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STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

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Witness

Andrew McDonnell,
"St. Thérese",
6, Glenayr Road,
Rathgar,
Dublin.

Identity.

O/C, Dublin No. 2 Brigade, 1921-1922.

Subject.

"E" Coy., 3rd Battn., Dublin Brigade, 1915-1918;
Dublin No. 2 Brigade, 1919-1922.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

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STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREW McDONNELL,

"St. Thérese", 6, Glenayr Road, Rathgar, Dublin.

I was born at 17, Ballsbridge Terrace, Ballsbridge, Dublin, on the 1st February, 1898, fourth son of James and Ann McDonnell. We were a family of eight, five boys and three girls. My father died in 1907, leaving my mother with a large family and a total income of roughly 25/- per week. We moved to Rathmines about 1913, and the first break in the family was when my third eldest brother joined the British Army on the outbreak of war in 1914.

I was educated at St. Mary's National School, Haddington Road, reached 6th Standard at the age of 13, when I left to work for 6/6d per week, a goodly sum to our family at that time.

There was not much national spirit in our home that I can remember. My mother talked of the famine years, and her hero of later years was the Dublin jarvey, "Skin the Goat", who was connected with the Invincibles, and, in her opinion, the most despicable man was Carey, the Informer.

There was no connection between our family and the National Volunteers, but when the Irish Citizen Army was formed, my brother, Peter, R.I.P., took an active part as he was then a keen Labour man but proved later that he was not born to be a soldier and backed out.

I was aware that there was a Volunteer company meeting in St. Enda's, Oakley Road, Ranelagh, as Joe McCormick, who lived a few doors from me, was a member and an officer. This information reached me through his brother, Larry, who was about my age and very interested in anything Irish.

January, 1916, I decided that I would join the Irish Volunteers, and in due course offered my services at Oakley Road, only to be told I was too young and to try again in another year. I kept annoying all concerned and in a few weeks' time was accepted as a member of 'E' Company, 3rd Battalion, Dublin Brigade, by Captain Liam Tannam, then O/C of the company at Oakley Road.

Drill parades took place on at least two nights each week, with firing practice on Sunday morning in the hall with a .22 bore rifle under the direction of Paddy Doyle of Milltown. The officers of this company, to the best of my knowledge, were: - Liam Tannam, Captain Joe McCormick, Lieut. Durcan Darcy (Postman), Lt. Paddy Doyle, Adjutant. There was a section of the company in Milltown and Dundrum, and the remainder of the company was made up with men from Donnybrook, Ballsbridge, Ranelagh and Rathmines.

The company was on parade with arms on the 17th March, 1916, when the salute was taken by Eoin MacNeill in College Green. I was then armed with a 6' pike, as were a number of the men in the company. I well remember the trouble it was to stack the pikes while we attended Mass at S.S. Michael & John's, Exchange St., on our way to the parade at College Green.

Early in April, 1916, I was sent from a company parade in Oakley Road to do guard duty on G.H.Q., then at 2, Dawson St., armed with a .22 nickel-plated revolver. Reporting there for duty about 7.30 p.m. to Barney Mellows, whom I did not know at the time, I was instructed not to allow any person upstairs. I was left alone in the hall undisturbed for about an hour, when a man I did not know entered the hall from the street and made for the stairs. I told him my orders and produced the .22, holding the stairs against all his explanations and threats. In time Barney Mellows returned and at once my stranger was allowed upstairs. He was Bulmer Hobson, but that meant nothing to me at that time.

Our company had a visit from Thomas McDonagh in the hall at Oakley Road on Thursday, 20th April, 1916. and addressed the men on the Easter manoeuvres. There was also a lecture by a man called Byrne, who was a first-aid man and spoke on the care of the feet and the danger of in-growing toe-nails. I have an idea Byrne came from the battalion to give this talk, and it was all in keeping with the Easter manoeuvres and no hint whatever about the Rising.

The company was well trained and equipped, but the arms were a very mixed lot - revolvers of all sizes from .22 to 45 Bulldogs, shotguns, pikes, a few rifles, .44 Lee Enfield, Howth Mauser and at least one or two long Lee Enfields. I was the proud possessor of a .22 revolver and a pike, both of which I kept at home well polished.

I was all ready for the Easter manoeuvres, complete with heavy pair of marching boots, 3 days'

rations, first-aid kit, green soft hat turned up at the side, scout's jersey, belt, trench coat and trench digger. The parade ground for the 3rd Battalion was at Camden Row, off Camden Street, Dublin, and here on many occasions prior to Easter Week the full battalion was on parade under the command of Commandant Eamon de Valera, O/C 3rd Battalion, Dublin Brigade. The strength of the battalion was roughly 400 officers and men, made up by six companies, A, B, C, D, E and F. The men in F. Company were mostly from Dún Laoghaire, Dalkey, Bray and Blackrock. The men who stand out most in my memory on such battalion parades are Comdt. de Valera in Volunteer uniform, with black strapped leggings, Captain Joe O'Connor, Captain Simon Donnelly, Capt. Seán McMahon and Cathal McDowell, all of whom I had the honour to serve with during Easter Week in Boland's Garrison and from whom I gained much needed strength and courage during my Baptismal fire.

I was mobilised for 12 noon on Easter Sunday at Oakley Road. I turned up in full kit with pike, and found about 20 men at the hall. There appeared to be a lot of dispatch riders coming and going, and at about 2 p.m. we were told the manoeuvres were cancelled. We were dismissed and told to remain at home for 24 hours and await further orders.

Easter Monday, 24th April, 1916, I was mobilised about 10.30 a.m. by Joe McCormick and told to report to Oakley Road at once with full kit and pike. Reported there about 11 a.m., I found about 12 men and after some little time Captain Liam Tannam arrived on an outside car with Durcan Darcy. He had a hurried conversation with Paddy Doyle and then left on the car with Darcy to

mobilise the Milltown and Dundrum sections. Doyle had received instructions to wait about half an hour and then proceed with all available men and arms to Earlsfort Terrace and report to Comdt. de Valera. I would say it was about 12.30 p.m. when Paddy Doyle decided to move off with the following members of 'E' Company - Tommy Devine, Michael Tannam, Seán Kinsella, Andy Murphy, Harry Winstanley, Tom Mahon, Mick O'Donovan, Andy McDonnell. There may have been others, but not many. We proceeded through Ranelagh with what arms were available, a few shotguns, pikes and a few small arms. I am sure Paddy Doyle had a rifle. Somewhere between Ranelagh and the Canal we met a lot of people on foot who appeared to be walking from town, and a few at least told us not to go near the G.P.O. as there was shooting there. I was still convinced I was going on a manoeuvre, and I am sure most of my comrades had the same idea. We were met by a dispatch rider who gave an order to Paddy Doyle, and we were told we were now going to Liberty Hall and the party kept going, much to the amusement of passersby. How or why we arrived at 144, Pearse Street (then Brunswick St.) I do not know, but arrive we did to find men and arms all over the place and plenty of confusion. I am of the opinion Paddy Doyle reported to Captain Joe O'Connor while the remainder of 'E' Company was left on the street with men from other units.
I did not see Comdt. de Valera at 144 but I did see the Battalion Transport arrive - this, a horse and cart in charge of Jimmy Murray, who was very lame as he had a short leg but his laugh and good humour made up for the short leg. The cart was loaded with all sorts of food, and I can still see flitches of white bacon, better known then as "The Lad", mixed up with military stores.

By this time I was having doubts about the manoeuvres and was convinced there was something wrong when I was ordered to hold up a tram, my first taste of active service. I stood in the street with my six foot pike 'at the ready' as the tram approached. Not an inch did I move as that tram came closer, but, to my great relief, it stopped and I ordered all passengers out. I have wondered since what would have happened had the driver donged the bell and kept coming: would I have turned and run, or would I have charged the tram with my pike? I wonder.'

There is a command and we all 'fall in' behind Transport, and the 3rd Battalion moves off, not very far, and we turn into what looked to me like a very big yard, the gates of which were thrown open by armed men, and closed as the last man entered. This was Boland's Bakery. Men were rushed to various parts of the building, while I was put digging a trench and my trench digger was in action, while my treasured pike was hidden behind some sacks of flour with the set intention of taking it home when all this fuss was over. I did make some sort of a hole in the very hard gound and was then moved into the bakery, where I once more met my hero, Simon Donnelly, who seemed to be all places at once, barking orders. He gave me a shotgun and put me out on a roof, not very high, overlooking Grand Canal St., with orders to fire on any British troops should they appear on the street below. I was wide awake: my vision of the big manoeuvre was gone; I was a soldier. By this time the sound of heavy gun fire from the direction of the city was very clear, and I was alone on the roof, far from happy or free of fear. How long I was left on that post I do not remember, but

it was dusk when Simon Donnelly took me down and I was sent into the bakery for food. This was handed out by Mick Tannam, who had been appointed Q/M. The meal consisted of "The Lad" fried and tea, but it was very welcome, in spite of the fact that it was smoked in more ways than one.

My next job was to help to barricade Grand Canal St. Bridge. This was done with bread-vans taken from the bakery and rushed along Grand Canal St., about three men to every van, and on to the bridge where some were overturned and others had the wheels removed. This job completed, I was once again put out on a roof with a shotgun, this time in Roberts' yard on the canal between Grand Canal St. Bridge and Clanwilliam House, already manned. I got my Baptismal fire on this post as fire was opened up on us from a lane or cul-de-sac on the other side of the canal beside the turf bank. This lasted for some time, and British soldiers were seen to withdraw with some wounded. Later this post was held by about four men until Captain Joe O'Connor withdrew the post, as he considered it too open and unsafe and the barricaded canal bridge, now held by snipers, covered the canal up to Clanwilliam Terrace. I was then sent on to the railway line between Westland Row Station and Beggars Bush. The line had been trenched and I found myself in the front line trench with Captain Joe O'Connor, and the only other man I can remember was Joe Curran who was then, to my mind, an elderly man. Fire was rather heavy at this point and by times it was not possible to lift your head above the parapet of the trench. Rations came through at very odd times, as it was difficult to reach us because of the fire. I remember seeing a black bucket moving along the

railway in our direction and yet we could not see anyone carrying it. I asked Joe Curran if he could see what I saw, and he explained that there was a man crawling and pushing the bucket in front of him. This proved correct; the bucket reached the trench and the man explained he was taking cover behind the bucket (poor cover!) That bucket was very welcome, as it contained mashed potatoes, cheese and bread.

Lots were drawn for men to go for sleep in the railway carriages along the line. I was not lucky and drew blank. Some older man took pity on me and allowed me to take his place, and I left for the carriages and much-needed sleep with several others. We were hardly settled when British snipers from the roof tops in Mount St. opened up on the carriages and we finished the sleep on the railway line under the carriages. We were then protected by the boundary wall of the railway overlooking Barrow St. I was on outpost somewhere along the line in the small hours of the morning, and as dawn broke I could see cats of all shapes and sizes on the railway and on the street below. I learned afterwards that the cats' home was somewhere near and, as there was nobody to feed them, they had been set free. I should mention the route from the bakery to the railway was through a hole very high in a horse's stall. You walked or crawled up a gangway through the hole and out on to the railway, which was much higher than the bakery. I was still on the railway when I heard Comdt. de Valera discuss with Captain Joe O'Connor the danger of the British manning the railway; with a total of not more than 120 it was not possible to hold this building in addition to those already held. The brilliant idea of the Comdt. was to

put a flag on the water tank on the roof of the Mill and so encourage the British to shell the building and so make it useless as a covering position for themselves. This was decided by the two officers, and a pike was needed as a flag staff. Here I was brazen enough to say I had a pike hidden in the bakery. (At this stage I was armed with a shotgun). I was ordered to get the pike. The flag was hoisted on the water tank by Mick Cullen of 'D' Company. Very soon after fire was opened by H.M.S. Helga from the Liffey, the first shell hit the pike staff in the middle but, in falling, the flag caught on the railing surrounding the water tank and remained there for the week and was later saved. Shells continued to pour into the building and/it became flooded and impossible to hold. The British had carried out the wishes of Comdt. de Valera. (Alas, my cherished pike had served well). The cats from the cats home were bad enough on the prowl, but the rats from the flooded mill were worse and they were many and varied on the railway.

Recalled to the bakery, I was given a crowbar and lost my shotgun; lined up with about 10 others, Donnelly proceeded to cover our backs with flour, with an explanation that we would be moving in the dark in single file, about 10 yards apart, and the white back would be a means of keeping contact. The Comdt. then took over. We were to move along the railway as far as Beggars Bush in strict silence, as the British military had already moved on to the railway. I was the last man in the file, complete with crowbar that I could hardly carry. Alas, the order was given, left turn, and I found myself the leader of the file. We moved out into the yard, black dark, into the stables, up the gangplank, through the

hole in the wall and so on to the railway, with the Comdt. in the lead and the white backs strung out behind him, stopped very often to listen, then on again, and my crowbar gained weight with every stop. Where were we going, after what seemed to me to be a full night. We reached the railway bridges, over Bath Avenue and beside Beggars Bush Barracks. We got orders to drop from the parapet of the bridge over South Lotts Road into some waste ground that contained the two huge gasometers, all in dead silence and pitch black. I was excited and more than likely frightened; as a result, I dropped my crowbar, not into the waste ground but on to the South Lotts Road, the clatter of which could be heard not alone in Beggars Bush but, to my ears, in Portobello. I was much more afraid of the Comdt. than I was of the British troops and, without thinking, I climbed over the parapet, hung out of it for a few seconds and then dropped on to the road, grabbed the crowbar, climbed over a wall where the houses are now, and into the waste ground before I was missed and no questions asked. We moved in between the two gasometers. The ground was soft and, in parts, covered with stagnant water, but the Comdt. was in the lead and covered the ground quickly in his long strides regardless of water or anything else. I kept well up, lugging the crowbar and very thankful the Comdt. had not had time to question the noise caused by my carelessness. He made straight for an office, evidently knowing the exact position. There was light in the office and the Comdt. entered with gun in hand. There was some talk between the Comdt. and a man who must have been a sort of watchman. He (the watchman) was told to lead the way to the gas works. This he refused to do.

Some peaceful persuasion by the Comdt. and we moved off with the watchman to Ringsend Road, somewhere near the bridge. Here we entered a big yard through a large gate that had been opened from the inside at the request of our watchman. The building was lighted and working, from the sound of running machinery. The Comdt. informed the man inside the gate that he was taking over the Gas works and would dismantle some of the machinery. All workmen would be permitted to go home and he would have a garrison of a few hundred men in the building within an hour. The Comdt. entered the building with about 4 men and my crowbar; others were posted around the yard, but it was my luck to be posted outside the gate, with a revolver, not a soul to be seen but the glow in the sky and the roar of guns which gave me some idea of what was happening all around me. I admit I was frightened outside that gate on my own. I could not say what I was afraid of, but I was alone, with no idea of how near the enemy was. After what seemed to me a lifetime, the gate opened and there in the yard was the Comdt., with all the workmen, a very large number, and he told them to get home as best they could and he would have the place garrisoned shortly. The idea was to let it be known that the Gas works were held, while in actual fact we did not leave a man in it. Remember ten of us took over the building, and we had not more than 120 men to hold the whole area. Some parts of the machinery were taken away, and when the workmen had moved away, the gates were locked and we got back to the bakery by way of Ringsend Road and Erne St. We were admitted through a gate by Peadar Macken, killed later, and then sleep. We just lay down on some flour sacks and were dead asleep almost at once. I was awakened by a very heavy weight on top of me. This proved to me Cathal

McDowell, who had come in from the railway and fallen over me, dead asleep, before he hit the sacks. I could not shift him or waken him until we were roused by Simon Donnelly, who sent us to various posts. I went with Donnelly and Paddy Flanagan (later O/C, A.S.U.) to a corner of a field near Grand Canal St. Bridge. Here we mounted a platform with a view of the bridge and along the canal to Clanwilliam Terrace and in full view of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital. We were under heavy fire from the turf bank side of the canal. Donnelly had a rifle, and Flanagan a Mauser, while I had a shotgun. There was a crude-looking bomb in a bucket that had been used for cement, and the bucket was very heavy. What we intended to do with the bomb I never knew, as we were forced from this position and had to retreat back across the field under heavy fire and bring the bucket with us with the ground being cut up with rifle fire. My next post was on a very high ladder covering Ringsend Basin through a loop-hole in the wall near the roof. My greatest worry here was trying to keep awake, as I was very far from the ground and to fall would be fatal. There was some shooting from this position and while it lasted I was safe from a fall unless aided by a British bullet.

The battle of Mount St. Bridge was raging within a distance of about 1,000 yards of this position and yet we were completely cut off from Clanwilliam House. That position was isolated from Bolands.

I cannot remember the days of the week, or day from night for that matter. They all seemed to run into one another. Sleep we got in fits and starts, and if you managed to remove your boots once in a while you were lucky.

You lay down anywhere when you were told you could sleep. There was a visit by a priest during the week. He was in the bakery, standing behind a van hearing Confessions. You got permission to leave your post and make for the bakery, find the priest, with your hat in one hand and your gun in the other, get Confession and rush back to your post. The priest may have been in more days than one, but I only saw him once. There was a prisoner in the bakery all the week. He was a military cadet in uniform and was kept at the base in the bakery and well looked after by Mick Tannam, the Q.M. There was some looting at the Hunt's Grocery Store in Brunswick St. I could see this from a post I held on the railway bridge overlooking Erne St. There was some action taken against this but the details were not in my line of vision.

My last post before the surrender was in the Dispensary in Grand Canal St., almost opposite Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital and Smilies Schools. I was on a platform in the area with my head on a level with the street. There was some heavy firing along the street and a woman was wounded as she rushed past the railings of the Dispensary. She managed to get around the corner out of the line of fire, but it was some considerable time before she was taken away and her cries were most un-nerving. We had some wounded in the Dispensary, one of whom was a man by the name of Bracken who had a bad face wound. The Comdt. received the order to surrender from the G.P.O., brought by a member of Cumann na mBan, a Miss O'Farrell or a Miss Grennan, or both. I am not sure of the time but it was on Sunday, the 30th. April, and Comdt. de Valera made contact with the British military in Mount St. and in due course the word was passed around and received with mixed

feelings. The Bolands garrison had held out for almost a week in spite of heavy odds, and some felt we could hold out longer. With the fall of Clanwilliam House, our position was likely to deteriorate rapidly.

To the best of my knowledge, when the surrender had been arranged by Comdt. de Valera and the British military we were brought together in the bakery and told to destroy all arms. We were formed up and were marched out into Grattan St. by the Comdt. The white flag of surrender was carried by Byrne, the first-aid man already mentioned in connection with a lecture given to 'E' Company, 3rd Battalion, at Oakley Road prior to the Rising.

We marched the full length of Grattan St. into Mount St. before meeting a British soldier. They were in Mount St. in force. There was a huge crowd of people in Grattan St. as we passed through a lane of onlookers, some with a word of cheer, others very hostile. I will always remember one woman in that street as we passed along. She was a big woman with a very white apron, or at least so it looked to me, not having used soap or water for a week. When I came along she cried out: "Lord, look at the child going to be shot". Stepping into the road, she picked me up in her arms and moved back into the crowd, evidently with the idea of getting me away to safety. This did not enter my mind at the time; my one idea was to go with my comrades and, in particular, the Commandant, as by that time I was willing to follow him anywhere. I kicked that good woman good and hard until she let me down, and then ran after the remnants of our army to surrender.

Arrived in Mount St., opposite the Elphis Nursing Home, we were surrounded by British troops who did not seem

to know what to make out of us - something they had never come across before, rebels against the Empire, unheard of! The officers were inclined to be friendly, if rather surprised that we showed no sign of fear or regret. An officer with Dr. Miles Keogh said to me: "Well, Sonny, it is all over now and you are all going to be shot". I just grinned. He turned to the Dr. and said: "There you are, they are all the same - from the oldest to the youngest they don't care a damn".

We were lined up under a heavy escort. Our Commandant came down the line and shook hands with every man with tears in his eyes. I was standing beside Simon Donnelly and his words were: "Good luck, Simon", and then more or less to himself, "If I had a battalion of Simons, I would never surrender". What a tribute from such a leader!

The escort moves and we move with them, along Mount St. to the bridge, troops everywhere, the remains of Clanwilliam House and 25, Northumberland Road, outposts that had held up the advance of the Sherwood Foresters and accounted for over 230 dead and wounded. We move along Northumberland Road, with Byrne still in the lead with the white flag of surrender, followed by Comdt. de Valera and Capt. Hitzen, O/C British troops (see photograph taken by J.A. Hurley, then living on Northumberland Road). Halted outside the Town Hall, Ballsbridge, the Comdt. was taken into the offices of the Weights and Measures on the corner of Keegan's Lane, now Ballsbridge Avenue. The remainder were marched along Anglesea Road to D. Gate of the R.D.S., into Show Grounds and along by the judging rings to where the Pembroke Hall is now. There is a line of Box Stalls; the cattle were removed, the straw swept out and 20 prisoners

put into each stall, our first taste of British treatment for prisoners-of-war. The R.D.S. Spring Show is held about the first week in May, and that was the reason why cattle were in the Show Grounds.

We were left in the stalls on the damp ground for some days. Meals were a movable feast: some days we got food and on others we got none. We were taken to the toilet under armed escort. This was at the end of the road near the gate leading on to Simonscourt Road. We were objects of interest to the British troops who were in the stables opposite and came to grin at us over the half door of the stall. One of the British soldiers was black, a negro, and his broad grin was most annoying until a well aimed tobacco spit made him give the half door a wide berth.

We had an inspection from a young British officer who said he would do something for us and dry straw as bedding would be first call. He told us he had been in charge of a prisoner-of-war camp in England and knew the ropes. We hoped so!

There was a Volunteer in my stall by the name of Malone, a big fellow in full Volunteer uniform. We were about 3 days in the stalls when he was taken out under escort and was away for about an hour. When he was brought back he told us a strange story: he was taken over to the Weights and Measures office where the Comdt. was held. There Comdt. de Valera, who was in Volunteer Officer's uniform, was told to change his uniform for that of Private Malone. This he refused to do and there were threats of force etc., all to no avail and the Comdt. stoutly refused. No reason was given for the suggested

change and in time the British gave up the idea and Malone was taken back to us still in his uniform. What was behind this move, will it be ever known ? Malone was in after years a member of the Dublin Fire Bridge and was killed at a fire in Pearse St. I have mentioned this incident to Comdt. de Valera and he was rather surprised that I should know of it, but he could not give any idea why the British should want to make such a change. I have an idea: the British were most anxious to include de Valera in the list of leaders to be executed but were afraid of reaction in the U.S.A. that might upset British efforts to get the States into the war. The plan to my mind was - execute Volunteer Malone on some charge or other and then discover that de Valera had been shot in error as he was wearing Malone's uniform.

The clean, dry straw arrived in the stall, up to our knees in it, what a treat, and to cap it all, a bucket of tea and bully beef. Alas, whatever about the tea and beef, we did not enjoy a night in the straw. All taken out, lined up under heavy escort, marched back to Ballsbridge, where we were joined once more by our Comdt. We continued to retrace our steps along Northumberland Road, Mount St., Merrion Square, Leinster St., Nassau St., College Green, Dame St., Christchurch Place, High St., Thomas St., James's St., Kilmainham and into Richmond Barracks. This was a long march on a very warm day for men not fed and still weary and in doubt of our fate. There was little interest taken in our passing by the people in the streets, just another bunch of prisoners. High St. gave us a hot reception, cat calls, dirty rebels; missiles of every description were thrown as we passed through the narrow

street. This could be attributed to people drawing British Army Allowance for Irishmen serving in the British Army. They left no doubt as to our fate if they got their way.

Richmond Barracks. Prisoners arriving from all parts of the country were gathered here. We were housed in the barrack buildings, 60 men to every room, cleared of everything except a latrine bucket. There was not enough space for all 60 men to lie on the floor at the same time; if you did not get space on the floor, you slept standing up. Food consisted of a bucket of tea and a tin of bully beef once a day - no cups or mugs, you opened your tin of beef and dipped the tin in the tea to draw your ration. The hot tea melted the red paint on the tin, and the grease from the tin floated on the tea. There were two large windows to each room, but to be seen at a window brought fire from the sentry on the barrack square below. In addition, there were four armed soldiers on each landing, all very hostile, and the more cheerful we were, the more rattled became the guards, so we were very cheerful (even if it had to be forced). Deportations were going on all the time, and we could steal a look on to the barrack square now and then and see a batch being listed for the boat. This information was given to us by the guards with glee. Our turn came and the room was emptied on to the square. Names were taken and each man got a tin of beef and two dog biscuits for the journey. The first evening this happened, my name was not called and I was taken aside with several others while the main party was marched off to the boat. When the barrack square was clear of prisoners, with the exception of about 12 of us who had been left behind, an escort of four

soldiers and an N.C.O. arrived, and the N.C.O. collected the tin of beef and two biscuits from each man and marched us back to our room. What an empty feeling - 12 in a room that held 60 less than an hour before, plenty of room to lie down now; gone were the men we had served with and looked up to, as they were all older than the 12 left behind. Little sleep that night as we huddled together in a corner and wondered why we had been left behind. We talked plenty and were shouted at every so often by the sentry outside on the landing, but the voice was different and we were quick to notice this. Gone was the Cockney accent and in its place a good Dublin one. This gave us a little cheer. Not that the shouts were by any means friendly; if anything, the threats were even more savage. Morning came and with it a burly Sergeant, Cockney this time, who took us to a room in another block. Here we were interrogated by detectives and military officers. Names, addresses, age, occupation, who supplied us with arms and who ordered us out to fight, how long we had been members of the Volunteers, and if our parents had any idea of where we were. Then a full description of each man and finger prints were taken, and we were taken back to our original room. (The finger prints were to prove my undoing in Mountjoy Prison 4 years later).

We got a friendly grin from the sentry on the landing as we passed into our room, the first ray of hope. Breakfast, very strong tea in a bucket and hunks of bread, aye, and mugs. This was really comfort. Later we were taken out to a toilet, and on the way back our landing sentry not alone smiled but slipped a few cigarettes. Yes, he was a Dublin Fusilier home on leave and had been

rounded up for duty. This information was given in fits and starts through the closed door - we were bloody fools, but we had put the wind up the so-and-so British Regiments and that was to his liking.

The day was a long one and no more food. Sometime in the evening we were taken out to the square again and lined up with another batch of prisoners. The tin of beef and two biscuits were handed to each man. We were on the move again. Once more our little group were put aside and the main party taken away. So we were not going. I stuck my tin of beef under my scout's jersey and the biscuits inside my shirt. The escort comes along and the N.C.O. collects the rations, not mine. I must have been missed, did not get any. He said plenty and marched us back to the room. That night was better as a few of the others had also concealed their ration and we had a party.

Next day we were taken to another block and put in a room with about 20 others, one of whom was Willie Corrigan of Camden St., also Austin Stack, and a Volunteer, Séamus Cregan, from Monkstown who had been arrested at Carysbrook House on the Pembroke Road. We were treated well here; at least, we got food and the other men, some of whom had been tried and others awaiting courtmartial, did not think the young lads, as they called us, would be deported. We heard rumours of the leaders being shot but could not get any information as we had little contact outside the room and had no idea of what was happening. Our room-mates were constantly changing, some taken away and others coming in. Very few of the Boland's garrison left - Theo Fitzgerald and one or two others. I saw George Plunkett and Jack on the square. They were G.P.O. garrison, and

we were told Comdt. de Valera had gone for courtmartial. This brought dismay to those of us who had served under him, as he meant everything, our world, so to speak. I got a glimpse of Con Colbert passing on the square, alone under escort. He was coming from, or going to courtmartial. We were joined by Batt O'Connor. He had been on a special mission to Kerry and was arrested on his return to Dublin. I cannot recall how long or how different places we were brought to, but one afternoon the young lads were taken before a senior officer who told us he was taking upon himself to release us, as he felt we were too young to realise what we were doing when we took up arms against the mighty Empire; the real culprits were the men who had lead us into this trouble. He had no doubt we would not be led astray again, and he was sending us home to our parents and hoped they would deal with us. We were escorted to the gate and told to go home. This was about 12th May, 1916. We needed no second bidding and got away as soon as possible, making for the canal to get away from the main streets.

I lived in Rathmines and had to walk the full distance as I had no money and I doubt if there were any trams running. We split up, each making his own way home. Very dirty and unkempt looking, we attracted a good deal of attention, but I did notice the people were more friendly, much more so than when we marched into Richmond Barracks. The executions had turned the feelings of the people. I arrived home, tired and weary, shortly before curfew, which I think was about 8 p.m. Home and a welcome: my mother, brothers or sisters had no idea where I was beyond the fact that I was in the fight. They had heard all sorts of rumours. I had been seen here, there everywhere, even on a stretcher, dead. The only real true

bit of information was that I had been seen with a batch of prisoners in Ballsbridge.

My home had been searched by military and police sometime after the surrender, most likely after the interrogation in Richmond Barracks. They found nothing and gave no information beyond the fact that I was a prisoner in Dublin.

I got a great welcome home and asked for food but was told to have a good wash. I had forgotten what soap and water looked like. There was no light to be seen coming from the house by military order, sort of blackout during curfew hours. I ate and talked through most of the night, but there was a sort of nervous tension. Jim Coade, a neighbour, had been murdered on Rathmines Road by Capt. Bowen Colthurst. Coade had no connection with the Volunteers whatever. I went out next day and met Mick O'Donovan and Andy Murphy. The latter had got away from Boland's and was lying low as he expected to be arrested. Donovan had been released with me from Richmond, and we considered ourselves free to roam as we wished. I was home about 10 days when I had a call from a detective by the name of Devine, who asked all sorts of questions. By this time I was getting on my feet again and inclined to be a bit perky and refused to give any information. I was taken to Rathmines D.M.P. station and questioned by other detectives. They knew all about Oakley Road and my connection with the Volunteers, but did not know who or how many had gone out from there on Easter Monday. I told them I was in the Boland garrison until the surrender, and then taken prisoner to Ballsbridge and Richmond Barracks and released from there. I was asked if I had met Paddy Morrissey in my travels.

(He was with the 4th Battalion in the South Dublin Union and had escaped). I was held in the station for the day and brought home by Devine late in the evening.

I was not picked up again but Devine made several calls by way of being friendly, but all the time he was trying to pick up information about Morrissey and keeping me under cover.

The neighbours were inclined to keep clear of our family, cold and distant, while some did not try to cover their hostility. Others were afraid to be friendly in case they should be tainted in any way. They were sound nationally and proved it when they got over the shock of the executions.

The months passed quickly. Each week men turned up who had escaped or had been released, and most of them were anxious that we should try to get the company together again. Others who had no connection with us were taking an interest and willing to join. About October, 1916, 'E' Company, 3rd Battalion, Dublin Brigade, was meeting in a loft at the back of Corney Kennedy's pub, in a lane off the main street in Donnybrook. Here we drilled and used broom handles as rifles; not a very safe place, as we were close to the D.M.P. station, but we kept scouts out and had a good escape route along the Dodder to Ballsbridge or over the Millrace and into Herbert Park. Recruits were coming in; releases were taking place from the jails and internment camps in England and Wales; our numbers were growing. While the section of 'E' Company in Milltown and Dundrum prior to the Rising did not produce many men in the fight, we were now getting men from the same area anxious to follow in the footsteps of Paddy Doyle of Milltown, who had died so bravely at the

Battle of Mount St. Bridge. Paddy Brennan and Dick Doyle were the first to join up from Dundrum. The time came when we had to leave Donnybrook. Our next meeting place was the Gaelic League at Ely Place. Here we met and drilled in the basement under the guise of an Irish class and the connivance of Miss Dora French, who was President of that particular branch of the Gaelic League. Mick Tannam had been released and was now Captain of 'E' Company. Liam was still interned. We stuck this place for a long time until we were discovered with arms in the basement by a very ardent member of the Gaelic League, Frank O'Sullivan, who was also a Volunteer. Arms in the Gaelic League, disgraceful; we would get the place raided. To save Miss French we left. O'Sullivan also left the following year, but he left the country and made sure not to return until 1923 when it was safe to do so.

Christmas, 1916, saw all the men of 'E' Company home from jails and camps and back to the company. We were in full swing. Comdt. de Valera was still in prison, serving a life sentence. Comdt. Joe O'Connor was now O/C, 3rd Battalion, and he set about organising South County Dublin as part of the 3rd Battalion. Captain Liam Tannam was ordered to start a company in Dundrum with men from Milltown, Dundrum and the mountains (Ticknock). I was at this time a section leader in 'E' Company. When Capt. Liam Tannam went to Dundrum, Capt. Mick Tannam was appointed O/C 'E' Company, with Jimmy Murphy 1st Lieut. I was appointed 2nd Lieut. The company at this time was up to full strength, 100 men. Arms were coming in, picked up here and there from British soldiers home on leave. We paid for them when we had to, but not otherwise. Special classes for officers

and section leaders were held every week in 34, Camden St. and 41, York St. As I had to attend the classes, I once again came under the eye of Simon Donnelly. He was tough during the Rising but as a training officer he was tougher still. Popular, yes; on parade he took no slackness; off parade he was one of us and the slightest hint as to where a gun or a few rounds of ammunition could be picked up and he became too friendly. We discovered quickly that it was better to keep a closed mouth or Donnelly would be first on the job and procure the prize, with the result 'C' Company, 3rd Battalion, was one of the best armed units in the brigade.

Early in 1917, orders came from Comdt. Joe O'Connor that Mick Chadwick, then a section leader in 'A' Company, and myself were to report to Capt. Liam Tannam as organising and training officers in South County Dublin. We were both given the rank of 1st Lieutenant. Chadwick was sent to Blackrock and I to Ticknock, Barnacullia and Glencullen. Dundrum was well organised at this time and known as 'H' Company, 3rd Battalion, with a meeting hall in the Main St. over a shop and very close to the R.I.C. barrack, not so good for the local men as they were well known to the police and very early had to leave home and go 'on the run'. Arms were scarce in the county but my first weapon, the pike, once more came into its own. A few men from the mountains were already members of the Dundrum Company, so I had good stuff to work on when I became a mountainy man. Orders to produce pikes; cart springs, iron gates, steel of any kind were collected, seized or even bought (not often). A forge was dug out on the side of the mountain between Mulligan's and Brennan's on the Ticknock road, and a bellows installed. The mountain men were all stone cutters and forge work was

second nature to them. Jack Courtney, his brother, Jim, Peter Little and Jack Mulligan were the blacksmiths and they set to work on the pikes. What a sight: stripped to waist, red hot steel, red glow of the furnace, the music of the anvil in the stillness of the night. The four big mountain men forged the pike heads while others stood by to put an edge on them. I had sections by then in Ticknock, Glencullen, Barnacullia, Kilternan, and a few good men in Enniskerry. Ticknock had to be treated as a separate unit as there was a very old feud going back 50 years or more between Ticknock and Barnacullia. I laughed at this and insisted that the two sections should come together as a half company. Being young and an officer, I was going to put an end to this feud. How green I was!

There was a decided pull against me, particularly in Ticknock. They carried out my orders but it was evident that they did not want me. I was an outsider. Barnacullia had no time for a city man; anyhow, I was too friendly with Ticknock! It was difficult to carry on. Glencullen was different in every way, much more friendly and I was accepted from the start. The curate in Glencullen at that time was a Father O'Rourke and we became very good friends. I stayed with him very often and I told him of my trouble with the two units, and it was from him I heard of the feud and how deep it went. I decided the feud would remain so far as I was concerned and the units would be worked separately. I was still an outsider, but progress was made and I was on friendly terms with a few families.

I was accepted as a result of an incident in Glencullen. The four sections had been out all night on a manoeuvre which ended about dawn in the village of Glencullen. We had a drum up on the side of the road, fires lighted and tea in billy-cans all over the place. I was sitting on the ditch with some Glencullen men with my billy-can between my knees when it was hit with a sod and overturned. I let it pass until it happened a second time, when I said that if it happened again the man who fired the sod would regret it. Dead silence and I went on with my tea. The Ticknock men were together and in a short while, Jack Courtney, the toughest of the lot, turned and fired a sod, upsetting the billy-can. I had a Colt .45 revolver by my side. I picked it up and fired, hitting the bank between Courtney's legs and put his billy-can out of action. That finished the sod firing. The meal over, we marched back to Sandyford in time for first Mass and the company was then dismissed. The following night I was at the forge in Ticknock. Courtney was there as usual, working hard, no comments on the Glencullen affair. Some days later I was invited to a wedding in Barnacullia at which I met Father O'Rourke. He told me I was no longer an outsider. I was one of them. He had heard all about the Glencullen cockshot and was convinced I was accepted as a result of it. Yes, I was one of them, lived with them, fought and bled with them, and proud to look upon Jack Courtney as one of my greatest friends to-day. All honour to the Mountainy Men.

Dundrum Company was very well organised at this time and working hard refilling shotgun cartridges at the home of Johnny Kavanagh, the local postman. Chadwick had the Blackrock Company well on its feet, with a half company

in Deansgrange and units in Cabinteely and Ballybrack linking up with Tom O'Connor and Charlie Somers in Dúnlaoghaire and Dalkey. Bray was being reorganised by Mick McGarry and had some good men to start with in Tom Sutton, an engine driver who had used his rifle, which he carried hidden in the coal tender, each time he brought his train into Harcourt St. Station against the British troops at Kelly's Corner during Easter Week. He also had P.J. Farrell, who was local I.R.B. Centre, and Joe Kenny.

I cannot remember when Comdt. de Valera was released during 1917 but there was a very special re-union arranged for 41, York St. on Thursday, the 2nd August, 1917, for Commandant de Valera's Command. Admission was strictly limited to those who had served in Boland's Garrison during Easter Week. I still have my admission ticket and can give the exact date and place. This was a great night, apart from the re-union; the Comdt. went into detail as to why certain buildings were occupied and the plan of operation if the Rising had taken place as arranged, and how he held the area with 120 men instead of 400 had the full battalion turned out. The idea was good - a re-union and a military lecture combined.

There was a raid on the hall in Dundrum. Capt. Tannam got away but was recognised and was forced to leave home and go 'on the run'. He was a teacher in Glencree Reformatory for a time before he got away to Cork.

Late 1917 or early 1918, twenty men drilling in Bob Soden's hall, Deansgrange, were recognised by Sergeant Tagney of the local D.M.P. Several days later a warrant was issued for their arrest. This information was passed on to Comdt. Joe O'Connor, who issued orders that I was to get the men out of Deansgrange and take them to the mountains.

I got them away that night by cutting across country to Golden Ball, Stepaside, through Darley's Wood and on to Woodside, where we fixed up a camp near Malone's Quarry. Sentries were posted, as instructions were issued that the men were not to be arrested. Food was a big question and very often had to be carried from Dublin on bikes. While the people on the mountains were very willing to help, they could not be expected to feed 20 men. Pat Yorke was the Q/M and very often worked miracles in producing food. On one day he had two rabbits and 4 tomatoes, some onions and a few turnips. Yet when I asked the men had they had been fed that day, they all claimed to have had soup and rabbit. Stephen and Jack Foley, Pat and Mick Yorke, Peadar Somers, Dan Doyle, Tim Carthy, Jack Sweetman, George Tallon and Seán Nolan are some of the men I remember in that camp. The bad 'flu hit the camp and several men were very ill, including Pat Yorke, who was at least 6' tall and very weak. Word was sent that the military were making a sweep over the mountains from Stepaside, so I decided to shift the camp over to Tibradden. We made a stretcher out of saplings and coats for Pat Yorke, and started the trek over by Kellystown to Tibradden, with Jack Courtney as local scout. What a night! The rain came down in sheets, but we reached the new camp with full numbers; not a man lost by 'flu or otherwise. The question of food was not so bad here as Mrs. Keely of Rathfarnham made great efforts to keep us supplied. I collected whatever she had and made my way to the camp on a bike. I remember the day she gave me a cow's head. This I hauled up within half a mile of the camp but had to leave it in a farmhouse. Due to enemy action nearby I was afraid to draw attention to the location of the camp. The people in the house knew

about the camp and were by way of being friendly - they would deliver the cow's head after dark. They never did.

I got orders to break up the camp and scatter the men to various parts of the country. Stephen Foley and Liam Tannam went to Cork; Jack Foley went to Barton's of Annamoe; Mick Yorke to Belfast; Tim Carthy to Galway; while Pat Yorke would not go any further than Leopardstown. They all came back when things got moving in the county and reported for duty. Stephen Foley remained in Cork until 1924 and made history for Cork No. 1 Brigade and himself.

Early 1917 Chadwick and myself were approached by Liam Tannam to join the I.R.B. This we agreed to do and in due course were taken to Parnell Square and sworn in by Michael Foley who, to the best of my memory, was Centre. Others in the circle were Batt O'Connor, Liam Archer, Dick Mulcahy, Desmond Fitzgerald, Greg Murphy, Garry Holohan, J.J. Doyle and others. We attended meetings about twice each month, or more often if special meetings were called. We got word of such meetings from Batt O'Connor.

All this activity in South County Dublin did not pass unnoticed by the police and military. Many arrests had been made, and a number of men all over the county were forced to leave home to avoid arrest. Liam Pedlar had been picked up in Blackrock and £100 personal property taken from him. This proved a very interesting case and went through all the courts and finally to the House of Lords before the money was returned.

We had now passed the pike stage and the job on hands was the making of grenades. Gunbarrel, used in the quarries for draining, was collected, cut into 6 inch lengths and scored with a file into squares. Both ends were threaded and a stop end screwed in. The top had a hole to take the fuse. A half stick of gelignite was inserted in the barrel. A detonator with fuse attached was stuck into the gelignite with the fuse protruding through the hole at the top. The length of fuse depended on the amount of time needed before the explosion. To fix the fuse firmly in the detonator a small pliers was used. More often the job was done by biting the case of the detonator and closing it tight on the fuse. This method was not approved by the engineers as it was very dangerous. As it happened, we had no serious accident.

The gelignite was taken from various quarries, but the largest amount was taken from a police stores in Moran's Wood where the R.I.C. kept it and issued it under licence to the quarry owners. This store was very well barred and bolted and under constant watch by the R.I.C. Details of their movements were noted and it was decided to raid the store. I had about 6 men with a sledge hammer who made short work of the bolts and bars, but not without a lot of noise. The job was almost complete when the R.I.C. patrol turned up and ordered us to put up our hands, firing at the same time. The fire was returned. The Sergeant was hit and the police retreated, leaving us with a good cargo. This was taken away by Peter Little on a horse cart and dumped in various parts of the mountain. On reporting this capture to Comdt. O'Connor, I was ordered to bring in 1 cwt. to the battalion.

The gelignite was packed in biscuit tins and buried until required. Very often when taken up it was frozen and, in such a state, very dangerous. To thaw it out and make it pliable it was carried inside the shirt next the skin. The heat of the body gave a gradual thaw. We got a sort of 'flu feeling - headache, lightness etc. This was brought to the notice of Dr. Joe Brennan, Blackrock, and he was not long in finding the cause of our illness - fumes from the gelignite.

There was a big dump beside a holy well on the lands of Con Mulligan, Ticknock. This was known to Con and he decided to join the British Army. When this information reached us, Con was gone some time and there was a danger that he might give the dump away. Men were rounded up to shift the dump across the mountain to the home of Jack Courtney who lived near the top of the mountain over Kellystown, the last house before you crossed the skyline. To reach the house you had to cross a river and up a boreen, very narrow. In the middle of the boreen there was a very deep well covered by a flat flag. This flag was lifted as the last man passed through. Anyone following and not knowing of the well would drop at least 10 feet. A very good outpost!

Arrived at the house, we found Jim Courtney very ill in a settle bed in the kitchen. The only light was a candle held by a man sitting on the bed to give us light to count and check what we had removed from the dump and carried over the mountain in the dead of night. Cold and hungry, very tired, the candle holder would nod asleep and often the candle went out. I was as hungry as the best of them. I noticed two large griddle cakes on the hob

evidently set to cool for breakfast. I decided to have one of the cakes next time the candle went out. It did, and so did the griddle cake under my coat. The re-dumping complete, we started down the mountain and I started to share the cake, to discover that Paddy Brennan, Dundrum, had taken the other one. Alas, poor Mrs. Courtney.

Chadwick and myself were sent to Bray with grenades for the local company. Arrived there on bikes, we could not find anyone to take delivery as the men were all out raiding for arms, the whole company area to be raided in the one night. We located Steven Mulvey, a tough man who had walked from Bray to the G.P.O. on Easter Monday, escaped at the surrender and walked back to Bray. Steven took the grenades and got us a good parcel of chips. Our load was lighter but the road was long, as we had to keep off the main road and keep close to the mountain. I had left home at this time and was staying with Chadwick in Cambridge Road, Rathmines, considered a safe house as Chadwick was not known. We reached home at 5 a.m. to find Chad's mother waiting to give us a feed. A great woman.

The mountain area had been raided and all arms collected. We got a good number of shotguns and more useful weapons in pro-British houses around Kilgobbin and Stillorgan. Some of the raids were funny, while others were sad when you came to take the gun that belonged to a son who had been killed in the 1914-18 war and was kept as a keepsake by a mother or father. This was very much the case in Manley's of Kilgobbin. The son had been killed in the war and his room kept as he had left it. The father, a good sort in spite of his pro-British outlook, showed us over the house but, on reaching the son's room,

told us he had not entered it since he got the sad news and was not responsible for anything found there. Lucky for us the room had not been touched, as it produced some useful weapons.

The raid on Boss Croker was more interesting as most of the men on the job were employed by him and so had to be masked. I was not, and he was rather curious to know the reason. I explained that the other men were known locally and it could be dangerous if they were recognised. This was accepted and the raid produced a .38 bore rifle and 50 rounds, the property of his son who had been living out of Ireland for a considerable time, and I was convinced the Boss did not know the gun was in the house. Many months later, Boss Croker sent a message by one of his stable hands that he would like to see the officer in charge of the district at 5 p.m. a few days later. The message sounded friendly but the fixing of the day and time left a little doubt. However, it was decided to take a chance with a fast car, and this was procured by Dick Doyle and Tom Cardiff from Reggie Adams, Dundrum, without his knowing what it was for. I would like to say here that in Dick Doyle and Tom Cardiff we had two of the best Transport men in the Dublin Brigade, and their ability was not confined to Transport.

We arrived dead on time on the appointed day, I looking very important in the back of the Sunbeam, Dick driving and Tom beside him, well armed. We had driven up to the hall door. The grounds were well scouted by the stable hands, members of the local company. I was received by Mrs. Croker, with the Boss in the background. He remarked on our fine car. Tom and Dick remained in the

driving-seat, ready for a quick getaway. I was taken in and listened to a story about damage and loss of property organised by some people anxious to force Boss Croker to leave Glencairn, the name of the house (now occupied by the British Ambassador). I undertook to look into the matter, and in the course of telling his tale of woe, the Boss stated that Glencairn was his home and he intended to live and die there. This statement brought me into the Croker will case very many years later when the children of the first marriage contested the will. The Boss was buried on one side of the hall door, and Orby, his horse that won the Derby, was buried on the other side. During tea the Boss told me all about the raid on his house and could I find out if the raid was official. I assured him it was but would eheck further. Mrs. Croker then took a hand and asked the old man did he not recognise me as the man who took the gun. Phew! I would like to say all Boss Croker said, and he said plenty. I admitted I was the man, and when he cooled down we got very friendly and that friendship was to last, not for me alone but for every man in the Republican movement. Glencairn was a safe house.

I was sent to Newry with the 3rd Battalion for the South Armagh Election when Dr. Pat. McCartan stood for Sinn Féin. This was a rough time as the Hibernians carried sway and used force to break up meetings until the Volunteers arrived. We were posted to various districts with H.Q. in Boyd's store in Newry, used as a barracks under the command of Comdt. Joe O'Connor and Simon Donnelly. We more than held our own when it came to a row, but we were beaten in the election. Some of the men I remember there were Dick Mulcahy, Mick Collins, Tom Cullen, Noel Lemass, Mick Tannam, Seán McMahon. I would say about

200 men were brought to Newry and remained there about a week under strict military control. The big man in that political fight was Harry Boland, with Frank Aiken a good second, who was on his own doorstep so to speak. Looking back on this, it was all part of our training, as we were billeted and under orders all the time, some in uniform, the most outstanding being Tom Cullen, O/C 'K' Company, who was very often taken as a British officer and got us out of a few tight corners.

The Bray Company was now under the command of Larry O'Brien, he was a member of the 4th Battalion and had been with the South Dublin Union Garrison during the Rising. He was now working and living in Bray, so Mick McGarry stood down in favour of Larry as Company O/C. Noel Lemass had come to Blackrock, and Chadwick had gone to Dundrum to replace Liam Tannam who was now 'on the run' and out of South County Dublin. Charlie Somers was O/C Dún Laoghaire, with Paddy Darcy in charge of Dalkey and Ballybrack. We got special officers out for training from the 3rd Battalion every so often. Michael de Burca was one. He had been dismissed from the British Civil Service. Chris Carberry, an old warrior of Boland's Garrison, gave lectures on small arms, while Comdt. Joe O'Connor and Seán McMahon kept a close eye on discipline.

I got a warning through the I.R.B. to keep out of Rathmines as I was marked and likely to be picked up under D.O.R.A. As I have already mentioned, I was staying with Chadwick in Cambridge Road, Rathmines. Let me recall one funny incident while staying there. Chad's mother would never let us leave the house without giving us a sprinkle from the Holy Water bottle. We were leaving the house one night on our way to Deansgrange. As usual,

Ma Chadwick wished us God speed and an extra good sprinkle as we were not returning for a few nights. Somewhere about Clonskeagh, Chad remarked there was a decided smell of chips. Nobody about and no shops, yet the aroma was there. On investigation we discovered we were saturated in vinegar. Ma had given us her blessing with the wrong bottle.

The path from the Holy Well in Ticknock over the mountain to Courtney's was as well known to us as a garden path. Hardly a week passed without a trip across the fields, over the river and up the steep ridge to the house. There was a very dark night when Chad and myself had to make this trip. All went well until we reached the second field, and out of it we could not get. Everywhere we went there was obstruction of some sort, a deep ditch, strong hedge or a wall, but no sign of the gap we had used so often. We decided we had got lost on the way and were in the wrong field. We sat down to eat some sandwiches, Chad pointing out the lights of the city below, giving me some idea as to where his girl-friend lived (May Kelly of the G.P.O. Garrison). The meal over, we started along the path, through the gap and over the hill to Courtney's, nothing to hinder us. We thought nothing of this at the time, we found our way. I mentioned this to my mother and some of the older locals a long time after, and got the same reply from all of them: "You had disturbed the Good People (meaning Fairies) and by sitting down you had broken the spell and your way was clear". There is no doubt we were in the right field but out of it we could not get.

There was an election in the Dundrum Company and Jack Curley was elected Captain. Noel Lemass had been arrested in Glencullen with a large number of the

Deansgrange and Blackrock Company. He got six months, which he spent between Derry, Kilkenny and Mountjoy Jails. Chadwick returned as O/C Blackrock. I had been elected O/C Ticknock, Barnacullia, Glencullen, etc. I had taken up residence in the mountains and stayed in various houses: Murphy's of Barnacullia and Little's of Balally I used mostly. There were four sons in Murphy's, all members of the company, and old Jane, the mother, was a better man than the lot of them. I had only one thing against Jane: she would insist on giving us goat's milk. It was good for us, she said, but it was too strong for me both in taste and smell. The sight of a mountain goat to-day is enough to make me bilious. Evidently it agreed with Jane, as she lived to be 93. Mahon's of Ballybeata, Glencullen, was another good hide-out where three or four of us slept in a settle-bed in the kitchen.

To have three or four sons from one family in the local company was common in the county. We had four Murphys in Barnacullia, Bill, Peter, Tom and Jim; three Brennans in Dundrum, Paddy, Seán and Mick; three McNeills in Blackrock, Brian (killed in action in Sligo), Neil and Turlogh. We had two brothers in almost every company. Father and two sons was common in Dúnlaoghaire and Deansgrange.

I was at a battalion meeting in 144, Pearse St. about March, 1920, when we were given a pep talk by Dick McKee, then O/C Dublin Brigade. The meeting lasted longer than was expected, so I decided to stay at home that night. I arrived home about 11.30 p.m. Curfew was at midnight. The house was surrounded about 1 a.m. by British military, who entered back and front. A minute search for an hour or so and then my four brothers and myself were taken under heavy escort to Portobello Barracks. Here we were questioned separately by

two officers, who took more interest in my brother, Alex, who had just been demobilised from the British Army, than any of us. This suited me, as I knew they were after me. We were joined by Fagan, who owned the Red Lion pub in George's St. He had been picked up after curfew.

Taken on to the barrack square about 6 a.m., put into a 5 ton Leyland lorry, handcuffed to the crossbar and taken to the Bridewell. Here we were welcomed by Frank Gallagher, 'K' Company, 3rd Battalion, and Larry Ginnell. I am not sure if he was a T.D. at the time but he wore a half tall hat and morning coat and looked the part. The most interesting prisoner in the Bridewell was a Sergeant of the Royal Field Artillery in full uniform, even to the spurs. With him in the same cell was a fellow by the name of Cooke of Capel St. We learned in time that Cooke had bought a few rifles from the sergeant and arranged for a second lot. This fell through and both were arrested.

I do not remember how long we were here but the official food was just awful. We still had Fagan in our cell and he was well known to the police, so the food for our cell was sent in from the Four Courts Hotel, charged to Fagan. This went on for a few days until Fagan was taken before the judge for being out after curfew. I do not know what happened him. He did not come back and the hotel stopped the supply. We went back to cocoa and hard tack. If you dashed your mug of cocoa on to the fine polished wall of the cell (which we did) it stuck like thick paint. I am sure the stain of my cocoa is still on that wall. Saturday night all out into the yard, lorries; we were on the move, to where? A friendly whisper from a D.M.P. man, Mountjoy for trial by courtmartial. Frank Gallagher decided

it would be a good idea if we refused to give our names when we got to Mountjoy. He had been there a few months before and knew the trouble it would cause. Arrived in the 'Joy' sometime in the early hours of the morning; lined up in the passage leading to the wings; along comes the head warder, taking names. We were dumb, but he did ask each man; even the Artillery man had forgotten his name, rank and number. Duty done, the warder leaves us in charge of about 10 other warders armed with batons while he reports to the Governor. He comes along rather worried-looking, wearing a monocle. The same all over again; each man asked his name; no answer. He reaches Frank Gallagher: "I know you, your name is Gallagher". A quick retort from Frank: "Mr. Gallagher in your mouth". Governor: "There are no Misters in this establishment". Frank: "Very well, I am Gallagher and you are Munroe". Poor man, he had enough and goes back to his office.

We are searched: everything taken and placed on a table by one warder while another makes careful entry in a ledger of every item, even to a button, in addition to all the useless things found in a man's pocket. I had the sum of 29/6d. This over, we were taken to the bath house, stripped and every mark on the body noted in yet another ledger. All this over, we were taken to D. Wing and locked in separate cells. Sunday morning, taken to chapel for Mass. A warder sat up on a high chair overlooking every three or four seats, but he could not keep us from having a good lock around. Convicts were in the first few seats in prison garb; the remainder were all political. There was Phil Shanahan, Tipperary-man with a pub at the North Wall; Maurice Walsh

of Brennan and Walshes; Todd Andrews; Dick Humphries; Harry Murray, O/C, 'A' Company, 4th Battalion; Dick Davis, Peadar Clancy, Vice O/C Dublin Brigade; Tommy Doyle, 4th Battalion; Tony O'Reilly, 'C' Company, 3rd Battalion, who had been tried by courtmartial for having a revolver and 300 rounds. He was awaiting sentence and known as "Giggler" as he was always laughing. There were many more but I cannot remember their names. We got two hours' exercise walking around in a cirlce in a cage, with a warder standing in the middle to see that we did not talk, ten paces between each man. Charge sheets were in frames on each door. The five McDonnells were charges under D.O.R.A. We were taken from D. Wing and put into B. Wing. My number was now 12B 3 . The Artillery man and Cooke were left in D. Wing. Phil Leddy was O/C prisoners and he decided, with Frank Gallagher, that this two hour exercise and twenty-two hours' solitary confinement must go. First step was to break up the circle walk in the cage. The warder, by the way, was locked in the cage with us and could only get out when the gate was opened by a warder standing outside the gate with a key. Word was passed around that next morning, on a given signal, a ball would be produced in the cage and we would break ranks and rush the ball. The signal was given and the ball soured into the air (made out of a pair of socks). A wild roar and we started a match. The look on that warder's face was worth seeing. He rushed to the gate, but the outside man was afraid to open it so they shouted at each other while we carried on with our game, shouting all the time.

Warders were rushed to positions outside the cage and the inside warder released. Governor arrives, reads out some sort of riot act and orders us inside. This was greeted with cheers and he departs. The match goes on. Troops arrive in full war kit - tin helmets etc. - surround the cage, but still the match goes on and the two hours are long past. Back comes the Governor with a lot of letters. The gate is opened and he calls a name, expecting us to step outside to collect our letter and be pounced on by warders and carried inside the jail. Nothing doing, we play on. The gate is locked and the Governor walks sadly away. The rules and regulations of H.M. Prison Mountjoy have been flouted: the end of the world has come.

We were left alone. Soldiers and warders kept us under cover but made no move to force us inside. We could smell the dinner and in time lost interest in the football but kept up a good din. Dinner was brought out by warders and convicts, dixies of stew, wooden trays containing net bags. Each bag had three potatoes, one bag to each man. The lot was left outside the cage and the gate opened. The head warder said: "Here is your dinner, come and get it". This was greeted by cat calls and loud cheers, but not a move towards the gate. We resumed the football and only got the smell for dinner. It was left there to cool and stiffen. In time the troops were withdrawn and the warders just lolled around. I would say it was about 5 p.m. when our O/C said we should go in as we had won the first round. We strolled in, followed by

the warders, to the roar of cheering that could be heard outside the jail. Each man to his own cell, and in time the turn-keys locked us in for the night. No tea.

We had a mixed lot of warders - some friendly and a few who kept us in touch with the outside world, while others would not bend an inch.

There was a surprise for the McDonnell brothers next morning. We were told to get ready to appear before the Governor, all lined up on the landing, checked, correct, 5. A whisper from a warder, "all being sent home". I had my doubts but did not put a damper on the high spirits of the others. We were taken to the Governor's office. There was Munroe, complete with monocle, the head warder and a few gentlemen in plain clothes, including my old friend, Detective Devine from Rathmines. I was taken to another office, a ledger put on the desk, opened and my hand put on a page. The finger prints taken in Richmond Barracks in 1916 compared. They had their man; my four brothers were released and I went back to the cell. The next morning my charge sheet frame was empty; by noon I had a new one - charged with carrying arms (where they got that one beat me, as there was nothing found in the raid and nothing when I was searched), to be tried by courtmartial.

There was no action taken over the cage riot and we were allowed full freedom while in the cage, all warders outside.

Easter Monday, April 5th, 1920, Mountjoy Jail hunger-strike starts. Called together in the cage by Phil Leddy to tell us of the strike and to give the following pledge:-

I pledge myself, to the honour of Ireland and the lives of my comrades, not to eat food or drink anything except water until all here have been given prisoner-of-war treatment or are released.

We had taken breakfast that morning, the last food for about 12 days. Contact was made with G.H.Q. outside through a friendly warder. We were promised every support outside; the fight inside was on and the world would know it. I do not intend to go into details of the strike as it is all given in "Days of Fear" by Frank Gallagher, who kept a day-to-day diary. The second day of the strike, while in the cage, Giggler wanted to know if there was a mathematician in the party, the reason - someone had been sentenced to 5 years for having 10 rounds of .303. Giggler had been caught with a revolver and 30 rounds and was anxious to know what he was likely to get. The general shout was "Giggler you are a Lifer", and Giggler laughed.

Things were much the same for a few days. Some men took to bed, others were even more lively and were told by Larry Ginnell to keep up the laugh as it was something the British could never break. The prison suddenly came to life: extra warders day and night on the landings, not looking for trouble but willing to do anything if we would only take food. Dr. McCormick was the Prison M.O., a nice sort of old chap who wore a brown bowler hat. I think there was a second Dr. McCormick and he came from Kilkenny. While "Brown Bowler" took everything in his stride with a joke and a laugh, his opposite number was very serious and as the days went by it was obvious he was very nervous and frightened in case one of us should die.

To recall this is light and easy; in actual fact, that hunger-strike was to me a frightful experience, not just hunger but the loss of sleep during an endless night, restless, to be honest, afraid and wondering what was to be the end. Let no man say he was not frightened on hunger-strike. It is a shocking weapon, and the British were just as much afraid of it as we were. The uncertainty: prisoners all well and a few hours later stretcher cases pass your door, the heart gives out suddenly, and the doctors knew it. One death and it was front page news the world over.

Routine remained the same. Breakfast, dinner and tea were brought as usual and left on your table. Each meal was left until the next one arrived. During the first few days, some of us pushed the food out through the window, down on the sentry below. Cockney curses not heard since Richmond Barracks. Others broke the spy hole glass and poured or spooned the food through the hole. As the days passed, the food was just ignored, but it kept on coming, to tempt or just blind regulations.

More doctors as the week drags on; as men faint or collapse they are taken by stretcher to the prison hospital. More prisoners arrive from Newry and Tipperary and start to strike at once. The cell doors are now left open, a bad sign. Men are too weak to move about the wing. Telegrams sent to relatives by the Governor (in my case to my mother, "Your son very low, visit advised), dirty trick. I knew nothing of this until my mother and sister were brought into the cell to find me on my mattress on the floor, covered by a few army blankets. I am sure I looked a lot worse than I really was. My mother made up her mind there and then that I was dying. The warder

stood by during the visit but I did manage to tell my sister to change the date on the telegram and come next day. The cell doors were left open from now on, day and night. Visits from military doctors, things were moving outside. Huge crowds gathered outside the jail and we could hear the singing of hymns all day long and well into the night. The sentries had been doubled inside the jail, while armoured cars and military tried to control the crowds outside. A friendly warder slipped me a paper, great news. Labour had decided to take a hand and called a general strike. This was answered to a man. Nothing moved: Dublin and many parts of the country had stopped work in support of our demand. I felt much better having read the news and passed the paper along to cheer others. Visitors were coming and going; evidently the Governor had sent telegrams far and wide. Maurice Brennan had a visit from his father, who had come from Charleville, Co. Cork. I had a visit every day; the date on the telegram changed each day. The news from outside was great: the people were with us, they dare not let any of us die. The Governor was in constant touch with Grank Gallagher and Phil Leddy. All sorts of rumours. Warders say Lord French will not budge in spite of repeated appeals. Even our old enemy, the 'Irish Independent', has asked the authorities to move quickly in order to avoid disaster.

The 13th April, excitement is running high. The Governor has been in to make an offer of release on parole. Turned down; word is passed around, the strike goes on. Many who had crawled around, now went to bed, all hope gone. I was one of that lot. That night was the longest one for me, it just went on and on. All cells open, all awake but silent.

Next day things start to hum again. There is some sort of form to be signed and we all go free. Once again a flat refusal. Back comes the Governor; a verbal undertaking will be accepted. Leddy and Gallagher get stiff. They feel we have won and will accept nothing but unconditional release. Warders are just as excited as we are, they say the hospitals outside are all ready for us. I do not exactly remember the time but it was late in the evening when cheers, the first for a long time, brought me out on the landing to be told we had won, all going out. The Governor stood in the circle and a name was called out. The prisoner made his way down the spiral stairs and the Governor read out something. The prisoner just stood there and was then passed on to a warder, who took him to some ambulance men to be rushed away. The Lord Mayor, Larry O'Neill, stood in the hall with some Friars from Church St. Slowly, very slowly, we were going out, but would my name ever be called. I saw Gallagher and Leddy go. They were the leaders. Others followed, and all the time I stood on the top landing, watching and listening. I would say it was about 11 p.m. when I was called, and the mad rush I had planned for hours did not happen. I was stuck to the ground, nerves or weakness I do not know, but I was helped by a warder and brought before the Governor to hear the following: -

> I, George Munroe, Governor of H.M. Prison Mountjoy, do hereby release the body of one Andrew McDonnell, relying on his or her honour to return to H.M. Prison Mountjoy on or before.....

Evidently this was the form we were to sign. On refusal, poor Munroe satisfied his conscience by reading it over to each prisoner, and so the awful delay. All over.

I was taken care of by Father Albert and the Dublin Ambulance men. All nearby hospitals were full. The last of us were taken to the Richmond Hospital. I have a faint recollection of crowds outside the jail, and then hospital: white sheets, white-coated doctors and real beds, sponged, a nightshirt, sips of something and talk while the doctors examined each one. Yes, there was Dr. Myles Keogh. The last time I saw him was in Mount St. after the surrender in 1916; more friendly this time. Sleep was out of the question. Who cared? we were out. Let me pay tribute to the hospital staff. They never left us for the night and everything possible was done for us. There were about eight of us in the hospital. The men I remember were: - Harry Murray, Tommy Doyle and Jim Shortall, all members of the 4th Battalion, Tony O'Reilly (Giggler), 3rd Battalion, one of the Newry men, and myself. There was a ward for British ex-service men next to ours, and they would do anything for us - offers of shaves, take messages, anything; to them we were also Old Soliders!

We were removed to a private ward upstairs. Dr. Jock Pollock took charge, with strict instructions - limited visitors, limited food. His orders were carried out for a few days and then visitors queued up, most of them complete strangers to us. We were told not to look too strong to people we did not know, and to remember we were free under the Cat and Mouse Act, likely to be picked up and returned to H.M. Prison Mountjoy. What a thought!

Giggler enjoyed himself. Any visitor with a parcel was welcome, until he got a bad turn and restrictions were imposed. We were in close touch with the other

hospitals and now under orders. Harry Murray was in charge of Richmond. Each hospital issued a daily bulletin. Our condition varied from day to day. Progress was slow, according to the bulletins. We were lucky in our doctors and students, all with us. Dr. May Maloney was a daughter of P.J. Maloney, Tipperary, who was on the wanted list. I do not remember how long we were in hospital, but as time went on Dublin Castle took a keen interest in our condition - visits from detectives, just a look round. Dr. Ryan from Dundrum got friendly with one of them and in time told us the Castle was ready to move. We moved first and left hospital that night.

I went to Kilkenny for a few weeks, from there to Gorey and so back to Dublin, but not to Rathmines, back to our mountains, where I got a great welcome. The whole area was very much alive by the time I got back. Dundrum, now under the command of Jack Curley and Paddy Brennan, had clashed with the R.I.C. Chadwick had burned the barracks at Ballybrack. Two men were badly burned and died later, Tommy Dunne and Paddy Meaney. The rifle range at Ticknock was burned. Paddy Darcy (Jacob's Garrison) had routed a military patrol in Dalkey. My first meeting of the I.R.B. after my release I was asked to explain how I was arrested. My explanation was accepted, just about, told I was not to allow myself to be arrested in future. Charlie Somers was arrested in Dún laoghaire. (I should mention he had taken part in the Rising). A good number of British ex-servicemen had joined the Dún laoghaire Company.

Late October or early November, 1920, G.H.Q. decided South County Dublin should be a battalion to be

known as the 6th Battalion, Dublin Brigade. I was appointed Commandant, with the following staff:

Vice O/C	-	Michael Chadwick
Adjutant	-	Brian McNeill
Q/M	-	Nial McNeill
M/O	-	Dr. J.J. Loftus
Transport	-	Tom Cardiff.

I got instructions from Dick McKee, then O/C Dublin Brigade, to keep things moving in the county in order to draw off troops from Dublin. I got fatherly advice from Comdt. Joe O'Connor and Simon Donnelly. I had finished with the Fighting 3rd Battalion, and sorry to break the connection.

Bray opened up with an ambush at Claffey's Grove, Crinkin, on a military lorry, killing one and wounding three. Tom Sutton, Steenie Mulvey, Lukey Leggett and Seamus McSweeney took part in this scrap, McSweeney making use of one of the grenades brought to Bray some months before by Chad and myself. Larry O'Brien was O/C Bray.

The naval base, Dúnlaoghaire, was attacked by Eugene Davis, George Kelly and several members of the company. This was a strong garrison of military and naval personnel. The attack lasted some hours and brought us the attention of the Director of Training, J.J. (Ginger) O'Connell.

Tommy Murphy, the Hotel Foxrock, was murdered in bed by Black and Tans from Cabinteely Barracks. I gave Rodney Murphy and Leo Murray two rifles and 10 rounds, with instructions not to return until they had got at least two of the Tans. Five days later the job was

completed; number of enemy dead, two; amount of ammunition used, 2 rounds. It gave me great pleasure to send that report to the brigade. Once again Ginger took notice and from then on he took particular interest in the 6th Battalion and was very helpful. We got some number 9 grenades from the brigade with instructions to try them out as soon as possible, and therein lies a story. We got a report from our Q/M, Niall McNeill, that a military lorry was in the habit of coming down Merrion Avenue shortly after curfew. He was anxious to try out one of the No. 9s on this lorry and was told to go ahead. Chad, Brian McNeill and myself were staying at the house of Mrs. Butler, Idrone Terrace, Blackrock, on the night the ambush was to take place. We heard the explosion. There was no doubt the No. 9 had gone off, but, so far as we could hear, there was no return of fire and no sign of search-lights as we watched from the back window. The men in the ambush party were staying at the house of Mary Kane some distance away, so there was nothing for it but wait for morning. It came, and with it the good news, the bomb struck the back of the lorry and exploded; result unknown, as the driver put on speed and got away very quickly. We had almost forgotten about this when some days later I was asked to meet someone from the Blackrock Laundry. I did, and was told one of their vans, coming home late after a breakdown, was ambushed in Merrion Avenue. Could I throw any light on this outrage? Damage: only to the van and contents, nobody hurt. The matter would be looked into, but it was doubtful if our forces had anything to do with it as they were not operating in that area at the time. Number of dead: 5 dress shirts. It took a long time to live that down.

The Bray Company was now very active. The R.I.C. garrison had been strengthened by Black and Tans who had taken over the Courthouse. Military had taken over the Royal Hotel. Two bombs were landed inside the door of the Courthouse by Jack Sterling and Danny McCarthy, with very good results. Their line of retreat was along by the Dargle River. They were observed by a Black and Tan who happened to be on the road and opened fire on the two across the river. This was answered by Larry O'Brien, Pat O'Brien and Tom Sutton, who opened up with rifle fire from the Golf Links. The Courthouse, Barracks and Royal Hotel garrisons came into action with rifle and machine-gun fire from behind steel shutters. No patrols moved out. Verey lights went up. The Main Street was swept with a hail of lead, and damage to property was heavy. This lasted some hours, and in a general round-up about dawn Larry O'Brien and Pat O'Brien were arrested, unarmed, in Duncairn Avenue. Tom Sutton took command of the company. This would be about April, 1921.

Arms were to be had in Birmingham and London. Personal contact was made in both places by Chadwick and Niall McNeill, who were helped by Gus Kirby, a London medical student at U.C.D. and a member of the 4th Battalion. Larry Nugent, 3rd Battalion, went to London on the first trip with Chad and McNeill, the idea being to have a fatherly interest in the two boys as they wore school caps and blazers; hairy old schoolboys! The London end was looked after by Annie O'Gorman, then living in London. Anything picked up was sent or brought by train to Holyhead. Here it was taken over by Martin Carden, then employed by British Railways, a native of Killala, Co. Mayo, a member of the Dúnlaoghaire Company and living

in Sallynoggin. Martin travelled on the Mail Boat between Dún laoghaire and Holyhead in the course of his employment a few days a week, collected his booty at Holyhead and took it aboard as passengers' luggage, and walked off at Dún laoghaire still carrying the luggage. This was made easy as Martin wore railway uniform and made sure to help someone when coming ashore. Once he was on the pier he was always met by Tommy Gredon, Billy Keenan or other men of the local company. Birmingham was worked differently. Here it was mostly revolvers that were picked up. The brigade had a man here who made the purchases. He put two revolvers in a boot box, made up a tidy parcel with a printed label addressed to Messrs. Ferrier Pollock & Co., Wholesale Warehousemen, 59, South William St., Dublin, Button Dept. The parcel was duly posted and delivered in Dublin by H.M. Royal Mail. Button Dept. was the clue for our man, Leo Keegan, who worked in Ferriers and looked after incoming parcel post. Button Dept. parcels were put aside until called for and handed over to the brigade at the Plaza Hotel, 6, Gardiner's Row. Maureen Kennedy, then a typist in Ferrier's, often took the parcel across town to the Plaza. It also fell to my lot to carry the parcel, and almost once too often. I collected the parcel one evening and put it on the back of my bicycle; along Exchequer St., down by the back of Hely's and up the lane into the end of George's St., to find the street from the corner of Dame St. up to the corner of Exchequer St. held by Black and Tans. All traffic and people inside the cordon held for searching, I walked up to the toughest-looking Tan in the street and asked him if I could be searched and let go as I was in a great hurry. "Why the so-and-so hurry?" I explained I was a messenger in the

Saxone Shoe Co. in Dame St. and got a pair of boots to deliver to Rathmines about 2 hours ago, and if I was not back by 6 p.m. I would be sacked. "Where were you for the two hours?" "I was down the lane playing cards". "Yes, I saw you coming out of the lane; go and deliver your so-and-so boots and I hope the wearer gets bunions". How I got my leg over that bike will always remain a mystery to me, but I did, sailed up Golden Lane into Bride St., down on to the Quays, Mary's Abbey, Parnell St. and up to the Plaza to deliver my boots. Did I say anything to the Brig., not D. likely. The H.Q. of the Dublin Brigade was at the Plaza Hotel, 6, Gardiner's Row, then and still is the H.Q. of the Engineers and Boilermakers' Union. The hall porter was Tom Hannigan, a member of the 2nd Battalion. He knew everyone and to strangers he was a snooty Trade Union official.

Brigade Council meetings were held at least once a week, when reports from the six battalions were taken by Oscar Traynor, then O/C Dublin Brigade. The former O/C, Dick McKee, was murdered in the Castle on Bloody Sunday. Prior to his arrest, the Dublin Brigade Council met in the Dublin Typographical Society, 35, Lr. Gardiner St. It was here I first met Dick McKee sometime during 1920, when he told us the fight was now getting really tough and any man who felt he could not stand up to it should get out honourably.

I was called to a council meeting in the Plaza in connection with the rescue of Seán MacEoin from Mountjoy. The meeting was not long in progress when word came from Tom Hannigan in the hall - military had cut off the whole street for a block raid. This meant that every house in the area was to be searched. We had a get-away

over the roof and were getting ready for the move when Collins walked into the room, looked us over and then said to me: "You come with me". I had come in from Bray for the meeting, looking very respectable - bowler hat, black overcoat, gloves and an attaché case. The case now contained papers and a gun. Out on the landing I was told by the Big Fellow: "You keep your mouth shut, I will do the talking". I was not likely to do any as I had no idea what he was going to do or where we were going. I was in bad company. Down the stairs into the hall. There was Hannigan, looking the part, Trade Union Official. He whispered: "Street lined with troops". With long strides the Big Fellow reaches the street. He was also carrying a case. Not another word to me as I tried to keep up with him. The street was lined both sides with troops. The Big Fellow selects a Sergeant: "Could I have a word with your officer, please?" "Wait a moment". My knees were playing 'the wearing of the green' by this time. Along comes a young Lieutenant: "What can I do for you?" rather friendly. "Sorry to trouble you, officer", from the Big Fellow, "we are students from the Rotunda Hospital out on an urgent case; could you have us searched at once and put us on our way?". "Good work, go ahead, gentlemen, and I hope it is a boy". We walked calmly to Gardiner St., down into Dorset St. When clear of the cordon, I was told to go one way and long strides went the other. I took a tram to George's St. and made my way to the granary in Mercer St., where Mrs. Byrne lived and kept open house for men on the move. I got my second wind after a meal and decided I should be grateful to my bowler hat; respectability had worked wonders. The Big Fellow was quick to see it work that way.

Dundrum Barracks was constantly under fire; patrols had been withdrawn behind steel shutters and the most the local company could hope for was a cockshot if they showed outside the barracks. Seldom a night was allowed to pass without an attack, which often went on until dawn. Casualties were many, but hard to define as the enemy kept them a close secret. Paddy Brennan moved about with an armed patrol in the hope of meeting up with a military lorry, and met a load of Black and Tans on Classons Bridge, Milltown. He had with him Dick Doyle (better known as Father), Maurice Kenny (Big Maurice) and Jimmy Lynch. As the tender came on to the bridge, our patrol opened fire and it was returned at once by the Tans. Maurice was hit in the leg, and was carried under cover by Brennan while Dick Doyle kept the enemy at bay, knocking out a few before they decided to get away.

Sergeant Dunny, Royal Artillery, stationed in Tallaght Camp and on military intelligence, was moved over to the Scalp under the guise of a visitor. Word reached me of this move through the I.R.B. and from Tom Watkins, a member of the 4th Battalion living in Saggart. The Mountain Company was at this time under the command of Captain Ned O'Brien. He got after Dunny and discovered he was only one of many now scattered over the area from Foxrock to Enniskerry, with a meeting house in Ballycorus. This house was watched and, in due course, attacked by O'Brien, Tom Rothery, Peter Little, Bob Butler, and Spa Roe, a stone-cutter by trade but a seventh son and a born first-aid man. The occupants were very well armed and the defence fierce.

Back and front were attacked with grenades and rifle fire, but our lads were getting the worst of it when Peter Little was wounded in the hip. He was attended by Spa Roe, and the attack called off. Enemy dead, two; wounded, three. Dunny was not one of them. Peter Little was taken to Harolds Cross, and from there by taxi to O'Donnell's Home in Eccles Street by Jo Ryan (later my wife) and myself, where he was operated on by P.J. Smyth and out of action for about a month. The Mountains got a comb-out by military after this. They were hit at Enniskerry and Stepaside.

Chadwick moved in with me from Blackrock and Deansgrange. Lieut. Breeze of the Warwicks was shot dead at Foxrock, while the Naval Base at Dun Laoghaire had its outposts shot up, with very good results. Cabinteely Barracks was attacked by Pat Yorke, Jack Foley, Liam Troy, Tommy Moran, Rodney Murphy and Leo Murray. The two last mentioned were later killed in action. Roads were blocked all over the county, telephones put out of operation, and signal boxes blown up, the idea being to draw the troops off the Mountain; we lost nothing in that sweep. It was evident they were out for wounded after the Ballycorus attack.

The Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, was a favourite hunting ground for gentlemen from the Castle, in and out of uniform. This proved helpful, as often they left guns in their coat pockets - easy picking for a time. Then it was decided to move in and attack. This proved a Wild West show, as a party of Auxiliaries had arrived. Lieut. Jim McIntosh was in charge of our party. He was fired on in the hall, and then hell was let loose, up the stairs and along the passages.

McIntosh was badly wounded, and died on his way to hospital. At least three enemy died, and two wounded.

Billy Walsh was now O/C, Dun Laoghaire Company. Billy had served in the British Army, in the Brigade of Guards, a fully trained soldier, very friendly with every ex-serviceman in the area. Information was passed, and a few, in the pay of the British Intelligence, were found guilty and shot on Killiney Hill, Graham and Knight.

Lieut. Eugene Davis, with Joe Hudson and Gay Byrne, ambushed a mixed party of military and Auxiliaries, on the Marine Road, Dun Laoghaire. This was a short, sharp encounter, both sides making use of bombs and rifle fire. Our men had one rifle, and this was used to cover the other two while throwing the bombs, while a fast car was kept running, for a quick get-away, as we were very much outnumbered. Joe Hudson found the target with his bombs, as the lorry and tender slowed down. This was too much for the enemy. They made a quick rush for Georges Street, where they ran into a burst of fire by Billy Keenan, who was on patrol and kept going. At Temple Hill, Blackrock, the same party was ambushed by Joe Flanagan, O/C, Blackrock Company, Johnny Goodwin, Speed Byrne and Warrior O'Neill, who happened to be on patrol, waiting on a convoy that was expected to pass that way, going to the Naval Base. There was no slowing up this time - a wild burst of fire from the lorry, while the tender put on speed, followed by the lorry. Our men claimed a direct hit, with a bomb, which may have been the reason for the quick run by the tender. Soldiers were seen to fall in the lorry, and one of the ambushing party was wounded.

The result of this was a patrol, with an armoured car, in and around Blackrock. The armoured car was attacked near Ruby Lodge, and withdrew, after a burst of machine gun fire.

Lieut. George Kelly, with the help of Paddy Gallagher, raided the railway station, Dun Laoghaire, and got away with a quantity of ammunition, on its way to the R.I.C. at Rathdrum. The raiding party was fired on by an armed policeman, as they left the station. Fire was returned, and the policeman wounded.

The Bray railway station was also raided by Tom Sutton, Lukey Leggett, Peter Ledwidge and Seamus McSweeney. Two British ambulances, on railway trucks, were soaked in oil, taken from the goods stores, and destroyed.

Cabinteely Barracks was attacked once more by Jack Foley, Liam Troy, Jack Sweetman and George Tallon. While the attack was in progress, a military lorry was ambushed in Cornelscourt by Pa Devlin, Pat Yorke, Tommy Moran and Dick Troy. This lorry was coming, in answer to Verey lights, sent up when the barrack attack opened. It never reached Cabinteely.

General Dyer, coming to Ireland after the massacre in India, was met at the mail boat, Dun Laoghaire, by a heavy escort, including an armoured car. Without knowing the strength of the escort, the party was attacked on the Merrion Road, near the Blind Asylum, by Lieut. Tim Coughlan, Johnny Goodwin, Jack Flanagan, Speed Byrne, Christy Smyth and Capt. Joe Flanagan. The armoured car took up the fight, after the first volley had been fired on two tenders and a lorry. Machine gun fire swept the road,

killing a civilian in his own house. Our men got away through the fields, as the bullets cut through the trees.

Close watch was kept on the house in Ballycorus, where Peter Little had been wounded in a previous attack, in the hope that Sergt. Dunny would return, as it was now established that he was the chief Intelligence Officer in the county, and was picking up enough information to lead to the arrest of key men. Chadwick received a report that Dunny and some others were seen entering the house at Ballycorus, and he decided to act at once, as he happened to be in the area, Barnacullia, to be correct. By good luck, or bad, I turned up from Enniskerry, as Chad moved off with Brian MacNeill, Spa Roe, Tom Rothery, Bob Butler and Bill Murphy. I am not sure of what plans Chad had, but I do know he was working on good information that Dunny and several others had entered the house at Ballycorus, and were now under cover. I decided to join the party. Arrived at Ballycorus, Chad placed the men at various vantage points, and opened fire, which was not returned for some time, until Chad called for surrender. This was greeted with a heavy volley from inside, and, after a little time, an attempt was made to break out, at the back. Chad moved to the rear of the house, with Brian MacNeill and Tom Rothery. I held the front with Bob Butler and Bill Murphy, and drew the fire while Chad moved in at the back. There was a crash from a window at the side of the house, and, as I crossed the front gate, out of cover of the wall, I was hit in the shoulder and face, not badly, but I was hit again as I rounded the house, and fell, within full range of the side window. I have little idea of what happened after that. I was picked up by Spa Roe and carried some distance back along the

road, where I was dressed by Spa, and moved further back. I was carried out across the Dargle, and learned later that they were taking me to Barnacullia, where we were joined by Chad and the remainder of the party, having called off the attack when ammunition ran out. The full result of the attack was not known for some days, when it came through G.H.Q. Intelligence - two dead, one wounded.

I was taken to the home of Peter Little in Balally. Dr. John Loftus, then Battalion M.O., was brought from Jervis Street Hospital by Ned Cummins, in a car loaned by McGovern, a publican in Windy Arbour. Loftus decided I was a hospital case. Word was sent to the Brigade O/C, Oscar Traynor, who ordered my removal to O'Donnell's nursing home in Eccles Street, at once. Time had been lost. The military swoop was on. Check points were set up, on a line from Foxrock to Glencullen, with particular attention to the Scalp area and Sandyford. Our scouts brought news of the military movements. The line to Rathfarnham was cut off, but there was a chance of getting through to Ballinteer. Word was sent to Dominic Hayden, a taxi owner, of Morehampton Road, Donnybrook, through Mrs. Woods. Hayden was not connected with the I.R.A., in any way, but always willing to help Mrs. Woods. Next day, he managed to get through to Ballinteer, and Moran's farm, taking his taxi up to within shouting distance of Little's house. The route he had taken was rather clear, with the exception of Milltown, where there was a check point. It was decided to take a chance. I was bundled in blankets, and taken away by Loftus, down the boreen. Nothing happened, until we reached Windy Arbour. Here, there

was a hold-up. I must rely on Dr. Loftus as to what happened here, as I was not in a condition to take much notice. An officer approached the taxi and, looking at the object in blankets, asked, "What have we here?" Without thinking, Loftus replied, "Bad case of D.T's, Officer!" "Lucky devil! Wish I was like him! Go ahead!" We had a clear run to Donnybrook, changed cars, and arrived safely at Eccles Street.

All was ready at the nursing home, word having been sent from the Brigade to expect me. I was visited almost at once by Jack Twomey, a chemist from Gardiner's Row. He was the contact between wounded men and doctors. Having got particular of my case from Loftus, he left for the Mater Hospital, and returned with Surgeon P.J. Smyth. I was taken by Twomey, in a horse cab, next day, to Fitzwilliam Street, to Dr. Hayes, for X-ray. After that, it was a case of operations. P.J. Smyth made an excellent job. Someone remarked that he would have made a perfect tailor, so neat was his work - no scars.

This was in May, 1921. I was in the hospital when Tom Ennis was brought in by Oscar Traynor, Captain Daly and Batt. Hyland, after the burning of the Custom House. Tom was badly wounded in the hip. Once again, P.J. Smyth was called in, and, while Tom had a limp for the remainder of his life, he made a wonderful recovery. Father Tom Burke, from Galway, was also in hospital for treatment, a much wanted man. We were visited by Liam Mellowes, Cathal Brugha and Oscar Traynor, from time to time.

I was passed out, fit, early in June, and

found things in full swing, in the county. The 7th Battalion had been formed, under the command of Comdt. Gerry Boland. This covered an area from Tallaght to Blessington, taking in Clondalkin, where there was a military post on a pumping station. Tom Watkins put this out of action, and captured some arms, soon after the Battalion was formed.

With this new area now active, troops were even more on the move, and it was decided to mine the Scalp road, near Butler & Hayden's tea-rooms. One of the Butlers had been arrested after the Ballycorus attack, tried by court martial, and sentenced to fifteen years. He was not a member of the I.R.A., and had nothing to do with the attack. I must pay tribute to this man. He kept silent, and made no effort to defend himself, but joined the I.R.A. in Arbour Hill detention barracks.

The mine was laid by Barney Short, who had been loaned from the 5th Battalion Engineers. It was in a trench on the road, with wires leading to the plunger, high up on the Scalp, behind the rocks. Pat Hayden, Stephen Barry (Enniskerry), Mick Dunne (Dosey), Ned Cannon and Bill Murphy took turns, to watch for a lorry that passed that way from Powerscourt. It did not pass for eight days, and, when it did, nothing happened when the plunger was pushed home. The mine was taken up, and brought to the bomb factory at Blackrock, for examination. It was found to be damp, and was put in order again. It was decided to put it nearer Enniskerry. On the way out with the mine, in a Ford car, driven by Willie Kane of Blackrock, they ran into

a patrol of military at Jamestown. The mine, Barney Short and Kane finished up in Arbour Hill!

The patrol, evidently pleased with their capture, returned to Jamestown, some days later, and were ambushed by Ned O'Brien, Bill Murphy and Fugs Doyle, all of Barnacullia.

Ginger O'Connell was very keen on an all-out attack on the Naval Base, Dun Laoghaire. The idea was to put steel plates on a railway engine. (The 4th Battalion had captured a large amount of plates.) Tom Sutton of Bray was to drive the engine on to the harbour siding, with riflemen in the tender. The plates were to be fitted at Westland Row. The Truce put an end to this job.

The bomb factory at Blackrock came under observation, and a quick move had to be arranged. Tom Cardiff produced a two-ton Garford lorry. I had never heard of such a make, before or since. The contents of the factory were loaded. This included pig iron, coke and many other odds and ends. With a full load, we set sail, with Ned Cummins leading a scout party of cyclists. We had no set destination, except to get clear of the Blackrock area, and, as usual, headed for the mountains. We arrived in Glencullen without mishap, and set about looking for a secluded spot to set up the factory. We found Glencullen House. This place had been unoccupied for a long time, but we discovered all the farm implements in the outhouse, including a ladder. A window was forced on the upper storey, and, to our delight, we found the house fully furnished, rather dusty and musty.

We decided to stay the night - at least, four of us did. The main party went back to Blackrock. I cannot say that we slept much. The house was explored, from top to bottom, every room furnished, and beds made. A chestnut tree had burst through the floor of the dining room, and was almost as tall as the table. Dust, inches of it, was on everything, and an uncanny atmosphere about the whole place. We were jumpy - aye, frightened. There was little comfort in guns. Our only light was a flashlamp, and this had to be kept away from windows, not that it mattered much, as they were covered in cobwebs. The silence was overbearing. We took turns to sleep. It was restless and came in fits and starts. A long night, and never was a dawn more welcome!

Daylight brought back courage, and thoughts of food. While we waited to see smoke from a neighbour's chimney, a further inspection was made of the whole house. It seemed much more friendly in daylight. We moved out, this time through the hall door that creaked and groaned. The lawn was overgrown, and nearby was a waterfall. This, we had failed to see, or hear, the night before. The truck was as we had left it. Walking towards the school, we met Father O'Rourke, who was very surprised to see us. When I explained that we were now parishioners, having moved in, the night before, to Glencullen House, he became very interested. Over breakfast - he was a thought-reader, and invited us to join him - he asked all sorts of questions about the house, what we found in it, and if we intended to stay there long. Then came his side of the story.

A suicide had been committed in the basement, some time ago, and, since then, the house had been closed and never entered. The usual rumours about lights and noises, seen and heard, after dark, kept the local people away from the place, and he assured us we would not be disturbed. I assured him that the lights and noises would be more pronounced from now on. I could safely say that he was not too pleased that we had moved in. Sound as a bell and always willing to help us, in any way, but the idea of us staying in Glencullen House disturbed him, for some unexplained reason.

We lived in that house, and used it until the Truce. It always remained spooky. Nothing was ever seen or heard, worse than ourselves. We were not disturbed, except by our own fears of the supernatural.

There was an interesting night in Dun Laoghaire, shortly before the Truce. Instructions were received from the Brigade to hit the Naval Base and keep it up, in order to draw troops from the city. This was carried out, about midnight, and, to make sure of a good show, the wireless station was also hit. After about an hour, an armoured car led a party of troops from the Naval Base, up the Marine Road, and into George's Street. Fire was kept up, at the wireless station, and then they sent out a patrol, going up Clarence Street into Lower George's Street. Both patrols were attacked as the armoured car went off on its own. Evidently, both patrols were working on their own. They clashed in George's Street, and opened fire on each other, with excellent results -

five wounded, and one dead. The armoured car got into a cul-de-sac, and, in backing out, hit a lamp-post, knocking it down. A soldier got out, to direct the driver in the backing movement, and was shot by the man in the turret. This information only reached us next morning, through Billy Walsh, who had a contact in the wireless station, Smith, who was a batman.

During a raid on the Hall, at Shankill by military from Powerscourt, Willie Owens was shot dead. He was on the run from New Ross, where he worked, and had come home to Shankill and joined the Bray Company.

Constable Skeets was shot dead at Cabinteely Barracks. Stephen Barry, Mick Dunne and Tom Fox made vain attempts to get Major Shore, stationed at Powerscourt, who was in charge of the raiding party, when Willie Owens was shot. They made up for their disappointment, by blasting the R.I.C. Barracks at Enniskerry.

Sean Nolan, Jack Sweetman, Tommy Moran and George Tallon, of the Deans-Grange Company, returning from an ambush at Kill-O'-The-Grange, ran into a party of R.I.C., under Sergeant Cullen, at Monaloe. There was no question of holding up. Both parties opened fire, and shot it out until the R.I.C. made a run for the barracks, leaving the I.R.A. with two rounds left - a lucky break.

Jack Furlong and Masher Mooney attacked a military lorry in Castle Street, Dalkey. The driver was shot dead, arms captured, and the lorry burned.

After the escape of Simon Donnelly, Ernie O'Malley

and Frank Teeling from Kilmainham Jail, each battalion were ordered to have bolt-cutters in our dumps, for future use. Tom Masterson of Mount Annville, Dundrum, worked in Booths of Stephen Street. He was not a member of the I.R.A., but was well known to Sean Russell, Director of Munitions. The bolt-cutters were made in Booths, and charged to the account of the Auxiliaries, and handed over to us by Masterson. Our special dump was built into a wall, in the kitchen of Netley, Cross Avenue, Blackrock, the home of Eoin McNeill, with his full knowledge and consent. The dump was never found, in spite of the fact that the house was almost wrecked during endless raids. We never used the bolt-cutters, or the extra long rope ladder that was always kept in the dump.

While I may be the only man ever to hold up a tram, with a pike, to Capt. Noel Lemass must go the distinction of being the only man in the Dublin Brigade ever to commandeer a tram. Always looking for action, and willing to go anywhere to take part in a scrap, I mentioned to him once about an attack coming off, on the Naval Base, Dun Laoghaire. This was something that appealed to him, and it was arranged that he should be in Dun Laoghaire, about 10.30 p.m., on a fixed night. He was then attached to the 3rd Battalion. The day arrived, and Noel made frantic efforts to contact me - could we wait for him until 11 p.m., as a dinner dance, or some such, would delay him? 11 p.m. it would be, but not later! We were at the spot, on time. No sign of Noel. A tram came along, very quickly, and off stepped Noel, complete in dinner jacket, coat and white scarf, with this explanation. He boarded the tram

somewhere about Mount Street, going upstairs. As it got further out, passengers got fewer and fewer, until Noel was alone on top, and, to his mind, progress was very slow. Slipping down the stairs, on to the driving platform, he told the driver to keep going, and fast. He did, and Noel arrived on time, with the help of the conductor, who happened to be Jack Luby of the Dalkey Section.

The 'Daily Mail' gave us credit for using coded wires. There is a simple explanation to that one. William Sutton, Rate and Income Tax collector, Kilternan, was loyal to the Crown, but not very dangerous otherwise. He had collected a fair amount of money, and had his books closed, ready to hand over the lot to the Castle. I moved in, sometime in the early morning, with Peter Little, Bob Kane and a few others that I have forgotten, and explained to Sutton that we had come to take the Rate and tax money, on behalf of the Government of the Republic. There was some delay before we got down to business, as a member of the family was very ill, and needed a doctor in a hurry. This was a little awkward, as we intended to keep everyone in the house, until all money had been lodged in Dublin. I offered to send for the doctor, on condition that he looked after his own job while we looked after ours. This was agreed, and, in time, the doctor arrived. He had no idea of what was going on. The patient was too ill to care. The doctor was driven home after his visit, and the necessary medicine brought back. If I remember correctly, the family doctor had to be brought from Bray. I must say that Sutton made no attempt to give us away,

and was most grateful for our help. The books and money were handed over - a total of, roughly, £2,000, some in cash, postal orders and cheques. I took the lot to an office in Nassau Street, having left the Sutton household in charge of Peter Little, who had instructions not to allow anyone out of the house until I returned, or sent a wire to say all was well. I remember waiting to have my cash and books checked, but I cannot remember the name of the man. He was one of our Local Government officials. I was sent to the Munster & Leinster Bank in Dame Street, to cash some of the cheques - no questions asked - evidently pre-arranged. Everything in order, I sent the following telegram, "Sutton, Kilternan. Goods delivered. All clear". The wire was duly delivered, and the boys moved off, much to the relief of Mr. Sutton. The wire was signed, "George". Next day, the 'Daily Mail' came out, with scare heading, "Armed Raiders Use Coded Wire".

Road blocking, raids on H.M. mails, and dislocation of the telephone service were regular. The mails produced some startling information from people least suspected. Police work was carried out by, at least, two men from each company. The Chief of Police for all Ireland, at this time, was Simon Donnelly, working under the direction of Austin Stack, then Minister for Home Affairs, with offices in Mary Street.

Rumours of a truce were in the air, and confirmed at a Brigade meeting in the Plaza Hotel, about the 9th July, 1921. I doubt if there were any regrets when this information was made known, generally. Bonfires blazed all over the country, as men prepared to go home,

for the first time in years. Monday, July 11th, 1921, at noon, all active operations were suspended by both sides.

Things were hectic for a few weeks. It was difficult to readjust oneself to the normal way of living. Guns were easy to come by, with the result that the I.R.A. police had a busy time.

The Brigade O/C decided that training camps should be set up in each battalion area, and a check-up on all arms. The 6th Battalion set up a camp, above Malone's Quarry, in Barnacullia. Men were brought in from all over the area, for a special course, some for a week, others for longer. The camp continued until October, 1921. The Brigade had an officers' camp in Glenasmole, in the 7th Battalion area, with Paddy O'Brien as O/C. This camp was later taken over by G.H.Q., with Emmet Dalton as O/C.

G.H.Q. decided, in August, to form the 2nd Dublin Brigade, made up by the 6th Battalion, the 7th Battalion and two Battalions in East Wicklow, covering an area, from Blessington to Inch, and from Merrion Gates to Wicklow. I was appointed O/C, 2nd Dublin Brigade, with the same staff as I had in the 6th Battalion, now with brigade rank.

I had lost a number of good officers, sent by G.H.Q. to act as Training Officers all over the country - a tribute to the 6th Battalion - but I needed them now, with a brigade to be trained. Within a few months, we had five battalions training in the Brigade area, under the watchful eye of Ginger O'Connell, Director

of Training, who had big things in mind, should the Truce end suddenly. Alas, this did not happen! Never more were we to fire on our old enemy, the British! Tragically, it was to be our brother Irishmen!

SIGNED: Andrew McDonnell

DATE: 25th March 1959

WITNESS_____