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STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

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Witness

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29, South Street,
New Ross,
Co. Wexford.

Identity.

1st Lieutenant, New Ross Company.

Vice Commandant, New Ross Battalion.

Subject.

Irish Volunteer activities, New Ross, Co. Wexford, and experiences in Frongoch, 1912-Dec., 1916.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

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STATEMENT BY JOSEPH McCARTHY,

29, South St., New Ross, Co. Wexford.

New Ross in my youth was a busy town of five thousand people. Many were employed on its long stretch of quays, where fleets of sailing schooners were constantly arriving, fully laden with timber, coal, manures and other cargoes. Additional sources of employment were a bacon factory, a brewery, a felt factory, three coach factories, a tannery, numerous malt stores, lime works and timber yards. Smaller industries gave employment to harness-makers, boot-makers, cabinet-makers, stone-cutters and lace workers.

The life of the town moved along with little interest of its national existence. The military barrack, which had been vacated some few years, left its remnant of discharged soldiers.

The guiding hand of England was evident everywhere. The R.I.C. were pompous and ponderous in carrying out the law. There were magistrates, retired army officers and landed gentry who walked the streets with a superior air, and it was usual to see a continuous string of people stepping off the side walks, hat at the salute, while they passed.

Ireland, or anything Irish, was never mentioned, except in an apologetic way. Articles made in Ireland were considered inferior, and it was often necessary to hide the fact that an article was made in Ireland to make a sale.

There were some attempts made by a few enthusiasts to learn the Irish language. Sometimes at concerts some of Moore's melodies were sung which would get heart-warming applause. Rebel songs were taboo, and folk songs were hardly ever sung on the stage. The "Irish Emigrant" or "Kathleen Mavourneen" were sung by whimpering shoneens in a style which conveyed that the Irish were a vanishing race. The street ballad singers held the breach. There was hardly a day they were not on the streets. Their songs were always of Ireland. The most popular were "Poor Robert Emmet" and the "Shan Van Vocht". Some of their songs were of their own composition in praise of some sporting triumph or some colleen's beauty or some Irish battle of long ago. The ballad singers were greeted with good humour and passed off as being a little daft. Frequently they were told by the R.I.C. to move off to the next town.

The bliss of being happy British citizens hung heavy sometimes on the old people. Ninety-eight was not a century passed and some of their parents lived during the period. In quiet conversation at the fireside in the winter-time or sitting out on a summer's evening, they would tell of the bitter memories of '98, of the bloody deeds of the yeomen and English troops. Their stories, told in cold emotional voices, left memories never to be forgotten. Remarks made in the everyday happenings of the people would recall memories of '98. Phrases used by the insurgents in the actual fighting were used by the older people. For instance, in my home when anything specia was cooking for a meal and I was discovered sampling it, or if I took something that did not belong to me, my mother, when ordering me away, would playfully say, "Go and kill

a Hessian of your own", which conveyed that during '98 a corps of Hessians were operating in Wexford with the yeomen and that they (the Hessians) were well equipped, particularly with good quality boots, which were much sought after by the insurgents. There was a rhyme which I overheard her humming in some kind of chant. I have forgotten the words except the ending of the chorus which had a repeated phrase:

"Hazzel was a devil,
Roast his arse upon a griddle,
Hear again, hear again,
For the loss of the time".

I was small when I heard this and at the time it conveyed nothing to me, but later it brought the picture of some notorious yeoman who was an expert with the pitch cap or other torture and who was promised the vengeance in store for him. I often heard my father suddenly say, "There goes again that damn blue British flag above our Irish green". This was apparently a war cry before a fight with the yeos.

There were some Fenians still alive in Ross in my youth, but the children were warned to keep away from them. One I remember well, as he lived alone in a street near my home. I never saw anyone talk to him. I often saw him at Mass and out for country walks. I think he worked sometimes for the farmers. The poor man was found dead in his house and he had a lonely funeral.

At the Christian Brothers' school we were taught the Irish language through O'Growney's books. Our greatest delight was in the singing class where we sang "Remember the glories of Brian the Brave", The Ministrel Boy" and other rousing Irish songs.

The first clash with the guiding hand of England that I witnessed was when, as a lad in the Christian Brothers' choir, I had the pleasure of being present at a "Grand Concert It must have been a very important one because all the "quality" of the town were there in the reserved seats, as well as the gentry from the county. It was a great gathering of all sorts and conditions of people. When our item was over we were sent to the back of the hall. There were items of all sorts - quartets, choristers, ministrels and comics. Then a young man named Kirwan from Waterford took the stage and sang a song for which he got generous applause. For an encore he came out again, and after waiting for the applause to cease he started to sing,

"Oh, Lord Waterford is dead,
said the Shan Van Vocht,
And the devil is at his head,
said the Shan Van Vocht".

If all the devils in hell and a pack of mad tigers to help them had broken loose in the reserved seats there would not have been such a stampede. As the gents and their ladies jumped up to get out, they grabbed hats and coats from one another and fell over the chairs in their wild rush out of the hall. The singer continued his song, and the "gods", realising what all the commotion was about, joined in with the singer and roared themselves hoarse singing.

I never before saw a breach in the even flow of Royal British citizenship, and it was excitement with a vengeance. The only thing previously that disturbed the smoothness of the guiding hand was when a tinker on a fair day felt like fight and it usually took about eight R.I.C. men to carry him to jail.

In a short time the guiding hand of Britain moved smoothly again and for years nothing happened. The United Irish League occasionally met and passed resolutions of fidelity to the Irish Party. John Cummins of Ballyhack organised a committee to erect a monument in Ross to the memory of those who fell in '98. He endeavoured to patch up a feud between William O'Brien and John Redmond by inviting them both to the unveiling ceremony. He failed in his efforts but the monument was erected and unveiled. Later John Cummins, although advanced in years, was actively associated with Sinn Féin and the Republican movement.

For some years I went to Our Lady of Good Counsel College, New Ross, which was run by the Augustinian Fathers. At that time Rev. Fr. Nolan, O.S.A., was Prior. He was a great Irishman and owing to his extreme national views was not too popular with some of the pro-English element. Assisting him in the college was Rev. P.A. Doyle, O.S.A., who wrote the popular play "Hook in the Harvest" and other works. He was also a true Gael and great teacher.

Fr. Nolan always strove to make the boys speak Irish, play Irish games and be patriotic Irishmen. He arranged with Patrick Pearse to have hurling and football games played with St. Enda's College and Knockbeg College. During my time there I was on the team which played St. Enda's in Croke Park. They were the first inter-college games played under G.A.A. rules. The Irish language was used by the teams during the games.

In 1912 I was employed by Messrs. Alex Findlater & Co. in O'Connell St., Dublin. For a while I was occupied in their wholesale stores which were situated in Findlater

Lane - a narrow passage off O'Connell St. This lane has since been widened and is now called Cathal Brugha St. Horse drawn wagons were constantly discharging and loading goods at these stores. As part of Findlater's business activities they had additional premises on the opposite side of the lane which they used as bottling stores. Adjoining these stores and immediately opposite the principal goods' entrance of the wholesale stores was a large shop front with the words "Irish Freedom" on the name plate. There did not appear to be any great life in the grimy looking houses in the lane and this shop looked as if it was used on some former occasion as a large warehouse such as a drapery store, as the window was of unusually large dimensions for anything else, but now it was muffed half-way up in black. The entrance door was usually open during midday and evening but occasionally it was closed all day.

It had a great fascination for me for I used to read Irish Freedom and Seán MacDermott was its editor. I often had a desire to go in, in the hope of meeting him, but as I had no business there I could not do so. One day I did get the notion of going in to buy a copy of Irish Freedom, and after opening a glass cross-door I stood in a large empty shop and saw no one there. I tapped and waited, and after some time I got uneasy and was on my way out of the door when I heard footsteps coming from an inner room and on looking I saw MacDermott approaching. Words or explanations failed me and in my confusion I rushed away and into Findlater's gate-way opposite. I saw MacDermott at the door looking out on the lane and he went in after a little while. I often looked in over the muffed part of the window

and sometimes I would see him inside parcelling copies of Irish Freedom for dispatch to various parts of the country.

After a month or two, having seen Seán MacDermott often, we got into a nodding and friendly acquaintance, but I never got the courage to stop to talk to him. I often thought at the time what a wonderfully courageous man he was. There was no one like him - he was so fearless and outspoken in Irish Freedom when scarcely anyone had a thought about Irish nationality, when British influence had a powerful grip of Ireland and in Dublin where the Union Jack was flying on public buildings and British soldiers swarmed in theatres, in the streets and in public restaurants, in fact everywhere. We were then whining to England for trifling concessions.

In one of the early editions of Irish Freedom a contributor suggested forming a rifle club. In the following edition it was supported by other writers and later a small announcement was made that a meeting was to be held in a hall in Parnell Square. I went to that meeting. About thirty men were at it and it was the first time I heard revolutionary speeches. At the end of the room a number of men spoke in the manner of the Fenian speeches which I read in the books relating to the Fenian leaders.

Those who were at the meeting were men mostly much older than myself and for the most part they appeared to be acquainted with one another, as they were talking and greeting each other. I could not recall the names of the speakers but one, whose name was Dan MacCarthy, and he gave a rousing address. All the speakers were grouped

together, except one man who spoke from the body of the hall and who expressed himself a stranger to all the others. He was just as emphatic as the others but he stressed the urgency of getting organised and of procuring guns and getting rifle practice. Although he was well received, caution was urged by other speakers. The meeting terminated, having agreed to have enrolment of names in a room on the same premises on certain dates.

Apart from the report of the success of the meeting, there was very little mentioned in Irish Freedom afterwards of the project. I was not acquainted with anyone there and did not like to contact anyone. However, I went to the hall on one of the arranged nights. At the entrance inside the door were a considerable number of plates which recorded associations and clubs and the numbers of the rooms which they occupied, but I failed to find anyone in the room in which it was agreed to meet and I never was able to contact the rifle club afterwards.

The Fianna Éireann had already been started at that time and they often had aeriochts on Sundays. I was at one of their meetings in a small hall somewhere in the Rathmines district at which Liam Mellows, Con Colbert, Seán Heuston Kavanagh and Countess Markievicz were present. The audience was mostly boys and women.

One Saturday afternoon about 3 o'clock on a beautiful sunny day I was walking along Dame St., and near Atkinson's poplin shop I heard the sound of drums and the skirl of bagpipes and in the bustle of street traffic I saw a band of three or four pipers leading a party of about twelve men, in green uniforms with rifles, marching at an unusually quick pace. The pipers played an Irish

march and the riflemen were marching in a well drilled stride. I was thrilled and in urgency asked the people on the side-walk, some of whom paused to look, who the marching men were. No one could tell me, so I would go a few paces and keep asking who they were, where they were going and, running to keep up with them, I stopped every few paces making the same query. No one knew and all appeared to be puzzled about them. But I kept jostling the people walking on the footpath to keep up with the marching men, still making the same query, until I realised I was making a nuisance of myself, and as they turned up George's St. I gave up the pursuit.

For days afterwards I kept up the quest of trying to find out who the marching men were, as I was convinced they were not English soldiers since there were no English troops dressed as they were. The Volunteers, the Citizen Army or the Hibernian Rifles were not established at the time. Later, when the Volunteers were formed, I asked many of the Dublin Volunteers to solve my problem, but most of them thought I was joking or having imaginations, so I gave up my quest. I am putting this on record in the hope that what I saw on a sunny Saturday afternoon in College Green and Dame St. might be solved. The pipers and riflemen were dressed in tight-fitting green tunics and green trousers with close-fitting brown leather leggings and green hats with one side of the brim turned up. The tunic had a throat-closed front with a short collar which was loose-fitted and could be turned up. They had no equipment except a leather belt. This description is to the best of my recollection and is open to correction.

On the Saturday that O'Donovan Rossa lay in state in the City Hall. I joined a long queue lined along Dame St

to view the remains. A line of Volunteers in uniform, with rifles, were posted at the entrance. Inside, Volunteers were posted at the bier with reversed rifles. It was an impressive sight. Rossa's head and shoulders could be plainly seen through a glass panel in the coffin lid. He was dressed in black frock coat with white collar and small bow tie. The long line of people moved slowly and dispersed as they came outside.

The following week I came to Bewley's, Mary St., to take employment there with a view to getting a course of military training with the Volunteers. One of the men I was working with got chatty and said, "I saw you in the queue at Rossa's lying-in-state". I looked at him closely and immediately identified him as one of the Volunteers on the steps of the City Hall. His name was O'Keeffe of Kilcock. From him I got some useful information about the Volunteers, where the best units were for training and the time of meetings.

Of the staff in Bewley's of about one hundred men, there was only one other in the Volunteers. I did not get attached to any unit but visited the different training centres as often as I could. One of the places frequently visited by me was a hall in Parnell Square where bayonet exercise was carried out. The company here frequently engaged in this exercise and there was always a full attendance. Members from other companies came also.

Every Sunday there were long route marches and manoeuvres, principally around the Dublin mountains. Sometimes I went on the route marches and it was on these marches I learned the popular marching songs. "Step Together" was more often sung than any other song,

followed closely by "The Soldier's Song". Often I went on my bicycle.

The Citizen Army drilled in Croydon Park in Fairview. Very often meetings were held outside Liberty Hall in Beresford Place. There was a huge streamer right across the front of the building with the slogan "We serve neither King nor Kaiser". The meetings were held at the Custom House side and speeches were delivered from a horse-brake or lorry. A section of the Citizen Army was always drawn up in front of the speakers. A Mr. Partridge always spoke at the meetings and he was always dressed in Citizen Army uniform and holding a rifle. His speeches were more revolutionary than the others and it seemed strange to me that Dublin Castle was afraid to take any action against those meetings at which large numbers were present.

The Citizen Army, as well as drilling, held aeriochts and drill competitions in Croydon Park which the working men of Dublin and their families attended in their thousands.

At this time, once or twice every week, a battalion of an Irish regiment of the British Army used to march from one of the many military barracks in the city at about 8 p.m. to the North Wall to be shipped to England and thence to the battle front. On several nights I watched their departure, and it was usual for the battalion to be led by a brass military band playing Irish airs and walking along by the ranks were crowds of women cheering the men and clinging to them. The soldiers marched 'at ease' with no order in the ranks, the women walking in amongst them.

On one occasion a battalion of Dublin Fusiliers, in full battle equipment, were on their way to the North Wall and the band was in front playing lively Irish airs. The first section was in fair order, but the remainder were in complete confusion as the men were not marching in step and there were numerous irregular gaps. The women were shouting farewell and clinging to the men. Some were hysterically crying. Other women were linking the soldiers or carrying some of their equipment. The officers, mostly youthful lieutenants, were urging the men, not in a commanding manner, but in a coaxing way endeavouring to keep the ranks in order. Some of the soldiers left the ranks along the Quays approaching Butt Bridge to shake hands with friends who were along the footpath, and some went into pubs and brought out bottles of stout. The officers had a busy time getting them back into the ranks. Outside a pub near Beresford Place there was a dense throng of men and women mixed in a confused mass and crowding out amongst the ranks of soldiers. I noticed amongst the men spectators a number who appeared to have some task of importance because they seemed to me to be looking suspiciously at those around them and whispering to one another. At this point a lot of the soldiers were lingering, talking and prolonged leave-taking. Women were crying and shouting and waving cheering farewells. Apparently, in the midst of all this the men I mentioned, by some pre-arranged tactics, crowded around two of the soldiers who came to talk to them and in a swift movement the soldiers completely disappeared. In the confusion no one seemed to notice the incident, but the soldiers did not return to the ranks. All I could hear about it was an occasional remark from some of the men whispering

around, "Are they all right?", and from that I concluded, as I had suspected, that with the collusion of the soldiers concerned, who had no further desire for soldiering, the men had arranged for their disappearance from the British Army and the handing over of their precious rifles to the Citizen Army. The military police in a strong force gathered a squad of straggling tipsy soldiers at the rear of the marching men and, judging by their sluggish movements, many more of them would like to be assisted out of the army.

I often visited Tom Clarke's shop in Parnell St. and it was never without a group of young men chatting to him. Conversation generally ceased when a customer came in. After many visits the owner became accustomed to me and he continued talking to the men. Frequently he spoke about the Irish in America and the Clan na Gael and how the Fenian spirit was actively alive there. There was always a large pile of Irish-American papers on a shelf outside the counter.

In Blessington St., J.J. Walsh's shop was also a rendezvous, and I got to know him well and through him we got some shotguns which we brought to New Ross.

On one Sunday evening when two opposing forces of the Irish Volunteers re-assembled in a village, the name of which I cannot remember, after an afternoon of strenuous movements in the Dublin Mountains, a group of officers, including Eamon de Valera, Thomas MacDonagh, Micheal O'Hanrahan and others were chatting about the day's events. O'Hanrahan was not satisfied with the umpire's report and de Valera placed his hand on O'Hanrahan's shoulder and playfully remarked to him, "Disconsolate Micheal", which

ended the debate with a good-humoured smile from O'Hanrahan.

Shortly after the inauguration meeting to form the Irish Volunteers in the Rotunda, Dublin, companies were formed in many places throughout Ireland. Enniscorthy gave the lead to Co. Wexford. Companies were formed in the other Co. Wexford towns shortly afterwards.

There was no sign of an effort or of any hope of a start being made in New Ross. Feeling that it was time to make a move, I had a few chats with Paddy Hayden. We made out a list of names and proceeded to ask them to help to organise a company of Volunteers. The following, in particular, were enthusiastic in canvassing for members: John O'Neill, Martin Deegan, Thomas McGrath, Spinner Hanlon, James Prendergast and James Clegg. They got little encouragement in their efforts; nevertheless, they got a few names. They reported that a number of British ex-soldier on the Reserve, wished to join (they were not called up by the British Army so far), and as British ex-servicemen were known to have joined other companies of the Irish Volunteers in other companies and assisted in their training, we also took them on.

The first meeting was held at my house in 29, South St. and about 14 or 15 turned up to it. I told them the purpose of the meeting; all expressed approval and though there was little talk we formed a committee and arranged for affiliation and drill and canvass for additional members. We met for target practice in old gardens and yards until we rented a derelict grain loft long since demolished in Trinity Place. Portion of the space has been taken over by the Central Garage and the rest of the ground is used as a garden. Here we learned how to

'form fours' and other rudiments of military training. The British ex-soldiers were keen in giving drill instruction and were like old war horses straining at the reins ready for battle. They shouted themselves hoarse with words of command accompanied by the formula of explanation and all the derogatory remarks they had to listen to themselves when in the British barrack yard parade.

One small-sized ex-soldier had a pet phrase, "Make the heels tell" and kept the little company marking time prolonged and needlessly, and in demonstrating how it should be done he used to stamp his feet with undue energy because his boots were very worn and, without the extra power, his efforts would not have the desired effect. This went on for a few weeks when the lady from whom we rented the loft (2/6d per week) came to me very apologetically and in a nervous manner asked us to leave and offered to forego the rent, as she was frightened of Captain Hamilton, the estate agent, whose house was adjoining the loft and who had protested to her about the annoyance caused to him by the shouting and tramping on the boards. So we retired from the loft after another week of tramping. This was fortunate for us because in a few months the old building collapsed, possibly hastened by the tramping.

There were always a few R.I.C. men near any place we went to drill. On the first occasion we arranged to have a route march, the ex-service men were worried about appearing with us because the R.I.C. were advising them of the danger of getting into trouble with the British Army by associating with us, and although we did not insist on them taking part in the route marches they continued to take part in drill instructions. We secured a number

of British Army manuals and studied them from cover to cover and in a short time we had a fair knowledge of army drill and field exercises.

We slowly increased the strength of our company to about twenty men and got two splendid men who were outstanding in the fight for freedom. Their names were William Murphy and the late Phil Lennon. They were leaders of outstanding worth and commanded a wonderful charm and confidence and were looked up to by all ranks.

After about six months an election of officers was held. Phil Lennon was appointed Captain; myself as 1st Lieutenant; William Murphy, 2nd Lieutenant; Patrick Hayden, Adjutant; and John O'Neill, Martin Deegan, James Clegg and M. Crowley as four section commanders.

We started to organise the New Ross district and we formed a fine company in Templeudigan under the leadership of James Furlong. The area of Templeudigan had a great national spirit and practically every young man there joined the ranks. I, with Bill Murphy or Michael Crowley, went from New Ross every Sunday to instruct the Templeudigan Company. We used the lands of the late Mrs. McGrath for military exercises and her house for meetings. Her sons, Thomas, Mark and Denis McGrath, were prominent and energetic members of the Volunteers. Thomas and Mark were arrested in the round-up after Easter Week and her house was frequently raided by R.I.C. and military.

Cumann na mBan:

A Miss McCarthy, a native of Dungarvan, came to Ross to organise the Cumann na mBan. It was apparent the R.I.C. were aware of her coming for a police constable was awaiting

her on her arrival at Kavanagh's Hotel, Cross Lane, and was about interviewing her when I arrived on the scene. I told him that we were not giving any information to him and anything we had to say about our activities would be given to the press for public information. After some remarks about his duty he declared he had a green heart inside his uniform, but later he proved to be a diligent servant of Britain and was always on our tracks.

The most active members of the Cumann na mBan were Miss M. Hennessy, Miss Dooley, Hoodsgrove, Miss N. Callaghan (now Mrs. Deegan), Miss M. O'Brien (now Mrs. J. McCarthy, my wife), Miss M. Bennett (now Mrs. T. Leacy), Miss Kid Connor, now in England, Miss M. Doyle (now Mrs. O'Hanrahan, in America), Miss N. Furlong (now Mrs. Casey), Miss N. Quinn (now Mrs. Murphy, Dublin) and Mrs. Patrick Lynch. They were a great help in providing funds, learning First Aid and acquiring First Aid equipment. They worked quietly, never appeared in public parade and were a source of worry to the R.I.C. We tried to discover how the police got the information about Miss McCarthy, but were unsuccessful. Unfortunately, there were occasions when our activities were known by the R.I.C., whether wilfully or not we were unable to discover, but we had no suspicion of either the Cumann na mBan or the Volunteers. The town was mostly pro-British and in the places where our members worked or lived the managements were more or less hostile.

Our company settled down in Murphy's yard in John St. for our headquarters. It had a steep rock at the end and rough soft earth at one part of it suitable for target practice. One side of the yard was bounded by a narrow

rocky lane known as Goat Hill. Organised hostile gangs occasionally laid a barrage of stones on us from Goat Hill when at target exercise. It was difficult to take any action against them, as we knew that if we did they would become more consistently hostile to us. The R.I.C. were always posted at Goat Hill but they made no effort to prevent this hostile gang from attacking us.

We constantly had in mind the securing of arms and bought four or five revolvers (.22 and .32) in a hardware shop where an assistant there was friendly to us. We had these hidden before the R.I.C. had a check of the stock. The friendly assistant's name was Matthew O'Neill.

I went to the first Volunteer convention which was held in the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. I cannot remember much about it except that all the Dublin Volunteers were mobilised and they had a 'march past' the Abbey Theatre, where the salute was taken by Eoin MacNeill, Chief of Staff. A big number of the delegates and the Volunteer staff were ranged in front of the theatre as the salute was being taken. There was a small number of men wearing uniform on the occasion and the parade proceeded to Beresford Place. One thing that impressed me was the serious attitude of those attending the Abbey Theatre. It was the first time the Dublin men met their associates from the country and it appeared to me that they were judging the character and sincerity of the men from the country.

The first manoeuvres was with Kilkenny City Company under Captain Tom Treacy. It was held at Brownsbarn Bridge. The object of it was to see how far Kilkenny Company could penetrate on an approach to New Ross from

Thomastown. We took as defence the River Nore at Brownsbarn Bridge, as they were approaching directly. The manoeuvres lasted from midday until late in the evening, during which there was a thunderstorm. Both Kilkenny and New Ross responded well under the test.

We bought two service rifles from a local soldier who was home on leave from the British Army. Sometimes the soldiers were sent home straight from the Front complete with all equipment after a bout of heavy fighting. In the early days of the war there was very little check on their equipment and each time a soldier came home he brought a rifle.

We made many journeys to Dublin and on one occasion got four rifles and six shotguns from J.J. Walsh who had a shop in Blessington St. at the time. We brought the guns to New Ross on an excursion train on the occasion of a football match between Wexford and Kerry. Two of us brought them in a horse cab to Westland Row Station where we were to meet some of our comrades. When we arrived we could not see them owing to the crowds and other cabs and jaunting cars. I saw Bob Brennan nearby and got him to help us to bring the rifles and guns into the station. Our friends then saw us and we brought them into the guard's van and got them home safely. A short time later Paddy Hayden got ten rifles from The O'Rahilly, who directed him to his residence near Ballsbridge.
We also got ammunition from British ex-soldiers and sticks of gelignite and canisters of explosive powder. I got several canisters of powder from John Nolan, an assistant in George Dooley's shop in Rostercon.

I sent reports of our activities to the official organ, The Irish Volunteer, regularly. Sometimes they were anything but correct, particularly of our manoeuvres with mythical companies of Volunteers from districts where there were no Volunteers. I did this to confuse the R.I.C. It had the desired effect, as they often went to the places mentioned and questioned the people of these neighbourhoods about the Volunteer activity in them, and the fact of getting no information conveyed the impression that the inhabitants were in collusion with everything taking place.

Phil Lennon, Bill Murphy and myself were delegates to the second Volunteer convention in the Mansion House, Dublin. This convention was held in the Round Room of the Mansion House. At 10 a.m. large numbers of Volunteer delegates from many parts of Ireland were assembled there. As each member of the Volunteer Executive Council took his seat, he got a rousing reception from those present. All the leaders who took a prominent part in the Volunteers in its later history delivered addresses. Those from the North of Ireland got a very hearty reception. Amongst those who spoke were Terence MacSwiney, Seán MacCurtain, Alec McCabe, The O'Rahilly, Eamon de Valera, Padraig Pearse, Seán MacEntee, J.J. Walsh, Arthur Griffith, Dan MacCarthy, John O'Mahony and many others. One person who was prominent at the convention was Herbert Moore Pim. He was one of the few in Volunteer uniform. (About this time a number of pamphlets called tracts were issued to stimulate interest in the Irish Volunteers and one of them was written by him; he also wrote a book about this time called "The Unknown Immortals"). His speech was in condemnation of the Curragh Mutiny and the formation

of Carson's Orange Volunteers, which he called "Carson's horse marines". His name was never heard of after this and it was said that he later changed his outlook and was associated with the British loyalists.

We got acquainted with Bulmer Hobson, Liam Mellows and Barney Mellows and frequently had communications from them. When in Dublin we always brought back bandoliers, haversacks and other equipments, sometimes getting them from Whelan's, Ormond Quay, and Lawlor's, Fownes St.

We formed a company in the Milebush, some two miles from the town of Ross at the Kilkenny side of the river Barrow. They often came to Ross for military exercise and our company frequently went to Milebush for a similar purpose.

We arranged to have a parade to commemorate the Manchester Martyrs and intended carrying arms for the first time. Fr. McCormack, one of the priests of the parish, was very friendly to us. He gave us many expressions of his good will. Being aware of this mobilisation, he told us on Saturday that the R.I.C. were aware of it and that the R.I.C. of the district were mobilised to be in New Ross for the occasion. We tried to counter the information the R.I.C. had got by changing the hour and the route and not to carry arms. Fr. McCormack agreed to be at St. Stephen's Cemetery to say prayers for the dead when we would arrive there.

We assembled in Murphy's yard and outside forty R.I.C., armed with carbines, with two police officers, marched up and halted outside. We numbered about twenty. Just as we marched out of the yard we were agreeably

surprised to see Fr. McCormack stepping into the front rank armed with a stout blackthorn, and he marched with us to St. Stephen's Cemetery.

The armed police caused the townspeople to anticipate the end of our organisation. We could notice the gratified grins of the more courageous of them who were daring enough to shelter behind the R.I.C. The march was a quick one at the fast even pace we were accustomed to use in our training. Our route was up College Hill, fatiguing even at a leisurely walk. The R.I.C. were sluggish and slow-moving. They made a desperate attempt in the beginning to keep up the pace, but in a short time they fell away and their party stretched in an uneven length. We were stoned by a mob from a field known as the Bowling Green.

When we reached the top of the hill at Mount Garrett Lane we considered that we should be entertained for once at our enemy's expense, so we reduced our pace and walked slowly till the R.I.C. came close to us again and got into some kind of formation. We then entered the Irishtown in which a large number of people lived, and gave the 'quick march' again. The R.I.C. formation, however, dragged at intervals and at different speeds.

When we arrived at St. Stephen's Cemetery we formed up at the big cross, and as the R.I.C. arrived, exhausted and exasperated, Fr. McCormack, in a short address, pointed out the object of our assembly and concluded by asking all to kneel and say a Pater and Ave for the martyrs. Our little party then knelt down, but Fr. McCormack looked in the direction of the R.I.C. and said, "I ask all to kneel down". He repeated these words again and added

that if it was the intention of anyone not to pray he would ask him to leave. After a brief pause we noticed the R.I.C., by ones and twos, begin to kneel, but there were a number still standing and he repeated again in a loud voice, "I said either kneel or leave" like a word of command, and the standing R.I.C. knelt.

At the conclusion we decided to bring the R.I.C. for a long route march, but when we arrived at the Bosheen they were not behind us and there was no sign of them. We were again stoned going down the hill to headquarters.

The most of our Volunteers were also associated with the local Sinn Féin club and St. Thomas's Social Club. The St. Thomas's Club was the most popular one in town and as it was non-political its members were of every shade of opinion. A number of its members were retired R.I.C. pensioners. Those of the Volunteers who were in the St. Thomas's Club never bothered about its running. We availed of it principally for meeting one another to go to any pre-arranged rendezvous. As the members of the Volunteers became known it was apparent that their membership of the club was not welcome, but we came to the club and met one another as usual. After a time, the majority of the older members, who were pro-British, failed to renew their subscriptions till its membership was considerably reduced. It was not long until it was considered to be a Republican headquarters by the public, but the Volunteers were never associated with the running of it. Some of the older members of the club held on, as it was still a popular place for a game of billiards or cards and it had a good library and reading room, but after a year or two the R.I.C. and military frequently raided it

and generally wrecked it and destroyed the library; but a caretaker was still paid and, though open at night, it was never visited by its members until it was finally closed.

In the summer of 1915 Captain O'Connell (Ginger), who had been an officer in the American army and who was on the Irish Volunteer headquarters staff in Dublin, came to New Ross. He remained about a week and gave us lectures on military tactics etc.

Each day Captain O'Connell arranged to have some member of the company available to view the surrounding country. He pointed out all the places which would be suitable for attack and defence. At night time he had military exercises with the company, after which he gave a lecture which he illustrated with plans and maps of the subjects of his talks. He impressed on us the importance of our area, stressing the point because of its position on the River Barrow. The company took a lively interest in everything and were anxious to carry out every detail of his instructions. He emphasised the importance of our area so much that we felt that a tremendous responsibility rested upon us. We thought we were going to have a major battlefield in our district. As the lectures proceeded, this uneasy feeling passed and we acquired from his instruction the rudiments of war.

Captain O'Connell visited the company many times during the winter of 1915, spending two or three days each time, and he put the company through many strenuous exercises. One of the many was one bleak Ash Wednesday (half-holiday in the town) when our small company was mobilised for Camblin (Elys Walks) at 2 p.m. It was raining

heavily. The usual 18 turned up and we thought he would cancel it, but he did not. We had a forced march to Slieve Coilta (four and a half miles to its base). It was raining steadily all the time. When we reached the approach to the mountain we expected he would cancel further operations but he did not. He divided the party into two sections. He placed me in charge of one party and the other officers with the second party. He pointed out the different routes each party was to take to meet at the top of the mountain. Our overcoats were wet through by this time. In the course of the climb it turned to hail and sleet and the going was heavy through slush, mud, bushes and briars. Captain O'Connell followed the party up and when we reached the top he held a roll call. It was now night-time and very dark and as we proceeded down the mountain together it began to snow. When we got to the road again he formed us up and marched us to attention and without a pause until we reached the Camblin Wood. There we squeezed some of the water out of our clothes. In a few words he pointed out the importance of exercises under such rigorous conditions and the necessity of forced marching and the maintaining and acquiring of discipline under difficult circumstances, hence the marching to attention and no rest on the long trail home.

It was suggested to him to dismiss us here as it was only 1½ miles from home. The snow was still falling. He formed up the party again and continued the march. Our boots were full of water and squelching at every step and the rain had gone through our clothes and was running down our skin. It was very late when we arrived in Newtown at the end of Victoria St., when we were dismissed. One of the party, Martin Murphy, Victoria Place,

got pneumonia as a result and never left his bed until he died the following year. Tom Kennedy got the same dose and was in hospital for some months before he started to recover.

The next night we were mobilised for a lecture on the experience. After the lecture he brought us for a long route march. All turned up except the sick men. The little party were determined to see their careers as Volunteers through to the end.

Irish National Volunteers:

John Redmond, M.P., the Irish Party Leader, looked on the Irish Volunteers as a menace to his policy and his party and sought to gain control of the organisation, and after some parley with Irish Volunteer Headquarters he was allowed some nominees on the Executive Council. Naturally, some of the Volunteers looked with disfavour on the arrangement, but it was held at the time that it might help to proceed more rapidly with training. But it was apparent in a few days that he and his supporters meant to destroy the Volunteer organisation.

The new body was known as the Irish National Volunteers and, as happened in other towns, the Irish Party supporters came to us to make suitable arrangements for the change and a new committee was formed under the chairmanship of John Sullivan, a prominent business-man and Chairman of the Urban Council. He held considerable influence and popularity with most of the inhabitants. I was appointed to the position of Secretary and all our four company officers were on the committee (which consisted of 30 members), so we were in a vast minority.

The first meeting was held in a field in Michael St., now the site of Mercy Convent National Schools. There were about 600 names taken down that night and all the ex-servicemen of the town had a gala night shouting commands with all the old barrack-yard jargon. There were about ten companies formed but we held intact our original company. No one fell into our company. Some of those who joined were unfit; others who came hadn't the slightest notion of being Volunteers and on wet nights brought umbrellas on parade. There were a number of ex-British army buglers amongst the crowd; one, in particular, was constantly sounding bugle calls which gave us the atmosphers of a military barracks. Once a week the whole force went for a short route march (sometimes we managed to have a long one), and to hear the shouts of the ex-servicemen "Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Cover off your men, March properly to attention" and two or three of them continually running about shouting at every company, and the bugler, without ceasing, playing all the calls he ever learned and the ones he invented himself, was, to say the least of it, when not exasperating to our company, if we were in the mood, amusing.

The wives and female relatives of the men who joined the British army were an awful nuisance. They were known as Separation Allowance women. They were always in groups and at all times of the day and into late hours of night were shouting such cries as "Up the red, White and blue", "Up John Redmond", "Three cheers for the Union Jack", "Up the khaki", and the most frequent was "To hell with the Sinn Féiners". Our fellows were well known to

them all and they carried on a regular tornado of hate, waving their shawls around when passing our places of residence or when they happened to meet us on the streets. We were careful to avoid them as much as possible.

Our committee meetings were a farce. They were always fully attended and always demanded that headquarters should send down sufficient guns to arm our battalion. I was always under a cloud when at meetings a formal acknowledgement to the request was submitted. The Chairman sent me a typed letter one day for my signature, as secretary, demanding those guns forthwith, but we got no acknowledgement at all to that letter.

Our company still kept intact no matter what was happening and we still kept in contact with Bulmer Hobson, Liam and Barney Mellows, who appeared to be still in a position of responsibility at headquarters.

I met Liam Mellows one day in Dublin and he said a big man came to Frederick St. Volunteer headquarters recently and asked to see some of the higher officers as he was from New Ross on the important business of getting guns, and having been informed that there was no one present but Mellows he went away very annoyed.

At a later period the Chairman mentioned when the question of guns arose at a meeting, that he called to the Dublin headquarters and saw no one there but a chap who knew nothing about guns or anything. (The chap was Liam Mellows). A small-sized thin spare man, a British Captain named Esmond, a relative of Mr. Esmond, T.D., and a Captain Corballis were appointed in charge of County Wexford by John Redmond's supporters. They summoned a meeting in

Enniscorthy which was held in a club known as Antwerp. Of the officers of the County there was a very small attendance - considering all the national Volunteer forces in the County. A cheerless affair, I can't remember the names of all those present but I remember Seamus Doyle and Seán Etchingham from Enniscorthy district. Bill Murphy and Phill Lennon and myself represented New Ross. There was no Chairman as well as I can remember, and after some time Captain Corballis spoke of the possibility of a German invasion and how the County Wexford Volunteers would be employed as a division to resist the attempt. He spoke in a halting manner, saying very little, wishing, I felt sure, that someone would help him out, but it was a hopeless affair and someone suggested the meeting would be adjourned for some later date. I think Esmond and Corballis left their exalted ranks later to go back to the British Army.

The pro-British atmosphere of the town was getting aggressive. All the reserves were called up and hundreds of men were joining the British Army. Recruiting meetings were held both at the Tholsel Square and in the Town Hall at which members of the Urban Council and business men were on the platforms. Speeches were made by some of them and by visiting orators (Irishmen who were in the British Army) urging the male population to join the British forces and fight for small nationalities and gallant little Belgium. After each meeting a military band paraded leading a group of men to the R.I.C. barrack for enlistment.

Some of the returned British Army Captains around the district, we were informed at a committee meeting,

would oblige by taking over staff duties in the battalion, and in a route march to Glenmore a number of them took part. A Captain Dean Drake and a Lieutenant Barton were amongst them. Both these men had country residences by the River Barrow directly opposite the Pink Rock and in full view of the route we took. On the flag post in front of Barton's house floated a large Union Jack, and as we were approaching along the road, the River Barrow between, Barton said to John Kennedy that we should salute the flag and Kennedy said to him: "We haven't marched that far yet". (Barton, who was later killed in France, was a brother of R.C. Barton).

Something would have to be done soon for our next appearance. Captain Redmond, John Redmond's brother, with Col. Moore had held a parade in Wexford town of the Volunteers of the County. Captain Redmond wore the khaki uniform covered by a civilian overcoat. The New Ross Battalion went but our company was in a high temper. Shortly after this the Irish Volunteer Executive in Dublin withdrew from Redmond's crowd, and the following night, at a mobilisation in the drill field, John Sullivan gave a speech in favour of Redmond's Volunteers and called on all in favour of Redmond to line the wall behind him. With a mighty roar the crowd ran down to him, leaving our company standing alone. We gave a 'left turn' and marched out of the field, but there was a shout of "come back" from the Redmond crowd and some of them ran up to us to know would we debate the matter with a deputation in the Tholsel. What their purpose was we did not know at the time, as our lads were steadfast. Some of them admitted later that they hoped to win over John Kennedy and Phil Lennon.

Our company went to the Tholsel and a number of John Sullivan's crowd came to advocate their point of view. Their principal spokesman was Paddy Mackey, a great personal friend of John Kennedy and, like him, a famous hurler. Paddy Mackey was in Sullivan's employment and perhaps on that account he took such a big part in this meeting. Kennedy took an equally big part at the meeting but he held firm with the Irish Volunteers. He was in them for some time before Redmond's crowd got interested and previous to that he was working in Dublin and was associated with Harry Boland and Frank Shouldice in hurling and football and Gaelic activities. Phil Lennon took a prominent part in the arguments on the Irish Volunteer side and there was no hope of a deflection to Redmond's crowd. They took up the argument that as our numbers were small there was little use in our carrying on.

Kennedy and Lennon had many contacts, and Kennedy, being at the peak of his hurling fame, had a glamour all to himself. The rest of our company were more conservative, had little to say and carried out their duty as Volunteers, letting nothing interfere with the work.

There was great relief when we were back again to our own company and again known as Irish Volunteers or Sinn Féiners.

The National or Redmond's Volunteers shrank in numbers until they had only about forty or fifty men. They finally got about thirty old Italian rifles for which there was no ammunition. The rifles weighed about one stone and were as long as duck guns. A hardware merchant named James Hutchinson was appointed Captain of the Redmondite Volunteers and he acquired a new Sam Brown

and sword in a few days. All his lifetime this man lived quietly. He was never a member of a club and never went to any social function, sports or amusements, and to everyone's surprise he took a prominent part in the National Volunteers. But, strangest of all, he did not get into the stampede to join the British Army. The National Volunteers in New Ross and their officers ended their careers as Special Constables for England during Easter Week 1916. They made some formal declaration and during Easter Week they patrolled the streets, the bridge and the district surrounding the town every evening. Liquid refreshments were provided for them each evening, which earned for them the title of "Bread and Beer Gang". Their headquarters was Taylor's yard near Graves on the Quay. The following are some of the names of the Special Constables Halpin, P.J. O'Gorman, J. Flanagan, Tim Doran, T. Lee, J. Bailey, Pat Grace, Jim Hogan, P. Hanlon.

The Gaelic League had a branch in the town and was composed of about twelve members, but the only activity of any account was the holding of a procession of school children on St. Patrick's Day to the Parish Church for Mass, the sermon being delivered in Irish, and the holding of an Irish drama on St. Patrick's Night.

The Gaelic League Dramatic Company was a well organised society and had a great reputation for its productions and was under the direction of Mr. George Armstrong who was a great character actor and scenic painter. But some of the members had very little interest in the political life of the country, much less the Gaelic League. It had a small committee of its own which was composed of John Redmond's supporters and myself. I was the only one on the small committee with different views. They had

acquired a big store of scenery and costumes which was often loaned for concerts and other functions. To our consternation the Irish Volunteers were informed that at a recruiting meeting held in the Town Hall the Gaelic League scenery formed a background to the stage and it was up to me to do something. So at the next meeting of the dramatic club which was held in the Tholsel I brought down with me a bundle of anti-recruiting leaflets. Copies of these leaflets had been posted some time previously at night-time in prominent places in the town. I distributed them to those men who usually loitered outside the Tholsel entrance hall. They were all of the pro-British type but I did it so quickly they did not realise what the leaflets were about until I finished the job. I was early for the committee meeting and the members who came later were raging mad as they were challenged about the leaflets which had been distributed outside the door. They did not require much evidence to blame me for the work and started to make long stagements of condemnation. I demanded that the agenda be gone through first and, very reluctantly, this was agreed to. The routine items were gone over quickly and the question of the giving out of anti-recruiting leaflets was then discussed. I proposed that our committee strongly condemn the action of the dramatic secretary for giving the use of the Gaelic League property for the recruiting meeting. The row started in earnest then. I got no seconder and no support whatever. I told them I expected the R.I.C. would take a hand in the job and suggested that that should satisfy the committee about the anti-recruiting leaflets. It was the first time I had to take part to any extent in a debate and, not being accustomed to it, I found it hard to fight a

lone battle, but as I had changed the situation somewhat I was satisfied. Later after some meetings I was given charge of the scenery and fittings. The only action the R.I.C. took was a raid on my house the following day without any great result.

We frequently posted up anti-recruiting and other seditious posters at night, but in nearly all cases they were torn down by the R.I.C. and the pro-British crowd the following morning. On one occasion, early in the campaign, I posted a proclamation firmly on the '98 Monument one night and the R.I.C., in removing it, broke one of the ornamental chains surrounding the pedestal and it was hanging loosely for some months without having been repaired. Just to keep things moving I wrote a letter to The Echo newspaper pointing out the vandalism of the R.I.C. in breaking it, the lack of citizenship of the Urban Council, who were custodians of the monument, for failing to condemn the action and for not having it repaired. The letter was signed in non de plume and was condensed to a few lines. Nevertheless, the chain was repaired the day following the publication of the letter.

The Templeudigan Company continued their activities under Captain Furlong. It was the only company with full strength, though there were men like Tom Hanlon, Gusserane, an Jim Byrne, Boley, who were doing their best to get things going in their districts.

In the summer of 1915 our company were on parade at Vinegar Hill, Enniscorthy, where the Irish Volunteers of the County were reviewed by P.H. Pearse, who delivered an inspiring address.

Captain O'Connell continued to come to Ross to advise on the training of the company. He went on the following days to visit other units.

On the occasion of O'Donovan-Rossa's funeral our company travelled by rail to Dublin. We had about thirty men, some of whom were in uniform. On arrival we formed up at Harcourt St. and the marshals allotted us a position just outside the station. There was a long line of Volunteers already in position. While we were waiting to move off, a huge crowd of spectators lined the streets and other contingents were marching to their appointed places. The general procession proceeded in due course. It appeared that all those taking part had been trained in military movements. The slow march of the Volunteers passing through the city conveyed to everyone the significance of a real national army. The wail of the laments from the pipers' bands and the music of the brass bands mingled with the slow and rhythmic beat of the steps of the marching men, re-echoed up the quiet streets adjoining the route and through the open squares. The procession, which was organised in companies, moved from the City Hall to Glasnevin Cemetery via O'Connell St., which was jammed with people. All wore emblems of some sort with O'Donovan Rossa's photograph. Occasionally some Wexford man or woman amongst the spectators would recognise someone from our contingent and, forgetting for the moment the quiet mood of the crowd, would shout, "Hello (so and so), Good old Wexford".

O'Connell St. once again opens a new page of history to its mighty tome of records. Armies of Britain had for centures resounded in arrogant strength

to the marching regiments of a mighty Empire. The rebellious wars and forays of the Irish people down those years ended in defeat, in jail, persecutions, deportations, death on the field of battle and on the scaffold. To-day an Irish army marches through O'Connell St. after all those centuries in disciplined companies and battalions. They march in exultant pride to the sowing of dragons' teeth, to the welding of a new link in the unbroken chain of yet another fight for Ireland. They march to bury O'Donovan-Rossa, for Britain the end of a seditious disturber and now an unwanted corpse, but to the Irish army, the not unknown warrior. For in Glasnevin Cemetery Patrick Pearse lighted a torch of flame in his oration over Rossa's grave that sparkled in the white heat of service for Ireland and triumphantly blazed the trail to Easter 1916.

The portion of the funeral procession in which we were came to a halt about a quarter of a mile from the cemetery, as the throngs of people from that on to the cemetery made it impossible to proceed and guides were allotted to the different companies to direct them through side-streets back to the city.

A Lieutenant O'Sullivan came to New Ross the week previous to Easter 1916 to intensify our training in rapid movement across country, scaling walls, holding road sections for sniping and surmounting difficult obstacles. He was called to Dublin about Good Friday, taking Jim Clegg's motor-bike with him. Dispatches came on Monday and Wednesday of Holy Week urging that arms and ammunition be kept in good order and readily accessible.

There was great excitement in the company as it was anticipated something important was about to take place. Pat Lynch and Mick Crowley were occupied all those days keeping in contact with the men about the arms and equipment, and they got information about similar activity in Dublin and Cork from railway workers and motor drivers.

On Good Firday I got a dispatch to mobilise the company fully armed and equipped on Easter Sunday night at a convenient place outside the town, and to proceed at 11.30 p.m. towards Clonroche where we would get additional orders. The dispatch carrier knew the contents of the dispatch and gave some verbal information. He stated we would likely proceed through Scollop Gap and link up with Kilkenny Volunteers. We were never to know the plan of campaign.

Captain O'Connell, in the course of his lectures, had mentioned that in the event of a rising he would take over command of our company and the Kilkenny Volunteers.

On Good Friday night orders were issued to our company to mobilise on Easter Sunday night in a lane near Corcoran's Cross. Also on Good Friday night, the section leaders were ordered to collect all the company arms and equipment at our headquarters, Murphy's yard, John St., on Saturday night and bring them by pony car at 12.30 p.m. to James Redmond's farm, Ballintubber, convenient to Corcoran's Cross, and place a guard over them. It was also arranged that the Volunteers from Milebush would come to Corcoran's Cross and meet the Ross Company there. Both units would then continue towards Clonroche and join up with the Templeudigan Company en route.

For some days previous to Easter Sunday the R.I.C. were giving us a lot of trouble by watching our houses and our movements more vigorously than usual. An R.I.C. man was on duty near our homes all Easter Saturday and all that night until Easter Sunday morning, when they changed their tactics and sent men to the principal roads leading to the town. Mick Crowley and I went out to Templeudigan for our usual Sunday afternoon with Bill Murphy and Tom McGrath.

The Templeudigan Company mobilised in full strength of about thirty men under Captain Jim Furlong on Easter Sunday night. There were only a few shotguns and revolvers in the company but the men were in high spirits and prepared for anything. It was dark and getting misty, and after being formed up we told them that this mobilisation looked like something real and a fulfilment of what we were preparing for. We told them to have confidence in themselves as they were fit and strong and better able for the stress of war than the type that made the British soldier. I told them of the worry of being without arms but I felt that Captain O'Connell had his plans prepared for this emergency and for a day or two we could help ourselves to the arms of the R.I.C. One of our worries was that we would have to contend with the hostility of the vast majority of the people who still had faith in John Redmond, but we felt they would not give information about our movements.

The company then went into concealment along the ditch to await the arrival of the Ross Company and the Milebush men. Jim Furlong placed sentries at each end of the lane. Everyone was in good form, waiting eagerly

for the word to be on the move. Paddy Hayden arrived from New Ross at Corcoran's Cross at about 7.30 p.m. with a dispatch for me from Captain O'Connell cancelling all the arrangements. I read it by the light of a bicycle lamp and could scarcely credit its contents. We read it over and over again. Shortly afterwards other members of the Ross Company arrived, including John O'Neill, Martin Duggan, James Prendergast and James Clegg, and told us that Captain O'Connell came to Ross by motor from Kilkenny and told Phil Lennon, the Captain of the company, that all previous orders were cancelled and instructed him to disperse the company and await written orders. It was difficult to reconcile the Templeudigan men to the news contained in the dispatch. The company was dismissed and we proceeded home.

On Easter Sunday, midday, John O'Neill and James Prendergast went to the Milebush to arrange for the men there, about eight in number, to cross the river at Ferrymountgarrett to join the New Ross Company proceeding to Corcoran's Cross that night. When they returned from the Milebush they met Martin Deegan at 5 o"clock and they saw Captain O'Connell with two others in a motor car coming along slowly. They saluted and he stopped the car and asked to be brought to Phil Lennon who was in St. Thomas's Club, and while walking to the club he told them that everything was off. Martin Deegan, James Prendergast, John O'Neill, Paddy Hayden, James Walsh and others went to St. Thomas"s Club and were present when Captain O'Connell gave verbal instructions to Phil Lennon that all previous orders of mobilisation were cancelled and to await further orders. He told them that something had gone wrong but he was unable to say what it was.

He also told them to be ready and alert for further orders. He then wrote the dispatch which Paddy Hayden brought to me at Corcoran's Cross. We waited for further instructions but none came. On Easter Monday evening we sent a man to Waterford to try to contact Captain O'Connell, but there was no trace of him there. Seán Matthews, Captain of the Waterford Company, said he was in the same position as ourselves.

On Tuesday Captain Phil Lennon, Paddy Hayden, Michael Crowley and Tom McGrath met at Creywell and sent a Volunteer to contact the Enniscorthy Volunteers to find out if they had received any instructions and what the position was. Captain Lennon got word back to "hold yourselves in readiness". Not satisfied with the message, he sent another dispatch requesting information, and the following day he got the same reply. Volunteers were posted at Creywell on the Enniscorthy road during the week to await any further dispatch. All during the week Pat Lynch and Michael Crowley were on duty keeping the movements of the Volunteers under strict control for instant assembly. Volunteers who had to change from their usual place of business or who went on any errands of business or home had to report their movements to them so that they could be quickly contacted.

About Wednesday or Thursday we got word from Waterford that British troops were arriving from Rosslare via Waterford, and Pat Lynch and M. Crowley started making arrangements to sabotage the Barrow Bridge where the railway crosses the river. The hostility of the people of the town to the Volunteers increased to fury during the week. Most of the people had relations in the

British Army. Most of the shopkeepers and a number of farmers demonstrated their loyalty to England by their condemnation, in violent language, of the insurrection and the Irish Volunteers in the town. The Urban Council passed a resolution condemning the rebellion.

Phil Lennon was arrested and handcuffed on Monday morning, 1st May, at John St., at about 8 o'clock and removed to Dublin the same day. The residences of all the Volunteers in Ross were raided the same day.

The National Volunteers, now the Special Constables, paraded every night, to the admiration and applause of the pro-British supporters in the town. The British military came to Enniscorthy and arrested those who took part in the Rising there, and a party of New Ross men motored to Enniscorthy to invite the British military to Ross. It was not necessary for them to show their loyalty to this extent because they were coming in any case, but it is necessary to place on record the fact that the zeal of the loyalists in New Ross was of such an extent that they surpassed themselves in every way they could think of to demonstrate their allegiance to the Union Jack.

A fund was started to provide entertainment and refreshments for the Special Constables and it was subscribed to by most of the business men of the town. The list of subscribers was published in The New Ross Standard (to the amount of £99).

At 5 o'clock on Tuesday morning, 2nd May, my house was raided by R.I.C. They took my Volunteer uniform and haversack containing shirt, socks and first-aid outfit. I had only time to hide my revolver and ammunition before

they came to my room. They failed to get these. The R.I.C. were all activity, watching the homes of the Volunteers, following them everywhere, patrolling the streets and bridge and railway station.

A regiment of The Notts and Derbys and an Irish regiment came to New Ross and, assisted by D.I. MacLien and a force of R.I.C., arrested about forty-two men in New Ross, including twenty-eight Volunteers, on 4th May, 1916. Of those arrested who were not in the Volunteers, some of them were supporters but a few were not, but in some way or another got under suspicion with the R.I.C. who were over-anxious to round-up every suspect.

The military had two sections in the round-up. They halted at the residences or places of work of those taken in custody and the R.I.C., with army officers and N.C.O.s, entered and placed each man under arrest. We were placed in custody in the Bridewell at the rear of the Courthouse. This building, since demolished and now the site of the Garda barracks, had not been used for keeping prisoners in for about fifty years previously. It was a small building containing a room with a passage entrance to three cells and had been used by the then Head Constable as a pig-sty. The walls were oozing damp and the floor was sticky with mud and slime and the roof was leaking. The only furniture was two builders' trestles and two planks and for toilet necessity a leaking bucket. It was semi-dark and the only ventilation was a small window in the passage. The prisoners had scarcely space to move about. It was agreed to let the older men sit on the two planks at night in relays. The other men rested by leaning against the slimy walls.

The District Inspector of the police, on the evening of our arrest, ordered us outside where he read a ponderous proclamation declaring the Irish Volunteers and kindred bodies illegal and demanding allegiance to the British Crown of the members of those associations. We were then returned to the Bridewell, the door of which was locked and a party of R.I.C. and military mounted guard outside. The prisoners were frequently banging at the door to be allowed to empty the bucket, which was in constant use. This continued all day and night and it was not a pleasant task for any of the prisoners who did the job. Imprisonment in the Bridewell continued for another day and night. The second night I can recall very well. The older men were very tired as they got little sleep and the air was getting fouler. Those of the prisoners who were Volunteers did not mind. They passed the time singing songs and chatting, but none of the prisoners could get much sleep. It was raining constantly during the night. I was near the cell window in the passage and I remember looking out at the silent slant of the pouring rain reflected in the gas lamp nearby. At about one or two o'clock in the morning I heard someone whistling softly the refrain "She is far from the Land" in a slow and pleasing manner. I looked around at my neighbours but they all appeared to be resting leaning against the walls. After some time I found that the whistling came from outside the cell window. I raised myself higher for a better view. I could scarcely believe my eyes or ears. It was a soldier fully equipped standing on guard. The rain splattered over the ground sheet which covered him. His bayonet glistening in the glow of the gas-lamp light appeared like some clever stage

setting rather than reality, but the air which the soldier was whistling was completely out of place and the whole scene would defy the naming of a title to the setting. I listened quietly for some time fearing that the picture would fade too quickly. I called one of my comrades to listen and he too was spellbound. The soldier continued to whistle the same tune. After a little while my companion joined in the whistling. Apparently the soldier heard him and he stopped whistling, but when my companion stopped the soldier started again. Suddenly he gave a quick turn and moved away. He did not come back and it is still a mystery what caused the English soldier to whistle such a tune in those unusual circumstances.

We were removed under a military escort to the old cavalry barracks in Michael St. which was not occupied by the British for about fifty years. It was formerly the site of St. Michael's Church which was demolished by the British during the Reformation to build the barracks. This barracks has since been demolished and on its site portion of the schools of the Sisters of Mercy has been built. During the work of excavating for the schools a Keystone of one of the doors of St. Michael's Church was found by a boy named Martin among the debris which had been dumped for filling in the old show-ground. It was carved in the form of a smiling cherub in what is believed to be caen stone and was encrusted with clay. The carved stone is now in my possession and is the only relic of this old and famous church. This barracks was in good condition and we were imprisoned in two of its rooms, one of which was spacious and ample for about forty men and the other room was smaller. The large room was used by the local brass band which played for the National Volunteers and at recruiting meetings for the British. We were permitted

to get bedding and blankets and meals from our homes. We were here from 6th May to 9th May and a party of military cadets were guarding us here together with a party of soldiers. The conditions were tolerable enough here. We had concerts and card games. But there was no place for washing and for lavatory we were escorted in small parties to a derelict portion of the barracks. We were removed by rail to Wexford jail on 9th May. When we were lined up in the barrack yard, surrounded by the escort, the British Officer in charge addressed the escort and ordered them to shoot at any attempt to escape or any attempted rescue. Our removal from the barracks in New Ross was the occasion of a demonstration by the British loyalist element of the town during our progress through the streets under a heavy military escort to the railway station. Large groups of people were assembled and greeted us by derisive cheers, and the women of those enlisted in the British Army were in loud voice shouting the pro-British slogans we were accustomed to and they included some new ones such as "Up the Sinn Féiners by the neck", "Send them to the Front", "That you may never come back", "Up the khaki", etc. The Cumann na mBan of the town assembled at the bridge and, in spite of all the hostility, courageously shouted greetings and gave lusty cheers for the Irish Republic and followed us to the railway station. As we entered the railway station we were pelted with stones, but as the escort got a share of the barrage a cordon of military was drawn at the entrance to prevent the mob coming further.

Apparently our arrival in Wexford was unannounced, as there was no organised hostility on the streets except

an occasional shout of "Up the Red, White and Blue".
We arrived at the jail in the late afternoon. This jail was abandoned as a place of detention for 10 or 15 years and was in a derelict state. Nevertheless, the cells were of solid construction and each prisoner was placed in a separate one. This was the first experience for our party of the occupation of a cell of which some of us were made familiar with on many later occasions. Each cell door, as a prisoner entered, was closed with a mighty bang and the first impression of what it meant gave one a gloomy foretaste of prison life. I was the occupier of one of the first cells, and after the door closed I could hear the other cell doors banging home in succession as each cell was occupied. After some time I examined the cell and found the place wreeking with mould and dampness, and in one corner was a bale of pressed hay, apparently to rest on,which was more like manure as it was soaking wet. I could not sit on it on account of the heat coming out of it. However, I had not the inclination or intention to use it. As I started to walk around the cell I heard different sounds and voices around outside and endeavoured to locate them. After some time I thought I identified the voice of one of our fellows and wondered what he was doing out of his cell. I discovered a small hole in the cell door which was used, I later learned, for the warders to look through to view the prisoner, and on squinting through it I thought I saw an eye looking in at me. I made some attempt to draw attention to myself and whispered questions, but the eye never left the hole. I thought to judge whether the owner was friendly or hostile but could not form an opinion. I went away from it and walked up and down the cell.

I looked again; the eye was still there and I gave up as hopeless the task of communication. Later on I heard a heavy footstep which halted at the cell door. I heard a metallic sound and a circle of brightness came through the peep hole and another eye appeared at it, and then I discovered that I was all the time previously looking at my own eye which was reflected on the disc which covered the peep hole outside the door.

A soldier opened the door and handed me a mug of cocoa and a junk of bread and, without speaking, banged the door again. It was now dark and, putting on my overcoat, I sat down on the cell floor. I could hear the noise of the town, the rumble of traffic on the streets, the joyous voices of children at play, the church bells pealing for evening prayers and the serenade of shrill voices of women singing "Keep the home fires burning", a recruiting song popular with the British partisans at the time. I was soon asleep and did not wake until my cell door was opened in the morning by a soldier who gave me a mug of cocoa and half a loaf and he informed me we were being brought to Dublin during the day.

We were paraded for the toilet. We exchanged our night's experiences and I found that some of the prisoners thought that the sodden hay in each cell was in lieu of a bed chamber and they used it accordingly and slept on the floor. In a short time we were brought under escort to the railway station, where we were put on a special train for Dublin. There were a large number of British soldiers in the escort and in each compartment there were three or four soldiers. In my compartment there was a young officer whose regiment had just arrived

from England. He appeared to be puzzled about the insurrection in Ireland and the mass arrests and seemed not to know anything about Ireland. Before we reached Dublin all the fellows in our compartment had their say in enlightening him on the situation and he left us at the station in Dublin hoping that none of us would be executed.

We were met by an additional escort at the station and we were brought to Richmond Barracks (now Keogh Barracks). Along the Quays the smoke was still rising from O'Connell St. and all along the way, in contrast to the jeers and pro-British cries in Ross and Wexford, the women of Dublin were frantic with cheers for the rebels and cries like "Up the Republic" could be heard. Alerted by the sound of the marching men, we could see women running down side-streets, opening windows and cheering, and encouraging shouts of "Keep your heart up", "Up Dublin", "Up the Republic" filled the air.

On our arrival in Richmond Barracks we were lined up one side of a large hall. On the other side were a large number of prisoners from different parts of Ireland, amongst them some men who took part in the Dublin fight. On looking across at the crowd of men I could hear shouts of recognition and recognised amongst them Captain O'Connell Brennan Whitmore, a friend from St. Leonard's, Co. Wexford, Mick Roche, who was in the G.P.O. in O'Connell St. during the fight, and Michael Savage. In a few minutes a group of British officers came in, apparently in a bad temper. They shouted in voices of rage and one of them went up and down roaring "Silence; if I don't have silence I will bring in a machine-gun and mow the whole ..... lot of

you down". There was silence for a few minutes and then there was a low hum of voices amongst the prisoners again. This same officer danced and pranced and spluttered "Silence" and repeated his threat several times, and the more he spoke the more indistinct he made himself, tripping his remarks. Another officer then took the floor with a pile of papers and called the names of prisoners who were then formed in a separate party. During all this time the officers were haranguing the prisoners about answering properly. Two prisoners were in good spirits and were constantly smiling and grinning at the officers, which apparently had them half crazy. The more the officers threatened to shoot them, the more the prisoners grinned. We were placed in soldiers' quarters in a wing of the barracks in parties of about 25 or 30 men to each room. There were windows in our room looking back on to another range of buildings and the front windows looked out on a parade ground. During the first day I could see from the back window a small party of prisoners being exercised in a small patch of ground between the two buildings. This party was composed of prominent men of the Dublin Brigade Headquarters staff. Amongst them were Eoin MacNeill and Count Plunkett. I cannot now remember the rest of them but at the time I knew quite a lot of them. On a number of occasions as we were brought in small parties to the latrines we met parties of prisoners from different parts of Ireland. They were from Dundalk, Cork and Dublin. With the Dublin party were men advanced in age, amongst them Mr. Burke, step-father of Liam Cosgrave, Mr. Stritch and Count Plunkett. His son, Joseph Mary, was executed the day we met him. We did not know of this and were not aware

whether he knew it, but he was, like all the other prisoners, in good spirits. Tom McGrath and Bill Murphy, patting his grey hairs, remarked to him: "What are you doing here, an old man like you"?, and he said "I would not wish to be anywhere else than amongst the rebels".

A small space divided a block of buildings and always a group of British soldiers were standing there. Apparently it was a boundary line for them as they never appeared to come any further. One day when passing I heard a voice from amongst them hailing my name, and on looking in their direction I saw amongst them a number of New Ross soldiers who were called up on the Reserves. The one who called me was one of the early members who joined the Volunteers. These soldiers used to stand in groups all day looking out for prisoners from their home town just to say "Hello". They belonged to Irish regiments.
After two days, barbed wire entanglements were placed along these spaces and one day we saw a battalion lined up on the parade ground in full war kit for a ceremonial farewell for the battle-front. A brass band played martial music and a salute to the colours "The Union Jack" and some high-ranking officer gave a farewell address.
A shrill command was then given. Again the band struck up and another Irish battalion departed to die on the battlefields of France for Britain. A few soldiers were mustered in a corner of the parade ground who gave an organised but faint-hearted cheer to their departing brothers in arms. We learned that evening that the British were rushing, in unseemly haste, all the Irish regiments out of Ireland to France.

Lice were in occupation of most of the rooms where the prisoners were quartered and after the first day it was a full-time occupation in helping one another to abat-

this menace. In spite of everything we did, it was impossible to get rid of them. From what I heard of other rooms, we were not so badly afflicted in our room. Some G. men of the D.M.P. came in several times to inspect us. They were looking for important men, but they did not take anyone out of our room. After numerous visits they got Seán MacDermott in a room close to ours, having failed to get him at first. That evening, when looking through the rere window, I saw Seán MacDermott in the squad of men with Eoin MacNeill at exercises. Two D.M.P. men in uniform, with a British officer, came into our room and took our finger-prints. The D.M.P. men were friendly and took out a heap of letters to post for us. They even provided the stamps. All the letters duly reached their destinations. They gave us all the news about Dublin and gave us a newspaper.

From nightfall searchlights hovered all over the barracks and pin-pointed each window in turn. Lots of relatives and friends were permitted to visit and bring food to the prisoners, but only the Dublin men had visits. One of our men, Bill Murphy from Ross, was called out through an error, as it was another Bill Murphy the visitor intended to see. However, he got talking to some of the visitors through barbed wire and he had the opportunity of talking to a relative of Arthur Griffith who was also there visiting Arthur Griffith. Bill got a large parcel of food from one of the visitors.

We heard the volleys on two of the mornings of the executions of the signatories of the Proclamation. On one occasion an old soldier on duty at the latrines said to me, "I wish to Heavens I was amongst yous" and boasted of all the relatives he had who were Republican prisoners.

He was well known as a carrier of letters for the prisoners. Every morning we could see isolated soldiers in full war kit marching round the complete square of the parade ground from early morning until 12 o'clock noon. The parade ground occupied an area of about two acres. There were always a few Sergeants standing near the flag staff while this was going on and they occasionally barked orders at the soldiers. I enquired from one of the soldier orderlies, who was talkative, about this and he told me it was punishment for such offences as arriving late from evening leave and other minor offences.

The English soldiers in Richmond Barracks were a surly lot. They were always cursing and complaining about the rebels and their one wish was to send us to the Front. We were one of the early parties to be taken from Richmond and transported to England. There was a rumour one day that we were all to be sent to England. The next afternoon I was one of a party that were lined up on the parade ground for deportation. Two lines of soldiers in full war kit at each side of every file of prisoners were our escort. Each prisoner was given a half loaf and a small tin of bully beef. As we entered the street from the barracks the prisoners sang "Step Together" and "A Soldier's Song". The soldiers were grumbling and cursing and before we were into the city officers and N.C.O.s came along the ranks and ordered us to stop singing. It was a very warm afternoon and all the time the soldiers, who were getting exhausted under their heavy load of full war kit, were asking the N.C.O.s to make the ..... rebels carry their kits.

When we reached the Quays, the people all along the way cheered us with more vigour than when we were brought to Richmond Barracks. Carters and workmen joined the women in their demonstrations. Women and men mounted the broken walls of burned out houses waving the tricolour, and at Beresford Place there was a big crowd waving and cheering. At the North Wall we were quickly placed aboard a cattle boat. We entered by the cattle ramp and were placed in the hold. The hatches were covered over and the place was in darkness. There was no seating of any sort, but noticing some tarpaulin in the corner I went over and sat on it with a number of other prisoners. When we were all aboard, Padraig O'Malley said the Rosary in Irish and after that each one was speculating as to where we were bound. Just outside Dublin Bay one of the hatch boards was lifted and a number of soldiers looked down, apparently to see how things were below. Some of the fellows shouted up to them for a drink of water and they said we could have plenty and they brought several buckets of sea water and emptied them down on the heads of those who were under the hatch. Those of the prisoners who were not sick sat around in groups. I was sitting on the tarpaulin most of the time. To make it more comfortable we raised it to spread over more space for as many as possible. To our surprise, underneath was a row of coffins containing the bodies of some of the soldiers killed in the rebellion. We placed the covering back on the coffin and resumed our seats.

When we arrived at Hollyhead the military rushed us quickly from the boat and put us on a train which was ready for us. After a short delay the escort was divided up amongst the carriages and the train moved off. We were

unable to get any information about our destination from the escort who began getting more friendly. All they knew, or at least all they told us, was that we were going a long journey. Some of the prisoners felt the pangs of hunger and began eating their bully beef and bread, but many more did not feel like eating and gave away their share to those of the prisoners who desired it. At Crewe there was a long delay. Mobile canteens were moving up and down the platform giving tea to the escort. Some of the prisoners wished to buy some, but a number of British officers went up and down the platform forbidding the serving of tea to the rebels. Another smaller group of young officers permitted the getting of tea and sometimes handed the cups into the carriages to us and, in some cases, the escort gave their share to the prisoners. The prisoners were getting more lively and started singing and greeting one another from the carriage windows, which had an unsettling effect on the officers and N.C.O.s of the escort and they rushed around the platform in haste commanding the noise and singing to cease and got the train to move away at once.

During the tedious hours of travelling the prisoners slept and the escort were eager to sleep as well, but the N.C.O.s were constantly on the move along the corridors keeping the soldiers wide awake. We arrived at Wakefield about 9.30 a.m. and the train was shunted away from the station to a small siding which was convenient to Wakefield prison. We were brought a short distance by a backward road where we met neither traffic nor people, and in a few minutes we were in sight of the prison. We had scarcely time to view the massive pile with its endless rows of cell windows rising storey on storey when we entered its

arched gate which was yawning open to receive us.

We were brought in batches of twelve to a table where warders and soldiers were grouped. They commanded us to empty our pockets and hand over any parcels in our possession. The property of each was listed and placed in containers. Anything of little value, as well as cigarettes, tobacco and pipes, was dumped in a separate receptacle. The officials had a gruff and domineering air and barked out commands and instructions. I can recall a comrade in my batch who favoured a clay pipe for his smoking and when he disgorged his pipe from his pocket said to a cranky warder, "Be careful of that pipe because it is valuable to me". The warder was not able to answer with the anger which inflated him to the extent that it nearly choked him, and he took up the pipe and broke it in smithereens with a bang on the floor, saying, "You will hardly want it again". As each man was divested of his property he got the command "Double up". No one responded to this but walked along the route directed. Each man was moved off alone. We went along corridors dimly lighted and at each turn was a voice, "Double up, run". Cell doors were banging and on entering the last of the corridors a warder was standing at the entrance and shouted, "Enter the first open door and bang it home". I was just at the last open cell door on the corridor when it banged home. There was no other cell in that row and I entered an opening at the end to which there was no door and remained there. I could hear the warder shouting his orders to the prisoners to enter the cells at the other side of the corridor and the prisoners moving along and the cell doors banging until both sides were occupied. I viewed the place I entered and discovered it was a

lavatory without a door, and not a cell. I stayed there and waited to see the outcome. I could hear the movements of prisoners being placed in cells on the tier over our corridor and the shouting and commands of the warders. I was wondering how long I would be in my position before discovery and wondered could I make some extra trouble for them to find me by moving to a more hidden position. Occasionally I would peep down the corridor but there was no other place I could discover. I could see a warder seated at a table writing at the other end, but no other sign of anyone. After a little while three warders with two soldiers with guns came to the seated warder and they proceeded to enter each cell in turn, bringing cocoa and bread. As they finished the cells on my side, one of the warders entered the lavatory where I was. I was leaning against the wall and pretended to be sleeping. When he saw me he ran out shouting to the others, "There is a prisoner here who got out of his cell". They approached me in a slow and definite manner and grabbed me, and they all shouted together at me demanding how I got out of my cell. They brought me down to the warders' table where they looked up the list of those occupying cells and discovered I should be occupying a cell near the middle of the row. They brought me to this cell, No. A1/19, which was closed. They opened it and put me in and told me to bang the door, which I did. I could hear them talking outside and after a short time they opened it again and asked me how I got out. I told them I was never in it and they did not believe me and, with dire threats if I did it again, banged the door.

The cell contained a small window at the end in which there were small panes of glass about three inches

square. On the outside of the window were iron bars. In a corner at the end was a mattress rolled up and some army blankets folded on top of it. Three bed-boards with two small trestles about three inches high were attached to the bed-boards. There was a small stool between a pot and a tin at the end of the cell. Near to the door was a small muffed plate-glass window and on a built-in shelf over the mattress in the far corner there was a piece of brick bath and container of salt and a few pieces of brown tissue paper for toilet paper and a slate with a piece of slate pencil.

I sat on the stool and leaning against the wall and was soon sound asleep. It was late in the evening when I awoke by the opening of the cell door by a warder accompanied by soldier orderlies who brought a mug of cocoa, bread and margarine. Apparently they were around earlier for I saw another mug of cocoa and bread on the shelf which was not there before I fell asleep. There was silence all over the prison in a short time and the long evening was gradually getting into dusk and I could hear the bed-boards all over the prison being moved and placed on the ground. I placed my bed-board on the ground and put the mattress on it and discovered, on opening the mattress, a small hard pillow. When I put that into position the black sticky marks of countless prisoners' heads was shaped in the middle of it. I put it aside and placed my boots sideways, the soles outwards, and my scarf between them. I used this method to replace a pillow during my imprisonment in Wakefield.

The next morning the prison bell, reverberating through the prison, awoke us at 5 a.m. and in a short time

we heard the jangling of keys and opening of cell doors and words of command, "Stand three paces outside your cell with your pot." No one seemed to understand this and each prisoner stood at his cell door looking out and making signs and whispering to his neighbour in the cell opposite him. In my case the occupier of the cell opposite, who was a stranger to me, was actively occupied whispering and making signs. All I could make out from him was while holding up his hand with fingers extended pointed with the other hand and saying "Five years". He also pointed to a slate on which he had something written but which I could not make out. I learned later he was taken in the round-up in Enniscorthy and was not in the Volunteers. He was a travelling man and when the warder entered his cell and found his mattress and bed-boards arranged in the regulation prison order and on his slate a written request for the prison doctor, remarked "So you were in jail before".

The warder gave a lot of instructions to each prisoner in his cell about the pot. We were to hold it with both hands with the tin cover on it, and at the blast of a whistle we were to take three paces out from the cell door. At the next blast of the whistle we were to turn right and at the next blast march three paces from each other, without talking, to the lavatory where there was a small tank used as a slop container, empty the pots and proceed back to our cells in the same order. Though it appeared to be a very humiliating and embarrassing task, all the prisoners made it a most laughable affair. At the lavatory, in spite of the anger of the warders, there was utter confusion. Some of the pots of prisoners were empty and they asked permission to go back and fill

them. Every silly question of the prisoners had the warders demented and as it went on they began blasting and cursing until finally we were all locked up again. But not for long. We were all out again and assembled in the corridor and a tough and foul-mouthed sergeant-major got up on a chair to give us a lecture and in front of him stood a soldier holding a pot and a tin container and two tin covers. He started off by telling us this was a prison, not a so-and-so amusement hall, and that we were so-and-so prisoners and that they were going to see that the so-and-so prison regulations were kept and obeyed promptly. Everyone would be known by his number, not his name, and the number was on a round yellow felt disc in each cell and it was to be worn at all times hanging from the top button of each prisoner's coat. The number was also the number of the cell. There was to be no talking either to one another or to the warders or soldiers. If they wished to make a request or inquiry it was to be written on a slate provided in each cell. This was punctuated with coarse and foul language every two or three words. He then took up a pot and held it over his head and told us, in unmistakable language, what it was for. He told us when to use it and when not to use it. He held up a battered rusty lid and said this was the cover of it and there was a piece of brick bath provided in each cell to make it shine like a looking-glass. Then he held up the tin and said this was for washing hands and face and the tin cover similar to the pot cover was to be polished daily. He then held one in each hand and said, "In my right hand is the pot and in the left the tin" and he waved each in turn and emphasised again and again what each was for and in a crescendo of awful language roared, "Don't make the mistake on your peril of using the pot for the tin

or the tin for the pot". The poor fellow looked as if he had performed an important and exhausting duty, but before he got off the chair he was greeted by spontaneous and hearty laughter by the prisoners as if he was a comedian in a music hall.

On our return to the cells each prisoner was brought a bucket of water and scrubbing brush and told to wash out his cell. In about an hour they came along the cells and again there was an uproar. None of the prisoners had done the job correctly and, with much cursing, we were ordered out for exercise. On the sound of a whistle we were to take three paces forward from the cell door. On another blast of the whistle we were to turn right and on another whistle we were to march six paces apart down the corridor and up a flight of winding iron stairs and along a passage and out to the prison yard. In the yard were stone-flagged circles some distance from one another, the smaller circle in the centre and circles getting larger in dimension around it in the form of a bull's eye target.

We were moved on to these circles six paces apart and ordered to march around on them without speaking. Soldiers with guns were lined all around the boundary of the yard and the sergeant-major gave frequent commands about the speed of our walking and the distance to be kept from one another. I saw several new prisoners I knew in the exercise yard, a number of them in uniform which appeared to have been torn. Leo Henderson was one of the first I noticed and a group of men who were in the Ashbourne fight. The Taylors of Swords were there and a number of Dundalk men also - Quill, Atkinson, Jim Lang and the Butterlys. Occasionally the prisoners got permission to

go to lavatories which were in an exposed position close to the exercise ring, and there conversation was carried on in whispers. We got used to whispering without moving our lips going round the rings, and sometimes in coming back from the lavatory a prisoner would slip into a different position to have a whisper with the companion next to him. Sometimes some of the prisoners would make a little sport for themselves by pretending to stumble and trip the comrade in front of him and it always seemed that the prisoners were not happy until they aroused the temper of the warders by doing something against the regulations.

We were frequently warned about singing in the cells or looking out of the cell windows which could be done by standing on the stool. In spite of the punishment of bread and water for two days for these offences, the regulations were constantly broken. There were always one or two in our row on bread and water. Our line of cells was partly below the level of the ground and on standing on the stool I could see a grubby margin and a flower-bed along the prison wall. The first thing I did in the morning was to look out of this cell window and gaze at the tulips in the flower-bed and count the number of new flowers which had come into bloom from the previous day. It was a pretty sight to see the morning sunshine on the yellow and red and speckled flowers blooming without anyone to see them except a prisoner who would get bread and water for two days for punishment. One got accustomed to the frequent squints of the warders through the peep-hole and one of our men, Daniel Hanly, since dead, R.I.P., was frequently discovered standing on his stool at his cell window, and he got the prescribed punishment

of bread and water for two days. We also got accustomed to the different sounds and movements of the prison routine and sensed the near approach of a warder on his rounds of peeping. They wore slippers for this work and could not be heard walking, but an occasional soft click of the disc covering the hole on a nearby cell gave the necessary warning. After the general lock-up in the cell at about 4.30 p.m. everything was quiet and one spent the time pacing up and down the cell saying the rosary or humming a song.

Somewhere the sound of a prisoner laying down his bed-boards would start the general move to do so and for half an hour the noise of the bedboards being placed on the ground could be heard from all parts of the prison. At night time the continuous all-night noise of trains shunting and the rattling of and coupling and buffers on railway tracks, the whistling of the engines and the loud crescendo of steam pressure from the nearby railway marshalling yard made sleep difficult at first, but soon we got used to it.

After some days, some of the prisoners were brought from their cells for cleaning and scrubbing along the passages outside the cells for one hour. This was considered a privilege for it meant a relief from solitary confinement. At exercise around the rings one day I got close to one of those who were at this work and asked him how did he manage to get this freedom from the cells. We were still not permitted to talk, but by an occasional whisper he told me that the chief warder over our part of the prison, a man named Ainsworth, got him out for the fatigue work after he put up a yarn to him as follows: "You see, you have been very kind to me here and in return I would like to repay your kindness by sending you a present if and when I am released". The

warder fell for it and had him out of the cell whenever it was possible on fatigue duty. My friend told me to try it on him but not to tell anyone else or he would be suspicious. Well, the next time he opened the call door I proceeded to carry out the formula. I discovered that he was chatty; he said it was a great relief to him that the prisoners were such a nice pack of rebels and that a special battalion of infantry were placed in an adjoining barracks for the sole purpose of subduing any disturbance in the prison but still the Governor and warders were uneasy. He gave me his home address to send the gift to him. The next day I was out of the cell with the fatigue squad and feeling sorry that my friend Bill Murphy had not the privilege of being out. I moved over to him at the exercise ring and told him how to get out of the cell for fatigue duty. The next day he was out with his mop and bucket and I had a quiet chat with him and asked him how he got on with Ainsworth and this is what he told me: "He did not seem a bit inclined to listen to me. He said there were too many out but I told him I was in the export business and would send him a turkey at Christmas. He began to ponder over this saying partly to himself a present of a turkey would be nice, but, fearing he would not fall for the offer I said to him, maybe you would prefer a bottle of Irish whiskey. He was still slow about making up his mind and in desperation I said 'maybe you would like an Irish salmon'. He was still hesitating, but he said at last: 'I dunno what to make of you fellows; about the turkey, a turkey for a gift I never got and it would be a fine present, but a bottle of Irish whiskey is a nice present too, but about the salmon, I'll have to think over which I'll take'. The more I offered him, it seemed to me, the less likely he would fulfil his part of the bargain, and when he said he would have to think it over, I told him I would send all three to him". He

immediately got him a mop and brought him out to wash the passage. Later, when all were released, I made inquiries and it appears that all forgot Ainsworth.

We attended Mass every second Sunday in a large building designed for Protestant Church Service. Each prisoner had a low partitioned space and by each wall were raised pulpit-shaped platforms in which warders kept a watchful eye on the congregation. French-Mullen, a Dublin prisoner, played the organ and before the priest arrived for Mass he always played "Hail, Glorious St. Patrick" and when Mass concluded and the priest had gone, he always played a "Soldier's Song". Both were sung lustily by the prisoners. During Mass he played the appropriate hymns which were sung with reverence.

After about a week we got more time on the exercise ring and we were allowed to receive parcels and see visitors. The Irish in England were very generous to us and came long distances to visit us. Several New Ross girls who were living in London and other English cities came to see us and brought parcels of food and, in some instances, English girls came also. At first, the visitors were few and they were met in a room with a wire grid separating visitors from prisoners. As the visitors became more numerous, they met the prisoners in a large room without any partition or grid. The warders were lined around the walls. I remember I saw a man amongst the crowd in the room whose face I remembered seeing at Volunteer parades and meetings in Dublin and I asked him what part of the prison he was in. He said he wasn't a prisoner, that he was a visitor, and he explained that he was in the Dublin rebellion, but escaped the round-up and came to England and was visiting some of his Dublin friends. I did not know his name.

A number of New Ross girls who were working in England

came from London and other English cities to visit the New Ross prisoners and brought generous parcels of food. Two New Ross girls in particular I remember were Miss E. O'Neill of Wexford Street, and Miss Whelan of the Irishtown, also Miss Higgins, [illegible], and a nun whose name in religion I forget; she was a native of Arklow, Wellington Bridge, Co. Wexford and an aunt of Tom O'Hanlon of Gusserane; and an English girl, Miss K. Phillips, Dewsbury; she had no Irish connections but was greatly interested in Irish freedom. Miss Whelan asked me to write in her autograph book some token of her visit and I wrote the following:

"Wakefield Prison,
3rd June 1916.

It's all so strange, the red brick walls,
The bolts and nuts, the locks and bars;
The cell, bare walls and cold flag stone,
The bed of planks, the pots and jars.
I sit and think when the door banged home,
And look around and sigh 'Ochone'.

I think of the fields of green,
The hills and woods of Ireland;
The smiling eyes of a gay colleen,
And I imprisoned for my sireland.
Of all the sights I've ever seen
Till now, a cell I've never been in.

A warder comes and peeps at me
Thro' a small wee hole in the iron door,
And says 'a friend', yes, 'A friend' says he
Waits up in a room on the upper floor.
I guess it's you she wants to see;
'A lady', Oh, who may she be?

Four smiling eyes now greeted me,
Two outstretched hands my own did take;
Two colleens of my Eire
'We've come' said they, 'for the old land's sake'.
We're Irish too, and proud of you
Because our land you've tried to free'

My pockets weigh and bulge quite large;
I'd like to carry all, but how?
I'd really want a river barge,
I dunno how 'twas done, but now
My muse has gone without a bow."

I never polished the lid of the pot and tin in my cell because it was so battered and rusty that it was impossible to make it shine. My next-door neighbour was Michael Sheehan,

since dead (R.I.P.); he was always in good humour and I often heard him in his cell humming a tune and keeping time to it polishing his old pot cover. When we were out in the morning for the pot parade I would be back before him and run into his cell and leave my lid there and take his, and after being locked up, I could hear him singing gaily his favourite song: "Come back Paddy Reilly to Ballyjamesduff" polishing my old lid without discovering the exchange. As he did not discover the deception in a few days I was rather disappointed, so I told him, and he played the same trick on his neighbour. Sometimes the fatigue party cleaning along the corridors would come to a cell where the warder would be abusing an elderly prisoner who was unable to scrub his floor properly, and one of the party would volunteer to scrub it for him. After a week or so we got out into the exercise rings twice a day, but the fatigue parties were kept inside to work. This was very unpopular, so the working party began getting careless, slopping water around, breaking brush handles and tearing dusters, with the result that most of the prisoners at this work were dispensed with and they got out to exercise with the rest.

One day we were told to prepare for a bath. This announcement created excitement, as anything unusual did. Some of the prisoners had the idea we were going somewhere else and when they lined up outside the cells they had their overcoats and the parcels they got from visitors tied up carefully with them. They were quickly told to put them back in the cells. The bathroom had a number of cubicles with a hot and cold shower in each, and a half door enclosing each one. Outside every cubicle was a soldier with a shotgun. The soldier at my cubicle didn't look very soldier-like. He had no equipment and appeared to be approachable, so I asked him had he a newspaper. He looked very cautiously up and down to see that no one in

authority was a round. He told me all the soldiers in the prison were prisoners doing up to six months sentence and they did not see a newspaper since they came in, and the soldiers in the exercise yard and everywhere in the prison on duty never had ammunition for the guns. He held up his shotgun and showed it to me. It appeared to be new but of inferior quality and I doubted the fact that he had no ammunition, so he held up the breech and turned his pocket inside out to prove it. He said they were in solitary confinement until the Irish prisoners came and it was a great change to get out of the cells. They were located in a different wing from the Irish prisoners.

From my cell window on two or three occasions I saw a company of young soldiers in full kit arrive in the late afternoon. They stacked their rifles on the grass margin together with their kit and rested there. They occupied themselves polishing their equipment and boots, writing letters and chatting. At night'time, they folded army blankets around themselves from the waist down and slept there during the night and, in the morning, they departed. I noticed that these soldiers were young and physically fit and apparently were under orders to maintain silence as they never spoke loudly or sang, and I never heard a military command. It was perhaps an exercise of guard duty and sleeping in the open air previous to their departure to the battle front.

All during our period in Wakefield the weather was summer-like and there was scarcely any rain. As the weather continued to get warmer, the peculiar smell of the prison increased in intensity and gave an airless, depressing atmosphere. I asked a soldier prisoner one day at the baths what caused it and he informed me all prisons had the same smell and it was caused principally by the tarry ropes on

which prisoners are occupied in the cells, picking into shreds to make oakum, and also the stink from the open lavatory tanks which mingle to produce it, and the fact that the prison was full to capacity.

As the time went on, visitors came in bigger numbers and, on several occasions, I was brought from the cell to see Miss Whelan or some of the other New Ross girls, or the English girl, Miss Phillips, whom I never heard of before and who never told me how she got my name. On one occasion the warder, Ainsworth, came to my cell and told me a bloke with a top hat wanted to see me. He said he must be a blooming lord or a cabinet minister as he had an important-looking pass from the War Office. I followed him up to the room wondering who this person was and what brought him. Sure enough, at the outskirts of the crowd in the room, there was an important-looking individual. He wore a tall hat, frock coat and a watch chain dangling from a fancy waistcoat. He was small in size, fairly stout, and his two hands were resting on a neatly folded umbrella slightly in front of him. I never saw him before and, as the warder Ainsworth approached him, saying: "Here is your man" my mind was building up a defensive armour. We looked at one another in silence for a moment and then he placed a paternal hand on my shoulder and said: "Ah, there you are, my poor fellow I would scarcely know you. You were a little chap when I saw you last. I wrote to your mother and your brother and sister and told them I would visit you. What happened you? Where were you before?". As he spoke without interruption in a definite Cork accent, I found from what he said that he was a member of John Redmond's Irish Party and that I was brought to him in mistake for a J. McCarthy from his parliamentary area. Rather than be hastened back to my cell, I impersonated the guest he intended to call on. I carried out a conversation

with him as best I could. The principal difficulty was when he spoke of the doings in Co. Cork. When Warder Ainsworth said the time was up, my visitor departed after assuring me of his good wishes and having presented me with a clay pipe and two ozs. of plug tobacco. The other prisoners who had met visitors at the same time were duly impressed by my distinguished-looking caller and, when I told them the story, I had difficulty in convincing them. Later, I got a letter from the family of this J. McCarthy. I told the warder it was for another McCarthy, so he took it away. At exercise, an older prisoner approached me with the letter and said it was not for him, though his name was McCarthy also but, some days afterwards, another prisoner - also named McCarthy - came to me with a letter he got which was for me. He asked had I a letter belonging to him which I got in mistake and eventually he got his letter.

Before I was removed from Wakefield Prison this M.P. came again. He met the correct prisoner this time, but he also asked for me and I think he had some doubt that the other fellow was genuine, for he insisted on telling me all about the family doings of the other prisoner. He gave both of us clay pipes and tobacco which were received with superfluous thanks, but when his back was turned, was changed to sulphurous invective by the other prisoner.

After some weeks a number of prisoners were released every two days or so. They were brought from their cells the evening before and placed in cells in an outer building and released the following morning. They were never let contact any of the remaining prisoners and it was only in the exercise ring the next morning we would hear about their release. The men arrested in New Ross, with the exception of four, were released in small parties in this way. It was

evident that the R.I.C. Intelligence was poor, for a number of very active Volunteers in New Ross were amongst the prisoners RELEASED from Wakefield.

In contrast to the hostile demonstrations at the time of their arrest, the released New Ross prisoners from Wakefield got a great welcome home. On each occasion large cheering crowds met the prisoners on their arrival at the railway station and they were greeted like heroes. A great change had come over the people and prominent citizens became actively associated by joining the National Aid Society, and they took no more part in British army recruiting meetings.

A few spoons and cell discs were smuggled as souvenirs by some of the prisoners who were among the first batch to be released. The warders were reprimanded for this neglect by the prison authorities and, as a result, those on the later parties were subject to a careful search and it was very difficult for anyone to retain such souvenirs. The prisoners remaining had an extra job of cleaning the vacated cells as well as the cells they themselves occupied. The cell A1/9 was one of those vacated so I took the disc out of it and hid it inside the lining of my coat and, later, in my cell I took it out and managed to put the figure 'one' before the nine in a fairly good resemblance of my own disc A1/19. I began wearing it and sewed my own disc in the lining of my coat. The next day there was a row amongst the warders, blaming one another for letting the occupier of A1/9 take away his disc; they never had any thought that I took it. I managed to hold on to my disc and bring it home and it is still in my possession in spite of routine searches in Wakefield, Wormwood Scrubbs and Frongoch.

The wearing apparel of the prisoners began in most cases to get dilapidated, and shirts, singlets and socks were issued

from the prison stores where some of the Dundalk prisoners were doing fatigue duty. When the prisoners were made aware of the issue of clothes, a lot of them made application for underwear and the warders granted all the requests. As usual, there was always some hitch as in every arrangement. The fatigue prisoners in the stores had changed the marks indicating the sizes of the articles and as usual had the warders in a raging temper and they didn't know the size numbers had been changed; but when the prisoners were issued with the clothes there were complaints from them that they were too big or too small. It was amusing to see the solemn faces of the store fatigue men handing out the articles. Sometimes in a twinkle, their faces would relax in a sunny grin or knowing wink and then quickly replaced that dignified solemn mask. One prisoner near me complained to the warder, Ainsworth, that the socks which were handed to him were too large. The warder turned to the fatigue, Bill Atkinson of Dundalk, and asked him in anger why he did not give the correct size. Atkinson, who was responsible for a lot of the confusion in size, said in solemn reply: "The most of the lads pull them down over their shoulders" and Ainsworth used this as a stock phrase afterwards when issuing socks.

By this time a large number of the prisoners in Wakefield had been released, including all the New Ross prisoners, except John Murphy, John Street, James Walsh, South St., and myself. All the remaining prisoners were brought by rail under escort to Frongoch. The journey was long and occupied all the night.

Frongoch internment camp was formerly a distillery with an extensive range of buildings. A large grain store of three stories was used as dormitories for the prisoners. I was one of the 250 prisoners who were on the top loft which had a

timber floor. The other floors were of cement. The windows were like those usually in grain lofts and were without glass; simply iron rails and wooden shutters. The beds were of the prison variety, three loose bed-boards and two trestles about six inches from the ground. We were brought to a farm haggard outside the camp and supplied with a canvas sack, the shape of a mattress and instructed to fill it with straw from a rick there. Not accustomed to making such a bed, the prisoners adopted different methods. In doing so some of them rammed the straw down tightly and found they were unable to carry it owing to the weight and had to take some out. Older men were scarcely able to carry the small quantity they put in the bags. When those bags of straw were placed on the bed-boards the shape didn't look like anything resembling a mattress, so there was a busy time jumping on them, exchanging straw with one another, and flattening them out in the hope of making them possible to sleep on.

Phil Lennon had arrived the previous day with a party of prisoners from Stafford Prison and I was put into his loft. As the prisoners took any bed space they liked, I went beside Phil and a man from Kinvara named Sean Whelan was at my other side on a row along the wall. There were four rows of beds in the centre as well as a row by the other wall. There were two passages down the floor separating the four rows of beds in the middle from the rows by the walls. Immediately opposite me in the centre row was Sean Neeson, William Kelly of Carrigmore, Co. Tyrone, and his son, William Kelly. William Kelly, senior, was an elderly man and an intimate friend and colleague of Tom Clarke, one of the signatories of the Proclamation of Easter Week. He was always talking of Tom Clarke and had a fiery disposition. His son was of the same temperament and ever ready to take part in any debate.

Captain J.J. O'Connell was appointed leader in our loft and kept the routine up to army discipline. The first night when all the men had retired to bed he insisted on everyone lying on his right side, and he went along all the rows and, when he came across any sleeper who was not lying as instructed, he pressed his foot against one of the small trestles and the bed collapsed. This meant that the occupant had to get up and remake his bed. For some nights it was usual to hear the bang of a number of beds falling on the floor. It was difficult for some to get accustomed to lying on the right side, but in about a week everyone was sleeping according to his instructions.

Amongst the men in Loft 3 were Richard Mulcahy, Donal Buckley, the brothers Price, McMahon, Eamon Moran, Ballysax, Curragh; Brennan-Whitmore, Sean Donovan, Clonakilty; Michael Knightly of Kerry (now Dáil reporter); Sam Buttle, Adare; O'Doherty, Derry; Sean Butterly, Dunleer, who composed verse everyday; Thomas McInerney, Lock Quay, Limerick, the man who drove the car which went into the sea at Ballykissane Pier when two Volunteers lost their lives while on their way during Holy Week to take over the Valentia wireless station; Dinny Barry, Tralee; the Crowley brothers of Clonakilty; Barney O'Driscoll, young Daly of Limerick, Michael Collins, Michael Staines, Barney McCartan (brother of Dr. McCartan); Johnson of Belfast (brother of Ethna Carberry); Sean Neeson, Belfast; James Walsh of New Ross; S. Kavanagh, Dublin; Christy Carbury, Citizen Army Michael Scollan, Hibernian Rifles; Martin Savage (killed later in ambush on Lord French); Michael Roche, St. Leonard's, Co. Wexford, who was in Dublin rebellion. He and Martin Savage worked in a licensed premises on Bachelor's Walk, Dublin, up to Easter 1916, and when on the run in the Tan war later paid two or three visits to St. Leonard's, Co. Wexford; Leo Henderson, Dublin; Paddy Cahill, Kerry; Joe Stanley, Dublin and ~~Dundalk~~ Drogheda.

The imperative blare of a steam hooter at 5.30 a.m. roused our slumbers and a fussy sergeant-major whom we knew later as "Jack Knives", together with a Sergeant Phillips and a few soldiers, came to our loft a few minutes later shouting in Cockney vibrance: "Show a leg", "Hop it". "Spring to it". The majority of the prisoners did not find this early rising irksome, but for some of the men who were in poor health and others who were old, it was a painful ordeal, for at 6 a.m. all were formed up in two columns of four in the compound outside to be counted. During the first week one or two at each of those counts would fall to the ground in weakness. We were instructed to anticipate such occurrences in future and, in many cases, the fainting man was caught before he fell. Later, this fainting became more numerous and many were badly injured by the fall to the ground. It occurred to men who were, to all appearances, in the best of health, and, therefore, were not watched too closely by their comrades. The counting was always tedious and the prisoners were kept standing in all kinds of weather, sometimes for an hour. A lieutenant and "Jack Knives" and Phillips usually did the counting and the tally was seldom correct until the count was repeated over and over again and until "Jack Knives" and Phillips, ably assisted by the lieutenant, had exhausted themselves cursing. Each night, before the lofts or dormitories, as they were called, were locked, there was also a count, each prisoner standing in front of his bed. There were other buildings around the grain store where the men slept. At right angles to it was a long single storey building used as a dining hall and where Holy Mass was said. At the far end of the dining hall was the cookhouse, and running at right angles from the cookhouse, was a range of buildings which were used as a storeroom and drying room for clothes. Running at right angles from the other end of the grain store was the arched entrance gate and boiler house which

joined the drying room. These buildings formed a square which was known as the compound. The gate led to an open space outside surrounded by two high fences of barbed wire parallel to one another with a space of about 12 feet filled with barbed wire entanglements and which, we were informed by "Jack Knives", had wire charged with electric current. Outside the barbed wire were raised timber platforms some feet higher than the barbed wire at convenient distances from and within sight of one another on which was a sentry box which was reached by a flight of timber steps. Sentries were posted on these sentry boxes day and night. Every hour during the night each sentry shouted loudly in rotation "Number one and all's well; No. 2 and all's well" and so on until all sentries responded to the cry. At irregular intervals during the night a guard patrol marched around on inspection and were challenged by each sentry with "Halt, who goes there?". One night when the sentries were crying: "Number one and all's well, etc.", the sentry in Box 4 or 5 failed to respond and we were all alert at the commotion which followed. No. 3 sentry repeated: "No. 3 and all's well", and finally he pressed the alarm signal which was contained in each sentry box and we could hear the guard running and the N.C.Os. shouting for a long time. There was much noise and running about and, in the morning, we discovered that the sentry had slept at his post and he was in clink waiting court-martial. We did not find out what the punishment was. The British soldiers at the internment camp were old men and unfit for active service and their work was long and fatiguing as they had very little time off. They were armed with shotguns which occasionally went off accidentally when on sentry duty, causing the guard to turn out and resulted in the sentry being put in the clink. These soldiers were a cheerless lot and it was difficult to get them to talk and even amongst themselves they held little conversation.

On one occasion, while sitting on a ditch during a halt on one of our route marches, a soldier's gun went off and badly injured his face.

In the outer yard was a small stone building which was used as punishment cells for prisoners. There was also a row of huts; one of them was used for the storage of blankets and clothing and another as a censor's office. The others were idle. The hospital was also in the open yard as well as the latrines. A small fresh water river separated the internment camp from the exercise field. Access to the field was by a wooden rustic footbridge which was enclosed by barbed wire fences and entanglements. An arrangement of barbed wire entanglements similar to that surrounding the camp enclosed the exercise field. By the side of the field close to the river was a small allotment garden and refuse dump and an incinerator. In the washing room large troughs were ranged parallel to one another the width of the room. Hot and cold water was plentiful and there was a row of shower baths along one side of the room. Except those allotted to fatigue duty, all the prisoners went to the exercise field until 12 noon. Games of football, running, jumping and weight-throwing were indulged in by many of the prisoners and those so inclined formed groups and walked the circuit of the field. Michael Collins, then a young prisoner like the rest, little thinking of the fame and destiny in the future, was always amongst the groups doing the long jump and throwing weights (which were large stones). Contests in all these events were held - dormitory against dormitory, county V county, and province V province.

During the morning the British Governor of the camp came to the exercise field and all the prisoners were formed up in column of companies for his inspection. The sergeant major -

"Jack Knives" - shouted the order "Hats off" and the Governor shouted to the best of his ability, but in a squeaky, drawing-room voice, "Good morning". "Jack Knives" had to bawl: "Answer - good morning". An undetermined mumble from the prisoners was the response. Commandant Staines accompanied him on these inspections and his bland face expressed the futility of these proceedings of the "Good morning". Inspection over, "Jack Knives" commanded: "Hats on" and Commandant Staines dismissed the parade. At 12 noon we went back from the exercise field to the camp and, until dinner, we were occupied looking out for letters at the censor's office and washing out personal belongings. The hooter for dinner was the occasion of a rush to our kits for mug, plate, knife, fork and spoon. The side drum rattle of knife and fork on the plate by the prisoners all the way to the dining room was an exasperating din which Commandant Staines and many others tried for a week or so to stop, but without success. Later, the prisoners ceased making the din on their own accord.

Midday meal consisted of stew of varied assortments of inferior meat including horse flesh, and potatoes which were never of the table variety. A large round pan of haricot beans was supplied to each mess. It was the only item on the menu really fit to be eaten, but as it was supplied every day it was gradually getting monotonous. Some of the prisoners got tired of it, but it was gratefully consumed by the men who had better appetites for it. The camp rations were supplemented by parcels from home and friends of the prisoners. In each mess little groups were formed who pooled the contents of their parcels and occasionally supplemented them by items bought in the prison canteen. Eamon Moran was in charge of a small group in our mess which allotted these items.

John O'Mahony acquired a sum of money by levying a charge on card games in the camp. One day after dinner, he asked the prisoners for suggestions as to what he should purchase with it. After some debate it was agreed to buy a bag of rice. John O'Mahony was a picturesque and lovable type; he was subject to much good-humoured banter, joking and interjections, which he always took in good part and was well able with his repartee. He always preceded his speeches with the salutation: "Comrades" and in a very short time this stuck to him as the name by which he was known ever after in the camp. This bag of rice was the cause of his falling temporarily in esteem as it caused serious illness. Everyone was looking forward to the special treat of the rice and all got a plentiful portion the day it was cooked. Eamon Moran had some presentiment that it should not be eaten and, in our group, he told us not to do so, and he provided a tin of fruit to take its place. We looked with some doubt on his opinion when the rice was distributed, as it looked appetising and was eaten with relish by all the others. Nevertheless he insisted that we should not eat it. However, during the night in the dormitory a number of men were constantly going back and forward to the lavatory which was situated there and, when morning came, half the men were up and dressed before the hooter sounded and were knocking to get out. After the count there was chaos in the latrine outside. The whole camp was in a continuous queue leading to it and those who came out of it doubled up to join it again. This continued all the morning and many of the men were removed to hospital. Various explanations were offered for the illnesses, but it was generally thought that the rice was contaminated and unfit for use. It was weeks before some of the men recovered.

The fatigue party drawing the bread rations from the railway station on wooden troughs found them difficult to carry

even when empty owing to their weight. Four men were allotted to each of the troughs carrying them on their shoulders. I was on this party several times and, even by putting my cap on my shoulder to relieve the pressure, the skin on my shoulder was always broken after carrying them.

The most unpleasant fatigue duty was at the latrines. They were primitive and were situated in the outer yard and consisted of a galvanised enclosure; inside were three long rows of pits with one length of pole running along the edge of each pit about 18 inches from the ground. Fatigue parties for the dormitories and dining room had to have large numbers as there was plenty of work in scrubbing seats, table boards, trestles and floors. The leader of each fatigue party drew brushes, buckets, etc. from the quartermaster every morning and returned them immediately after using them. They were also given a plentiful supply of Jeyes fluid.

When locked in the dormitory each night the men used the time in many ways. A number of them started the hobby of doing macramé work with coloured cord and, in a short time, several of them got very expert with it. Donal Buckley, Maynooth, made some pretty coloured ladies' handbags with interwoven designs and initials on them. Others got bones from the kitchen and dried them and carved paper knives, crosses, book covers and trinket boxes and embossed Celtic designs and ships on them. Another group went in for woodwork, but wood was the most difficult item to get and their efforts were limited to small box containers. Many took up sketching and drawing. A few composed topical rhymes. A number of the prisoners who were jewellers had diligent pupils learning the art of ring and brooch making from coins and wire.

Each night the rosary was said in Irish and about an

an hour's concert followed it. We had some fine singers - P. O'Doherty of Derry was a beautiful tenor and had a great selection of songs, and the charm of the Derry accent added to this enjoyment. A man named Kavanagh from Dublin was also a good singer and he was constantly in request. His songs were: "Whack fol the diddle", "Moses ri tooral" and the other popular songs of the time. Another Dublin man named Begley was a tip-top singer and varied the programme with operatic selections.

On a raised corner of the loft a group had claimed a squatter's rights, playing cards, or just talking. Dick Mulcahy, Sean Neeson, Michael Staines, Padraig O'Maille and Professor Liam O'Briain were always there and many others made occasional visits for a game of cards. Several men were always writing stories, poetry, or composing music.

In our dormitory there were many traces of the previous occupiers - the German war prisoners. Along one of the walls there were several crayon drawings in colour of girls' heads which had an undoubted professional style. These drawings were removed shortly after our occupation, when the premises were whitewashed. On the shelf the length of the wall were many religious leaflets in German distributed by a Catholic organisation. I have one of them in my possession still. There were also a number of small wooden containers well-made without any nails with slotted hinged covers which were used for holding salt, as traces of it were inside them. There were also a few pairs of clogs here and there in the loft. These were of makeshift design put together with flat pieces of timber and bits of tin, and were worn for fun by our fellows.

The instructions of Commandant Staines and Captain O'Connell to put shirts, socks and other personal clothing which prisoners washed through the fumigator were ignored by some of the

prisoners, until an outbreak of lice caused a united and determined action amongst the men to see that the order was carried out and, in a short time, this menace was overcome. A tall Clonakilty man was in charge of the fumigator and he had a busy time.

Sometimes the daily posters of newspapers' contents, which are displayed outside newsagents' premises, came to the camp, used as wrapping paper. In most cases these announced a big number of German casualties on the war front. The Clonakilty man used get possession of these and hang them in front of the fumigator and painted out all the printed matter except 20,000 casualties, or whatever big number the poster announced. Naturally, this gave amusement to the prisoners, but "Jack Knives" was furious and took down the posters, but it was of no avail, for, when these posters were confiscated. the prisoners - knowing that it gave irritation to the soldiers continued to paint on odd sheets of paper the daily casualty lists of thousands.

Rats were all over the camp when we arrived and all the efforts of the prisoners failed completely to eliminate them. Our camp officers were always endeavouring to get rid of them and got traps and poison from the sergeant major. A number of dock workers of the Citizen Army, who had some skill in exterminating them, were put in charge. When we were locked in at night, the rats could be seen from the windows in uncountable numbers in the compound and on the roofs of the dining room and cookhouse. When the prisoners were sleeping in the dormitory at night I often woke up and saw hundreds of them running and playing along the floor and over the sleeping men. Frequently, men got up to frighten them away, but found it was impossible to do so. Donal Buckley was bitten under the eye one night by one and he got medical treatment, but the mark of the bite

remained on his face.

Lectures were given on many subjects. The principal ones were military matters and were well attended, and I still have notes on one of them; it was the French invasion at Killala and the battles fought after it and the lessons of tactics learned from them. Another popular subject was on farming which always caused some lively arguments and debates. I can remember James Haverty of Springlawn, Galway, as a prominent debater of those lectures and I can remember Barney O'Driscoll always talking about "alluvial soil". There was an Art School limited to a small number. It did not continue, as the artists who were teaching were too busy painting portraits. I was admitted to some of the lectures which were principally on perspective, and were excellent. There were Irish classes in every dormitory.

A German priest, who had been chaplain to the German prisoners of war, remained with us for about two weeks. He was middle-aged and a saintly man. He spoke English fairly well, but with a very pronounced German accent. After Mass on each Sunday he mentioned how he was aware of the rebellion in Ireland and hoped that Ireland would see happy times in the future, that many of the German people knew a lot about Ireland and about its beauty, its culture and its loyalty to the Faith, and he hoped that peace would soon come to the world. We were pleased with him and felt that behind those non-committal words he was one with us, but he was removed fairly quickly, and a very young English priest came to take up his duties as chaplain This young priest did not resemble in attire what we in Ireland were accustomed to. He wore a straw hat and short civilian cut black coat. He hardly ever spoke to the men and passed along rather timidly. The men began asking why we could not have an Irish priest, and a request was made to the Governor and an

Irish priest, Father Stafford - a British army chaplain - came next. He arrived in British army uniform and the camp was in a furore, as they believed the British were making use of Father Stafford to create trouble. Father Stafford was made aware of the objection of the men to his wearing khaki while acting as chaplain to Irish Volunteers, as they were not British soldiers. When visiting the camp afterwards, he wore a soutane over the uniform. Some of the men still noticed the khaki trousers and were not quite satisfied.

There were scarcely any dwellings around the locality of the camp and, on the road nearby, there was no traffic except occasionally a farm cart going to the fields from the nearby farmhouse. Occasionally a flock of sheep passed the way in charge of a man with a sheep dog. On Sundays we could see a congregation of not more than twenty people pass along to church service in a trim-like protestant church situated close to the north camp. Outside the church was a well-cared-for little cemetery in which some Germans were also interred.

Route marches were held once or twice a week during August and September. They were much enjoyed by the prisoners as the camp was in an isolated mountainous district. The guard which accompanied us did not relish this additional duty and were always tired and grumbling on the march. The country road was picturesque and resembled Wicklow or Kerry. Little streams were tumbling down crags, everywhere fuschia was growing by the roadside. Mountainash was gleaming with red berries through its yellowing fingered leaves, and the close shining green of holly was in profusion, One of our lads played lively marches on the bagpipes, the men singing lustily to the airs. After walking a mile or two before returning, there would be a halt and the piper played a hornpipe or reel for some of the

more expert dancers. Sometimes a shepherd or two would come to view the scene and Liam O'Briain would engage them in a conversation in the Welsh language which would be mingled with hearty laughter.

The camp was run by the prisoners themselves who selected an officers' council and chose Commandant Staines as camp commandant. The prisoners co-operated in carrying out their daily orders and responded willingly to the tasks of fatigue duty and, as far as it was possible with constant work and material available, the place was kept in very good condition. The British Camp Governor and his staff were constantly causing a lot of friction by introducing new duties which had no relation to the good order of the camp. These orders were resisted and frequently men were punished by terms in the cells or deprived of receiving or sending letters, newspapers and parcels. The removal of the British guards' refuse to the dump and incinerator involved most of the prisoners in punishment. Every day, "Jack Knives" detailed a fatigue party to go to the guards' camp to remove the soldiers' refuse. The prisoners refused to carry out this work and were conveyed to the north camp and isolated and deprived of letters and parcels. I was on the third batch sent to the north camp. None of the men were worried about it.

On another occasion the British wished to get some of the prisoners who came from England to take part in the insurrection to conscript them for military service and all the camp refused to answer to their names in an attempt to save them from identification. This brought the usual punishment. The letters, when we did get them, were mostly in shreds as the censors used the scissors to cut out lines and half pages of the written contents. The letters were censored in a hut in the outer compound and were in charge of a British army officer

and two N.C.O.s. Parcels were also opened here and the prisoners were called to be present at the opening of the parcels. The N.C.O.s who did this job often let letters enclosed in the parcels go uncensored in exchange for a packet of cigarettes or other small share of the parcel. Frequently there would be a stack of newspapers piled on the floor of the censor's office - and which were never given to the prisoners - but when getting their parcels, prisoners often took some of the newspapers unobserved and hid them under their coats.

During the months of July and August, all the prisoners were brought in parties of about 20 men to London to appear before an Advisory Board set up by the British Government composed of Judge Sankey and a Mr. Mooney, a member of John Redmond's Irish Party. The prisoners were brought under military escort by rail and lodged either in Wandsworth or Wormwood Scrubbs Prison. Each party of prisoners were three days in London prisons where the Board sat, and in all would be about five or six days before being brought back to Frongoch. It was difficult to understand all these arrangements for such an absurd farce, for it could have been done in Frongoch. From the prisoners' point of view, it made no difference to them, but it certainly was a shocking waste of transport, time and military personnel of the British Government, while the world was told that Britain was using all her military strength and her resources and had her back to the wall fighting for small nations in the battlefields of France.

Our party was brought through the streets of London on two double-decker buses to Wormwood Scrubbs Prison on 17th June. It was apparently a show parade for, on the way, people on the streets, groups standing outside pubs and on the pavement jeered at us and shook their fists. I was on the top deck of

a bus and had a good view of those street scenes. Outside one pub there was a small group who gave the word of our passing to those inside. I saw a crowd rushing out and, amongst them, a group of women who were apparently intoxicated. They were dressed in shawls and their small hats were trimmed with feathers and flowers in disorderly array on their disarranged hair. They were shouting and prancing inagitated gusto. Passing near a school, a number of boys were filling water pistols and garden syringes in street pools after a recent shower of rain and spraying the contents on us on top of the bus. The military escort got most of the dirty water. This had the immediate effect of drawing a tornado of awful language from the escorts with threats from them to stop it.

In passing two large buildings, one a hotel and the other a shop premises, groups of girls, who must have been Irish, hung out and waved large streamers of green from the top storey. From what other parties of the prisoners related, these girls were always on the lookout and waved when the prisoners passed by. The military escort were young soldiers who were cheerful and friendly and enjoyed our banter and the different type of reception we got. Our route went by Hyde Park and, noticing numbers of fashionably dressed ladies with gaily trimmed wide straw hats on the park chairs, we were surprised that the soldiers shouted all kinds of ungentlemanly remarks to them and when the ladies got up from their seats and walked unindignantly away, we indicated surprise at the unseemly conduct of the soldiers. They laughlingly replied in explicit but not academic language that they were everything but ladies.

The memory of Wormwood Scrubbs is the most lasting of all my prison experiences. On entering the large entrance hall it was like a scene from another world. The putrid smell of foul air, a mixture of oakum and decay, of sweating and sick

humanity, was choking. A dark yellow fog made everything dim and it took some moments to distinguish the surroundings. For some minutes, we were standing there and, in that time, a file of about ten miserable prisoners passed slowly along in front of us. They were small in size, deformed - some of them very lame, others of them hunchbacked - and each of them was carrying an iron ball which was chained to his leg. Their movements were deadly slow, their faces were drained of blood, flesh-parched and furrowed. Their eyes fixed on the ground, they looked neither left nor right, but continued the snail paces until they turned into a corridor. What their crimes were and why they got such cruel treatment, I never was able to find out. We were soon placed in separate cells on the ground floor, similar in type to other prison cells. We were not permitted exercise in the morning. A warder told me that the regular criminals had to get exercise. I had a peep out of my cell window by means of a prison stool and in the exercise yard I saw a large number of prisoners whom I learned later were conscientious objectors getting some tough treatment. They were doubled around the exercise ring until exhausted. They were then ordered to take their small prison stools which they brought from the cells and ordered to perform arms drill with them. They had to bend down low and hold the stools and slope arms with them and the warders who were in charge had no mercy for them, shouting and abusing them. It was impossible to perform the task, but they were kept at it for about fifteen minutes and then brought to the cells.

The warders in Wormwood Scrubbs were a type I had not met before and reminded me, in the way they carried out their duties, of those quick-moving, discreet wild animal trainers seen at circuses. They gave their orders to us in a sing-song strain, repeating the same thing over and over again. They walked

quickly with catlike strides, hesitating only when turning a corner or coming near a prisoner. Perhaps dealing with the hardened type of English and foreign criminals who were imprisoned there made it necessary for them to adopt such methods. The Irish prisoners had them perplexed. We moved slowly and continually we grinned at one another and at them particularly when they gave their orders in their parrot-like fashion. It was difficult to engage them in conversation.

In the evening we were brought out to the exercise yard with the usual stone-flagged rings. We were placed on the outer ring, keeping the usual three paces apart, and told to walk. At one corner of the yard was a small shed partitioned in about six cubicles with a small bench in each. As we passed by it in our circuit, I noticed six prisoners in prison garb with heads bowed intently at the work of sewing mailbags. They did not appear to look at us or notice us as if we were not there at all. This apparent lack of interest in their surroundings caused me to study them more intently when passing them and I noticed they were constantly putting their fingers in their mouths and withdrawing them quickly. Every time I passed them I stared at them and, at last, one of them looked up quickly and sucked his finger and blew his lips out. At once I knew what he meant. I had some cigarettes and put a few in a bit of paper with some matches and, after a round or two, I tossed it in front of the shed when the nearby warder was not looking. Immediately all the prisoners in the cubicles raised their heads from their work for just a moment and then continued their work with heads down; but one of them came out and in a quick movement got possession of the paper and went to a latrine. Some of my fellow prisoners saw what I did and they in turn tossed quite a lot of cigarettes to the convicts and they retrieved them in the same manner. When those prisoner

raised their heads for those brief moments it would be impossible to convey what their appearances were like. Their faces were bereft of all human expression, their colour was ghastly grey, their eyes were large and vacant and conveyed the dregs of despair and misery. The daily routine of the harsh prison life, perhaps for long-term sentences, had left them without even the human interest of looking at us first. But the little incident of throwing them the cigarettes put a little sparkle of humanity into them; hence, they often raised their heads and looked at us in a dull, but awakening interest.

My attendance at the Advisory Board was short. We were brought in groups of five and seated outside the door and called in one by one. Thomas McCarthy of Enniscorthy was in front of me on the seat and when he came out of the room I was called in. It was a large unfurnished room except for some shelves piled with files of papers and, seated at a spacious table, were Judge Sankey and Mr. Mooney. It was easy to know Sankey with his precise imperious manner. Mooney, a member of John Redmond's Irish Party, sitting at his side, had a condescending futile appearance. Up to this time, such Irishmen, when dealing with Englishmen in any kind of authority, were too complacent to the ponderous acclamations of the British. A lackey in bowing servility brought forth a file from the shelf in answer to Sankey calling for the file dealing with me. Sankey opened it and looked over some sheets of records therein, of which there were many, and put the question: "Are you Joseph McCarthy?" in answer to which I said yes. In the meantime, Mooney pulled the file over and had a peep. He could not have read two lines when Sankey pulled it back. Sankey asked me a few silly questions, such as where and when I was arrested; where was my uniform. I told him the R.I.C. took it in a raid on my house on Easter Monday of which he knew already. He

closed the file and wrote a few words. Mooney urgently pulled the file to him, but Sankey reached for it and handed it to the lackey and said: "Next".

It would be interesting to get those records which Sankey had at the Advisory Board, particularly to see how far R.I.C. Intelligence was successful and also to what extent they were misled and outwitted in the information. While we were being put back in the cells, a file of prisoners were going up an iron stairway to cells in the upper storeys. They looked like men only recently in custody, as they had not the pallid appearance of those other prisoners I saw in Wormwood Scrubbs. Some of them were well-proportioned and others of distinguished appearance. One of them, in particular, looked like those important people you see in newspaper photographs of Members of Parliament and Company Directors. A warder I did not see before came to place me in the cell and he appeared to be different from the rest in his manner. He asked me some questions about what happened at the Advisory Board and mentioned his wife had some connection with Ireland. I asked him who were the prisoners who were brought to the higher cells just now. He laughed and said those were most prized criminals they had in the prison and included the most notorious and successful spies, a few murderers and crooks and a Member of Parliament named Tresbetch Lincoln. He was an adventurer with a big story that could not be recorded here, but he got himself selected to contest a parliamentary election, defeated his opponents and won a seat in the English Parliament during the war. Amongst his crimes while in parliament was giving information to the enemy. Later, after completing his sentence, he went to Tibet and was elected to high office in a monastery there. He later took part in many other exploits and came to England again in an unsuccessful

attempt to get a reprieve for his son who was sentenced to be hanged for murder. He was about to tell me of the others but, as another warder approached, he said he must go now.

Our trip back to Frongoch was uneventful, but, going through the streets of London again under military escort and by bus, I noticed huge-sized hoardings with recruiting posters, featuring Lord Kitchener with his beetling scowl and his accusing finger in extra large dimensions pointing outward, and the wording: "Your King and Country need you", with a background of the Union Jack in colour. These huge hoardings, I learned afterwards, were erected on any available site in London at his own expense by Horatio Bottomley, who was proved to be one of England's famous swindlers and who made a considerable sum of money during the war by patriotic benevolenc and fraud.

The experiences of all the prisoners at the Advisory Board were very much the same pattern and, when all had been before the Board, a number of prisoners were released. When the releases ceased, the camp members were reduced by about half the number of prisoners. The prisoners remaining settled down in good spirits. Everything went on as usual, but the conflicts with the Governor became more numerous over rights and principles of running the camp. The general pattern of punishment was removal to the north camp and being deprived of parcels and letters, and smoking. At one time, nearly all were in the north camp and no one felt any worry. They always sang, played jokes and carried on as usual and, in spite of restriction, we were able to smuggle tobacco, cigarettes and extra food from one camp to the other. There were often raids to search for tobacco and cigarettes and very rarely they found any, though the huts sometimes were reeking with the smell of tobacco smoke.

As the year advanced, conditions became unpleasant owing to frequent rain and snow and the ground in the north camp was a sea of mud. Duckboards were placed on the approaches to the huts and the other buildings, but everywhere else were improvised passways by stepping stones, and anyone missing his step was ankle deep in mud. In spite of every care we could not keep the mud out of the huts and it was difficult to keep clothing and blankets clean and dry. Some of the prisoners became expert at housekeeping and were the envy of the others Their laundry was spotless and their work with the needle was tailor-like in workmanship, and the meals they were able to provide at night-time on top of the hut stoves with meagre resources were appetising fare. Phil Lennon, who was a hut leader in the north camp, became a first-rate cook and in our hut he was in constant request to use his skill.

Most of the prisoners adopted a fashion of growing beards or moustaches which was the cause of endless joking. Some of the younger men were not very successful and took in friendly mood the taunts of "Arbour Day" and "Haven't you any subs for that team of fifteen hairs" and many other remarks rippling in endless jokes. Those with beards fashioned them in endless style, some favouring goatees, others side-whiskers and others let them grow in mass profusion, but this craze was only of short duration and only a small number continued with beards or moustaches. Phil Lennon was one of those and after his release he continued for some months wearing a trimmed growth of reddish whiskers.

Commandant Staines informed me of my release on 6th December 1916, and gave me a dispatch to deliver in Dublin. He instructed me to make sure of its safety and to destroy it rather than have it discovered. I had to memorise the address which was not

written. It was O'Doherty, Goldsmith St., Dublin. Sergeant Phillips gave me and my kit a careful search and failed to find the dispatch. I had it sewn inside my coat sleeve. In the railway compartment on the train journey to Paddington there was much coming and going of passengers at the station stops. Sometimes there were few people in the compartment and at times it was overcrowded. Amongst the passengers were always numbers of soldiers either going on or returning from leave. There was no man in civilian clothes. I was not far on the journey when an ageing clergyman got into the compartment. He carried some parcels and had difficulty in finding room for them. I shifted my green kitbag (which a friend kindly sent to me in Frongoch) on the rack over my head to make room for his parcels. After sitting down opposite me he beamed at me and, pointing to my kitbag, remarked: "Going on furlough?" I said: "No, I am going to surprise you. I am a Sinn Fein prisoner just released from Frongoch Internment Camp". I said "Sinn Fein prisoner" as the English papers referred to the Republican prisoners as Sinn Fein, so that he would not mistake what I was saying. I said it in a voice that could be heard by everyone in the compartment as I was eager to see the reaction. A gasp of excitement came from the clergyman. With horror and frightened expressions the women moved together and away from me, the soldiers stopped their conversation and gazed at me. No one spoke for quite a while. All were looking at me as if I were the rarest specimen of man. I was smiling at the clergyman and when he recovered himself he cleared his throat and put his hand timidly and gently on my knee and said, slowly: "Well, well, my dear boy, to look at you one would think you would not harm a child. Ireland must be a shocking place to live in" he said, after a little reflection.

The clergyman asked why were the Irish people so disloyal. I pointed out to him that it was their loyalty to Ireland that made it so difficult for England to rule it and, until he left the train, a few stations further on, we monopolised the compartment with the attention of the listeners to our conversation. When he left, the remaining passengers were competing with one another with kindness, offering me cigarettes and fruit, and, as the passengers left the train, they were particular to give me cordial handshakes.

On my arrival in Dublin early in the morning, I delivered my dispatch to the lady of the house, Mrs. O'Doherty, who informed me it was usually at this time the G-men came to raid her house and when she heard a knock she expected to see a raiding party of G-men. I accepted her kind invitation to breakfast and left for New Ross.

Signed: Joseph McCarthy

Date: 10th Sept 1956.

Witness: _____