

**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 1,670

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1670

**Witness**

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12 Achill Road,  
Drumcondra,  
Dublin

**Identity.**

Captain, H/Company, 1st Dublin Brigade,  
Irish Volunteers and I.R.A.

**Subject.**

Fianna Eireann, 1909-May 1916

**Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.**

Nil

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STATEMENT BY CAPTAIN SEAMUS KAVANAGH,

12, Achill Road, Drumcondra, Dublin.

I was born in Liverpool, England, in October, 1897, my father and mother having emigrated from County Wicklow to Liverpool. As my parents returned to Dublin when I was about two years old, I do not remember any of my associations in connection with Liverpool. I went to school to Marymount National School, Harolds Cross, National School, Rathmines, and the Christian Brothers, Synge St. I was thirteen years of age when I left school. My mother died in 1908 when I was about twelve years old, and I left home about twelve months after she died, and went to stay with relatives.

My first employer was Joseph McGuinness of Longford, who had a drapery business at Nos. 68 and 69 Camden St., Dublin. I got my job with him by using my elder brother's birth certificate which showed me as being fourteen and a half years of age. This was in the year 1909. Joe McGuinness was subsequently elected to the first Dáil Éireann as one of the Sinn Féin T.D.s, when he represented Westmeath and Longford.

My first association with the national movement came about in the following manner. A lady customer entered the shop one day, and purchased a shape and ribbons, for the purpose of making a lady's hat. She spoke with, as I thought, an English accent, and it was the first time I had ever seen a lady smoking a cigarette. I was employed as apprentice cash-boy, and the milliner, who was serving her, called me to take the cash for the purchase to the cash office.

When I came back with the change, the lady addressed me. "Little boy'", she asked, "What is your name?". I told her it was James Kavanagh, and she asked me would not "Seamus" sound nicer. I said I thought it would. I thought to myself that it was peculiar for a person with an English accent to be asking me a question like that, at that time. She said, "Will you promise me that you will never answer to any other name but Seamus in future?".

She followed that by asking me did I ever hear of Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet, the Manchester Martyrs and '98. I said "I did". She asked would I not like to be like one of them. I said, "I think I would". Then she asked me would I join the Irish National Boy Scouts movement, and I said, "No, because I think it is just like the Baden Powell scouts". I refused to believe her. She, with her English accent, was asking me to join the Baden Powell scouts. I thought I was being trapped into joining something. So she argued the point with me. At the time I was very confused, but she persisted that I was mixing up the National Boy Scouts, of whom I had never heard before, with the Baden Powell scouts. She informed me then that the National Boy Scouts were just being formed, and that the reason for their formation was to counteract the influence of the Baden Powell scouts which existed mainly as an adjunct of British imperialism in the country.

At this stage, Mr. McGuinness came along, not knowing, as he told me afterwards, what was wrong and what we were discussing. The lady explained to Mr. McGuinness about the National Boy Scout Movement being formed in No. 34 Camden Street, and she asked him to promise that he would send me over to the first meeting. No. 34 was just across the street. He agreed. After she had left the shop, I learned that she was the Countess Markievicz.

Up to then, I had never heard of the Countess Markievicz, and it struck me as peculiar that a titled lady should interest herself in a matter of this nature. However, I attended a meeting that night in No. 34 Camden Street.

There was a number of persons present that night, including Con Colbert, Eamon Martin, Pádraig Ó Riain, the four Fitzgeralds of Pearse Street (James, Leo, Theo, and Willie), Percy and Frank Reynolds, the Countess Markievicz, Micheál Lonergan (whom we afterwards called The Major), Harry and Leo Walpole, who lived in Ranelagh, a lad named Finlay, Brian Callender of Johnson's Court, Barney Murphy, who worked afterwards in the Abbey Theatre. They were young men in their early twentys.

Also present that night were Miss Helena Molony, Seán McGarry, Bulmer Hobson, and Peadar Kearney (author of "The Soldiers' Song", the present-day National Anthem.)

That is as many as I can recollect at the moment. They were all leading lights at that time. The premises were lit by gas and oil lamps. Bulmer Hobson gave a lecture on Wolfe Tone. I remember one thing he said that struck me rather forcibly, and that was about Tone being a Presbyterian and a person of standing in the country, yet he became a member of the United Irishmen, took the oath of allegiance to the Republic, and was prepared to break away from everything for the sake of his country. It impressed me very much. Seán McGarry also spoke in somewhat similar terms.

When the meeting was over, our names were taken by Con Colbert and Pádraig Ó Riain, the two people who seemed to be most active on that particular night. We were then

dismissed and I went home. I felt very pleased with myself for having attended the meeting.

A night or two later, we were ordered to attend at 34 Camden Street for drill and general instruction in scouting. Before the dismissal, Con Colbert gave us a lecture on the old Fianna, on the achievements carried out by the members - the tests and examinations they had to pass - before being admitted into the Fianna. I found all those things very inspiring. It helped to make me very enthusiastic about the whole movement.

At the end of the lecture, there was an appeal made to all of us to bring in every boy we possibly could, with the result that in a very short time, upwards of fifty and sixty boys had joined, ranging in age from ten to sixteen years of age.

From that time until the end of 1920, we attended, on an average, twice weekly at 34 Camden Street where we received instruction, and attended lectures on Irish history.

About this time, Liam and Barney Mellowes were initiated into the National Boy Scout Movement of Ireland, as it was then known. Later, it was to be known as Fianna na hÉireann.

About 1910, we were divided into squads and sections. I was given control of a squad comprising about eight boys. There were two squads in the section, controlled by a section commander. My section commander was James Cashen, who lived in High Street or Nicholas Street and was a tailor's apprentice. I believe at the present time he is an artist.

There was a bookshop, owned by a firm called Ponsonby's, in Grafton Street where British army manuals of every description could be purchased. I spent most of my spare cash and time buying and studying these books. We were encouraged to do this by our officers.

It was either in this or the following year that another branch of the Irish National Boy Scouts was formed at No. 10 Beresford Place, which was the headquarters of the Irish Transport Workers' Union. This branch of the National Boy Scouts was, as far as I can remember, officered by Paddy Houlihan, Garry Houlihan, Eamonn Creegan, who, I think, had been in the British Army. They met there regularly each week, and from then on the movement commenced to spread.

A third branch was formed in a house in St. Joseph's Avenue, Drumcondra. The organiser of that branch was Seamus McGowan of the Irish Transport Union, who had been attached to the North Dock Sluagh.

The fourth branch, as far as I can recollect, was organised at Dolphin's Barn, the officer being, as far as I know, Bob Holland, who had two or three brothers and had been attached to the Camden Street Sluagh.

Another name that comes to my mind is that of Paddy Daly, subsequently a well known Volunteer and Army officer, who was a member of the North Dock Sluagh, and later formed a branch in Fairview.

When the scouts had been in existence for about two years, the section commanders were organised into a Committee which had for its object the training and administration of the Sluaghte.

Up to this, we had been attending meetings in our ordinary workaday clothes, and it was now decided that we should wear uniform. The question of a particular type of uniform was considered. It was agreed by Céad Sluagh - Camden Street branch - that kilts, jerseys, belts, haversacks, the Owen Roe type of hat, and black shoes and stockings would be the uniform approved and recommended for wear by all members of the organisation.

Each member was required to purchase his own uniform which could be obtained from, among other places, Whelan's of Ormond Quay, Lalors of Fownes Street, and Fannin's of Mary Street.

There was a Miss Boushell who was a member of the Inghiní na hÉireann, which was the female counterpart of the Fianna and which had been in existence for some time prior to the formation of the Fianna. This body was controlled by Madame Gonne McBride and Countess Markievicz, among others. Miss Boushell, who was subsequently head usherette in the Abbey Theatre and who lived in Inchicore (she died some years ago), undertook to make some of our kilts.

Our first Convention was held in the Oak Room of the Mansion House in the early summer of 1911, at which delegates from all branches were in attendance, including a strong representation from Belfast. Among the Belfast contingent were Una and Nora Connolly, the late Joe Robinson (brother of Seumas Robinson), Alf Cotton, and Seamus Kelly (now, I believe, a solicitor in Belfast).

Pádraig Ó Riain, whom I have previously mentioned, had by this time become Honorary Secretary of the Fianna organisation. At this Convention, we became known officially as Na Fianna Éireann.

At the Convention I remember that the members of the other branches of the Fianna wore green blouses with a double row of buttons, black or navy-blue shirts, on the Baden Powell pattern, and green slouch hats, the other items of uniform being similar to ours.

Rank distinctions at that time were as follows: -

Red, V-shaped cuff and Red shoulder straps	-	Squad Commander.
Blue, do.	-	Section Commander.
Yellow, do.	-	Officer.

During this period, Peadar Kearney, Barney Murphy and Brian Callendar formed a Fianna pipers' band - all three of them being pipers. In addition to the three mentioned, the following made up the members of the band: - Percy Reynolds, Jack Neynolds, Jack and Paddy Norris, "Bully" Roberts, and some others whose names I cannot remember at the moment. Each member provided his own instruments, and instructions were given by Brian Callendar and Barney Murphy. There was no distinctive type of uniform for the members.

About this time, the hall at 34 Camden Street was wired for electric light by Seán McGarry, who was, I think, engaged in the electrical business.

In addition to ordinary drill routine, we took part in dramatic classes and produced plays, mainly of an Irish nature, and all-Irish concerts. We also attended Gaelic League classes. Each member attended a class best suited to him. Some of us attended the McHale branch in North Frederick Street and afterwards in Dorset Street. There was also a Branch of the Gaelic League in Kildare St. which other members of the Sluagh attended.



Part of our training consisted of long route marches to the Pine Forest, Rathfarnham, Glendhu, Glencree and all around the Wicklow and Dublin mountains.

On one of these route marches, which took place, I think, on the first Labour Day, 1st May, 1911, I heard the Soldiers' Song sung for the first time. It had just been composed by Peadar Kearney and Paddy Heaney, who was a member of the Willie Rooney branch of the Gaelic League. We had been singing the usual old Irish national songs, "The Fenian Men", "Clare's Dragoons", etc., when Peadar Kearney suggested that we should try and sing this new song, "The Soldiers' Song", and that, as soon as we knew the words, each rank would sing a different line and all would join in the chorus. We all tried it, and found it very inspiring. From then onwards, hardly anything else was sung but the Soldiers' Song, which became the marching song of the Fianna and later of the Volunteers and the I.R.A., and is at present the National Anthem.

On the occasion of the visit of King George V. to Dublin on July 8th 1911, those of us in the Fianna who were old enough and big enough were ordered to march to Wolfe Tone's grave at Bodenstown, in order to get us out of the city. It took us a few days to cover the march, there and back, a distance of twenty-two miles. The majority of the city business houses were closed, so as to give the employees and employers an opportunity of paying homage to His Britannic Majesty. A large banner was erected across the bottom of Grafton Street. During the night, it was taken down by some persons who put these words on it, "Thou are not conquered yet, dear Land!", before replacing it. The banner was eventually removed by the police. I remember there was a song composed in

connection with this incident, the opening words of which were, "The poles that once in Grafton Street, their tale of treason told".

During the year, 1911, or perhaps 1912, I was present at Castlebellingham at a pageant, entitled, "The Coming of Cuchulainn", which was presented by the pupils of St. Enda's College, under the auspices of the Gaelic League. Among those taking part, I recollect the following: John V. Joyce, now a Colonel in the army, Joseph Sweeney, later a Major General in the army, Frank Burke, Brian Joyce.

In the same year, we went camping at Belcamp Park, Raheny, Co. Dublin, which was then occupied by the Countess Markievicz. We would go out on Saturday, and return to town on Monday, although some of the boys stayed there all the time.

In August of that year, an Oireachtas was held in the Rotunda Rink, in which the Fianna took part, and at Christmas, the first Aonach took place, organised chiefly by Seán McDermott. It was held in the Round Room of the Rotunda, its object being to display goods of Irish manufacture.

I attended a lecture given by Major John McBride in No. 6 Harcourt Street, which was the headquarters of the Sinn Féin organisation. The subject of the lecture was the Irish Brigade in the Boer War, in which he had taken a prominent part. We were all very thrilled to meet Major McBride and to hear his lecture on the Brigade. It was the first time I saw him.

The next matter of national importance was the 1913 strike. When the strike had been on for some time, food kitchens were set up in Liberty Hall, where the Transport

Union had moved some time previously. The Fianna were called on to assist. The Countess Markievicz, Inghiní na hÉireann, Dr. Kathleen Lynn, Mrs. Darrell Figgis, Miss French-Mullen, Miss Molony and other women connected with the National movement assisted in preparing and serving meals to the wives and children of the men on strike.

I remember the morning that Jim Larkin addressed a huge crowd in O'Connell St. The British authorities had banned him from speaking in public in Dublin, but it was understood that he would make an appearance somehow, and we were all advised to be in O'Connell Street. He appeared on the balcony of the Imperial Hotel, and addressed a huge gather of the citizens. He was disguised. I saw him being pulled off the balcony by the D.M.P. Baton charges by the D.M.P. and by the R.I.C., who had been called in as reinforcements, were made afterwards to disperse the crowd. One of our Fianna boys, Patsy O'Connor, got a smack of a baton on the head, as a result of which he died subsequently.

About this time, the Transport Union presented Mr. Larkin with a house in Fairview, known as Croydon House, Croydon Park, in the grounds of which an aeriocht was held one Sunday, where I saw, for the first time, the Irish Citizen Army which had been formed. It was commanded by a Captain White, who was a son of Field Marshal White of the British Army.

About December, 1912, the first unit of the Ulster Volunteers was formed in Belfast, its object being to oppose the passage of the Home Rule Bill.

A meeting was held in the Rotunda Rink, Dublin, on the 25th November, 1913, for the purpose of forming the

Irish National Volunteer organisation, in opposition to its Ulster counterpart. This followed on a convention which had been held in Wynn's Hotel, Abbey Street, where a Provisional Committee was formed, for this purpose.

All Fianna officers were instructed to attend the meeting in the Rotunda, our duty being to distribute circulars and membership forms, and to act as stewards generally at the meeting. This meeting was addressed by the late Professor Owen McNeill, Pearse, Larry Kettle (later, City Engineer), Seán McDermott, Bulmer Hobson, Eamonn Kent, Piaras Beasley and The O'Rahilly.

From then onwards, Volunteer companies were formed in different places throughout the city, principally around Parnell Square, Camden Row, Inchicore and Fairview, to which all Fianna Officers were detailed as instructors and to assist in the organisation of the different units. In the earlier stages, I was detailed to give instruction to units which had been formed at 34 Camden Street.

On the occasion of the Howth gun-running on July 26th 1914, all the Fianna officers and senior Fianna boys were instructed to parade at the Dún Emer Guild Hall in Hardwicke Street on the Sunday morning, in full uniform, with a day's rations. The Fianna had purchased a scout trek cart prior to this, and I saw it at Hardwicke Street on this particular morning. Inside the trek cart was a number of batons, about eighteen inches long, and about two inches thick. I thought it funny when I saw those, but did not ask any questions.

We then proceeded, under the command of Con Colbert, Liam Mellowes and Eamon Martin, to the Father Mathew Park, Fairview, where we saw the Volunteers formed up. The parade was addressed by Bulmer Hobson and others. We

arrived at the tail-end of the speeches. Shortly after our arrival, we were given the order to move. We got no definite instructions as to our destination. We were fairly tired as we reached Howth, although we had taken our turns in the trek cart, in order to rest ourselves.

When we arrived at Howth, we were halted. I noticed that there was great excitement, and Volunteers were marching down the pier. We of the Fianna got the order to "double", and we were halted at the head of the column, just at the mouth of the pier. Close into the pier was a white yacht, and, looking down, I could see rifles. Some of the Volunteers went aboard the yacht, and were handing up rifles in a sort of chain. Prior to this, the batons had been issued to the Volunteers who were guarding the mouth of the pier. When all the rifles had been handed out, there were boxes of ammunition handed out, and these were put into the trek cart.

I observed a lady on the boat, which I thought funny. I can never forget the thrill I got on seeing the rifles and ammunition put on the trek cart.

We were then addressed by Con Colbert. We were told to guard the cart with our lives. The weight and size of the rifles surprised me. They were different from the Lee Metford rifles which were being used by the British at the time. We were ordered to take up a position, midway in the Volunteer column, when it moved off on its return to Dublin.

As we approached the junction of Howth Road on the tramlines side of Sutton, a tramload of D.M.P. men arrived and dismounted. The Inspector in charge seemed to give the order to stop us, but all the D.M.P. men stood fast

and as we passed them we all jeered. I learned later that two of the D.M.P. men were dismissed for refusing to obey an order. Everything went well until we arrived near the end of Howth Road and Fairview, where our advance was blocked by a large body of British troops whom I afterwards learned was "The King's Own Scottish Borderers". We were given the order "About turn" and marched up Charlemount Road and on to Malahide Road, where our advance was again blocked. We were again followed by our own officers, but I noticed a number of the Volunteer officers proceeding to the front and an altercation seemed to take place between them (the Volunteer officers) and the British officers. A scuffle seemed to have taken place and I heard some of our officers were wounded by bayonet thrusts.

Liam Mellows and Con Colbert gave us the order to "About turn" with the trek cart of ammunition. Others of the Volunteers wanted to take some of the ammunition from the cart, but Eamon Martin, Con Colbert, Liam Mellows and Pádraig Ó Riain ordered them away. The Volunteers were running in all directions; some of them discarded their rifles; others stood fast, shouting at them to stand their ground. There was great confusion about this time. A number of us in the Fianna were detailed to stay behind while the remainder took the trek cart of ammunition away. Paddy Daly was put in charge of the body of the Fianna remaining behind in order to collect any rifles that had been abandoned. Daly lived in the vicinity of the Malahide Road, to which he told us to take the rifles. Paddy, Frank and Jimmy Daly, all brothers, who were in the movement, lived close by. We took the rifles to their house. That operation took some time.

"The King's Own Scottish Borderers" had withdrawn back towards the city through Fairview and the Volunteers fell back towards Artane and across fields that belonged to The O'Brien Institute in the direction of Croydon Park and Father Mathew Park, where most of the rifles were dumped.

While we were collecting the rifles from the gardens along the road and bringing them to Daly's and other houses, The O'Rahilly, who had been supervising the collection of the arms, left to go towards the city. He was back again within an hour and told us to report back to Father Mathew Park. There seemed to have been a meeting of the officers in the Park and some excitement prevailed at the time. "The King's Own Scottish Borderers" on their way back to the Royal Barracks (now Collins Barracks) were jeered at by the people on the side-walks, and as they arrived in Bachelor's Walk a number of them halted and 'turned about', bringing their rifles to 'The Ready' position, opening fire on the people, killing three or four and wounding about twenty. They returned to barracks, still being jeered at and shouted at by the people on the way. I think they were confined to barracks for a number of days after that.

Father Mathew Park was situated in Philipsburg Avenue, Fairview, within the 2nd Battalion area. Quite a large number of Volunteers lived in the vicinity, including Leo and Frank Henderson, Seán McGarry and M.W. O'Reilly, who were officers in the Volunteers. As many rifles as possible were stored in their houses and in friendly houses in the area.

Before we were dismissed and told to go home by The O'Rahilly, we were feeling very tired and made our way to our homes as well as we could. How many of the Howth

rifles were lost I am not in a position to state, but there were many. We learned afterwards that Captain M.J. Judge, who was O/C, 'C' Company, 1st Battalion, Irish Volunteers, had been wounded by a thrust of a bayonet on the Howth Road and was in hospital.

At this time I was Assistant Instructor with Volunteer 'Mocky' Comerford to the 1st Battalion. The night Captain Judge appeared after his release from hospital there was a parade of three or four companies of the 1st Battalion in 41 Parnell Square. We gave Captain Judge a great reception on his appearance.

About this time I was also Instructor to the Central Branch of Cumann na mBan, who paraded in 25 Parnell Square where they were instructed in first-aid, stretcher drill, ceremonial drill, physical drill and signalling. Nurse Adrian of Lusk, Co. Dublin, was one of the first-aid instructors. The officers of the branch at that time, to the best of my knowledge, were: Mrs. Tom Clarke, Mrs. Ceannt, Miss Brennan (a sister of Mrs. Ceannt), Mrs. Reddin (the mother of Kenneth - now District Justice Reddin), Miss McMahon (sister to General P. McMahon, Secretary, Department of Defence, and now Mrs. Sorcha Rogers, Kilbarrack, Co. Dublin), the Misses Ryan (Mrs. S.T. O'Kelly, Mrs. Mulcahy and Mrs. McCullough), the two Misses O'Hanrahan (sisters of Mícheál O'Hanrahan, executed after the Rising in 1916), Mrs. Joe McGuinness (whose husband was later T.D. for Longford), Miss Leslie Price (now Mrs. Tom Barry, Chairman of the Irish Red Cross Society).

The Central Branch of Cumann na mBan was looked on as a sort of Headquarters Branch, and very often I was assisted in instructing the branch by the Reddin brothers



(now District Justice Reddin, the two doctors, and Norman, the solicitor, who died). It was this branch that designed the Cumann na mBan uniform, which was comprised of a tunic on something the same pattern as a Volunteer officer's tunic, loose skirt, leather belt and tweed slouch hat.

It was shortly after this period that the First World War broke out on the 4th August, 1914. Meetings were being held all over the country to get recruits for the British army. Many of the Redmondite Party joined in those meetings. About this time the split took place in the Volunteers, the Redmondite element of the Volunteers advocating that we should join the British Army and fight for Home Rule. A big number of our officers strongly objected to this, with the result that a split in the forces took place. The Redmondites called themselves "The National Volunteers" and the Sinn Féin side called themselves "The Irish Volunteers".

The officers of the Irish National Volunteers who remained with the Sinn Féin side were, to the best of my recollection, Professor Eoin MacNeill, the brothers Pearse, The O'Rahilly, Tom MacDonagh, Tom Clarke, and Eamon Ceannt. These included all those who were later executed in 1916, with the exception of James Connolly who was head of the Irish Citizen Army. There were many others who were sentenced to imprisonment following 1916. After the split the Sinn Féin element was a very small minority. The companies were, however, reformed and officers appointed in charge.

It was about the 25th October that a convention was held in the Abbey Theatre to decide on policy and constitution. I was still in the Fianna at this time,

practically all of whom remained with the Sinn Féin element of the Irish Volunteers. The Fianna representation on the Irish Volunteer Executive were: Bulmer Hobson, Pádraig Ó Riain, Eamon Martin, Con Colbert, and Liam Mellows. It was about this time that Seán Heuston became active in the Volunteers and was in charge of a slough in, I think, Skippers Alley. Shortly after the convention, a company of Volunteers ('A' or 'B' of the 1st Battalion) ran an excursion to Limerick. Volunteers, Cumann na mBan, and Fianna took part in this excursion, where Captain Monteith reviewed the Volunteers and took the salute.

While marching through Limerick we met with a very hostile reception from the Redmondite Volunteers and wives of British soldiers. The discipline and courage of the Volunteers, Cumann na mBan and Fianna could not have been excelled. We got back to the Fianna Hall in Limerick City, where we rested before returning back to Dublin by train.

A big number of the officers remained for the convention and there were contingents from places in the south and west. Con Colbert ordered me to take charge of the Fianna and Cumann na mBan back to Dublin. Going through the railway station gates at Limerick, we were attacked by much the same element who had attacked us earlier in the day with stones, bottles, potatoes and everything they could lay their hands on. A number of our people were injured. There was no retaliation on our part and we eventually got safely back to Dublin.

All this time, Volunteer companies were growing all over the country. Officers were appointed as organisers, holding meetings in many centres. Occasionally many of

those organisers were arrested and sent to prison. On numerous occasions the Fianna were invited to different parts of the country to give a display and take part in competitions, more as demonstrations than anything else. Among the places I remember that we visited were Courtown, Gorey, Galway, Sligo, and Castlebar, where we gave demonstrations in ceremonial drill, rifle and bayonet drill, first-aid and stretcher drill, physical drill and signalling. These would be held at open-air functions such as aeriochts and drill competitions. Volunteer companies were brought in from around the county.

One incident that remains very fresh in my memory was our visit to Castlebar. We left Dublin, accompanied by our Fianna Pipers Band, on a Saturday evening. Arriving at Ballyhaunis station I noticed a crowd of people on the platform. Some of us got out to investigate and find out what it was all about. We discovered a man lying on the ground with a broken leg. That gave us an opportunity of putting our first-aid knowledge to the test. We bandaged the man's leg with bandages and splints, placed him on the stretcher and took him into the train. We arrived in Castlebar somewhere around midnight, and the place was black with people and Volunteers. We proceeded to the hospital in Castlebar with our patient and handed him over to Dr. McBride, who was a brother of Major John McBride who was subsequently executed after the Rising in 1916. He congratulated us on our first-aid work. Having left our patient in the hospital, we received a great reception from the people outside, who escorted us to an hotel where we did justice to a good supper. Afterwards we proceeded to the grounds of the Christian Brothers' Schools where we encamped for the night.

Rising about 6 o'clock the following morning, and having cleaned and tidied up camp, we had our breakfast, washed ourselves and attended Mass. Afterwards we returned to camp and proceeded to the showgrounds at the rear of the asylum where the competitions and displays by the aeriocht took place. There was an exhibition of fencing with single sticks between Percy Reynolds (later Chairman of Coras Iompair Éireann) and myself. Both of us wore kilts and the exhibition was held on a platform about 5' from the ground. During this exhibition Percy tried to keep me to the edge of the platform most of the time. I got the idea into my head that he was trying to put me off the platform. It was afterwards I learned the reason for this, which was that he had no 'shorts' on him underneath the kilts. Thinking he was trying to put me off the platform, I decided that I would put him off and manoeuvred him to the edge. In trying to avoid a lunge that I made at him, forgetting that he was so near the edge of the platform he fell back on the ground. This created a great laugh. Pádraig Ó Riain, realising the embarrassment that Percy was in, declared the exhibition at an end.

We went back to camp that evening and started back for Dublin the following day. That would be somewhere about August, 1915, I think.

Around this time there were recruiting meetings being held by the British army and many of the Irish M.P.s (the Redmondite Party) took part in these recruiting meetings, including a Colonel Arthur Lynch who had fought on the side of the Boers with Major John McBride in the Irish Brigade during the Boer War; Captain Tom Kettle, who was secretary to the National Volunteers, and many others of the Redmondite Volunteers. Members of the Fianna

and Volunteers attended these meetings as 'hecklers', very often causing the meetings to be abandoned. The usual cry at that time was "Join the British army and fight for the rights of small nations". Belgium, which was at war at the time, had been invaded by Germany and according to the recruiters the Germans were supposed to have massacred men, women and children and burned their homes. These 'catch cries' were to try and gain the sympathy of the Irish people.

Another thing was that they got the support of practically all the Irish newspapers. The national element in the country were left with about two or three newspapers to put forward the national ideals, telling Irish people to stay at home in Ireland and to fight for Ireland in Ireland. One of these papers was "Sinn Féin", a weekly publication edited by Arthur Griffith, and for a short time it became an evening publication. There was also "Irish Freedom", edited by Seán MacDermott, and I think Connolly had "The Irish Worker". These papers were suppressed afterwards.

Other papers came along then under different names. I think some of them were printed in Scotland or Belfast. Papers which appeared were "Scissors and Paste" and "Honesty". These last mentioned papers, to my recollection, contained cuttings from other papers, including English papers.

During this time, Volunteers, Fianna and Cumann na mBan were very active, training, buying arms where possible, and obstructing recruiting meetings wherever possible.

Every year up to this we attended the Wolfe Tone Commemoration in Bodenstown, many of the Fianna proceeding down by foot on Saturday evenings and pitching camp somewhere in Bodenstown on Saturday night. Other activities in the Fianna up to this time included marching and training, leaving Camden St. at 11 o'clock at night, arriving at Rathfarnham, where we would be halted and lectured by Con Colbert, Eamon Martin and Liam Mellows on the importance of this night training. It meant that from the time we moved off we were confined to strict silence - neither talking nor smoking - halting every hour for a ten minutes' rest. This was a test of our ability to keep silent.

Arriving at some part of the Dublin mountains at daybreak, we halted and were allowed to talk and smoke, and lighted fires and prepared our breakfast. Having had our breakfast and rested, we saw to it that all the fires were put out and started on our journey back to the city, sometimes attending Mass in Dundrum, Rathfarnham or Mount Argus - all depending in what direction we were going - arriving back to the city about 12 o'clock.

On the arrival of the remains of O'Donovan Rossa, we escorted them to the City Hall where they lay in state for about a week. All the members of the Fianna were mobilised for the purpose of stewarding and controlling the queues of people going into the City Hall to view the remains in the main hall. The remains were in a casket, with a glass panel, showing the head and shoulders. There was a continuous guard of honour supplied by the Irish Citizen Army, the Volunteers and the Fianna. From early morning until late at night, there were queues of people, practically the full length of Dame Street, down as far as George's Street, to view the remains.

On Sunday, members of the Volunteers, Fianna and Cumann na mBan arrived in the city from all parts of the country for the funeral to Glasnevin. I remember seeing there for the first time Terry MacSwiney and Tomás MacCurtain and many others who were either executed or imprisoned afterwards for their activities.

Both the lying in state and the funeral were a great fillip in recruiting new members for the Volunteers and Fianna.

Shortly afterwards, I remember attending classes for officers in No. 2 Dawson Street, which was then the headquarters of the Volunteers. The classes were held on Saturday nights. Lectures on tactics were given by the late Colonel J.J. O'Connell, who was then a Staff Captain. He had recently arrived from America. P.H. Pearse lectured us on general military matters, James Connolly on street fighting, Tom Meldon on musketry and armament, de Valera, who was then Adjutant of the 3rd Battalion, on tactics, Captain J.J. Doyle on first-aid, and Captain Breen (afterwards Colonel) on engineering. We had several lectures by Connolly on street fighting. He seemed to attach great importance to that particular subject, and told us that, if we did happen to go into action, most of our activities would be street fighting. During the early part of 1916, I remember the 1st and 2nd Battalions - the 1st Battalion, particularly - held night exercises in street fighting around the battalion areas. At that time Ned Daly was Commandant, and Piaras Beasley.

'C' Company, 1st Battalion, held a concert in 41 Parnell Square, at which P.H. Pearse gave an oration. During the oration, a remark that he made was a sort of an indication that we would soon go into action. The remark

was that, before the people of Ireland realised that they had a country worth fighting for and dying for, the streets of Dublin would run red with the blood of Irishmen.

All this time I was training the Volunteers of the 1st Battalion and Cumann na mBan and preparing for a competition which was to be held in Father Mathew Park between Volunteers, Cumann na mBan, Citizen Army and Fianna. The competition was held in January and J.J. ("Ginger") O'Connell was one of the examining officers. It also included Tomás McDonagh (afterwards executed), P.H. Pearse and other officers of the brigade. The prize for the best unit was a rifle and that was won by the Irish Citizen Army. A company of the 2nd Battalion got second prize, and 'C' Company of the 1st Battalion, which was my unit, got third prize. My unit of the Fianna carried off the first prize for Fianna training, which was a bugle. The Central Branch Cumann na mBan won the Cumann na mBan competitions, the prize being a stretcher.

During the competitions I remember being detailed to report to Captain O'Connell ("Ginger") to assist him at the "close order" exercises of other units. It was actually an examination for section commanders. Also at this time there was a company composed of grocers' assistants. It had just been formed and met in the Father Mathew Park on Sunday mornings. The late Paddy Moran, who was executed over 'Bloody Sunday', was in charge, assisted by the late Martin Savage who was killed at the attack on Lord French, and Dan O'Connell, who was a Professor in St. Patrick's Training College. On that day, after my other duties, I was asked to give that company (known then as 'D' Company of the 2nd Battalion) some instruction. The 2nd Battalion at that time was commanded by Commandant Tom MacDonagh;



the late Tom Hunter was second in command. Tom Slater was Adjutant, and Dick Stokes, I think, was Quartermaster. That was the staff of the battalion as I knew them.

The following week I was informed by the late Joe McGuinness, who happened to be my employer at the time and an officer of 'C' Company of the 1st Battalion, that I had been transferred to the 2nd Battalion to take charge of 'D' Company. On a Friday, I think, I received an order from No. 2 Dawson St., which was Volunteer Headquarters then, to report to Father Mathew Park on the following Sunday. Having done so, I reported to Tom Hunter, who introduced me to the company and told me to proceed and take command. Paddy Moran became my second in command. My section commanders were Martin Savage, Dick Healy (Healy's of Parnell St., publichouse), Seán O'Farrell, and a chap named Harry Williams. These men were practically all grocers. Members of the company were Phil Scanlon, Seán Milroy, Paddy Swanzy (brother-in-law of the late Seán Connolly who was killed in the attack on the Castle in Easter Week 1916).

About February, 1916, a number of men who came back from England joined the company, including Joe Vize (later a Colonel in the National Army), Joe Furlong (later a Colonel in the National Army), and his brother, Matt, later killed in an accident when experimenting with or testing a mine.

About a fortnight after that I remember a big man coming in with a note from No. 2 Dawson St., whose name was Collins, telling me to attach him to my company. I took the note from him and told Paddy Moran to attach him to the recruits' section which was being instructed by Martin Savage. After the parade, Paddy Moran told me the

recruit wanted to see me. I told him to bring him up. The 'recruit' stated to me that he was a Company Commander in the Volunteers in London and was not pleased at being put into a recruit's section. I told him I didn't care if he was a Brigadier, that as far as I was concerned he was a recruit until I saw how much he knew, that everybody had to go into the recruits' section first and that he would be placed in another section the following Sunday. I remember that he smiled, saying "Very good". He then joined Joe Vize and Matt Furlong, whom he seemed to have known.

As was usual then, at the end of each parade an appeal was made to the company to subscribe towards the arms fund. I remember the four people mentioned asked me the price of a rifle and the price of a revolver, which at that time was valued, I think, at about £4 - 10 - 0 each. They wanted to know if they paid for them there and then could they have them immediately. I informed them we would have to get the money in first before we could buy them. This company, being mainly composed of grocers' assistants, were in the very happy position of being able to purchase arms from British soldiers, and practically every week secured two or three rifles or revolvers.

One of the members of the company, who was a grocer's assistant, was a chap named Seamus Cooney who was foreman for Eamon Morkan, a Captain in the Volunteers, who had a publichouse in Queen St. He was arrested for purchasing a rifle and was sentenced to six months. Eamon Morkan was Quartermaster of the 1st Battalion at that time.

In or about this time there was what was known as 'The Foreign Legion'. This was a company in Kimmage made up of all the 'refugees', as we called them, from England and

Scotland. Mick Collins was one of the men on my strength who was transferred to this company. We had been asked to give men from our companies to this company in order to strengthen it. Collins was the only one from my company who transferred. Joe Vize and the brothers Furlong remained with my company, as they were working then at the Dublin dockyards and this was the most convenient unit for them to belong to.

In March, 1916, we were notified about a parade that was to be held on St. Patrick's Day and we were to muster every man possible for this parade. The 1st and 2nd Battalions assembled in the Father Mathew Park, Fairview; the 3rd and 4th assembled in Camden Row and proceeded to College Green, where we 'formed up', blocking the thoroughfare from Trinity St. down to Trinity College. The parade having been formed, it was inspected by Professor Eoin MacNeill, President, Bulmer Hobson, Seán Fitzgibbon and other high-ranking officers of the Volunteer Executive. I'd say there would be about 1,400 to 1,600 men on parade that day. An incident happened during the inspection when a number of British officers tried to break through the ranks, on foot, at Trinity St. end, but we did not allow them to proceed. After the inspection we returned to Camden Row, where we were addressed by Professor MacNeill, Tomás MacDonagh and P.H. Pearse and afterwards dismissed.

I would like to mention at this stage that in 1915 I left the drapery trade and the premises of Mr. Joe McGuinness in 27, Dorset St. (where he had moved) and became an apprentice cabinet-maker in the Dublin Woodworks owned by Mr. Anthony Mackey. At week-ends I assisted Mr. McGuinness in Dorset St. McGuinness's premises was more than a drapery house; it was a receiving depot for

small arms and ammunition delivered in cases with drapery goods. The arms would be concealed amongst the drapery. These would be sent from England and, at times, Belfast. The cases would be opened usually in the evenings when the shop would be shut, and put into drapery parcels and placed in open racks. At times Mr. McGuinness would be assisted by Peadar Clancy, Tom Hunter, Micheál Staines, Micheál O'Hanrahan and others. The arms, which were put in parcels containing shirts and underwear, would be placed in open fixtures in the shop. This was taking place in or about 1916.

There was another place where something similar happened, in Henshaw's of Christchurch Place, and the person who looked after our interest there was a Mr. Frank Harding who had a shop next door. These arms and the ammunition would be given to couriers from different parts of the country who could call for same.

At this time I stayed in a boarding-house, 19 Upper Sherrard St. It was controlled by a Mrs. Ward and her daughter, and a brother of Mrs. Ward, Mr. Harry Shiels. These people came from Belfast. Harry Shiels was a member of 'F' Company, 1st Battalion, and fought in Church St. under Piaras Beasley during the Rising of Easter Week 1916. He was badly wounded in the arm during the fight and had to have portion of it amputated. There were about ten of us staying there at the time - all Volunteers, including the late Micheál Murphy, a Waterford chap who had come over from England and who later was appointed Secretary to the Shelbourne Greyhound Racing Track under Mr. Paddy O'Donoghue.

Amongst those who came over from England were: Joseph McCann, three brothers - Joe, Manus and Fergus McMenamin, Micheál Cremin, Tadhg O'Riordan, Tomás O'Donoghue

(a Kerry chap). They all came from England and were attached to companies in the 1st and 2nd Battalions and came over here to evade conscription in England and take part in the fight here. There was also Alf Monaghan (who was later organiser for the Gaelic League).

On the Sunday prior to the Rising, after my parade with 'D' Company, 2nd Battalion, I had a fair idea that we were moving up to what we were training for - "action". The late Mícheál O'Hanrahan, who was an officer in the 2nd Battalion and also acting officer Headquarters Staff, and a member of the I.R.B. (of which I was also a member), informed me that he wanted to speak to me on the way home. I was a member of the I.R.B. Circle of which the late George Irvine was Centre. We usually met in 41 Parnell Square. On the way home, Mícheál O'Hanrahan told me he wanted me on his staff for that week. I asked him what about my job. He told me to forget about it. It was then I learned that things were taking shape. He informed me that a man would call, probably the following morning, in a taxi, giving me a description of the man, and that his name would be Eamon Tierney. He would be tall, thin and dark, with a strong English accent and would wear a "G.R." band on his arm, indicating that he was a member of the British Home Guard. He would have a number of suitcases with him containing small arms and ammunition. I was to receive him and take the cases from him, see that he was fed and rested and back on the mailboat that evening. This was to take place several times during the week. And on placing the arms and ammunition away safely, I was to inform Mícheál O'Hanrahan as to their arrival. At this time Mícheál O'Hanrahan lived in Connaught St. During the week both he and his brother Harry would call to remove some of the arms. This happened repeatedly during the week.

On Good Friday morning, Eamon Tierney arrived again as usual, and on learning of the mobilisation for Sunday he said he was not going back; if the fight was to be on he wanted to be in it. In the course of conversation with Tierney I learned that he originally came from either Monaghan or Fermanagh. His father was a Grand Master in the Masonic Lodge in Ulster in either of these counties. He was a Presbyterian. He had been sent over to England for education and had acquired fluency in twelve languages. He said he worked in Lloyds, Shipping Agents, London. Having joined the Gaelic League in London for the purpose of learning the Irish language, he met nearly all the lads previously referred to as staying in 19 Upper Sherrard St., and many other Gaels from Ireland. It was then, he said, he realised he was an Irishman. Later he had joined the local Volunteer company in London, which was commanded by Michael Collins (later General Michael Collins).

On Good Friday I reported to Mícheál O'Hanrahan that Tierney refused to return to London, and I think his remark was: "Well, we can't deprive him, having done so much, of taking part in the fight". Tierney fought during that week in Church St., where, I have since learned, he gave a very good account of himself. Piaras Beasley knew him very well.

On the Thursday of Holy Week I remember Charlie Monaghan, Con Keating and Dan Sheehan calling to 19 Upper Sherrard St., where they had a long conversation with Alf Monaghan. They left after having a meal. I could tell by the look of Alf Monaghan's face that they were on a serious mission. That evening we were all very busy with company parades and the repairing of equipment for the general manoeuvres that were to take place on the Sunday.

I had been kept very busy with Mícheál O'Hanrahan, buying equipment and storing it. In fact, we bought up everything in the line of equipment from Lawler's of Fownes St., Fallon's of Mary St., and the late P.J. Bourke's of North Frederick St., theatrical costumier. We left some of at Bourke's and also brought some of it to Mícheál O'Hanrahan's house or had it sent there. There was another man, from whom we bought small arms and ammunition, by the name of Ross. He had a shop at Redmond's Hill. To the best of my knowledge he was an Englishman. A meeting was held in O'Hanrahan's house on Friday night arranging for the distribution of the arms and ammunition. The O'Hanrahan sisters were present at most of those conferences, and it was arranged that they would be there all the time to hand out arms, ammunition and equipment.

On the Saturday I was busy preparing mobilisation orders and delivering them along with Fergus McMenamin who stayed in 19 Upper Sherrard St. as a member of my company. The purpose of these orders was to ensure there would be a full muster at 'D' Company's parade on the following day. Some of the lads in No. 19 were anxious to know if it was just going to be a manoeuvre or a scrap, which we could not tell them. But there was nerve-tension amongst the lot all the time. That night we had a sort of smoking concert in the house. It was a dry one too because none of us drank at that time. I remember Harry Shiels had been out most of the evening and all that night. I think he was on duty down in Liberty Hall.

On Sunday morning I proceeded to Father Mathew Park after Mass, held my parade, issued out arms and ammunition to most of the men who were not already supplied, and carried on with my Sunday morning parade, dismissing the men about half-an-hour earlier than usual, with instructions to parade outside the Hotel Russell that

evening not later than 6 o'clock. There was great discussion going on as a result of an announcement that had appeared in the 'Sunday Independent' that morning, signed by Professor Eoin MacNeill, calling off the manoeuvres. In the absence of orders to the contrary I carried on and had just dismissed the company when Tom Hunter, Battalion Commandant, and Thomas Slater and other battalion officers arrived from Father Mathew Park. We went back to the Pavilion and had a discussion, and Tom Hunter issued an order that the men were to be demobilised immediately. They were given orders not to leave their houses or businesses without leaving word where they were to be found at a moment's notice. After the dismissal there was a lot of work to be done by myself, Fergus McMenamin and one or two lads I was able to catch before they went away, who gave a hand at writing out the instructions and delivering them to all the members of the company. Paddy Moran, who was foreman of Doyle's publichouse, Phibsborough, was one of the first I got to chuck his job and go around to the different section commanders with the orders.

Having satisfied myself that all men were notified, I went back to 19 Sherrard Street where I was staying. I found great tension among the other men there. They had all received similar instructions from their company commanders. Harry Shiels of 'F' Company, 1st Battalion, was out most of that evening and night, on special duty. We passed the time discussing McNeill's countermanding order and the news of the loss of the three lads, Charlie Monaghan, Dan Sheehan and Con Keating in Kerry, and the arrest of Casement. We remained until fairly late that night, discussing all this, and having a sing-song to take our minds off it. We retired to bed about 2 a.m., as we felt that no orders would come through.



At about nine o'clock on Easter Monday morning, Harry Shiels came into the house, looking very tired. I think he had been on duty in Liberty Hall. He told us all to get up. I asked him if he had any news. He said that the only news he had was that he thought we were going to be called out.

While dressing, I happened to look out through the window and saw a member of the 2nd Battalion passing by on a bicycle and going towards No. 2 or 4 Lr. Sherrard St., where Tommy and Johnny O'Connor lived. I blew my whistle to attract his attention, and he came hurrying to the door. His name was Joe or Tom O'Rourke. His sister was a nurse, and he lived near Clonliffe Road. I went to the door and received him there. He informed me that he had been looking for me all the morning, and had called to Lower Sherriff St. He handed me an order to mobilise my company for St. Stephen's Green by 10 a.m. That order was signed by Tom Slater, Adjutant, and Tomás MacDonagh. I was to report myself personally to Mícheál O'Hanrahan at 10 a.m. When I remarked that it was rather late to receive the order, it was then he explained that he had spent a lot of time looking for me, and that the order had been issued earlier.

I ordered Fergus McMenamin to fill in the time and place of mobilisation on the orders which I had already prepared, and to proceed to Paddy Moran, Dick Healy and other mobilisers with the orders.

I proceeded myself to St. Stephen's Green, and reported to Mícheál O'Hanrahan, Tom Slater and Tom Hunter at a small tobacconist shop beside May's music shop (St. Stephen's Green, West). There were a number of 2nd

Battalion Headquarters officers there at the time.

Mícheál O'Hanrahan ordered me to get a cab, take a few lads with me, and go back to Sherrard St. and to his own house in Connaught St., and collect any arms and ammunition that were there. I suggested to him that I would commandeer a motor car, as it would be quicker, but he said, "No"; that it was likely to cause a commotion, and that the cab would be less suspicious. Motor cars at that time were very scarce.

I selected four Volunteers who were nearest at hand. Among them was Peadar McMahon, now Secretary of the Department of Defence, and who was then a Volunteer. I took him into the cab with me, sent one man on a bicycle in front, and posted the third and fourth at the rear. I had a double purpose in that. One was to help to get the arms and ammunition out of the houses as quickly as possible, and the other was for protection in the event of a hold-up. We proceeded to Sherrard St., where I collected a number of cases, put them into the cab, and then proceeded to Connaught St. Arriving at the corner of Connaught St. and St. Peter's Road, I noticed a large number of D.M.P. men. As this was very close to O'Hanrahan's house, I decided to proceed straight ahead without going near the house. I did not want to run the risk of creating a scene if there was any shooting, and losing the arms already in the cases, as well as what was in the house. I was also afraid of upsetting any plans that may have been made, if there was any shooting at this stage.

We proceeded through Fassaugh Lane and down Cabra Road. When we arrived at St. Peter's Church, I saw Captain Jim Sullivan of 'B' Company, 1st Battalion, standing there,

with a number of Volunteers, and I informed him that there were arms and ammunition in O'Hanrahan's house, and that he was to try and collect them as soon as the police moved away from the vicinity. I explained why I had not collected them myself, and he promised that he would look after them.

We then proceeded in the direction of Stephen's Green. Arriving at the G.P.O. in O'Connell St. at approximately 12.10 p.m. or 12.15 p.m., I saw Volunteers breaking the windows from the inside, with their rifle butts, and Joe Plunkett and other officers and Volunteers clearing the crowd that had collected in front of the Post Office. Again, I had to do some thinking. Fearing that we might not be able to get across town to Stephen's Green, with our arms, I consulted Peadar McMahon about carrying on, or going into the Post Office. We finally agreed to proceed to Stephen's Green.

We arrived at Stephen's Green without further incident. I noticed that the Green was practically deserted, except for curious spectators. The gates of the Green, facing Grafton Street, were closed, and Volunteers were inside. I proceeded into the Green with the cab, and enquired for Mícheál O'Hanrahan or Captain Hunter. I saw the Countess Markievicz approaching, and I advanced towards her. She gave us a great welcome. I enquired for Commandant O'Hanrahan, and told her my mission, and that I was to report back to him. She told me that we would have to stay where we were, as men, arms and ammunition were badly needed there, but that she would have Commandant O'Hanrahan notified. We unloaded the arms and ammunition from the cab, and I remember paying the cabman and letting him go.

The Countess Markievicz brought me along to the gatekeeper's lodge, just inside the Cuffe Street gate of Stephen's Green, where I saw Michael Mallon and other officers, mostly Citizen Army. The Countess informed him what I had brought, and it seemed to put him in very good humour.

I was then detailed to take charge of the street gate, and to get the men to dig trenches inside the gate. One of the men I remember was Bill Partridge. I think he was shot there. I was then told to proceed down to Leeson Street gate, and do likewise. In fact, my job was to look after the defence of the Green. I had arrived in the Green about 12.30 p.m. or 1 p.m. I went round to the different gate entrances into the Green, and got the men to erect barricades inside and dig trenches with the small number of trench tools which we had.

I proceeded back to the lodge, and reported. There were a number of Cumann na mBan girls in the lodge, making tea, of which I gladly partook.

About 3 p.m., a number of Citizen Army men and Volunteers, who had been holding Davy's publichouse at Portobello Bridge, fell back on the Green, a number of them taking up position in Little's publichouse at the corner of Cuffe St. and Stephen's Green.

I remained in charge of the party at Cuffe St. gate, inside in the Green. Several Volunteers and Fianna boys reported for duty. Two of the Fianna boys stick out in my memory. One was Tommy Keenan, a lad of about twelve years of age, and the other was a younger brother of mine, Joey. On account of their age, I told them to go home. Tommy Keenan, who was very upset at being sent home, told me that that was not what I had always told him. Eventually, they went away.

Shortly afterwards, I began to hold up all cars and bicycles that came along, including motor cars and cabs. I got them to stop across the road, and I used them as a barricade from Stephen's Green to the Hotel Russell. While on this operation with members of the garrison, I was surprised to see Mr. Larry Kettle arriving down Harcourt St. on a motor bicycle and side-car. He seemed very indignant when he was held up, and told to fall in.

Knowing Mr. Kettle as one of the old Executive who had gone over to the Redmondites, I approached him, and told him to get out. Jokingly I said, "I am glad to see you are coming to join us"! He looked at me with a scowl, and said he was not joining us. I told him I was afraid he would have to. On searching his side-car, I discovered a belt, with a holster, revolver and ammunition pouch. I asked him, if he was not going to join us, what was he doing with those in his car, to which I got no reply. He was very dogged, and resented it when I told him I was taking him a prisoner, and was handing him over to the Countess Markievicz. Having taken him out of the car and into the Green, I proceeded to one of the summerhouses which was the headquarters of the Countess. One of the escorts I had with me was the late Andy Dunne, a Citizen Army man. The welcome he received from the Countess was very warm. She told me that she would look after him, and that I could go back to my duty.

While I was handing over Kettle to the Countess, I noticed young Tommy Keenan and my brother, Joey, hiding behind the Countess. I asked them why did they not go home when they were told, or how they got in there. They told me they got in through York St. gate. I informed the Countess that I had sent them home earlier, and she

smilingly remarked that I could leave them there, and that, if their fathers came along, I was to refer them to her. They were delighted. Of course, they would be very useful for carrying despatches, and could get through where we would not get through.

While in the Green, I remember seeing the late Fr. Tom Donoghue, who was then a piper in the Fianna band and a member of the Citizen Army, Christy Crothers, another Fianna boy, also Citizen Army, Commandant Billy O'Brien, Professor Liam Ó Broin of Galway University, Joe Connolly, also of Fianna and Citizen Army, Andy Dunne, already mentioned, Fianna and Citizen Army.

Most of the people I saw, I knew. During my tour round the Green, examining the defences at the various points, I noticed that there were not more than eighteen men, if there were that many, most of whom were officers and men of the Citizen Army.

Between six and seven o'clock on Easter Monday evening, the cars were returning from Fairyhouse races. I remember one motor car breaking through and refusing to halt. We opened fire on it, but did not succeed in stopping it. I later identified the driver in Knutsford prison when he came in for an identification inspection.

Prior to that, we received word that British troops were advancing along Camden Street, as if to launch an attack on Jacob's. When I had reported this information to the Countess Markievicz, Tom Donoghue and a Citizen Army man whose name I cannot remember, and myself were ordered to proceed along Cuffe Street. Just as we reached Fanning's, the chandlers, we saw the head of the British column at the Cuffe St. end of Wexford St.

We lay down, and opened fire on them, wounding about three of them, whom I saw falling. They seemed to scatter in all directions. They were British "Tommys" being marched along Wexford St. We fell back on the Green then, as we expected them to come down Montague St. and attack us at Harcourt St., but we got word that they had returned to Wellington Barracks (now Griffith Barracks). They probably had been out scouting.

There was very little activity around the Green from then until dusk when I was ordered by Commandant Mallon to take a party of three or four and proceed to Leeson St. Bridge on reconnaissance. We remained in Leeson St. for some time, and fell back on the Green again.

Commandant Mallon ordered me to take over Byrne's publichouse and hold it. When we had taken it over, we collected some provisions, such as, sugar, butter, etc., and sent them into the Green. I remained there until about seven o'clock on the following morning, that is, Tuesday. During the night, British troops had succeeded in entering the Shelbourne Hotel from where heavy machine-gun fire was coming in the direction of the Green.

I reported back to Commandant Mallon in Stephen's Green. As I was proceeding, a big burst of machine-gun fire opened up, and I heard a voice telling me to take cover quickly. I rushed towards where the voice came from, and found there the Countess Markievicz and Commandant Mallon. While we were lying there, Commandant Mallon suggested that I should take over Iveagh House and erect defences. We discussed the question of taking it over, and the number of men I would require. He told me that they had taken over the College of Surgeons during the night, and would have very few men to spare for Lord Iveagh's house. I told him I would require at least twelve men. He

said he could not give them to me. I suggested to him that he should leave it alone, as we could not defend it, and it would be putting him in a false position. He eventually agreed.

Commandant Mallon then ordered me to remove the prisoners from the summer house and escort them to the College of Surgeons. The prisoners were Larry Kettle, a D.M.P. sergeant and a naval officer. I proceeded to take Kettle first. On our way to the College of Surgeons, we were fired on, on a few occasions, and each time a burst of fire came, Kettle fell. I told him that, the next time he fell, I would make sure that he would not get up. Arriving at the College of Surgeons, I put him in the charge of Tom O'Donoghue (later Rev. Fr. Tom O'Donoghue), a Citizen Army man, previously referred to, and Commandant William O'Brien.

I returned to the Green, and was instructed by Commandant Mallon to go around and make sure that nobody was left behind. There were three or four men at the Merrion Row gate, one of whom was the late Phil Clarke, and I told them to fall back to the College of Surgeons. I proceeded to the Leeson St. gate. I had just left when I heard another burst of fire. Looking back to where the men were, I saw Phil Clarke lying on the ground, fatally wounded. We pulled him into the shelter of some trees, and I said the Act of Contrition into his ear. I told the two Citizen Army men to return to the College of Surgeons and report to Commandant Mallon, that I would proceed to Leeson Street and clear the men from that post. On my way there, I saw a cab horse lying on the ground where it had been shot earlier that morning. Having satisfied myself that there were no more men in the Green, I proceeded to the College of Surgeons.



When I arrived there, I was ordered to proceed to the roof of the College. There I found a number of men returning the fire from the Shelbourne Hotel. The late Joe Connolly (later Chief of the Dublin Fire Brigade) had been appointed in charge of the roof party. Men kept coming on to the roof which happened to be flat on top. Among them was a man named Doherty. Just as he came on to the roof, there was a burst of machine-gun fire, and he was badly wounded. A number of us succeeded in getting him off the roof. An ambulance, which had been called to get Phil Clarke in the Green, arrived shortly afterwards, and while they were there, they took Doherty away. They were given up for dead. (Later I saw Doherty in Frongoch, minus an ear and an eye). The firing was very, very heavy. We entrenched ourselves around a balustrade there and kept returning the fire. At this time, there was a number of men below, boring through the walls to make an entry to the next building for the purpose of establishing lines of communication.

During that evening (Tuesday), I saw Joe Vize, who was a member of my company, Matt and Joe Furlong, who later held commissioned ranks in the National Army, Tom Keogh, who later held rank as Major General in the National Army and was killed in action in Kerry during the Civil War, Peadar McMahon, Professor Liam Ó Briain of Galway, Tommy Clifford, Christy McCormack, Captain of the Citizen Army, one of the Poole's, Michael Kelly, O'Shea, Jim Joyce (all Citizen Army men who fell back on the Winter Gardens).

I think it was on Wednesday morning that there was a sortie of Volunteers out on bicycles. They had apparently come from the G.P.O. and, when passing Trinity College, were fired on. One of them was wounded. I think he was Barney McCormack who belonged to my company.

Most of the day (Wednesday) went preparing our defences and getting some of the men to rest. The Cumann na mBan girls who were there were looking after some of the wounded and preparing food, which was very scarce at the time. That evening, a number of men came from Jacob's with provision, cakes, biscuits and bread.

Word was received on Tuesday evening that Seán Connolly had been killed in the attack on the Castle.

I remember going up to the roof to try and get some of the men to come down and rest, including Joe Connolly, who refused to leave the roof. Commandant Mallon sent me back to tell Connolly that he was ordering him off the roof, but he refused to come down.

On Wednesday, there was not much except sniping, and boring through. Also, there were scouts out reconnoitring.

On Thursday evening near dusk, a party was sent out and proceeded towards Harcourt Street, as word had come in that British troops were advancing that way. Among the group was Margaret Skinnider. When they reached the Ivanhoe Hotel, at Montague Street, the British troops opened fire on them, wounding Miss Skinnider. Both parties fell back after this.

There was very little activity from then until the end of the week, except returning fire on the British garrison in the Shelbourne. Friday was somewhat similar to Thursday.

On Thursday, Kettle was to be courtmartialled in the College of Surgeons, and he sent Tom Donoghue and Billy O'Brien to tell me he wanted me. Prior to this, he had asked for, and had been given writing material, as

he wanted to write his will. Having written his will, he got Tom Donoghue and Billy O'Brien to witness his signature, and he handed it to me. I handed it over to Mallon.

On Saturday, at about 1 p.m., we got a report that the G.P.O. was being evacuated. Later that evening, we got an order to cease fire. I was on the roof at the time. I think it was one of the Cumann na mBan girls who came along with a white flag. There was a British army officer with her. Most of the officers were collected and told that the G.P.O. had surrendered, and we were ordered to lay down arms, or cease fire until something more definite came along.

Later that night, it was confirmed that Pearse had surrendered, and we had been given orders to surrender also. I don't know what negotiations went on after that.

On Sunday morning, we were all assembled, and Pearse's letter was read out to us, that it was to save further bloodshed, that we had vindicated ourselves in our protest. He pointed out that some of the leaders might be executed or sentenced to terms of imprisonment, but that the remainder would be sent home.

I remember that there was pandemonium and protests. Some of the men got their rifles and smashed them - including Joe Connolly. A number of them started crying.

We were asked to kneel down and say the Rosary, which we did. To my surprise, I saw the Countess Markievicz taking out a Rosary beads and reciting the Rosary with the rest of us. She was not then a Catholic, as far as I can recollect, although she used to come to Mass with us when we camped at Belcamp and in the mountains, but I had never seen her with a Rosary beads.

After the Rosary, we were told to collect our arms, place them in the ground-floor of the College of Surgeons, and wait for the British army officers to come and take our surrender.

I remember going around and visiting the sentries that we had posted. Peadar McMahon came along with his rifle. He said he was not surrendering, that he was going over to Jacob's. He was followed by two or three others.

About two or three o'clock on Sunday afternoon, two British officers arrived, with some N.C.O.s. One of the officers was a Canadian. The other was a Major Wheeler, a brother of Surgeon Wheeler. We were formed up and counted. There was a conversation between the British officers and Countess Markievicz and Michael Mallon. Young Tommy Keenan, whom I have already mentioned, was among us when we were formed up, and I remember Major Wheeler remarking, "You even have babies fighting!". He and the younger Fianna boys were sent home, but Tommy Keenan again refused to go. After checking up, we were marched out of the College of Surgeons, and among the people who were looking at us was my friend, Mr. Kettle.

We were marched along Grafton Street, Dame Street and into Dublin Castle. On the way to the Castle, there were quite a number of people on the side-walks. Some of them shook their fists at us, others cursed us, some spat at us and some called us murderers and Germans. I remember one British army N.C.O., who happened to be a Dublin man, saying that hanging was too good for us, that we had shot his sister in North King Street.

Arriving at the Castle, we were taken through an iron gate entrance inside in the Castle, at the rear of Ship Street Barracks. From there we could see a green plot which had been dug up, and I remember the British N.C.O. saying that it was a grave dug up for us all. We remained there for some time, and were then taken out again and marched to Richmond Barracks (now Keogh Square).

Arriving in the barracks, we were formed up, and picked out in batches and sent into the gymnasium. As we were going into the gym., I noticed a number of detectives, including Hoey, Smith, Love, Halley, Barton and Bruton. Our names were taken down by an N.C.O. as we went in. Some of us were put to the left, and others to the right of the gymnasium.

I was sent to the left, where I saw the brothers Pearse, McDonagh, McDermott, Clarke, Fahy, Daly, Joe McGuinness and practically all of the officers who were sentenced and executed subsequently.

A sentry was walking up and down in the centre of the floor, to keep the prisoners separated, that is, the parties on the right from those on the left. As I was crossing the floor, Joe McGuinness advanced towards me and said he was glad to see me, as he had heard a rumour in the Four Courts that I had been shot or wounded. While talking to Joe in the centre of the floor, the sentry came along and, thinking I had come from the right, put me on the right and McGuinness back to the left.

While we were there, more prisoners kept coming in all the time, some being sent to the left, and others to the right. A number of us were discussing what was going to happen when the party on the right was ordered to leave

the building. We were marched out and sent to a barrack room where we were given a bucket of water to drink from.

After some time, we were marched outside to the square, where everything was taken off us, including pocket handkerchiefs, Rosary beads, etc., and we were issued with a tin of bully beef between every two prisoners and some hard biscuits. We were informed by a Lieutenant Barron, who was a Dublin Jew, that we were being deported.

We were then marched to the North Wall and put into the hold of a cattle boat. I remember I got some life-belts, on which I lay down and fell asleep. I remembered no more until I found we had arrived in Holyhead, Wales.

Before concluding my narrative on the Rising and our occupation of the College of Surgeons, I would like to refer to the food situation, and to state that, during the week, we lived mostly on bread and tea. I think we got soup on one or two occasions. On the Saturday prior to the surrender, we were contemplating the execution of a horse, which was in a stable at the rear of the College of Surgeons, in order to provide food for us. We also got supplies of biscuits during the week from members of Cumann na mBan who brought them from Jacob's.

I should have mentioned that there was a force of British troops stationed in the United Services Club from about Thursday, and that they were continually sniping at us.

We were all formed up, and despatched to various detention barracks in England.

Signed: *Seamus Kavanagh*

Date:

Witness:

*Mr Ryan Condl.*  
(Investigator).

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRA MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 1,670