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STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

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Witness

Very Rev. Fr. T. O'Donoghue, P.P.,
St. Joseph's,
Rawmarsh, Yorkshire,
England

Identity.

Founder member of Fianna Eireann

Subject.

Irish Citizen Army, St. Stephen's Green and College of Surgeons, 1916

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STATEMENT BY VERY REV. FATHER THOMAS O'DONOGHUE, P.P.

St. Joseph's, Rawmarsh, Yorkshire.

I joined the Fianna and I was present at its inaugural meeting held at 34 Camden St. Dublin, in August 1909. This meeting was announced in Arthur Griffith's paper - either "The United Irishman" or "The Nation". It was also announced in "Inghini na hEireann". As far as I remember, the meeting was announced for the formation of an Irish Boys' Brigade. At this time, I was a member of the McHale Branch of the Gaelic League of which Sean T. O'Kelly was President. I think the meeting was also announced in W.T. Ryan's paper. I attended the meeting and I think it was presided over by Bulmer Hobson who introduced Countess Markievicz. The latter made a speech which reminded me of John Redmond's "Green Flag" speeches. It was a lovely speech, made from her heart, and sincere. As a boy, I had, however, a horror of waving the Green Flag and telling England we were going to fight her.

At the meeting I found it was an Irish Boy Scouts' organisation that was being formed and not a Boys' Brigade, as announced. It seemed to me that this organisation resembled too closely the British Boy Scouts - Baden Powell's - but this was got over by calling the organisation "The Fianna". The committee was elected for a month. I was a member of that first committee and I was also appointed section leader. After a month, we had a permanent committee of which I was also a member. Those on the permanent committee were: Seamus McGashin (a schoolmate of mine), Eamon Martin, Seamus Paunch, Miss Nellie Bushell of the Abbey, Miss Helena Molony, Countess Markievicz, Padraig ÓRiain and, I think, Jack Shallow. Some of these may not have been exactly on the committee, but they were on that status.

In the Fianna, although credit was given to Countess

Markievicz, the major mind in it was Bulmer Hobson. He was the head, and she could be described as the heart of it. I drifted away from the normal opinions of the leaders of the Fianna because of the fact that I objected to boys being trained to use arms and to people talking too much about fighting for Ireland, because I had become accustomed to flamboyant speeches of the Irish Parliamentary Party and was very suspicious of anything of that nature. To my mind, the ideal was contained in a book by Bulmer Hobson - "Defensive Warfare" - written about 1904 or 1905. It was before Sinn Fein actually got going. This book was a foreshadowing of the guerilla warfare of 1920.

The committee or sluagh of the Fianna in Camden St. at the time began to spread out and appoint officers to take charge of various sluaghs in the city. They were the nucleus. Thus, after a time, I confined myself solely to the Pipers' Band which was organised by Brian Callander. Amongst the pipers was Peadar Kearney, the writer of "A Soldier's Song" which, it was hoped, would become the marching song of the Fianna, but other people asked Brian O'Higgins to write the marching song of the Fianna instead.

After three years, I think, we eventually formed a new organisation called "The Irish National Guard". We had previously rejected the name "Irish Volunteers" because it savoured too much of Arthur Griffith's ideal of the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland. The President of this organisation was J.V. Lawless of Cloughran. Mat Stafford, Sean O'Hanlon and a few more were in it. Our idea was to have youths, not boys, trained in the use of arms. I was appointed secretary, but I am afraid I lacked the energy and organising ability necessary. We had three branches in Dublin and three in Galway. That was about 1912. I think we had a branch in Cork, but I am not too sure. It lasted for about 12 months and eventually

it died away. All the Dublin members of the National Guard situated in Blackhall Street joined B/Company, 3rd Battalion. I lost heart in it because they started a Cumann na mBan group in it and I would not have anything to do with it then. I had a horror of ladies being in uniform and masquerading as soldiers.

"A Soldier's Song" was first sung by the band when they marched over the Featherbed mountain. It is interesting to relate that this was due to a number of ex-Fianna boys who drifted from the National Guard to B/Company, 3rd Battalion, Dublin Brigade Irish Volunteers, and brought with them "A Soldier's Song". There were some very good singers amongst them and hence it became popular with the whole battalion during the march. Afterwards the song spread through the camps in 1916.

There is a very interesting article in "The Gaelic American" written by myself and published by Griffith. John Devoy took it over and put a little note at the bottom.

The National Guard was a military body to train the youth of Ireland to fight. We had the support of the I.R.B. At that time, I was not a member of the I.R.B., though I knew all about it. Owing to my extensive reading, I traced the I.R.B. to 1904 or 1905 and came to the conclusion that it was still existing and, in fact, I knew many members of the National Guard to be members of the I.R.B., although I pretended to be in complete ignorance of this knowledge. Many of the boys in the Fianna were sons of members of the I.R.B., which I knew to my grief one time.

While I was still a member of the Fianna and head of the John Mitchel Sluagh at Blackhall Street, I had many disputes with the Fianna over various items of policy. I found eventually that all the boys were being taken out of my Sluagh by their parents through I.R.B. influence. I then received notice from the Columcille Gaelic League that John Mitchel Sluagh of the Fianna could no longer use the premises at Blackhall St. and

Mr. Lennon, one of the committee of the Columcille Branch took me aside and a sked me did I know who was up against me. I said yes, that I knew it was the I.R.B. I discovered that the trustee of 5 Blackhall Street was a McShane of North Circular Road. I went to him and asked for another room in the house, over the heads of the committee. As a result, he gave us another room in the premises (Blackhall Street). These were the premises in which the Irish National Guard was formed. We did not mean to be in opposition to the Fianna. We only wanted youths - not boys.

After I left the National Guard, my activities were solely taken up with the Pipers' Band and I was one of the founders, instructor and Pipe Major of Fintan Lalor Pipers. Robert de Coeur was really the founder of the Fintan Lalor Pipers' Band at 77 Aungier Street.

When the 1913 lockout strike took place, the workers were really hopeless, and one means of keeping up their enthusiasm was through marches of the Pipers' Band. One Sunday (I think it was the first Sunday of the strike) we were coming from Liberty Hall to 77 Aungier St. and, on turning into South Great Georges Street, some commotion took place at the rere of the band and I gave the order to halt in a very loud voice, I called over the Superintendent of the police and asked him for his name. I told him I'd hold him responsible for any breach of the peace that took place; that we were merely marching, as we had a right to do, through the city, and we did not need police protection. I was very young then and looked even younger which, in retrospect, adds a touch of humour to my approach to the Superintendent. That evening, Bob de Coeur called a meeting and proposed that hurleys be provided as a bodyguard for the band, and a man named Charlie Armstrong (reservist of the Royal Irish Fusiliers) was appointed to drill

and train the members to act on whistle signals only. From the time the bodyguard was provided, we had no more police interference. The founding of the Citizen Army was coincidental with the forming of this defence corps and it now became part of the Citizen Army.

When arms became more plentiful, I insisted that the Band itself should be armed with revolvers and, of course, ammunition. However, I objected to one of the members of the Band - Billy Roberts - being armed, as I did not consider him a reliable type. I received the arms from Connolly personally. He gave them out to each one of us like something very precious. My objections to Roberts were the cause of my leaving the Band. Billy Roberts afterwards became a British Tommy. He is now in the asylum. I knew him better than any of the others. Robert de Coeur was the type who trusted everyone. Henceforward I was concerned with the Citizen Army military side only.

I joined the Volunteers in Larkfield, but, upon finding that they were dominated by the I.R.B., I ceased to attend, although I must say that I highly honoured them and their ideals

I took part in the manoeuvres with the Citizen Army including a midnight attack on the Castle. The result of my participation in manoeuvres was that I had very little respect for the ability of the officers of the Citizen Army, the fundamental reason being that the majority, as trained soldiers of the British army, lacked initiative and the practical knowledge of strategy and tactics. They knew how to drill and fight, etc. To give an example of that: we were on manoeuvres in North County Dublin between Santry and Swords. The object of the manoeuvres was the penetration of the defence of North Dublin by the advance party trying to enter the city. Knowing the country well from my time with the Fianna, I was detailed to assist Lieutenant Tom Kane (now dead) who was in charge of the cyclist party. The defenders of the city were commanded

by Commandant Michael Mallin. I was asked by Lieut. Kane to suggest a plan of entry. My suggestion was to deploy over the fields with our skeleton party, to send a skeleton attacking party on the position where we knew Mallin had concentrated all his forces, namely, on the main road to Swords. We then detailed the cyclists down a road parallel with the Malahide Road. The cyclists came down this road without any opposition and they took another turn leading them on to the Swords road while the main body of Commandant Mallin's party were held by the skeleton party pretending to attack them. According to the rules of warfare, Commandant Mallin's party would have been captured. They formed, so to speak, a line of defence, while the advance party had succeeded in their objective, namely, penetration towards the city. On the criticisms of this manoeuvre on the following night at Liberty Hall, Commandant Mallin said he objected to De Wet tactics. He had in mind the Boer War.

The Citizen Army contacted sailors from overseas and tried to get small supplies of arms through them. My rifle (a Lee Enfield) came from Richmond Barracks. It was brought out openly by a soldier and I paid 30/- for it. They had a supply of Howth guns. My principal reason for remaining a faithful member of the Citizen Army was that I knew if a fight took place the Citizen Army would not be left out, as Connolly was very eager to take part in any fight for Ireland. He was one of the most practical and most sincere of all the men I met who had high positions, either in the Volunteers or the Citizen Army. In one of his "talks" he told a few of us that he lived all his life waiting for the opportunity "that is now near at hand". Many times he dreamed and wondered would it ever come in his time; hence, he was determined that under no circumstances would he lose the opportunity which presented itself of striking a blow for Ireland on the field.

I remember distinctly, about three weeks before Easter

Week 1916, he (Connolly) called a number of us together and gave us commissions signed by himself as Commandant, appointing us to various ranks. I received the rank of Lieutenant which was the same rank as he gave Countess Markievicz on this occasion, although she was one of the Council of the Citizen Army. Mick Kelly got a commission that time. He was Lieutenant. Tom Kane had been a Lieutenant, but he was now made captain. Sean Connolly was also made captain. Frank Robbins was made sergeant. O'Shea (Jimmy, I think) was also made sergeant. These commissions were only to take effect when the fight began. Up to that I was a full private.

Digressing here, I really took charge of that manoeuvre described, but only because Tom Kane asked me to do so.

Continuing where I left off. In a few days time, each of us was taken in separately to Connolly's office in Liberty Hall and given our positions in the fight which was soon to take place He told us the fight would come off, but he didn't tell us when. He told us where to take our positions and the approximate number of men we would have at our disposal. He asked us to prepare our own field plans and to submit them to him later on and to read matters up. He said to me: "I believe you are a great student of military manuals", adding laughingly, "read them up".

In the British military manuals available to me I could find nothing touching on street fighting; hence, I went to the National Library and looked up the records of the fighting in Moscow in 1903 or 1904. This was just to visualise what took place. In subsequent discussions with Captain Kane, I argued that when in Moscow they could only last four days despite the fact that the "rebels" were well armed; therefore, I could not see how we could last unless we went out into the country-side.

The position allotted to myself as Lieutenant was at the

north-east corner of Stephen's Green with the houses around it including the Shelbourne Hotel. A Sergeant Keogh from Raheny, or that direction, was to take charge of the Shelbourne under my command with twelve men. As far as I remember, I was to have 35 or 40 men all told. Shortly after this, Connolly told us that one of the signs that the fight was very near would be the distribution of three days' supply of food.

I visited the position several times at the corner of the Shelbourne and felt bewildered at the prospect, because I had never taken part in any kind of a fight and always shuddered at hurting anybody. My brother, Eamon, a member of B/Company, 3rd Battalion, and I discussed the whole situation and came to the conclusion that Easter would probably be the time when the fight would take place. One thing that indicated this was that all leave for Volunteers to go on holidays during that period was to cease. As well as that, Eamon was appointed as armed guard occasionally at the Volunteer Headquarters in Dawson St.

We now tried to complete our equipment and we acquired more ammunition. Tom Traynor, who was afterwards executed in the Tan trouble, had a shoemaker's shop at Merchant's Arch near the Metal Bridge and he made a leather harness for the knapsacks of about half a dozen of us. Strange to say, one item of my equipment was a large axe which was to be used for the purpose of entering houses that were barred against us, an essential thing in street warfare. Connolly insisted on the importance of breaking through from house to house and making blocks of houses whole units for defence.

Going back to 1915 - I was then employed in Kynock's factory in Arklow, and there I met some men who were to take an active part in the 1916 Insurrection. Amongst them was Joe Vize. He was chief engineer on some ships which took ammunition from Kynock's to the Depot in Kent where the British army shells were

filled. After this, I went to Loughrea in Co. Galway and founded a section of Volunteers. I remained in Loughrea until January 1916. The general spirit in Loughrea was very slavish and the really good people were terrorised by a few dominant politicians. For instance, when it was learned that I was starting a Pipers' Band and that I spoke Irish and did not smoke or drink, they came to the conclusion that I was a "Sinn Feiner" and had come into the town to cause trouble; so a deputation of a couple of prominent citizens waited on my employer, Locksly of Leeds, to have me sacked, but he refused. It was then I set out to found a company of Volunteers. There were some men of very great courage in this little town, because it required great courage to stand up to the opposition they met with. The most prominent amongst this courageous group were Joseph O'Flaherty, an old Fenian, and Peter Sweeney, a building contractor. Being independent men, they could afford to stand out, if necessary, against the whole town. The National Volunteers were very powerful in the town and were now used as a basis for recruiting for the British army.

In pursuance of this policy, a public meeting was held in a large hall opposite the Cathedral - I think it was the Town Hall - to urge enlistment in the British army. The only dissentient voice was that of Peter Sweeney.

The following night, the National Volunteers, headed by the town band and led by Mr. Semple, a bank clerk, paraded the town and broke some windows, including O'Flaherty's. Peter Sweeney then asked me to get arms for our Volunteers. I went to Athenry by bicycle on Saturday morning so that my absence from the town would not be noticed by the police, and Liam Mellows in Athenry told me to call to Michael O'Hanrahan here in Dublin and he would give me some revolvers and ammunition. Tom Kenny of Craughwell (who was brought for trial for the murder of a policeman in Craughwell - named McGoldrick) asked me to come to

Dublin as representative of the Irish Council and take his place as committee representative. This was merely an excuse for going to Dublin. I attended the meeting which was held over Noblett's in O'Connell St., Dublin.

When we came to the station in Athenry, police guards were watching and, being the same build and colour as Mellows, I imagine some confusion arose, because Liam was going to Gort, while I was going to Dublin, and the trains were leaving within 5 or 10 minutes of each other; I am not too sure. The police tried to overcome this by giving a note to a man on the train, but when I arrived at Broadstone, I jumped the wall on to the canal and was quickly lost. I received a dozen revolvers and ammunition from Michael O'Hanrahan in Dawson St., and returned to Galway so as to be at work on Monday, nobody in Athenry being the wiser except our own people. We distributed the arms amongst the Volunteers.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, I don't know which, I returned to Dublin in January 1916, and lost all touch with the Volunteers in Athenry until I met some of them in jail. If I had been in Athenry, they would have turned out. I might be wrong in judging Galway by Athenry, because the latter was dominated by a few unscrupulous politicians.

In December 1915, in order to make recruiting more popular, the National Volunteers marched through the town during the Loughrea horse fair. I wrote a description of this for Connolly's paper "The Workers' Republic". This paper was rigidly censored by the printer, I think. I don't think it was official, but my article was overlooked and when the paper was published the military took possession of the printing plant and all available copies of the paper, much to the delight of Connolly, who said he felt highly honoured because, in other cases, the police did the suppressing of papers, but in this case it was military. This incident was brought to my mind

because I was to form one of a guard on the printing plant in Liberty Hall. I slept on the layers of newsprint on Holy Thursday and Good Friday nights in Liberty Hall with my rifle by my side, fully loaded, also my revolver. On Good Friday morning, about 9 o'clock, I was asked by Connolly to go to the Bijou, a tobacconist shop on Stephen's Green, and there I was to meet Thomas McDonagh whom I was to accompany back to Liberty Hall. I was to carry my revolver fully loaded. I met McDonagh at the door accompanied by Danny O'Grady. The latter went away and I accompanied Thomas McDonagh back to Liberty Hall. During our walk, we met Sergeant Smith of the 'G' Division, at Talbot St. and I asked McDonagh to come down a little laneway under Dunne's fish shop. My idea in this was that if Sergeant Smith endeavoured to arrest McDonagh, we would have a better chance of escape in the small laneway than we would in the open street. With all humility, McDonagh agreed to come down the little laneway and smilingly said: "You'd imagine there was something serious about to take place".

We walked over to Liberty Hall and I conducted him to Connolly's room. I showed him in but I did not enter; therefore I was not present at their conversation. I realised that something was about to take place and I did not like to ask questions or make comments. That night, we slept in Liberty Hall in the Printing Works section, and I do not know whether it was on Friday, Saturday or early on Sunday morning that a clergyman came up the stairs of Liberty Hall and asked for Mr. Connolly's room. He looked very sickly and his collar did not appear to fit him. Afterwards I learned that he was Joseph Mary Plunkett. A number of other people came at different times to Liberty Hall including Ceannt, Tom Clarke, and I cannot remember the others, but quite a lot of the leaders came during the Friday and Saturday and the activity in Connolly's room was intense.

I consider that Liam Mellows was one of the most self-sacrificing and one of the most sincere men I ever met, and I never met a man who loved Ireland so much. I remember in August 1920, we were both going down to Cork on Volunteer business and he came out on the corridor of the train, pointing out the various places we were passing through, with great feeling. He almost had tears in his eyes when indicating the direction of Slievenamon. He said, with great expression: "Is not Ireland a lovely spot; is it not worth fighting for and dying for?" . I don't think he either drank or smoked and his attitude towards Ireland was a strictly religious one. He felt it was a duty to give himself for Ireland.

On Holy Saturday night I went home, in order to go to Communion on Easter Sunday morning. I returned to Liberty Hall on Easter Sunday morning. My brother was with me and, on the way down, we got a copy of the "Sunday Independent" and saw MacNeill's statement. We were both very puzzled and it was a great source of worry to us. We wondered if there was any dissension amongst the leaders. Liberty Hall was a hive of excitement with people going here and there, strangers coming in and making the inevitable inquiry for Connolly's room, Some of them came on motor bicycles and appeared to have come a long distance. We were served with our three day ration on Saturday, I think, which was an indication to us that the fight was close at hand, as Connolly already had told us on a previous occasion, even though no date was given to us. So great was the number of people going up and down the stairs of Liberty Hall that I wrote in chalk on the wall: "Please keep to the right", in order to divert the traffic and maintain order. The rations were mostly sandwiches, but I don't remember anything else. In fact, I did not get mine, I did not bother taking them. The rations were all made up into parcels and I think they were all sandwiches.

Some of the people passing up and down the stairs may have been members of the Irish Transport Workers' Union, but I doubt it very much.

Rumours were now circulating of some calamity which had occurred around Kerry, and Councillor W.P. Partridge had gone down to investigate, but whatever calamity had occurred, we all felt determined to go ahead. About 12 o'clock, Connolly called the officers of the Citizen Army together in his office. He asked us first had we seen the notice from MacNeill in the paper. "Well", he said, "we all have agreed to act on that notice. There is no division amongst the leaders. At any rate, he continued, "if nobody else turns out, we shall". He then said that Bulmer Hobson had been arrested by the Volunteer authorities and confined in a house, but he had been allowed to see his sweetheart who conveyed a message to MacNeill; hence, MacNeill issued this countermanding order.

Christy Poole was present, also Richard McCormack - both captains. There were also present Captain Sean Connolly and Captain Kane. The latter was originally a lieutenant. James Connolly told us that messengers had gone out with orders confirming MacNeill's orders. We were ordered to parade with our units some time in the afternoon and we noticed many of the higher Volunteer officers at various parts along the road. We were fully armed, with guns loaded, and we carried full equipment. I think it was Connolly's last rallying word: "We are ready". I may, however, be wrong in this conjecture.

I returned home at 3 o'clock and I don't think I went back to Liberty Hall until about 7 o'clock. When I went home I met my brother who had been mobilised for 3 o'clock at 41 Parnell Square with the Volunteers. I asked him to return with me and not to go to "41". He refused, saying "No"; adding: "I have been mobilised for 3 o'clock and I must attend".

I told him all was off and that if he came back with me I'd tell him the whole story. Again he refused to come with me and said he had been mobilised and would turn out. This was Eamon! He returned at 5 o'clock with word that they had been told to await orders for mobilisation at home.

On Holy Thursday, I asked my older brother to order a sack of flour for mother. My brother refused, as we never had that quantity in the house before, stating that he did not see why we required it. However, I urged mother to get at least a few stone of flour and have it in the house, that it would be handy. This precaution was due to the fact that we fully realised that a fight was near at hand. Although I was not definitely told of the rising, from the various precautions I was aware that something of importance was coming off.

In preparing the sandwiches, Sean Connolly was using a bread-slicing machine. It was one some of them made. He sliced off a bit of the skin of his thumb during the operation and this was a great source of worry to him as he (Sean Connolly) was afraid it would impair his use of the rifle. At tea on Sunday evening, about 6 o'clock, we had some of the wheaten bread that mother made from the flour she purchased, mixed with wholemeal, and I put some of the squares of bread into my pocket for use the following day. I was about to return to Liberty Hall, and even mother must have felt that something was close at hand, and she advised me not to fire on the police if they came in to arrest us.

We returned to Liberty Hall that night and everything seemed quieter. Connolly gave instructions that, under no circumstances, was he to be awakened from his sleep, as he told one of the men that it might be the last sleep he would ever have.

On the Sunday night I slept in the room in Liberty Hall furthest from the railing at the front, and on Monday morning

at 9 o'clock, Mallin told me to post guards and take charge of the defence of Liberty Hall. At about 11.45 a.m. there was great excitement and I saw most of the members of the Citizen Army were out on the road in Beresford Place. I went to Mallin and asked him were we also to "fall in". - that was, the little group I had at the time - and he said "yes". Immediately I went upstairs and told all my men to get out. I then reported to Mallin that we were on duty. I don't know how many men I had. Mallin asked me to get them into position. I felt highly honoured that morning. I gave out the command "Easy!" and I saw everyone was in position. I then called them to "Attention". Then I gave the command "Number" and "Move to the right in fours". The men still "At attention", I saluted Mallin and said everything was all right. This was a very proud moment for me as it was the first time I had ever drilled the Citizen Army in public or in private, and some of the old "sweats", that is, the ex-British army soldiers, were astonished at hearing the stiff military commands given by one who looked so youthful; but my early Fianna training had now come to the top. I took my place at the rere and Mallin came along and appointed to each of us the men we were to take charge of. I was given a party of twelve men near the end. We marched off then. I think we went up Tara St. I went up to Mallin and asked him were we marching into the fight and he said: "Yes, we are out" or words to that effect. I then returned to my twelve men and told them my plans.

The first name that comes to mind is Sean Rogan, who had been one of the men to whom I looked up as a little child for inspiration in national matters. He conducted the "Sinn Fein" choir at one time, but at this time, I think he was a clerk in Liberty Hall. Another was Willie Kelly, a shoemaker, who had been previously in the Tramway Company. Another was Williams - I don't remember his christian name. Another was

Vincent Poole, whose uncle had been executed in 1882; also J. Doherty - I am not sure of his christian name initial.

At the top of Grafton St. the main body entered Stephen's Green through the Dublin Fusiliers Memorial Gate, but I gave my little party the command "Left wheel" and they marched straight to the Shelbourne Hotel corner.

On page 7 of James Stephen's "Insurrection in Dublin" there is a pen picture of some incidents connected with our little fight on Monday. These have, however, got a journalistic aspect, while substantially true. We went into Stephen's Green at that corner. I marked off the places where rifle pits were to be dug. Each pit had to hold four men and was so constructed that the back served the purpose of a seat. Two of them were facing towards Merrion Row, one was facing Hume St. The men worked very hard with their picks and shovels or spades - I don't know which. While this was in progress, I posted men in the bank at the corner of Merrion Row. William Kelly was placed in charge there by me. He was up in the top windows or roof. Sean Rogan was posted at Gerard's, right opposite. I stopped many cars of all descriptions and put them in the barricade. opposite the front door of the Shelbourne Hotel. This idea of placing obstacles across the street was part of Connolly's suggestion about street fighting. Amongst the cars was a very fine limousine driven by a chauffeur with a clergyman in the back. I apologised to the chauffeur and clergyman and I told them I needed their car for the barricade. The clergyman told the chauffeur to do as he was told and to obey all my directions. The clergyman went to the footpath and remained there as if perplexed. I went over to him and again apologised and told him that he could go into the Shelbourne if he so desired, but he replied that he had to get to Armagh that day. He was a Protestant bishop, I think - probably the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh.

One incident not mentioned in Stephen's book was - a British officer was walking unarmed and Vincent Poole - an old Boer War veteran - ran to him with his rifle as if to shoot him. I called out "Don't fire!" I paraded the officer and asked him to give me his word of honour that he would give no information as to our position or strength or any other things he may have noticed about us. He gave me this assurance and I advised him to get away as quickly as possible. Many years afterwards, I received a message from Father Marius, O.F.M., asking me to call to see this man who had since become a Catholic, as he was anxious to meet the "very young and very polite young officer" who saved his life.

During that day, I accepted many recruits or, rather, Volunteers who could not find their units. These I either retained or sent them to local headquarters, which was in the summerhouse in the Green. Mallin was located there all the time. I accepted at least 20 Volunteers in this way. When a Volunteer came along I asked him was he a member of the Volunteers, what company and battalion he belonged to and who his O/C. was. One of those who volunteered was a young lad from the country. I think he belonged to the 2nd Battalion, D/Company, and he said Seamus Cavanagh was his O/C. I was a little suspicious of this, because Seamus Cavanagh was with us. I cross-questioned all the applicants to make sure they were genuine and not spies. I asked this young man what part of the country he came from and he told me Tinahely. I asked him did he know Clonmore. He said "Yes". I then asked him did he know the O'Donoghues of Killalongford and he said "Yes" and asked me in return did I know the O'Donoghues of Bellshill. I answered "Yes", adding that O'Donoghue was my uncle. "Well", said the young man, "he's an uncle of mine also". This young man was afterwards known as Colonel Tom Keogh.

While reviewing our position on the Monday, I noticed two

men whom I knew to be members of the I.R.B. They were obviously on some business connected with the fight. One of these was a brother of Tom Traynor. When I had my full complement of men - almost 30 - I asked Mallin would we take the Shelbourne Hotel, as there would be no difficulty in holding it with a very few men once it was barricaded at the bottom. We would also have a source of food supply, a good position, and eliminate a grave danger to the Green, but Mallin's reply was: "Don't trouble about it. As a matter of fact, tonight you will have to take possession of Baggot St. Bridge",

I returned to my corner and told the men to be prepared to move in order to take the houses at Baggot St. Bridge. I advised the men to try and sleep in turn, one man being awake in each rifle pit while the other two slept. In the darkness, we noticed quite a number of houses around the Green where the electric light was flashed on and off as if giving the signal to somebody watching. This occurred in at least half a dozen houses, including the Shelbourne. I went over to Mallin and drew his attention to it, but he said it was all right, that they had seen this for themselves. Each of us was able to get approximately 1½ hours sleep that night. As dawn broke, I thought it time to consolidate our barricade in front of the Shelbourne Hotel. For this purpose, we took some spanners out of a motor car and proceeded to undo the chains between the posts on the Green. Our purpose in this was to run the chains through the wheels of the vehicles and forge the chains together again so that even a powerful car could not force its way through the barricade. We came out on the front gate of the Green which we had closed after us and I told the man who came to the gate with us to open the other little gate opposite Kildare St. and I explained to the two men who were with me that our purpose was not to return through the front gate in

case we were watched from some of the adjoining houses, and, if attacked, we were to return through the gate opposite Kildare Street. While we were working at the chains, I noticed a window being raised at the top left-hand corner of the Shelbourne Hotel. I then noticed a head coming out through the open window. I called to the man who was using the spanner opening some of the chains to come quickly and get back into the Green and to leave the chains alone. I shouted to him several times, but he was so intent on his work that he did not heed my command. Johnnie McDonnell (one of the St. Lawrence O'Toole Football Club) obeyed my command and both of us entered the Green, but Phil Clarke still continued to open the chains. Just as we entered the Green, some shots rang out and Phil Clarke fell wounded. We replied to the fire and then it ceased for a short while. McDonnell and myself took refuge in a rifle trench in the centre of the pathway in the Green where there was supposed to be a large pit, but, to my amazement and horror, this rifle trench - the only one I had not examined on the Monday - was only 12" x 12" wide. Naturally, of course, I said quite a lot to the two men responsible, namely, Lawless (another of the O'Toole football team) and Johnnie McDonnell. I was, however, quickly silenced by a volley of machine-gun fire over our heads. As quickly and as calmly as possible, we proceeded to dig the trench with a penknife and a bayonet. We had cover from the furze around, but, although we were concealed, we had no protection whatsoever from a machine-gun which was firing over our heads. As we proceeded to dig the trench, we noticed that the clay was now rolling down the grass outside the bushes, thereby giving an indication to anyone observing closely that a trench was being dug on the site. We then proceeded to fill our hats with clay and empty it behind. I then returned to Mallin and asked him what were his orders in the new situation. He told me that we were to go back and

hold out and, under no circumstances, retire. I went from trench to trench as furtively as possible and gave my commands to the men concerned. We reconciled ourselves to "sit tight", as I had told Mallin that we had enough food and water in our trenches to last a couple of days; hence there was no need for anxiety regarding us.

While we were still digging the trench before referred to, a voice - that of a woman - from the Hume St. direction, called out: "O'Donoghue! where is O'Donoghue?" I recognised the voice as that of Countess Markievicz. I shouted back: "Madame, here I am in the centre of the little hill". She came over to me as if no machine gun were about and told me that we were to retire immediately to Cuffe St. corner. I told her that my orders, received a few hours earlier directly from Mallin, were that I was to hold on and not retire under any circumstances So Madame said: "Well, your orders now are to retire; Mallin sent that message over to you". "Well, Madame", said I, "we are not going to run away. We will have to organise in order to retreat. It would be too dangerous to retire immediately in disorder". For this reason, I went to the trenches and told the men to go in different directions, some along the Green in the direction of Leeson St., others in the direction of Grafton St. and others to take the shorter route across the centre of the Green, but, under no circumstances should two men go to the same bush or make the same rushes in exactly the same direction, but to vary them as much as possible so that the machine-gun could not pre-select its target.

We reached Cuffe St. corner and Madame told us we were to go to the College of Surgeons. We felt safe at the far side of the Green and so Madame and I were able to indulge in a little conversation. Madame said she never thought that I would turn out in the fight, as she heard that I did not believe in

physical force. I replied that I did not believe in physical force and that was why I was out, that when the Germans could not beat the British, I could not see how we could succeed. I then returned the compliment by telling Madame that I didn't think she would turn out and instantly she asked: "Why?" I replied that she was too much of a fire-eater and that I always believed that people who spoke strongly were not sincere in their protestations of willingness to fight, but I saw now that she meant everything she said.

We went to the front door of the College of Surgeons and banged heavily on it, but there seemed to be nobody there to open it for us. At length, it was opened and we entered and I noticed that no steps had been taken for the defence of the college. I reported to Mallin and told him we had arrived and that some of our men had not retired on the command, but were still in the Green. This was due to the machine-gun fire over their heads and I told him they were safe while they were in the trenches. He then told us to have a rest and he would tell us what to do next. I was, however, so excited that I could not rest. I returned to the front door of the college and saw that it was locked securely. I then asked where was the back door and someone brought me to the door at the corner of York St. I found that this was a safer door to have open than the front door, so I posted one of my men at the door and gave him orders to admit anyone whom he thought might be our friend.

Returning with a few men to the front door, we proceeded to barricade it with anything moveable we could find. I am afraid we were not careful with some of the things we handled. I then went through the college to see what reserves we had available. I found some jars of chlorine and I thought they might come in useful. I brought some of the jars to windows overlooking York St. and posted a man in charge of a window

with orders that if an armoured car came along, he was to throw a jar of chlorine at it. We then went up towards the roof and found there were men on it. Afterwards, I discovered an entrance into a laneway at the back of the College of Surgeons and, in crossing the lane, I saw a number of horses in a stable. They belonged to the Irish Direct Trading Company, Glover's Alley The man in charge asked me would we allow him to feed the horses. I said: "Certainly". Of course, I had in mind the fact that food might become scarce and that even a horse might be of use.

As evening came, one of the men I had posted came to me and said he had nothing to eat all day. I then searched around and found Miss Grace Gifford had organised a kitchen in another part of the College of Surgeons and she agreed to provide food for the men. Accordingly, I went around all the other posts and informed them that, in turn, they would be relieved and could come to the kitchen for food. When night fell, I was still roaming around the building and, while examining the basement with the Countess, where we were groping in the dark for electric switches, I suddenly heard her exclaim: "O'Donoghue, there is a body here - I can feel the curly hair. It is like the body of a child". I shuddered and found myself unable even to look for the electric light switch, but Madame found it quickly enough and we replaced the cloth over the body of the child. I did not really look at it - I could not.

During the day, when having nothing else to do, I noticed that the main hall in the college had a lot of glass in the roof. I mentioned to Mallin that this would be dangerous for us at night if we had the light on. I asked his consent to have the lights changed so that no light would be reflected through the glass. This work I did myself, and during the night I was quite satisfied with the results.

On Wednesday morning a message came to me from Mallin to the effect that he wanted to see me and he told me to remember

that I was not in charge of the College of Surgeons and that I was not to give orders, that I was to take orders from Captain McCormack. I said "All right", adding that I was only doing what I believed had been overlooked. Late on Wednesday evening a man sent a message to me that he had not had any food for over 24 hours and that he had not a rest or a sleep in that period. This was one of the men I had posted on top of the house. I told him that I could not do anything, that he would have to report to Captain McCormack.

On Wednesday night, we were all lying down asleep in the large hall, rolled up in a carpet, when I heard a voice saying: "Where is Lieutenant O'Donoghue?" I said: "Here I am". He rejoined: "I have a job for you. I got up, dressed and ran out to see what it was. The job he had for me was to lead a party to take the rere of the Russell Hotel on Stephen's Green, that there was information that the Russell Hotel was manned by British troops and that we were, accordingly, to threaten the rere of the hotel; not to attack it, only threaten it. We were to take two houses in Harcourt St. by getting in through the shops. If we were not able to hold out, or if we were attacked before we would consolidate our position, we were to set fire to the two houses and get back to the college of Surgeons. On that raid we had about 20 men. I was the Lieut. in charge of this attacking party. I was giving all the orders. I got some jars of turpentine and I gave the instructions to the various men what they were to do on arriving there. Commandant Lawlor - at present in the National Army - was on duty along with me. He can verify this. Also present were: W.P. Partridge, Foy, Freddie Ryan (who was killed on duty), Charlton (a printer), Robbie O'Shea and, I think, George Campbell My plan was as follows: I proceeded in front with an automatic pistol which the Countess had loaned to me. I went about 20 yard ahead of the party. We went in single file, very close to the

houses on that side of the Green. I was shod with rubber goloshes, as we expected to meet a British party at the corner of Cuffe St. It was a very panicky and anxious moment for me when I noticed noise behind of the heavy military boots of some of our men. I had to stop several times in order to signal to them to try to make less noise. There was no sentry at Cuffe St. corner and we reached the houses in Harcourt St. safely and quietly. Councillor Partridge and another man, whose name I cannot remember, had the duty, with the butt end of their rifles, of smashing in the glass of the door through which we slipped to get entrance to the shops. When we came to the shops I asked them to get ready. They were in position and I asked them were they ready.

Partridge became anxious and eager to start and again I wanted to be assured that they were ready, because this action was in the nature of a surprise attack and, hence, any premature noise would have betrayed our position. I again asked Partridge were they ready, to which he rejoined: "For God's sake, man, will you give the word". I said: "Are you ready?" and he answered "Yes". I wanted to make sure.

I gave the word and we got in through the windows. I told them all to get in. We were examining the place when we heard some shots from behind. Actually, Partridge, in his excitement, must have touched the trigger of his gun, with the result that when he hit the glass, his gun went off. This, of course, added to the noise. I was told that there were some shots outside, but I was so excited I did not hear the noise. Foy called out to me that there was a girl shot outside and, in impolite terms, I told him to leave the girl alone and do what he was told. This meant that we had no choice but to fire on the places and retire. We, therefore, heaped everything moveable into the centre of the shop and poured turpentine over the lot. We had something else inflammable as well as the

turpentine. After firing the place we got outside and ordered everybody back to the College. Partridge pointed out that there was a man lying down wounded near the shop, but someone examined him and thought he was dead. I gave the order to leave him lying and come along. The shots had come from 6, Harcourt St., the Sinn Féin Headquarters. We then retired very ungracefully to the College of Surgeons as best we could, but when we returned Mallin gave orders that the body of the man who had fallen was to be brought back. For this purpose the Countess and Partridge returned to Harcourt St., the former armed with her parabellum. She (the Countess) kept up a running fire at 6, Harcourt St. which enabled Partridge to bring the body back to the College. The man who was killed was Freddie Ryan, one of the Fianna and National Guard. At this time he had been in the Citizen Army. I think Ted Tuke was with us on this raid. I reported to Mallin the success of the sortie, and he rewarded us by giving us permission to have a sleep. On the following morning we were again rewarded by having large bowls of coffee provided for us, and some of the Cumann na mBan were very sympathetic when they saw my left hand covered with blood from a cut of a glass in the window or the door. The cut was so small that I never even noticed the blood on my hand until they saw it. When the blood was washed away I found it was only a small superficial cut. Miss Margaret Skinnider had been carried back by our party when we were returning to the College of Surgeons. She had been wounded in Harcourt St. The following afternoon we discovered some sets of bagpipes, so I got out in the yard at the back of the College of Surgeons for a little recreation with them. I was playing for about five minutes

when a message came to me that I was to stop, that the girl was dying, so my piping career was cut short.

The following night (Thursday) a similar operation was to take place as a threat to the United Services Club on Stephen's Green, as again Mallin had reason to believe that British troops were quartered there. The officer appointed to take charge of this raid very unwisely told his men to say good-bye to their friends, with the result that everyone's nerves were on edge, but having to proceed some distance down the side of the Green the officer himself was the first to show panic and he had to be carried back to the College of Surgeons - hence the raid did not take place.

On Thursday night the Countess and myself were on the roof of the College of Surgeons trying to discover the location of the fires near the centre of the city. The flames were so intense that we decided the fires were somewhere about College Green area, but we could not understand this as we did not know of any of our forces being in possession there, and they were not in the direction of Trinity College. They were just the other side from Trinity College.

With regard to Friday, I cannot bring anything to mind at the moment.

On Saturday many rumours reached us, for instance, that the people were starving and that the Volunteers in the G.P.O. had surrendered.

In the Green itself was Dan MacArt of the Fianna who was wounded there, and also a man named Rafferty.

On Sunday morning, I think, about 9 o'clock, all the officers were called to a meeting upstairs in the College of Surgeons. Mallin had in his hand a typewritten document and he told us he had a very painful duty to perform. He tried to read the paper but felt unable to do so. He exercised great self-control despite the inner emotion, which was quite evident. He then said we could all read the document for ourselves and he passed it through the crowd. When we knew the contents of the document, some of us disputed Connolly's signature which was the only one on it, but Mallin reminded us that it was his genuine signature. Captain Bob de Coeur and myself whispered together concerning the advisability of putting Mallin under arrest and continuing the fight, but Mallin, seeing us whispering and knowing both of us quite well, smiled and said: "I know what you are talking about". Continuing, he said, "We came out as an army and we are now going to surrender as an army". The scene following the dispersal of the meeting is very hard to describe. For myself, I went into the room where Larry J. Kettle was detained as a prisoner, and I sobbed bitter sobs and cried bitter tears. After this I braced myself and put on a brave face before all the men. On going out I found I was not alone in my grief. I saw men in all postures overcome by grief and some appeared to be in an agony. One man, a fine strong man, Joe Connolly, afterwards Chief of the Dublin Fire Brigade, kept sobbing as if his heart would break. By the time the surrender was to be taken at 12 o'clock we had all mastered our feelings and tried to smile, though our hearts were broken. I asked Mallin for permission to take one of the sets of bagpipes and play it at our head as we marched through the streets of Dublin as prisoners, but Mallin would not

agree to this, adding that they were not our property and to take them out of the College of Surgeons would be tantamount to looting, so we retired.

The method of surrender was that we were to retire to a large room and deposit our arms on the floor. Then the British officer - Major de Courcy Wheeler, came inside and gave us the command which brought us outside into York St. As we entered the street, some of the onlookers cheered. This gave us some heart. We marched down the Green, Grafton St., College Green, and into Lower Castle Yard. Here we were directed into a gateway opposite the Chapel Royal, and from the avenue to which the gateway led we noticed a number of large pits that had been dug there. We were informed that these were intended as graves. In a few hours we were again marshalled and marched up by the City Hall, Lord Edward St. and Thomas St. As we passed St. Catherine's Church, the site of Emmet's execution, some of us raised our hats in salute to that young man, who would have been proud to have been in our ranks. As we turned into Richmond Barracks, some of the women (separation allowance women) shouted: "Shoot them! Shoot them!" The soldier nearest to me seemed to be very bitter towards us and said we had destroyed everything on them, and, strange to say, he wore the badge of the Dublin Fusiliers. We were brought into the barrack square and there we had to surrender anything in the way of money or food in our possession. We were placed in barrack rooms, about 25 or 26 in each room. Later, as night came on, we were provided with a bucket of water, some tins of bully beef and hard army biscuits. Before we were marched into this building we were brought into the gymnasium of the barracks

and there had to pass the scrutiny of members of the 'G' Division. Bruton, particularly, seemed very nasty, judging by the way he pinched my arm when they asked my name and address. On the far side of the gymnasium we noticed about a half dozen prisoners, in the forefront of whom was Seán MacDermott. I shall never forget his appearance the last time I saw him alone as he lay there on the floor in a half-sitting position. Seán seemed to be admiring all those who passed out through the gymnasium.

In the early hours of the morning we were marched down to the North Wall along the south side of the Quays and put on board a cattle boat in the cattle pens. I was one of the early arrivals and I took my seat on a heap of lifebuoys. We were all very tired and sleepy. Before long the place was crowded almost to suffocation. I saw men trying to sit on some of the cross-beams of the boat, about 8" in girth. However, I fell asleep very quickly and woke up in Holyhead with four people lying on top of me. We were then marched out on to the station at Holyhead. It was early morning, of course. I looked around to see any of those I knew and picked out some members of the band, namely, Andy Dunne, Seán Conway, George Campbell, Ted Tuke, and I don't remember the others. When we were entrained we knew almost everybody in our compartment. We were brought straight to Knutsford Gaol, where we remained in solitary confinement for 28 days. On our arrival the beds had mattresses, sheets and pillows, but these were removed and we were left with boards to sleep on. I was transferred to Frongoch prisoner-of-war camp on the 11th July. I was released from Frongoch on the 24th December, 1916.

N.B. The author of this statement died before he could sign it. See covering note by the Investigator, Lieut-Colonel Seán Brennan.