I was in prison in Durham the 1918 general election had been held. Prior to the election I had sent letters through the secret post to Fr. Matt Ryan and to others of our men who were not in prison. Most of the men that I would have liked to have got in touch with were, however, in prison. I urged Fr. Matt and the others to have Seamus O'Neill of Rockwell College selected as the Sinn Féin candidate for the Mid-Tipperary Division. They did so, and he was proposed by Fr. Matt Ryan and seconded by some others of our men at the convention in Thurles, but the majority of the delegates voted for Seamus Burke of Rockforest, Roscrea. The Cumann in Rossmore and in other centres stated that they had not

been appraised of the convention, or at least did not receive the necessary papers on which to send in the names of delegates in time for the convention, and for that reason Burke secured the nomination. I put forward O'Neill as being an activist in the entire Irish Ireland movement for a good many years - Gaelic League, Sinn Féin, I.R.B. and Irish Volunteers - and he was also an Irish speaker and scholar. He would have been a suitable man in every way and I regretted that he was not elected and I still regret it.

On my way back through Dublin from Durham I learned that William O'Brien had sent my sister word that I was wanted in the Labour Party office. I called there and I found that my business was with him and Tom Johnson in particular. Tom Johnson was a member at that time of the National Aid League, which had been set up during the conscription crisis period. They seemed to be very shy in mentioning the business they wanted to discuss with me, but it came out that a sum of £200 from the National Aid funds had been reserved for me to cover my losses whilst in prison. They thought that the sum was inadequate and that was the reason for their shyness. I told them that I would not take it, that I was fixed pretty well at the time and that we were making money in Kilshenane which we were using for the national movement, and that it would be improper on my part to take the £200. They said to go back to Tipperary and discuss the matter before they would make any decision. I came back to Tipperary and I was surprised that this claim had been made on my behalf. I discovered that it had been made by Fr. Matt Ryan, with the best intentions in the world. I went to see,

amongst others, Miss A. Ryan, who was the Secretary of Cumann na mBan in the County, and we discussed the matter. She said that if I was not going to take it, that there were some families in the County who had been hard hit. She mentioned Dan Breen's mother, the Fitzpatricks of Tipperary, who had become very prominent in the movement, the Hogans of Dualla, who's son, Paddy Hogan, was killed a couple of years later fighting against the British, and Seamus Malone and his wife who had been treated pretty badly. So I wrote to Tom Johnson and suggested that he could transfer the money to those parties instead, and I understand that when it came before a National Aid meeting, some of the Dublin ladies on the committee were not quite agreeable to have the money transferred. They said that it should revert to the funds when I did not take it, and that they had several in Dublin who wanted the money badly. That, of course, was true. On the other hand, Tom Johnson and John Dillon and other members of the association declared that the money was really mine and that they were going to distribute it in accordance with my wishes. They did so, giving £80 to Mrs. Breen (Dan's mother) and £40 to each of the other families. That was a satisfactory settlement.

We began to organise the raising of money for the Volunteers in general by collections and by dances, and those latter we ran everywhere we could get a house or a band, and the local Company Quartermaster generally had charge. In our own area we had a first-rate Quartermaster, Mr. Pat Hayes, who is still living at Clareen in the parish of Boherlahan. The procedure as regards the collections was for the Quartermaster of each company to try and raise all the funds possible in his company

area, and a good deal of it passed through my hands, or it was sent direct to where I had informed them it should be sent. We did a good deal in that direction and I think in 1920 we raised something like £1,000 for the arms fund. Seán Treacy came out with me to raise that. Collections were entirely for the arms fund. Occasionally the Quartermasters were not able to get very much done in their area, so we had to step in and make a collection on our own. The money collected was passed on to trustees in Dublin, save where used by Dan Breen and myself and some other officers to purchase arms.

Some money that had been collected was on the table at a meeting that was held somewhere around Blackcastle at which some of our officers attended. Seamus O'Neill was captured at that meeting by the Lancers from Cahir, and Seumas Robinson escaped by junping into a deep pond and staying with his head concealed by reeds until the military departed. They captured £40 which was addressed to "E. O'Dwyer, Brigade Quartermaster", but mistakes like that did not occur very often. Our crowd at Kilshenane was earning money with me in the various fields of farming, insurance and farming agencies, and the money was going to keep the entire staff of us and also to aid Cumann na mBan and the Volunteers and to pay the expenses of Brigade meetings and other such calls.

About this time we got Miss Phoebe Hope of Belfast to come to Kilshenane as a typist and general clerk, and she remained there until Kilshenane was burned in 1920. She was a front rank Irish speaker amongst other things. Somewhere about this time, too, Seán Treacy,

who, of course, was now "on the run", arranged a secret code for messages. It was rather a simple code - the insertion of certain words instead of others - but it worked pretty well. My old house at Ballagh was being used at this time by "A" Company for their own work, and the place has passed down to history for one reason which I will come to now.

On the 9th May, 1919, one of those Volunteer dances was held there and the young and the brave and the beautiful from the countryside were there in great numbers. Seán Ó Treasaigh, Seán Hogan, Seumas Robinson and, I think, Dan Breen were there. We were all there. Some time in the morning Seán Hogan left to go to Meagher's of Anfield. He was accompanied by Miss Bridget O'Keeffe of Glenough, who was a cousin of the Meaghers. He was, as is known, captured later in the morning at Annfield, despite the resistance of Jack Meagher and others. When we learned of this, there was intense excitement and Robinson and Treacy prepared for a rescue. "A" Company was ready to do anything that was required, and it was known speedily that Hogan would be transferred from Thurles to Cork Prison and the question was would he be sent by railway or by road. The roads were watched carefully by the members of "A" Company, and probably all other companies as well, but in particular the men of "A" Company, who had mobilised in great force, armed everyhow and anyhow.

Late at night, on the 13th of May, I got word that Seán Hogan had been taken by train to Cork. I went home and the others dispersed, as they, too, had got similar news. When I got home I hid what arms I had

and went to bed. I used sleep upstairs and I had retired only a short time when my sister called from the ground floor that she heard the noise of many men rushing in the avenue. I was putting on some clothes as gun butts hammered on the door. I went down and opened the door to a large force of R.I.C. They pushed me in before them. They searched me and the others in the house very thoroughly, and also searched the house, but found nothing. Having done that, they remained looking at me and doodling around, so I began to query them as to what it was all about. Why the raid? Was I being arrested? The Sergeant from Clonoulty said that I knew the why of the raid already, and I said "No", but I did not say very much because I guessed something very serious had happened. Then I thought that maybe they were waiting for something and I grew very alert, but I relied on our local men. By now surely they had scouts out. It was daylight long since and at long last Sergeant Hamilton and the others decided to go. They had gone out the avenue a short distance when Hamilton and Constable Cholton Walsh halted, and I could see that Walsh was talking very earnestly to the Sergeant. Back they came and the Sergeant said: "You seem to be very much in a state of perplexity about this raid, so Constable Walsh has asked me to tell you the why of it. You know Hogan" he said. "I know several Hogans, which Hogan? I replied. "Oh", he said, "you know the Hogan I mean, your friend Jack Hogan from Grenane". "Well, what about him? I said. "Isn't he a prisoner?". "He is not a prisoner any more", he said. "He was rescued a few hours ago". I could not hide the satisfaction that dawned on my face. "Oh", he said,

you are delighted, but are you also delighted that two poor old Peelers were killed in the fight". "Well now", I said, "that is too bad, but those things cannot be helped". They went away and I expected every moment that a dispatch rider would be arriving. The R.I.C. were not long gone when one arrived on a motor-cycle. I think his name was Kenny and he came from Mid Limerick. He is undoubtedly mentioned in the records somewhere. He carried a dispatch from Seán Treacy which told briefly that in the rescue Breen was badly wounded, that some of the Galbally men were wounded, that his (Seán's) own face was cut with glass splinters, that there were some things I would need to deal with, and also there was need for money to pay for medical attention and to pay for other things, and asking me to send back some by the dispatch rider. I looked around and found that I had about £40 on hands and May Kearney had a couple of pounds of Cumann na mBan funds. I did not think that the total was sufficient. Some of the officers of "A" Company had, as I expected, alerted members of the company, and I called Captain Bill O'Dwyer and Lieutenant M. Davern to discuss what was to be done. We decided to make a hurried rush around in the locality and ask for subscriptions. Within an hour we had another £40 and I sent back £80 with the dispatch rider. Seán was informed by the doctors and nurses later that their services were free, so that money passed back into the Brigade funds.

Some time in this period there was an aeriocht at Incholavanna. District Inspector Hunt, with R.I.C. and soldiers, surrounded the place and raided the aeriocht. I got away in time. Earnán de Blaghd was arrested there

and got a sentence, as they found on him a plan of action that had been given to him early that Sunday by J.M. Kennedy of Thurles. It was intended for Richard Mulcahy. I called to Kennedy late that night to warn him that this had been discovered. There was a very awkward sequel to this affair, because the Labour paper, I think it was "The Voice of Labour" then, printed a statement that this plan had been planted upon Blythe by an agent provocateur. There could not be anything further from the truth. I wrote to the paper and said this was a damnable lie. Sometime, too, around this period I was at Thurles station when Hunt roughed me and shoved me around the place. He had a crowd of armed R.I.C. men with him, but I could gather from their attitude that they had very little sympathy with his blackguardly way of handling affairs. He was shot on May 23rd 1919, and I can only say that he was by no means a gentlemanly officer.

The I.R.B. held its usual meetings all the time, but there was very little that it could do that was not being done by the Volunteers. The Brigade Council at its meetings in Kilshenane and other places decided that it was about time to drop the I.R.B. They asked me would I cease to be County Centre and give all my time to the Brigade. As a way out, they suggested that we should appoint some other County Centre who would really be a wrecker and let the I.R.B. quietly die. I agreed and I resigned as County Centre, and the Supreme Council sent a red haired man whose name was Denis Lane to call on me. Denis, when he arrived in the area, was entirely too secretive in his attitude to people, and the result was that our local fellows arrested him

and had him held in a barn as a prisoner when I came to the rescue. I had him released and brought him down to Kilshenane. He said that the Supreme Council wanted me to remain on. I told him that I had too much work to do and it was better to have another man on the job, and we selected Michael Sheehan. Some few on the Brigade Council suggested that I should throw up the Gaelic League and Sinn Féin work also and concentrate entirely on Brigade work in addition to my own business. I said I was doing all the Brigade work that any man could do as regards the Quartermaster's department in getting money and searching for arms. "If you send me out to attack barracks and all the rest, I will be delighted to throw up the job of the Quartermaster's department." No, they would not hear of that at all. I was too valuable a man, they said, in doing that work, and they made some sort of order on the quiet, unknown to me, that I was not to be called out for any other sort of work. I quite agreed that I had enough to do at the time. I was also on the Sinn Féin County Courts and on the District Court at Knockavalla. I remained on those for quite a long time.

The Volunteers were established later that year of 1919 as the I.R.A., and the oath was administered to all the officers and men in the 3rd Tipperary Brigade. A Brigade convention was held in a big disused house between Dualla and Cashel. Meldrom House it was.

Towards the end of the year Seumas Robinson was Brigade Commandant, Seán Treacy was Brigade Vice Comdt., and Dan Breen was Brigade Quartermaster. There was some opposition to Dan Breen as Quartermaster. It

came from the southern end of the county, and those delegates said that I was doing the work and why not I be appointed Quartermaster. I thanked them for their attitude but said that Dan Breen was the man, and I agreed to be Assistant Brigade Quartermaster.

Raids on Kilshenane were very numerous during that year, but, strange to say, I remained outside of a prison during the remainder of 1919. On October the 27th, the day after Austin Stack, Piaras Beasley and D.P. Walsh escaped from Manchester Prison, the R.I.C. and military raided Kilshenane and also Sheehan's house above Dundrum that morning. When I asked them why the raid, Sergeant Davis from Dundrum said, "You have not got the daily paper yet". "No", I said. "Well, here it is" he said, showing me the headlines of the news of the escape from Manchester.

As regards the getting of arms, I cannot remember where I got all of them. The only thing I can remember was that I brought some of them from Dublin, but I cannot remember all the various arms that I had personal charge of from time to time. I do remember being in Limerick one very wet evening and I had two rifles and some other stuff. I had a bicycle and I tied and covered them on the bicycle and found that the load I had to carry was too heavy. For good luck, who did I meet only

Paddy Davern, now of Cashel and a brother of Michael Davern. He said he would come back with me, so we distributed the load and in the downpour of rain and dark of night we set out for home. We missed the road somewhere at Boher and we had gone very far afield before we discovered we were on the wrong road. We got back to the right road for home and we reached Cappamore sometime about 1 a.m. A publichouse there was fortunately showing some light, and we were let in and dried ourselves at the fire. We got something to eat and again got on the road for Doon, arriving safely at Paddy Ryan's Hotel where we put up for the night. The arms which I had were ~~taken~~ collected at Doon by some Volunteers from the Hollyford area.

Paddy Davern had left Ryan's in the early morning but I had not my business completed in Doon until later in the day when I got away on the cycle. I took side roads to evade ~~Captain White~~ Cappawhite, R.I.C. Barracks, and also Annacarty Barracks further down and I had decided to evade Dundrum Barracks similarly, but, to my surprise, below Annacarty when I turned the corner of a road, what confronted me only three Constabulary men fully armed marching up against me. I had no hope of turning back, so I decided I would try and get through and, as far as I can remember, I had stuff on me. As they came nearer to me, the sergeant looked in my direction and he said something to his men and they scattered across the road and held up their hands for me to stop. There was no way out of it and as I stopped I heard the order: "Men - Attention, and salute O'Dwyer the hunger-striker!"

I nearly fell down with surprise. They came up and shook hands with me and then I suddenly remembered that I had heard that our Intelligence officer in the brigade, Tom Carew (later colonel in the army) had won over those men and that the Annacarty R.I.C. were loyal to the Irish Republic. We had a few minutes talk and I told them that I was taking a side road to evade the Dundrum R.I.C, and the sergeant said that, if required, they would escort me past that post. I thought that would be too good a thing. They had sufficiently shown their sincerity as Irishmen. I have an idea that the sergeant in charge was murdered later by the Black and Tans, but I have not any complete knowledge of the affair.

Tom Carew is dead now - Go ndeinead Dia trocaire ar a anam - and I doubt if any of the countryside brigades in Ireland had such a competent and intelligent officer. He was a first-rate Intelligence officer; a brave, well-spoken and straightforward man. Another incident in which he had a connection with me was at some time in 1919 or early 1920. I had gone down in a car from Dublin with Padraig O'Maille, J.J. Walsh and Larry Casey and, on our way down, we passed through Cashel. I had to get out of the car there and see if there were any messages for me and then we went on to Cork where we had some important business to do the next day. We returned via Tipperary from Cork and they dropped me at Dundrum from whence I went to Kilshenane. The morning after, I was having a good sound sleep when my sister called me and said that there was a dispatch rider from Tom Carew. He had a note from Tom which said that the enclosed copy of an R.I.C. dispatch should interest me and that I could expect to be raided immediately, and that the dispatch had been sent out during the night by the Co. Inspector to all R.I.C. stations in the locality and perhaps in the county. The dispatch was

directed to the sergeant in charge of each post and read as follows:

> "You are to do immediately everything in your power to ascertain who were the four unknown men who accompanied Suspect Edmond O'Dwyer of Kilsnenane in a motor car that passed through Cashel on its way southwards on Tuesday. The same motor car with the four unknown men accompanying Suspect Edmond O'Dwyer passed through Tipperary on Wednesday".

The additional fourth man in question was the driver. I sent a note to Tom and told him that they would be unable to find out anything about that business and that it was not very important anyway.

The dispatch rider had just gone away when a large force of military and R.I.C. men arrived from Cashel and they went around the whole place picking at beams of wood in the out-houses with bayonets and searching here, there and everywhere looking wise and still not getting anywhere with the search. Needless to say, we were always prepared for those searches. I saw a soldier picking at the end of a beam of wood in an outhouse and I asked the officer what did he think he was going to get there. "I don't know" he said curtly. "Maybe" said I, "he could get four unknown men that accompanied Suspect Edmond O'Dwyer in a motor car yesterday and the day before". "What", said he, "will you say that again?" and I repeated it. He looked at a Sergeant Maher who was in charge of the R.I.C. from Cashel and I saw that the military officer knew about the dispatch. At once he ordered the soldiers to line up and march away. "We're making fools of ourselves" he said to them. The R.I.C. remained. "You know it all" said Sergeant Maher, "where did you see that"? I thought it was a good time to use the same sort of thing that used to be worked on us. "A copy was sent from nearly every police post in the neighbourhood to a friend of mine" I replied, "and he passed one on to me. They went out last night, so I was expecting you along". "Oh, my God" he said, "I am an oldish man and I am heading for my

pension. Is there anyway I can protect my life. I want to draw that pension and I don't want to do any harm". I told him that he would likely not be in any danger if he were not too officious. He wanted to know what to do to play safe and that I was likely an officer that could tell him, but I was wary and I told him that I was not an officer and knew no officer of the I.R.A. in Cashel, but that it might be a good thing for himself if he passed on useful information to people in Cashel that he thought were friendly to the I.R.A.. He was probably only sounding me to see if he could get any information.

There was one R.I.C. men in the crowd from Cashel, whose name I have forgotten, who got very excited. He shouted that it was quite clear that their very comrades in the barracks were betraying them and, for one, he was not agreeable to be doing this job against his own countrymen. They went off and, some time that evening, this R.I.C. man became violent and he fired some shots in the barracks and was removed to a mental home.

I have told this story here to show, as far as I can, how ably Tom Carew was conducting the work of Intelligence. Generally speaking, his field of work and mine had few contacts. I knew he had made many contacts amongst the R.I.C.

By this time, the whole R.I.C. force was pretty well honeycombed in our area in Tipperary with men who were friendly to us and loyal to Ireland. I have already referred to the Clonoulty R.I.C. men. In Dundrum R.I.C. post we had a few men who were very good. Sergeant Davis was a gentlemanly man, but I could never say that he gave us information. One of the friendly R.I.C. in Dundrum was a very stout man. Stack was his name and I do not know where he disappeared to. His job was to come to Kilshenane every day and watch my movements and

and what he reported were the movements I told him to report.

In connection with the getting of arms there were very many incidents connected with this work, but this one should go down in history. Sometime in the winter of 1919/20, I got information that there were some arms at G.H.Q. in Dublin awaiting collection by me, and I went to the city, leaving instructions with the company captain, Bill O'Dwyer, and with my sister as to what was to be done and the messages I was likely to send when I was returning. I understood that there would be a fairly large consignment and I arranged to have two young women board the train at Thurles, find out where the stuff was on the train and to take it off at Gooldscross Station in case there was R.I.C. on patrol there. Bill O'Dwyer was to get some Volunteers to come along with my horse and car and be outside Gooldscross on what we call the Ballymore road. The stuff, when I got it in Dublin, filled two large cases and a large handbag. I had in those cases six Peter the Painters, a great deal of .303 ammunition for the smaller guns, 14 hand grenades, some explosives and detonators. Paddy Ryan (Thady) was then working on the Kingsbridge Station and he took charge of them when they were delivered into the Parcel Office and he put them on the train I was leaving on. He has since been a captain in the army and is retired by now.

I arrived at the Kingsbridge Station in the late evening, having done the necessary work early in the day. I sent my message to Tipperary and got back a reply that all was well. The wires forth and back were in Treacy's code and were to good addresses. It was dark night when I got in to the Kingsbridge and there was a detective there that I knew. He was a Protestant young man from Tipperary. He came up to me and, after shaking hands with me and asking how I was, he told me to get into the train and stay in a corner away from the

window. There were, he told me, some fellows coming down from the Castle and a message had come to the Kingsbridge that they were to be on the lookout for me and that he would do his best to see that they were guided around somewhere away from me. I thanked him and got into the train. I was not long sitting in the carriage when I saw three detectives walking up and down the platform and looking into every carriage, but apparently they did not see me. A detective who used to do duty on the Mallow Station came into the carriage and stayed in the doorway leaning out through the upper portion of the window which was down. Whether he was covering me or not I do not know. I had an idea that he was, but I did not ask him and did not speak to him at all, and he did not pay any attention to me; but I am sure he knew me.

We reached Thurles and the girls came on the train there. They were - Mrs. Josie Gleeson, whose husband was a teacher in Clonoulty. Her own name was Ryan from Lislohan and she was accompanied by her sister, Katie Ryan. Both of them are dead for some years now. I gave them a tip where the cases were without having much conversation with them. We reached Gooldscross and there were no R.I.C. on the station and it was fairly late at night. We came out and brought out those cases of stuff and we had to walk about 150 yards to get out over the railway bridge and reach the Ballymore road. We expected the car to meet us there. The cases were terribly heavy and it was a dragging business to get them so far. I had left a bicycle in the station office when I was going to Dublin and I got this out and slung the bag containing the detonators and explosives and a loaded revolver on the front of the bicycle and then helped the girls to carry the bigger cases in turn. We took them one at a time. We got well beyond the bridge and there was no sign of a car and things looked pretty

awkward. It was impossible for us to carry this load, so the girls said it would be better if I cycled on and tried to pick up some of the crowd to help bring the load. I thought it was a good idea. I mounted the cycle and I had only gone perhaps 200 yards in front of them in the dark of the night when a force of men loomed in front of me. They got across the road and I had to fall off the bicycle to evade them. To my horror, there were a crowd of armed R.I.C. men. I kept my head pretty well and I asked what was the trouble and the sergeant's voice came back to me. It was Sergeant Hamilton from Clonoulty and he said: "You have no light". "No", I said, and I asked the sergeant to excuse me, that I was not a breaker of those general laws and that I had been in Thurles and I had delayed later than I expected. So he said it was all right and he then spoke in Irish, asking me how I was and that it was a fine night and so on, and I replied in Irish. I knew he had a tender spot for Irish and that he was not at all bad. He gave the order for the men to march on, but before he did so, he gave the bag on the bicycle a shove with the butt of his rifle and said he supposed it was full of dynamite and I replied jocosely and urged him not to blow us all up. Away they went and I waited for the girls. I got out the revolver as I was afraid that the R.I.C. would come back or that there would be a further force of them on the road and they would not handle us so softly. It might be a question of fighting for those arms. I had never lost any arms for the movement and I did not mean to lose these without a struggle. The girls came up and they were a bit alarmed, needless to say, and I said that if there was any further trouble the best thing they could do was to get over the fence and escape, that whatever happened I did not intend to let the struggle go easily. They wondered what had happened. They knew that Bill

O'Dwyer had fellows picked to come with the horse and car and to be on the road in time. He had given them their orders also, and if he thought these men would not have done their business he would be there himself. Just then we heard the noise of a couple of parties coming along the road in our direction. I said that this might be a further bunch of the R.I.C. patrol which might not be so easy to get through, and then a voice came out of the darkness and said: "Is that you, Eamon" and I knew Paddy Hayes's voice and I said "Yes" and he and Martin Moloney came up to us. Martin Moloney now lives at Mantlehill near Golden. One of them had a rifle and the other a shotgun and they had come to fight to the death if necessary to protect the stuff. They told me that some time before Phoebe Hope had run up from Kilshenane, sent by my sister, to say that no one had come for the horse and car and none of our staff was in the place at the time. Paddy Hayes said: that was desperate, that there was a patrol of five armed constables after leaving Ballydine and they will meet me on the road and he called on Martin and said they would get guns and go and see what they could do to rescue me and hold the stuff. Michael Kearney had arrived in Ballydine on his way to Kilshenane at that moment and he said he would go down and get the car and there was another man named Dan Brown who worked in a neighbour's farm and he said he would go with Kearney, and they went to Kilshenane and got the side car. Somewhere they met Michael Davern and he came too and so they arrived a few minutes after Hayes and Martin Moloney. All had guns in their hands prepared for any trouble that might arise. So, by good luck and the fact that Sergeant Hamilton was a man with some little gradh for the country, everything was safe, and we brought the stuff on to Kilshanane. Amongst other things when we opened the case was an item I had forgotten about, a part of a machine gun. Where that went to I do not

know, but, some evenings later, I got those hand grenades to Glenough. Jim O'Gorman got charge of them to instruct the Volunteers in their use. Jim O'Gorman had been in the Australian army and when home on furlough from the war fronts he deserted and remained at home. He became an instructor to the I.R.A. and he was a very capable and good man.

The night or two after some of this stuff had to be sent to Rossmore and part of it sent from there again to Dundrum, Michael Davern and William Ryan of Ballagh went with it. They brought it to Rossmore safely, but it was so late at night that they did not think they could get to Dundrum and find anybody up and they decided to bring that part of the stuff back. Unfortunately, when coming through Ballagh, they ran into a patrol of R.I.C. and were surrounded and made prisoners. This small amount of the stuff was got on them and they got prison sentences. Michael Davern was out in a few months again but, some time later on, he got a long prison sojourn.

A bit of relief to us in the countryside was the shooting in Dublin of Detective Hoey in September 1919. He knew all the crowd from the countryside pretty well and he was a slimy snake with a long career of villainy against his own countrymen before his life was terminated. He was one of those who picked out the prisoners for courtmartial and execution immediately after the Rising at Easter Week 1916, and I have referred to him in my previous statement.

Early in 1919 a man called on me whose name I cannot now remember. He carried a letter from Sam Fahy. Sam was a teacher in the Christian Brothers' School in Tipperary. I did not know Sam very well, but on account of knowing his brother Frank, later Speaker of Dáil Éireann, I thought that anything that Sam wrote would be quite correct. Though I felt

the letter was a bit highflown, I acted on it. It appeared from Sam's letter that this man was nearly a Robert Emmet and he needed a job. He suggested that as I had agencies, perhaps I could fit him into something. So I did fit him into selling seeds and he sold a share of them all right. It was a good bit after when a dispatch rider brought a very agitated letter to me from P.J. Moloney, Tipperary, who was a very reliable man, as were his sons, and he asked me if I could, immediately or whenever I would be at home, call to him to discuss a matter that was of great concern. I happened to be at home and I called to him that evening. It was concerning this man. P.J. asked me if I had given him a job and was he collecting money and selling stuff and so on, and he said he was a thief and had already robbed some of the business people around Tipperary and got agencies from them similarly and had gone out selling stuff and had cashed in on the proceeds. I said: "I got a letter from Sam Fahy and I thought this man was a Robert Emmet". "Oh, don't mind Sam Fahy" he said. "Sam has no commonsense". I said: "I will halt his gallop and if there are losses I will have to put up with them". That was settled and the man got away out of the county and things were not too bad. I do not think that he was spying or doing anything of that sort. He was just chancing his arm to get some easy money, but, later on, I had a visitor who turned out to be quite a different sort.

Later that year, probably in the winter months or on towards 1920, Sean O'Duffy and somebody else from Tipperary called with a strange man in tow and they wanted me to have a private talk with me in the parlour at Kilshenane. I said we would talk when tea was ready. They told me that this man, whom I think they introduced as a Sean O'Farrell, was a man who was very much on the run; that he had been engaged in attacks

on the R.I.C. in the Co. Clare, who had suffered casualties, apparently serious ones, at the hands of this Sean O'Farrell; that he was drifting around from point to point, being shoved on from one place to another, and he now wanted to come from Tipperary to a new place so as not to prolong his visits in any one place. He had already been with the Maloney's down near Emly, and he had been with Paddy Ryan of Doon. He was then staying in Tipperary and if I could put him up in Kilshenane for a time, they considered it would really be good business. I asked if he had his transfer papers from his company or battalion. That was the general rule at the time. "No", they said, he had left in such a hurry that he could not get those papers. Somehow or other, the name of Sean O'Farrell struck a warning bell in my mind and something told me that it was not right, but indeed, under the circumstances that prevailed at the time, I would have been very cautious of taking an unknown man into Kilshenane area. I called Duffy and the other outside and said to them that I did not want to discuss affairs before this man, that I didn't know him from Adam, that maybe he is all right, but I didn't know, and I was not going to take their word for it that he was all right. I would not keep him there or put him up in the locality, and the reason for my attitude was that Sean O'Treasaigh, Seamus Robinson and Dan Breen - but particularly Sean and Seamus - were frequently here in the district, calling to my home doing business with me, ataying at O'Brien my next-door neighbours, and staying in Glenough and other places a round. I didn't want any supposedly I.R.A. man in that area that I was not sure of. If I agreed to keep him he would have the confidence of the people and equally so if I sent him to stay with somebody else. They were very indignant. It was a wrong thing for me to do, or rather not to do. I said, maybe it was, but that is the way it was going to be,

and they left in a huff and reported me to the Brigade Council.

The matter came before the Brigade Council meeting and Sean O'Treacy happened to be in the chair in the absence of the brigade commander and he said:that I did what was perfectly right and I could not have done anything else. "Who is this man, I have never heard of him" said Sean. "Oh, he was so and so, was the reply. Sean asked me did I think he was a spy. "I don't know, Sean" I said. I told him that he could have been and that I had very serious doubts about him and I wondered where he was now. Nobody seemed to know.

I was in Cork Prison again towards the end of March and Sean Fitzpatrick from Tipperary was also there. We were not talking more than a minute when he said that he had something very interesting to show me and he produced a cutting from one of daily papers stating that an unknown man had been found shot dead at Monroe, Newcastlewest, on 27th March. I asked who was he and Sean replied that he was my visitor that winter night in Kilshenane. He told me that some stuff which had been secreted very well by the Maloneys in Tipperary town was discovered by the R.I.C. some time after this so-called Sean O'Farrell had been there, and that around Doon he had done some harm too, and that finally he was run to earth after something which had happened down in Kerry.

When I got back to Wormwood Scrubbs from Cork Prison Paddy Ryan of Doon had arrived there with some other prisoners and I went to see Paddy at once. We were not talking very long until he brought up this affair of the man I did not give shelter to or look after in Kilshenane. He was very surprised as he thought I was a very hospitable man. I told Paddy my reasons for so acting and I said I had a cutting there from a paper that was given to me by Sean Fitzpatrick in Cork Prison

and that Fitzpatrick said that the man who was shot dead, according to that news item, was the man who visited me at Kilshenane and who had stayed with some others. That was the only case we had in that area of that type of man attempting to gain our confidence.

One morning in February 1920, somebody rushed into the house in Kilshenane and said that there were military and police around the place on all sides. I rushed to the front door as I thought I could escape that way through the fields, but there were R.I.C. men getting over the hedges on all sides and rushing in with rifles levelled and shouting "Hands up". I managed to step behind the door for a moment and passed any stuff I had to my sister. Included was the code we used and there were some accounts I had been handling for the Quartermaster's Department. When I was searched I had no stuff on me only business correspondence that was of no consequence. They had closed in in great force and I was taken prisoner and brought to Cashel and from there to Cork Prison. After being a short time in Cork there was a bunch of us (prisoners) brought down to some of the small ports below Cork and there we were put on board a torpedo boat calle "The Flying Fox". There were at least 40 of us on this boat, many of them men from around Cork, some from Bantry and a good many others, whose names I can recall only hazily at the moment. We were kept in irons in the hold of the vessel and were suffering terribly from seasickness owing to this ship having a narrow shape, but the captain in command of the ship must have heard a complaint for he came down and saw that the irons were removed in spite of protests from the R.I.C. escort. He said that we could have plenty of hot tea. He was a jolly sort of man and he said that we were classed as very dangerous men, but that he had 200 or more of a crew on the vessel and did not think that 40 of us would be able

to take the ship or would we try to take it off them. We laughingly replied that we certainly would if we thought we had a chance. So he laughed at that and said: "You have not a chance, so you will be sensible enough not to try."

There was, amongst the escort, an R.I.C. man whose name I had well in memory until some years ago, but have now forgotten. He discussed things with me and seemed to be a decent sort of man. He was deploring the way things were gradually growing worse and said that they were coming to the point where there would be wholesale murder. The R.I.C., he said, were getting out of hand and some of them were going around trying to organise the doing of things that he would not agree with, and that was the proposed killing of prominent Sinn Feiners.. As the conversation went on he told me that only some short time before there had been a plot to have the Lord Mayor of Cork, Tomas MacCurtain, murdered. That R.I.C. men were being recruited for the job but it did not get support from a great many of the R.I.C. and the matter had lapsed for the moment. He thought that there was the danger if there were any more killings by the I.R.A. that it would arise again. I listened carefully, but perhaps did not think that such a thing would ever materialise. When we reached Wormwood Scrubbs Prison I got in touch with the Volunteer officers who were prisoners there and I informed them of what I had heard. We discussed it and then forgot about it. Amongst those to whom I talked about the matter was Jim Lawless, who was then our commandant in Wormwood Scrubbs, and also to Joe McDonagh, whom I had known for a considerable time, Henry O'Hanrahan, P.J. Moloney and my old friend, William O'Brien of the Labour Party.

We had two small hunger strikes in Wormwood Scrubbs; one of them lasted for four days before being settled, and the other for five days. I was in both of them. William O'Brien

then struck out on his own and he went on hunger strike for release. The British Labour Party made quite a row over it and there was a general strike in Liverpool and O'Brien was eventually released; but before his release, Tomas MacCurtain had been murdered on March 19th in Cork. When O'Brien was released he brought out my story and the next I heard of the whole business was when I was called to the Governor's office and told by him that there were orders there that I was to be brought to Cork to be a witness at an Inquiry that was about to be held concerning the murder of the Lord Mayor of Cork.

I had not been too well dressed on the morning I was arrested and had not got time to change, so my clothes did not look too good. Lawless thought I should insist on getting a full outfit from the British authorities as I was being sent as a witness to the inquiry. I thought that would be carrying things too far and I said that the British authorities probably would not want me at that Inquiry at all, but that they had to send me there. Finally, I looked for the clothing and I got a complete outfit - underclothing, boots, socks, collars, ties, &c For the first time since I had grown up I was dressed in all British manufacture. The day before I was to leave for Cork, Joe McDonagh, who was on parole, came back to the prison. He came to my cell and told me there was very little likelihood that I would be called as a witness at all; that Collins was greatly pleased with the evidence which I could give, but that Martin Fitzgerald of the Freeman's Journal had been talking to Arthur Griffith and had mentioned about this information of mine and that I had said that the R.I.C. man had a brother a Curate in one of the Wicklow towns. McDonagh's story was that Fitzgerald, who was then a wealthy man, as well as being a good Irishman, suggested that they go and see this priest and, through him, made a pretty big offer to the R.I.C. man to get him to come into the witness box and tell the story. I under-

stood that Fitzgerald was prepared to invest at once sufficient money to give this policeman £1 a day for life. Quite a big sum of money at that time. However, the R.I.C. man did not respond and that was quite understandable, because he well knew that he would be speedily murdered and perhaps before he could reach the witness box. I got on my way and, though I was on parole, a deputy chief warder and two warders were sent with me, and we arrived in Cork and were brought to the jail. It was full of prisoners at the time and there was quite a number of women and others outside. They were all sympathy for this deputy chief warder, who was a little grey old man and whom the crowd mistook for the prisoner. They did not think I was the prisoner at all.

I understood that the "Daily Mirror" of the time had a picture of my entry to Cork Jail on that occasion, but I have never been able to see it. As I have said, I had a talk with Sean Fitzpatrick in the Jail and I was very delighted to see him as he was a reliable man as were all members of the Fitzpatrick family. The next day I was brought down to the City Hall where the Inquiry was being held and I met Diarmuid O'Crowley and Barrister Lynch. They told me that it was unlikely that I would be called; that something had happened that might upset my evidence. My sister, Winnie, and Miss Phoebe Hope had called there to see me.

I have gone ahead of my story and now I go back a little. When we reached Rosslare there was a large armed escort of R.I.C. in charge of a Head Constable waiting for me on the pier head. This officer, whose name I found out was Collins, told me that they were accompanying me to Cork and I asked what was the necessity, that I was on parole and that I would not attempt to escape. "That is not the reason we are here" he said. When we got on the train he sat beside me and told me the reason

they were accompanying me was to protect me from the R.I.C., that everywhere they were indignant and they were saying that I was coming specially to this Inquiry to attempt to place this foul murder on their shoulders. I asked on whose shoulders should it be placed and her eplied that the R.I.C. were a disciplined force and they would not be guilty of any such thing and that it must have been a bunch of the I.R.A. or Sinn Feiners that committed the murder. I said that he was very much mistaken, that there was scarcely any doubt but that the R.I.C. murdered Tomas MacCurtain, and at some time or other he would find out that such was true. Years afterwards I met him in Dublin and he agreed that I was right. On our way to Cork, when we stopped at any station, there were generally a few R.I.C. men fully armed waiting for the train to come in and most of them glared like devils at me; so it was fairly clear that Collins was telling the truth. From whence came their information? The Inquiry was held in the City Hall and I was brought back at its close, without being called as a witness, to Cork Jail. In due course, I was returned to Wormwood Scrubbs and that, I think, was some time in April 1920.

I was not very long back in Wormwood Scrubbs when some disunion arose in the Prison amongst our own fellows. It began with the hunger strikes, I think, and I felt very trouble about it. I and most of the others could not understand why such should occur, but the upshot of it anyway was that the real division came on the question of having a hunger strike for release. One group said that it would be wrong to stage a hunger strike for that purpose. We could not have it for anything else because we were being treated as prisoners of war, and Jim Lawless, Henry O'Hanrahan, P.J. Moloney and others insisted that it would be very wrong to have this hunger strike

for release. On the other side we had the argument that the British had no right to keep us there. Why not get out of the place? Joe McDonagh became the leader of what we will call the hunger strike men, and with him were Frank McGrath, myself, Eamon Hayes and, as a matter of fact, the majority of the prisoners . Some of them were bitter enough to fellows on the other side, but that did not apply to Frank McGrath or myself. We were for the hunger strike, but we recognised the other man's point of view also.

On 21st April 1920, began the great hunger strike in Wormwood Scrubbs. What set it off was probably the disunion that had been so evident amongst the prisoners and some of us thought we might as well try to settle that by beginning the hunger strike and that all the others would probably come in with us and thus the trouble would end. On the fifth day of the hunger strike (26th April) the Governor, who was a bit of a bounder, came out to look us over when we were in the exercise yard. He was very sarcastic and he said that we were lying around like hens with the pick and we had the finest food to get here and every convenience and he did not know what it was all about. As nobody else was replying to him I took it on myself to do so. I told the Governor that we were in that prison because we had taken Britain at her word in the war that had finished some time before; that she and her allies were fighting for the rights of small nations and that our country, being a small nation, had just as much right to be free as Belgium or England or any other country and, because of our attitude in that respect we had been brought there, and we objected to being kept in prison and that was why we were hunger striking. The Governor got very angry and he said that we fellows were beginning to get uppish and he may as well tell us that, in case we started any trouble

"we have the famous British regiment - the Coldstream Guards in the grounds of the prison. They outnumber you five to one and they are armed with rifles and bayonets". (He also said: "O'Dwyer has been reported to me from other persons as a dangerous trouble-maker"). When he had just finished, our commandant, Joe McDonagh, arrived on the scene. Joe was a man full of humour and he said: "Right you are, Governor; rub it into them. Surely you are right. Five British soldiers armed with rifles and bayonets should be quite able to beat up one unarmed Irishman". The Governor departed and we had a confab and McDonagh said that now it was up to us to go further with the fight, that the Governor was looking for trouble and we may as well give it to him. We decided there and then that we would return to the cells and when the cell doors were opened again, when the warders came back from their dinners, we would go into action at once and stage a complete wreckage of that wing of the prison. We believed that action like this might unite our forces also. Plans were made as to how the work would be done, and McNamara from Ennis, who had been a sergeant major in the British army, with some other prisoners was given the task of taking down all the wire netting that was on the ends of the prison wing and throwing the wire netting into the passages through which the famous Coldstream Guards would be likely to enter. Others were to smash the windows, others the stairs, other men had the job of getting down the centre walls of the cells with anything and everything they could find, and my particular job was to get off the cell doors. We had managed to do this very well in Belfast Prison and the method was to get a block, or failing a block, some large book would be pressed into service and placed between the jamb of the door and the frame; a pull on it and off came the whole door with a shot like a gun. Having got these off, we flung them out over the railing and down

through the wire netting to the ground floor, and they crashed down in continual showers.

The first one we got through narrowly missed the Governor and he retreated rapidly to the centre portion of the prison followed by his warders and followed also by a shower of bricks that had now been loosed. We had very little compunction about hitting any of those warders in Wormwood Scrubbs. They were, on the whole, a poor class, with the exception of the Chief Warder, who was a very gentlemanly man, who had been in attendance on Roger Casement. I thought highly of him.

In a short time all that wing of the prison was in a state of wreckage and, in the meantime, the Coldstream Guards had been alerted. Troops were lined up and when they tried to force their way in they had the tough job of pulling the wire out of the way. They said afterwards that the men who fixed it must have been experts at the work.

After a five-day hunger strike we were not too strong, but we managed to wreck the prison before we had to sit down or lie down completely exhausted. We were pleased to find that all our old comrades, those who had not been on hunger strike, had now joined in the struggle, so we were a united party once more.

The Coldstream Guards poured into the prison and their officers queried the Governor as to what was to be done. He thought we should all be shot, but the officers did not think such was possible without orders from the Home Office. In three or four hours they (the Coldstream Guards) came along, picked us up and brought us down to a new set of cells on the ground floor, and that evening a determined attempt was made to break the hunger strike by putting some fancy dishes in the cells for us, but it did not work.

Some of the prisoners were very young men and boys and it was a big trial for them. On 27th and 29th April large crowds of sympathisers gathered in Wormwood Scrubbs Common outside the prison. On the first night they were attacked by a mob from the city. On the second night a large crowd of Irishmen came there with hurleys, ashplants or blackthorns or canes of some kind and we understood that a good deal of English workers aided them to rout this mob. Amongst those who took part in the struggle outside the prison was Miss Mary Phillips of Cashel whose brother Paddy was in the same cell with me. He was quite a young boy then. On 7th May the "Irish Independent" said that there were 100 deaths imminent in Wormwood Scrubbs. A good many of the weaker parties were being released, one by one or in small groups. Again on 8th May the "Irish Independent" said there were 114 men looking into the jaws of death. After the 20th day of the hunger strike I asked the prison doctor how I was going on. He said that he would begin to worry about my case in about 50 or 60 days from then and I said "Would I live that long?" "Yes" he said, "you would. You are a very powerful man and you would have a tough time. I hope it will not occur". He said that a lot of our men were not of that physique and he was releasing them strictly on medical grounds according as they were falling down.

In the finish, only a small crowd remained and then we had designed a couple of big placards which we stuck up in the prison wing and on them there was, in Irish only, "Buadh no Bás" and we meant to stick it out to the finish. However, on 12th May, the last group of us were lugged into ambulances and sent to a hospital. Most of that group were sent to the hospital of a disused workhouse at Cornwallis Road where we were treated very nicely and, after a short time, we were able to move around and got a very nice time from the Irish people

in London. We decided that we would not return to Ireland until we got complete release and until the British Government agreed to pay our fares home and most of the crowd stuck it out on those lines until the general release was announced. It was also decided that if they took us back to prison we would go on hunger strike again.

I returned home later, some time in June. I was not feeling very well. I had 'blackouts' very often, but I got on to the work again in various fields and made my usual visits to Dublin. There, on one of those visits, Michael Collins sent a statement to me that I was prominently figuring on the list of those to be murdered by the R.I.C. This was the list that Arthur Griffith made an annoucement about some couple of months later. Collins also stated in this message to me that Michael Ryan of Curraghduff was a man he had not been able to get in touch with and that he was in serious danger too and he asked me to try and get in touch with him as speedily as possible. I knew he was in Dublin at the time and I got word to him to come to Stella Gardens. I met him there and Sean O'Treacy was also there on the same night. I told Ryan what my message from Collins was and that he was never to stay at home at night in the future. He agreed and he obeyed the order for some time. In October 1920 he got ill with pneumonia and went to his own home to recover. On 25th October he was murdered at his home by the R.I.C. murder gang. As far as I can remember, he was shot in bed, though the Chronology says that he was brought out and killed outside.

In the Chronology there is an entry that on 14th July 1920 John O'Dwyer of Mansfield was shot dead at Annesgrove. This man was a rather rough character and was a caretaker for W.P. Hanly on lands in that locality. His wife's people were

were associated very much with the movement in the 4th Battn. and some of them were in prison at the time. What I want to point out is that this killing had no political significance at all. If it were members of the I.R.A. shot him, they did so without orders, and it simply meant that they were growing up with the notion that they could act on their own and regardless of national direction.

On 9th May there had been a Sergeant O'Connor killed at Clonoulty. Sergeant Hamilton had been removed, wounded, from there and I had never seen this new man; but everyone said he was decent and not looking for trouble. The constable with him, who was by no means a decent R.I.C. man, escaped. Those things had no good effect upon the general attitude of the people, including a great many of the I.R.A. Our supporters thought that things were getting out of hand and that, unless checked, it meant training fellows to murder who would murder our own men later on if anything arose that created ill-feeling.

Since my return from prison not many brigade meetings had been held and the attendance was at no time complete. The last brigade meeting that I attended and at which Sean O Treasaigh was present and presided at was at Carhue at the house of William Hayes. Hayes was a brother-in-law of Paddy English who figured prominently in the struggle.

After something to eat in the house we adjourned to some hollow or disused quarry in the fields and discussed the business of the brigade. I only remember one item which came before us and that was a proposal by Michael Sheehan that we should send an armed force into the Mid-Tipperary Brigade area and round up some of the I.R.A. officers in that brigade and hav them courtmartialled for robbery, etc. I had heard a good many rumours of things that had been happening, but Sean seemed to be taken a bit aback and he questioned Sheehan. I intervened

and I said that Michael, of course, may be right in what he says, but we have one war on hands and that is enough. If we are going to fight with our own, we are finished, and I proposed that nothing be done about it, but that O Treasaigh might be able to get in touch with Paddy Kinane (Padraig O Cuinneáin) and some others and give them any help possible to straighten out matters. We all knew that Kinane and the Meaghers, Leahy, Jerry Ryan and others were men of strict honour and honesty.

Following on this we had a Brigade Council meeting at Kilshenane. I am certain it was a Brigade Council meeting, though the attendance was not very good. As far as I can remember, there were some important officers there, especially from the southern end of the county, and from Clonmel in particular. Questions arising out of a good many happenings that we didn't care for were discussed and, in the absence of Breen, Robinson and Treacy, there did not seem to be a whole lot we could do about them. There were some who thought that the struggle was growing bigger than we could handle expecially in the absence of any fair amount of arms. There were others, of whom I was one, who wanted a new plan of campaign; who thought that ambushes and lying in wait might create a certain type of man that we did not want, and there seemed to be some of that type growing up in other areas. We could not do anything on a big scale, or even on a little scale, without having arms and ammunition, and it appeared from the financial accounts that the brigade had quite a good share of money on hands, something like £1000, in the hands of trustees in Dublin. We could use this money to buy arms. The result of the discussion was, that I was delegated to go to Dublin and contact the Minister for Defence on the arms question, and Arthur Griffith who was then Acting President of the Republic, on the general

national and political position. Before the meeting ended I pointed out that we apparently had here and there some people in the brigade area who were giving some information to the British. One incident made this clear, but there were others.

Sometime before this I had directions to go to Dublin to what may have been an I.R.B. or I.R.A. convention. My orders were to cover my movements pretty well and to see if I could evade the R.I.C. and get to Dublin. I decided that I would get a train at Kilsheelan, outside Clonmel. I contacted a garage in Cashel and I asked them to have a car for me at some hour early the following morning at the house of Tomas O'Dwyer of Clonbohane, near Cashel, where I had been invited to a dinner party on the previous night. The car was there at 5 a.m. all right, and I reached Kilsheelan and when I got on the platform there were two armed R.I.C. men there before me. I got by Waterford to Dublin. Other R.I.C. men got on the train at Waterford and at other points. All the way up the R.I.C. and detectives were on the watch at every station but when I got to Dublin, the guides who met me managed to evade the spies and watchers, and by some back streets we got into Vaughan's Hotel early that night.

I remember that Collins and a great many other leaders were there, but whether the business was I.R.A. or I.R.B. I am not certain now.

When I went up at this time to see Griffith and the Minister for Defence I had no difficulty. I picked up the train beyond Thurles in the night time and got easily into Dublin and I went at once to Dixon's Soap & Candle Works, of which Cathal Brugha, the Minister for Defence, was a Director. In the course of a short time I got to see him and

I told him what my business was and that it was very difficult for us to continue without a reasonable supply of arms; that we had quite a considerable amount of funds, probably £1000, that we could plank down to help in getting stuff, knowing of course that it would all have to be bought or paid for in some way or other. Brugha seemed to think that there was no difficulty in the matter. He was full of fight and the only question was to get the arms and go in and get the enemy, attack their barracks and attack them every way. I asked him if he would make arrangements to get any stuff that could be got for me and he told me that it was not in his hands, that I should see Michael Collins and that he would send a guide with me to Collins. He thought I would have no difficulty in getting a pretty reasonable supply.

I got to Collins and he was quite indignant that I should be looking for something which, he said, I knew was not there. I replied that I had seen the Minister for Defence and he seemed to think that it should be possible to get supplies and that was how I came to him. Collins said there were no arms to be got and he did not know when there would be any to be had, and if they were to be had, we would get our share of them. He also said that I had been too long in the struggle and needed a rest and to let some of the younger men do the work for a time, but that we must carry on some way without arms. We were prepared to do this, I told him, but a good many of the crowd were not prepared to carry on a campaign that did not seem to be leading anywhere, only producing certain types we did not want. I alluded to some of those things that had happened, such as robberies for personal gain, but he said the I.R.A. ought to be strong enough to deal sternly with those fellows and enforce discipline. He said that he was rather surprised that I should make such an effort

to get arms that I ought to know were not to be had and that we seemed to be a very purse-proud crowd in Tipperary with this £1000 we had to spend. On this jocose note we parted. I knew very well that Collins knew his business and that he had told me the truth. In fact, I had surmised fairly well that no arms were available. Phil Shanahan, Dan Breen, Sean O'Treasaigh and others had been working for long for us in that field, but of late with no success. I was rather sorry that I had been sort of forced into worrying Collins on the matter.

I got to see Griffith in an office where he was apparently engaged on editing his paper or upon other correspondence. My conversation with him showed that he did not like the situation that had developed and he feared for our ability to stick it out. He was non-committal in his reply to the questions I had been directed to put to him. They had reference to the various aspects of a situation that had arisen - the departure from national idealism of some of our own people, and the destructive tactics of the enemy. Should we abate our armed activities as regards ambushes? Should we strike big blows in other ways instead? He referred me to the army authorities. Perhaps he was right, but it seems to be generally inferred that when President de Valera returned from the U.S.A. he and the army chiefs in Dublin decided that small affairs were not much use, that without sufficiency of arms greater battles could not be fought, but that there were other ways of hitting foreign rule, and so came the great blow of the Custom House.

I returned to Tipperary and gave my report to a brigade meeting. I had got nothing for my journey.

Some evenings later I was engaged in a skirmish with some

British officers, but it was only a waste of good ammunition. There were no arms to be had, or further supplies of ammunition, and a compulsory levy was introduced to take the place of the former collection for the arms fund.

The usefulness of Kilshenane for organising work had ended as it grew more difficult to have any meeting there, owing to the incessant raiding. I rarely stayed there for more than a few minutes and never slept there. At the fall of night I generally headed towards a remote hayshed, climbed into it and slept. The shadow of death hung over the staff at Kilshenane, but the work went on somehow or other.

I was in Dublin frequently and with this and the constantly moving about, the spotters for the British murder gang were unable to place my whereabouts; but, finally, those gangsters got accurate information of my being in Kilshenane and they very nearly got me.

A good deal of the time - when it was known that I was at home - I had women callers who wanted to get their sons or brothers or husbands out of danger's way. They were good people, staunch enough to the cause and ready to make any sacrifices of money, means, imprisonment, but they wished to save the lives of their dear ones, and who could blame them? Those were heartbreaking ordeals for me, and sometimes I had to intervene and bring fellows home against their will. Michael Sheehan suffered similarly, but to a lesser extent.

All this business, and my feeling that the ambushes were doing our men harm, made me kick against the ambushes in the finish.

Seamus Robinson arrived in due course in Kilshenane and discussed the matter with me, but I was sore and pig-headed

and we got nowhere with the discussion. It was a certain type of thing I was opposed to. Like all Irish people, I was proud of Knocklong and Ballinalee, of the daring attack on Lord French and, later, of the heroic fight at Carolan's house, Sean O'Treasaigh in Talbot St., the great stand at Crossbarry, and similar fights.

I had been back in Kilshenane one day in late September 1920, when news reached us of an ambush at Coolcussane and the wounding there of the British officer in charge of the military at Dundrum. Some short time before that, Captain John Prout of the U.S. army had come to visit his old home and friends at Dundrum. He had a fine record in the U.S. army. I knew him when he was a boy and my people and his were old friends. I went to see him and to get his help, even if under cover, for the I.R.A. He gladly consented to do this. Amongst other work he got into intimate conversations with this British army officer. The latter, I understood, was a South African by birth and had relatives in Dundrum area who had long been our supporters. John Prout reported to me that this officer would not join us or throw up his commission, but he guaranteed that he and his men would act decently and humanly. As I have referred to Prout, I will finish my story as far as it concerns him. He had been giving instruction to I.R.A. units for some time and, on the coming of the Truce, took charge of one of the training camps. At the beginning of the Truce he came to see me in Dublin and handed me letters from the U.S. Army Command in Occupied Germany. He was offered promotion to the rank of Major if he would go there. He asked me what he should do and I urged him to stay on, that he would be a great help in forming an up-to-date Irish army. He stayed on and became a Major General. The civil war disgusted him and he has been back in the U.S.A. for many years.

When I heard the news of the ambush at Coolacussane I felt that this happening would be sufficient incentive to send the murder gang out. I felt a premonition that a blow was coming. Seamus Browne and I were out and about under cover and as that September night fell we entered Kilshenane for supper and, when that was eaten, we asked Jack Cussen, my sister's husband, to come away with us, as no man would be safe there in the night. Jack insisted that he would stay with his wife and children, but Browne and I and Winnie insisted that he should go with us, and at last he consented. I advised also that he or no other man stay in that house in the nights and that was agreed to. As it turned out, it was easy to keep that promise. We left the house and stationed ourselves on the bank of a double ditch with thick hedges and not far from the Cashel road. I expected that if the murder gang came they would be accompanied by some of the Lincoln Regiment who were stationed in Cashel, and my plan was to hit them, if at all possible, on their way back to Cashel. Seamus Browne had a rifle, Jack a shotgun, and I had a Webley revolver. It would be an ambush but with the difference that we would be shooting at ruffians on a murder mission. It was a wet night and two of us slept on the ditch top whilst another kept watch.

I had made arrangements to go to Dublin on the morrow to a meeting of the Irish National Assurance Company that was to be held on the day after, but I wondered if I would be there. Morning came and nothing had happened. We went to Kilshenane and had breakfast and soon I heard that most of our local men with arms had been mobilised five miles away the previous night near the home of Tom Carew of Golden Garden. I was the only person in that area of South Tipperary that was listed to be murdered, but I had never asked for

protection and never would. A car brought me to Lisduff station that evening and I got on a train to Dublin there. All the train checkers were I.R.A. men and knew me and I could get on or off trains anywhere. I was very troubled leaving Kilshenane for I felt that the murder gang would soon have a try for me.

The following day I was sitting at the table in the Irish Assurance office in College Green. Larry Casey was in the Chair. A clerk brought in a telegram to him. He tore open the envelope and glanced at the contents. His face clouded and he looked across at me. "Good God, bad news, Eamon" said he as he handed the telegram to me. It read: "Kilshenane burned down last night". "Not so bad so far" commented, and then I asked Larry to send wires for me to my sister but to cover addresses, and with the aid of our code book I worked out messages. I wanted to know if all were well and that Phoebe Hope should come to Dublin at once with all details. Later in the evening came a reply that everyone was safe and Miss Hope arrived at my sister's home in Dublin that night. This was the tale she told us: My mother, Miss Hope, my sister and her two children were clustered together for mutual solace in a bedroom when, about midnight, they heard the trampling of men as they rushed in the avenue from the road. A moment later and the door was battered down and there was a shout of "Women and children out". Two masked men were with the crowd of about a dozen soldiers and they shouted: "Where is Dwyer the murderer?" My sister faced them bravely and replied: "My brother is no murderer, but a gallant Irishman". Then those two threw hand grenades into my room and, after their explosion, rushed upstairs with drawn revolvers. The women and children were brought out to the roadside and kept prisoners there under guard whilst the remainder of the gang

looted, wrecked and finally burned the place. Then the hapless prisoners were let go and they went for refuge to O'Brien's house. They had nothing left to wear except what they stood up in.

Kilshenane was gone after quite not four years of great effort. We were building from there a part of Ireland we hoped to see arrive "not merely free but Gaelic as well", the Ireland that might have been, but has not come yet.

I went down to Kilshenane next day and stayed somewhere that night. The following day I had a look at the wreckage and then I went into O'Brien's to have a meal and get Miss Hope to write some letters. A scout called and said that a marching party of the Lincoln Regiment were in the neighbourhood. I went to an outhouse to get my cycle. Just then two soldiers burst in searching for eggs. I directed them further and headed for the road with my cycle. When I got out on the road there was a straggling party of 25 or 30 soldiers marching towards me within 100 yards. To turn Cashelwards, towards my wrecked home, would be fatal, so I kept a happy face and kept moving towards them. Needless to say, I was afraid, but I consoled myself with the thought that I could only die once and, smilingly and tactfully, I passed through them, saying it was a lovely day, but in my heart wishing them all in the nethermost depths of hell. I showed no haste and mounted my cycle and slowly pedalled away when I had passed through them. The further I went the faster I went and I was just reaching the crossroad of Faheen when I heard a shout behind me and, looking back over my shoulder, I saw a soldier rushing out from O'Brien's and shouting something. The others turned in my direction and some were raising their rifles and then I turned the corner and saw them no more. Later, when I saw my sister, she told me that the party called in to Kilshenane

and they rounded up all the poultry and took them away with them. Jack Cussen and another Volunteer were milking the cows and the soldiers threatened to shoot them. The officer in charge said, sarcastically, to my sister: "The cunning scoundrel, Eamon,, escaped from us. He was so nice getting through us that we did not know who he was until too late".

As no man could now safely work at Kilshenane, I decided to sell it at once and pay off any debts that were on it. I fixed up the old place in Ballagh for my mother, Winnie, Jack and the children, and brought enough cows and equipment there for them. After over three years of strain and terror my sister was about to have a rest from trouble. With what I got for Kilshenane, now minus a house, I paid Miss Daly her £1000 plus interest for the entire period and I cleared the Bank A/c. and all other accounts.

Later I got compensation for the other losses but, in turn I lost it all in the publishing of "The Gael" and "Banba".

I had many letters of sympathy about the burning of Kilshenane and the Gaelic League paper "An Claidheamh Soluis" had a good deal to say about my work. The name appeared on the map issued showing the burnings by the British. It was clear to me that my presence in Kilshenane in those days before the raid was reported by some spotter.

In all cases the murder gang got away safely after doing their devilish work and that fact gave me and many others cause for reflection. It showed how terribly weak we were, how lacking in watchfulness and how lacking in determination to meet these midnight raiders with death and it all boiled down to the fact that we had no worthwhile supply of arms. Who were the masked men of the murder gangs? Had they been

hunted down and executed as the murderer Swanzy was, deeds worth while would have been done.

After the destruction of Kilshenane and the attempt to trap and murder me, I was definitely a bad risk as a guest in any household and, on account of my stature and being so well-known, it was no easy job for me to escape the quest of the spotters of the British murder gang.

I had to stay in the neighbourhood as I had to carry through the arrangements for the sale of Kilshenane and fix up my mother, my sister and her husband and their children in the old home at Ballagh, and, having done that, keep far away from them, except for occasional secret visits by night, so that they had a chance to live in some little peace.

There were many who would risk their lives to shelter me and among them the great patriot priest, Father Matt Ryan, P.P. of Knockavilla. I discovered one morning after sheltering for the previous night in the Parochial House that this venerable old priest had stayed awake and on the watch throughout the night.

There was not much I could do at the time, especially as I differed from some of the Brigade Council on the policy to be pursued, but after this, reaching a certain point of unpleasantness, the matter died out and I went to my work in Dublin and to hiding.

My sister and her husband and their children lived at 93 Stella Gardens and in those years Seamus Robinson, Sean O'Treasaigh, Sean Hogan, Dan Breen, Michael Sheehan, Sean O'Meara were frequently there and, occasionally, others like George Plunkett, Seamus O'Neill, Sean Morrissey, Paddy O'Dwyer and, at least once, Michael Collins. The death of my dear and gallant friend, Sean O'Treasaigh, was a terrible blow to me.

I was pretty ill at the time and I felt terribly saddened.

The British got some notes on Sean and on one of them was written "Duncan's, Stella Gardens", which was my sister's house. The British made a search in the area, but they were led astray by the D.M.Police of Irishtown Station, who could not find any Duncan in Stella Gardens, but said that there were such people there some years before. After this close shave I got lodgings with a Mr. Gaynor until one night early in 1921, Seamus Robinson Sean O'Meara and Rody Connolly, son of James Connolly, the executed 1916 leader, called to Duncan's seeking me and Anthony Duncan brought them to Gaynor's. It was after curfew. Mrs. Gaynor, at my request, prepared and served a supper for us and she could not help seeing that they were heavily armed. They slept in my room that night and left after breakfast in the morning. They discussed with me a project for getting arms from Germany and my job was to arrange for some business agency for O'Meara and Connolly who were to go on this mission. The 3rd Tipperary Brigade still had this money that Collins said was making us purse proud. The mission was undertaken. Gaynors knew I was a "wanted" man, but now that other dangerous men had come visiting, Mrs. Gaynor grew very fearful, naturally enough, and I had to leave. My sister got other places for me but, apparently, the tale went around that I was 'on the run' and I had to go.

Turning back to the closing days of 1920 I have always felt that had Breen and Treacy got to me in Stella Gardens in that week before the battle at Carolan's, the Duncans and I could have got them shelter in that working class district. It is known that they were hard-pressed to get safe shelter in the city. Later on the terror invaded Stella Gardens too, and outside some few homes like Duncan's, shelter could not easily be found there.

In those latter years I had worked hard in the economic field, mainly to smash the British monopoly in the insurance fields and had been very successful. Feeling pretty confident that an Irish Government would soon be in power, I turned to the cultural field and it was, and is, my opinion that good bilingual periodicals, soundly national, would help us along to reach the ideals of Pearse and the countless others who had worked and fought to create an Irish Ireland.

I then set about organising "The Gael Publishing Society" and, later, when our war with Britain had ended, the weekly "Gael" and the monthly "Banba" appeared. We had an office at 73 Lower Mount St.

On Bloody Sunday, November 21st, I was at the Pillar with Mr. Doris of "The Mayo News" about to board a Drumcondra tram for Croke Park, when a Captain Ryan and another I.R.A. man came to me and said that he had orders from Michael Collins that prominent I.R.A. men who, like myself, were easily identifiable, should be directed to keep off the streets. They insisted that I should at once go with them and take the Sandymount tram to Stella Gardens. I did so. When my tram reached Ringsend bridge over the Dodder, terror-stricken people who had apparently crossed on the Liffey ferry were coming off the quays to the Ringsend road and some continued their headlong flight along the Dodder towards Ballsbridge. The following forenoon I had slipped into the Mount St. office and had been there only a very short time when a lorry or two loaded with Auxiliaries came tearing to the door and a raid was on. I got out by the back yard and into Grattan St. I had got about 50 yards when a number of the Auxiliaries came into the street and opened fire on me. With bullets hitting the walls and street near me, I got into a shop and out the back way and over walls towards Westland Row and felt quite elated that

once more I had been able to escape. Mr. J.J. Cooke, the owner of the house, the MacPat Brothers who operated a brush making factory in the basement, and all the male members of our staff were hauled off to prison and held for some weeks. Had I been caught, I doubtless would have been murdered by those Auxies as were Dick McKee, Peadar Clancy and Conor Clune on that 22nd November 1920.

There were a few minor incidents in early 1921 of a personal nature, but this story has grown too long, and I will now deal only with a few of the more interesting happenings. Dates I cannot remember.

One afternoon in the spring of 1921, I had gone down from 73 Mount St. to the Irish National Assurance Office in College Green. I had told the staff in Mount St. that I would return within an hour, but man proposes and .....
On my way back in Nassau St. I was about to turn into Browne and Nolan's when men in civilian clothes with their hands significantly in their overcoat pockets closed in on me, and told me not to make a move or I'd be very dead. I worked my brains and tried to persuade them that I was a Dublin businessman. They asked why did I leave Kilshenane and, the game being up, I replied that they knew the answer to that. "Come with us" was the order, "and if you try to escape or signal friends you'll die sudden". I saw no friends on my way up Dame St. Arrived inside the gateway of Dublin Castle, an olive complexioned constabulary officer handled my interrogation and prodded me in the face and mouth and stomach repeatedly with a revolver muzzle, whilst uttering threats that he thought were blood-curdling. Frightened enough at first, I grew case hardened as time went on. He ran short at times of verbal ammunition with which to fire at me and had to refer to others in an office on the left-hand side of the entrance drive from Dame St.

Amongst the threats made were that I would be sent to join Treacy, and some of the allegations were that I was the paymaster of the "Tipperary Murder Gang", that I used pay Dan Breen a sum of £25 for every "peeler" he "murdered", that I was also a cunning murderer and a traitorous hound, whose plausible tongue had seduced scores of R.I.C. men from their rightful allegiance to the Crown, and that I had been making secret moves to safeguard those secret traitors who were amongst the R.I.C., that their crimes and mine would yet be brought to light and we would all be hung. There was a lot of it and, after a couple of hours, I was hardly able to keep on my feet.

The interrogator fired scarcely any direct question at me. It was clear that had I lost my temper and said or done anything to give an excuse for rough handling I would have been slaughte-ed there and then.

Eventually I was handed over to the British military in the City Hall. No daylight was admitted into my prison chamber there and, in the weeks I was there, there was constant coming and going of prisoners. Amongst them was Sean MacCraith of London whom I knew very well.

When I did not return to Lr. Mount St. that evening or to Stella Gardens that night or next day, my sister was in a state of fear. A guarded message to Winnie in Tipperary brought fear to her. Again the terror was in their homes. I had disappeared. A couple of days later, John Condron, Irishtown, and a member of the republican police, brought my sister to the Republican Police Secret H.Q. The officer in charge there heard the name of the missing man and the story and then he asked that the name be repeated. When this was done he exclaimed: "Eamon O'Dwyer; they have murdered him somewhere!" So my people were in a state of anguish and I was not allowed to write a letter

until I was sent to Arbour Hill Prison.

I had been in the City Hall about a fortnight when I induced one of our soldier guards to post to my sister (Mrs. Duncan) a scribbled note and so relieved the fears of my people.

I was all alone in Arbour Hill Military Prison in 1918 for about a week. Now there were over 1000 prisoners there, but most of them were not members of any national organisation. Some time later I was released from there, but within a few days searches were made for me again. Nine or ten days before the Truce I was sent by G.H.Q. to Glasgow to look into some matters that Phil and Sean Healy had in hand there when they had to flee to Ireland. I was with Jack O'Sheehan (now of Irish Hospitals Trust) and Andy Furlong when there came the Truce and so ended my part in the struggle to oust British occupation.

My final talks with Michael Collins were as follow:
On the day that Collins returned to Dublin after the signing of the Treaty I was walking up Grafton St. On the other side, Collins, Diarmuid O'Hegarty and some others were walking down. Collins saw me and he called to me, came across, shook hands warmly and asked for my opinion of the settlement. I replied that it was as good as could be expected, better than most people expected, and things missing from it that would complete it as a national settlement could be secured as Ireland grew in strength under a 26-county government. "Would Tipperary accept it, and especially the I.R.A." he asked. The people would accept overwhelmingly, was my opinion, as would also the majority of the I.R.A. In both predictions I was right.
He again shook hands warmly and we parted.

Some time later, Paddy O'Dwyer "the man from Hollyford" and now of Mantlehill, Golden, came to 93 Stella Gardens with a message from the 3rd Battalion that they wanted me to call on

Michael Collins the following morning at the Provisional Government offices in the City Hall and ask him to get the National Land Bank to grant a loan to Jim O'Gorman to buy a publichouse in Cappawhite. D.P. Walsh fixed the appointment for me with Collins and Padraig O'Maille agreed to go with me. There was grave disunion threatening, and Collins would not listen to some of the Tipperary men who were against the Treaty He had a talk with us and, on my urging, he agreed to get the loan for O'Gorman. Before we parted with him, and I never saw that great and gallant man alive again, he said jocosely to me: "Eamon, do you know what was the worst thing you did in your life?" I told him I could not pick one out of the many, and then he said: "Bringing Seamus Robinson to Tipperary"

During the civil war period I was secretary for a group that made great efforts to bring about peace and unity. On that committee were, amongst others, Joe Stanley, Martin Conlon (I.R.B.) and Paddy Belton.

I have now come to the end of my story, or at any rate, to all those portions of it that belong to a military history of our times. I look back with pride and pleasure to my meetings with so many of the great men and women of our race, but, above all, I wish to record my pride in the great mass of our people who gave my comrades and me their unstinted support in those years of national effort. My loving remembrance goes to all those who stood with us in the years of tribulation, those who helped me in national work throughout most of Munster and in Dublin; the gallant men of A/Company of the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Tipperary Brigade, and the Cumann na mBan associated with them; the men and women of the Kilshenane staff (or garrison), Misses K. Moriarty, May Kearney and Phoebe Hope (now Bean Mhic Maolain of Belfast), John Cussen, Seamus Browne

(Clogher), Mick and Tom Kearney, Paddy Hayes; Michael Davern, Martin Moloney, Bill and Sean O'Dwyer and, above all, to Seamus Robinson. Amongst those who were closely associated with me, and who are to the fore today, I would like to mention Seamus O'Neill, Ceannphort na nGarda, Gaillimh, Tadhg O'Dwyer, Dan Breen, Padraig O'Cuinneáin, Seamus agus Tomas O Maoileoin. Prayerful, loving remembrance, too, of those friends and comrades who fell in the fight, died in prison or passed away in more recent years: Sean O Treasaigh, Piaras MacCana, Phil Ryan (Mason), Jerh. O'Dwyer, Richard Treacy, Michael Sheehan, Paddy Hogan, John Halloran, Bill O'Dwyer, Bill (Russell) O'Dwyer, Proinnsias O'Druachain, Sean Morrissey, William Benn, Tom Carew, J.J. Hassett, also my brother-in-law Anthony Duncan, 93 Stella Gardens, who gave of his best, and my sister Winnie (Mrs. Cussen) whose health was broken in that last year of terror in Kilshenane.

And, finally, to those of my own family who are today living in Dublin - my sister Kate (Mrs. Duncan) who was hostess in her home to Sean Treacy, Dan Breen, Seamus Robinson, Sean Hogan, myself and others so often in those years; John Cussen (my brother-in-law) who went through the days of terror in Kilshenane, and his daughters (my nieces) Maureen Cussen and Kitty (Mrs. Sinclair) who still vividly remember that night of terror when their home was set ablaze and they were held prisoners by the British soldiery. And there is my nephew, Sean Duncan, and my niece Ann (Mrs. MacDermott) who remember during their childhood days being held on their knees by Sean O'Treasaigh and Seamus Robinson.

Beannachta Dé ortha go léir.

Signed: Canon O Dubhir

Date: 14 Iúnasa 1956

Witness: J. Grace.