

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BUREAU STAGE MILE. TV 1913-21  
NO. W.S. 328

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

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**Witness**

Gearoid Ua h-Uallachain,  
71 Mobhi Road,  
Glasnevin, Dublin.

**Identity**

Q.M.G. Fianna Eireann;  
Chief of Staff Fianna Eireann.

**Subject**

- (a) National activities 1910-1916;
- (b) Magazine Fort and Church St. Area  
Easter Week 1916.

**Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness**

Nil

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STATEMENT BY GARRY HOLOHAN

71 Moibhi Road, Glasnevin, Dublin.

I joined the Fianna in 1910. I can always remember the day because Jim Larkin, the Labour leader, appeared before the magistrate in the Dublin Courts on a charge of stealing the books belonging to the English Dockers Union, in which he was an organiser before he started the Irish Transport Workers Union.

The Fianna had two rooms in the same house as Larkin's new Union, at No. 10 Beresford Place. This house was situated where the loop-line railway meets the house line at the Abbey Street end. The house is now demolished and the space occupied by Brooks, Thomas & Co. We had a large drawingroom and a small room off it. This room contained a quantity of scenery belonging to a dramatic society in which the Countess was interested. The rooms were also used on certain nights by a choir called the Emmet Choir. The members of this choir were men of strong National views. Most of the members were in the Irish Republican Brotherhood and afterwards took an active part in the formation of the Irish Volunteers, and in 1916. Most of the girls joined Cumann na mBan. The conductor's name was Sean Rogan. He is at present employed as a clerk by the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. I remember it was a member of this choir I first heard singing "The Soldiers Song"; his name was Billy Mullen, and he died before 1916. He was also a member of the John O'Mahoney Hurling Club.

It was Joe Connolly, afterwards Chief of the Dublin Fire Brigade, who brought me into Na Fianna. He and his brother George were members all the time. The Connollys were the first Irish-Ireland family I ever knew. From

their earliest days they were associated with the National movement. Their father, Michael Connolly, who worked on the Dockmasters staff in the Custom House docks was a member of the Robert Emmet Costume Association in the early days. I remember him riding on a horse in the St. Patrick's Day procession with Sean, who was afterwards killed on the roof of the City Hall in 1916 while attacking Dublin Castle, riding a pony beside him at the head of the Irish National Foresters.

This Branch of the Fianna was called Sluagh Emmet. There were about twenty members, some of them very tough lads while others were of a very fine type. The Branch was under the special care of an old retired school-master named Paul Gegan, who lived in Marlborough Street. He was a Councillor representing the North Dock Ward in the Dublin Corporation. He was unseated by Alfie Byrne in the municipal elections about 1911. He was a tall old man with a whiskers, very like Count Plunkett in appearance. He had four or five sons. Seamus was about 25 years of age at the time and Dinny was doing his Senior Grade Intermediate at the O'Connell Schools. They also took an active part in the Branch. There was also a labouring man named Keegan, who worked for Ross & Walpoles, an engineering firm; Willie O'Brien and Fran O'Brien. Willie set the type for the Proclamation of 1916 in Liberty Hall. He was later a Commandant in the National Army; Frank was also a Commandant in the National Army. He was wounded in St. Stephen's Green in 1916. Willie Halpin, who was captured at the City Hall after the attack on the Castle in 1916, as a member of the Citizen Army, was there too. He is now in charge of the Platers in the Dublin Dockyard.

There was An Cead Sluagh at 34 Camden Street, and another Branch in Drumcondra at this time. Eamon Martin

started a Branch in Sandwith Street, and Tom Donoghue, who is now a priest, started one in John Street, near Smithfield. The Camden Street Branch wore jerseys and kilts, and had a pipers' band. Con Colbert was in charge and Pádraig Ó Riain was the Secretary. Sluagh Emmet wore cotton shirts made like the Catholic Boy Scouts' shirts, with green slouch hats and blue knickers. At a later date an officer named Michael Lonergan, who was on the clerical staff of Messrs. Clerys in O'Connell Street, designed the Fianna double-breasted shirt with the brass buttons used up to the present. He got the idea from the American Army uniforms. He was a very good type of boy and had great taste in clothes. He was a very competent drill instructor, and succeeded in bringing us up to a very high standard of efficiency. He was later availed of by the I.R.B. to train them when they started drilling in the Foresters Hall at 41 Parnell Square about 1912. He was very popular, but decided to go to America about 1914 as his mother and the rest of his family were living in New York. He got a job in a bank, and was later employed as chief organiser of the Catholic Boy Scouts of America.

When I joined the Fianna, Countess Markievicz had a big house at Belcamp, County Dublin, near the Carmelite College. This was situated between Coolock on the Malahide Road and Santry village on the Swords Road. Shortly after joining the Fianna I went on my first week-end camp to the grounds of this house. We arrived late on Saturday evening, and I remember that on the way up from Coolock we saw anti-recruiting bills posted on the gateposts and on the telegraph poles. I remember getting a real gun in my hands for the first time while on sentry duty. It was a great sensation.

On Sunday morning we were paraded and marched to Mass



in Coolock Church. The Countess came with us although she was then a Protestant. We had many happy week-ends at Belcamp until the Countess moved into Surrey House, Leinster Road, Rathmines, about 1912. It was at Belcamp I first got lessons and practice in shooting, from the Countess. She had two .22 rifles and always kept a liberal supply of ammunition. We used to cycle over to Malahide for a bathe.

During the summers of 1912 and 1913 we camped at Malahide, opposite the Martello Tower. This was a great spot at that time, as the crowds from Dublin had not yet started to frequent either Portmarnock or Malahide.

The Fianna were supposed to be non-political. We simply promised to work for the independence of Ireland. However, I soon found myself moving towards everything that was Irish-Ireland. We were taught to be aggressive to the R.I.C., and the boys in Camden Street would avail of every opportunity to attack the Protestant Church Boys Brigade, who at that time were very strong and would carry the Union Jack.

I remember seeing the Tri-Colour for the first time at 10 Beresford Place. The origin of the Tri-Colour (Republican Flag) was told to us in the back drawingroom of No. 10 Beresford Place by Willie Halpin, who later became a member of the Irish Citizen Army, shortly after I joined the Fianna in 1910. As far as my recollection goes, the Fianna always carried the Republican Flag from that time onwards.

I can recollect the disturbance at Beresford Place at the coronation celebrations of George V. The horse police were used to disperse the crowds and there was some stone-throwing. The I.R.B. took an active part in these disturbances.

It was about 1910 that Harry Heelan, now one of the Assistant Secretaries in the Department of Agriculture, joined the Fianna. I remember cycling with him to Belcamp. We also cycled to camp in Wicklow about Easter 1911. We cycled down on Good Friday and back on Easter Monday, and it never stopped raining from Friday night until Monday. We had to sleep in a hayshed on Sunday night as we were washed out. I cycled down to Ballymoney on the Sunday to see the Holohans. They are my father's relatives.

If we were not camping we usually went for route marches to the mountains or to St. Enda's College, Rathfarnham. We would go to Kilmashogue Mountain, to Hell Fire Club, Glendubh, or to the Three Rock Mountain. We usually went to St. Enda's, or Sgoil Eanna's as we called it, if the weather was bad so that we could get shelter. Pádraig Pearse was very good to us and used to give us every facility. We had permission to swim in the pool he had constructed for his boys. Sometimes we would camp in the big field in front of the house. I remember one week-end we were camping there and some of the boys were found stealing apples in the orchard and we were ordered out at once. I do not think Pádraig could have been responsible for such a thing; I was told at the time that it was one of his sisters.

Pádraig Pearse and Con Colbert were great friends. Con used to drill the boys and recruited a number of them at a later date into the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

When the Irish Transport Workers Union grew in numbers we had to leave 10 Beresford Place and seek new premises. We rented a small hall that was owned by the priests of Berkeley Road, and was situated over an archway in Nelson Street.

The Sluagh at this time was in charge of a young Tipperary man named Micheál Lonergan, who designed the Fianna shirt. I remember learning Company drill from him, and he was using matches for the purpose of demonstrating the different exercises.

I think it was in the summer of 1912 that the Fianna cycled down to Lusk to an Aeridheacht. It was a great day in the town. Tom Ashe was there, and Francis Joseph Biggar, a nephew of the famous Joe Biggar, M.P., presented a large flag with a black raven on it to the Lusk Pipers. There was a procession through the town, and Francis Joseph and the Countess were at the head.

The following week Francis Joseph Biggar sent an invitation to the Dublin District Council of the Fianna, to send down two of the Fianna boys for a holiday. I do not know how it happened that I was selected as one of the boys to be sent with another called Arthur Healy, the son of the manager of one of the bottle factories at Ringsend. He is now a Customs Officer. We went to Mr. Biggar's house in Antrim Road, Belfast. I cannot think of the name of it, but it was afterwards occupied by Joe Devlin, M.P. It was a glorious house with a beautiful garden. While I was there he entertained the Belfast Fianna on Saturday evening. After a couple of days we motored down to Ardglass, where he owned Castle Shane, which was situated at the end of the harbour. This was one of Sean O'Neill's castles. He had it re-furnished in the original way. On the first floor was the kitchen or guardroom. The ground floor was completely built up like a vault and could be used as a store. On the second floor was an armoury, in which there was a display of every type of bow and gun. Some of the bows were of the most elaborate type, and the guns were of every possible description. On the top floor was the

chieftain's bedroom, in which there was a massive wooden bed, into which you could put seven fellows lying crossways. Then you had the roof and battlements, from which the Tri-Colour was flying and very frequently a piper playing. He employed a local man to keep the place in order. I cannot think of his name now, although his brother called to see me a few years ago. He was a great A.O.H. man.

The castle was full of guests at the time. The only two I can recollect now are Alf. Monahan of Beaumont Road, the Gaelic teacher, and an Uilleann piper from Belfast named Frank McPeake. There was a Feis in the town during the week-end, and a great Aeridheacht on the Sunday with a concert in the parish hall that night. The usual procession took place through the town, with Francis Joseph at the head, followed by the Pipers Band. He was, I should say, about 55 years of age, and had a very goodnatured face. He was a great authority on works of antiquity. There were excursions from all over the North that day.

At that time the herring fishing was very prosperous at Ardglass, and there were about forty girls employed salting them and packing them into barrels. I remember a party of us went out one evening in one of the motor trawlers. We left about six o'clock. We had a piper and the Tri-Colour was floating from the mast. After a while I started to feel sickish from the smell of the old motor engine, and later I got so bad I was put into the boiler-room in the bow of the boat. This boiler was used for making steam to work the winches. Then Healy got bad, and I will never forget him calling for his mother that night. We arrived back in port about eight o'clock next morning, and I can assure you I had enough of the sea for a good while.

I do not know if I stayed for a week or a fortnight, but Francis Joseph took a liking to me and kept up correspondence. During the winter he came down to Lusk in County Dublin to give a lecture with lantern slides in the library, and he asked me to come and meet him. I went down on my bicycle intending to come back on the train. I waited until the last minute and then started off to the station, which is situated half-way between Rush and Lusk. It was a very dark night and I was going my best when I saw the reflection of my light in the black belt of an R.I.C. man. The next moment my front wheel went between his legs and he got the full force of my handlebars in the back. He rolled over on the ground groaning and when I picked myself up I could hear my train coming into the station. I immediately took the offensive and asked them what they meant by walking on the road in the dark. I invited them to inspect my lamp and see that it was warm. I also called a courting party who were passing, to verify my statement. There were two R.I.C. men present. When the lad was picked up and had got his breath, they proceeded to take my name and address. As I had very little faith in British justice or that the magistrate would take my statement against that of the two policemen, I used a little discretion and gave a wrong name and address. I gave the address of a friend in Gardiner Street, so that I would know if they pursued the matter. I heard later that they did call at that house looking for Mr. Kelly, and that they made enquiries in Lusk and swore that if they caught me I would remember it.

I was in Belfast in 1911 another time with Joe Robinson, a member of the Fianna. He was one of the first members of the Fianna, and got five years imprisonment in Scotland before the Rising for taking explosives in

Scotland. His father and mother were living in Belfast at the time and he asked me to go down. We went down by boat from the North Wall. At that time there was a very nice little steamer called the S.S. "Carrickfergus" sailing from Dublin on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. She left Dublin at 8 p.m. and arrived in Belfast at 6 a.m. It was a splendid trip, as the scenery was splendid in each direction. When going up you could view the whole County Down coast and Belfast Lough, and coming back you had Dublin Bay. The fare was only 7/6d. return and the tickets lasted for six months. This service was stopped during the first world war. When we reached Belfast we went to the Black Mountain at Hannastown outside the city, where Bulmer Hobson had a little cottage, and we camped there. It was here I met Ernán Blythe for the first time. During these visits to Belfast I always met Dinny McCullough, who at that time was the recognised leader of the Fenian movement.

I remember when we were going up the River Lagan we saw them building the greatest liner in the world, the "Titanic". She was supposed to be unsinkable. I can also recollect reading the poster at Eden Quay the day she was lost, and I could hardly believe it.

Francis Joseph Biggar continued to write to me and he made me a present of a suit of overalls. He also gave me a present of a set of kilts. He invited me down for Christmas, 1912, and I had a great time going to different functions, including ceillidhthe. I remember meeting Carl Hardebeck, the musician, for the first time at Biggars, and I took great offence at a remark he passed when he heard I was from Dublin - he said that Dublin men were no use for anything but passing resolutions. I often wondered did he change his mind, because it was to Dublin he came when he was in greatest need, and ended his life amongst us. I

also met Colm Ó Lochlainn, the printer, for the first time, and a lad named Liam Bradley, the son of a doctor. He was a student in St. Enda's under Pádraig Pearse, and we remained great friends for a number of years. He is now practising as a doctor in Drogheda.

It was during the Aonach, which at that time was held in the Round Room of the Rotunda, in 1912 that I was made a member of the I.R.B. At that time Bulmer Hobson had a cottage at a place called Balroddery, near Tallaght, County Dublin, and we used to go there for week-ends with Pádraig Ó Riain, who was General Secretary of the Fianna, and Frank Reynolds, a brother of Percy Reynolds. It was a two-roomed cottage situated in a field on the opposite side of the road to the gate leading up to the big house called Bella Vista. By the way, this house, Bella Vista, was once occupied by Matt Byrne the famous bell-founder who had his foundry in James's Street, and had cast most of the Church bells in the country. We used to go to Mass in the Dominican Church in Tallaght on Sunday morning, and Bulmer, who was a Protestant, would have the dinner ready on our return.

The Aonach na Nodlag was held in the Round Room of the Rotunda about three weeks before Christmas in 1912. This was a great opportunity for all the friends of the Irish-Ireland movement to meet each other and offer Christmas greetings. My uncle, Hugh Holohan, was one of the principal organisers of this Exhibition, with Arthur Griffith, Sean McDermott and Tom Kelly. I remember after it closed on Saturday night I went to Hobson's cottage with Pádraig Ó Riain and Liam Mellows. On Sunday Hobson said he had to come into town early, so we started at about three o'clock. Bulmer Hobson and Pádraig were in front and Liam and I were behind as we walked into town. Liam

approached me about joining the Fenian movement and I expressed my willingness. He then told me that they were going to a meeting and invited me to go with them. I agreed.

I was brought to the Fianna office at 12 D'Olier Street. Before I entered the room Con Colbert came out and brought me into another room, where he administered the Fenian Oath. I then found myself among most of the senior officers.

The Circle was called the John Mitchel Circle. Con Colbert was Centre. I think Pádraig Ó Riain was the Secretary. These Circle meetings were held once a month. At the time I joined there had been a split - that Christmas 1912 - which was very harmless. There had been a kind of a clean-up. While a number of the men had done a good deal of work in their younger days, I think they were inclined to lean on their laurels and use the organisation as a means for getting into the Corporation, as Fred Allen had good influence. However, Tom Clarke, Sean McDermott and Bulmer Hobson had the reins when I joined, and it was not long until things started to move.

The John Mitchel Circle of the I.R.B. was mostly composed of students of St. Enda's and Fianna officers. Amongst the members from St. Enda's were Eamon Bulfin, son of the man who wrote "Rambles in Eirinn", Desmond Ryan, the writer, Frank Burke, Jack and George Plunkett, Fergus Kelly, who is now chief engineer on the Mining Board, Liam Mellows, Eamon Martin, Pádraig Ó Riain, Con Colbert, Frank and Jack Reynolds, Barney Mellows and Father Tom Walsh became a member after 1917. I got in touch with him after 1916 while he was in the training college in St. Patrick's, Drumcondra, through a fellow-student named Jimmy Fox of



Clondalkin, who was also a member of the I.R.B.

It was during the week-ends in Bulmer Hobson's cottage that I first read Eithne Carbery's poems. I think they were only published about that time, and I can assure you they did much to fan the fires of patriotism to white heat. From now on my outlook on life was completely changed. The Fianna was no longer a mere pastime or social function. It became a sacred duty, and I started to bend my every effort towards the freeing of Ireland. No task was too great or time too long.

At that time they made a collection of three-pence each at each meeting for a draw for a rifle, and it took two months to get the price of one rifle and 100 rounds of ammunition. A rifle at that time cost about £7. The first rifle was won by Pádraig Ó Riain, the General Secretary of the Fianna, and the second by a boy called Harry Ward, who lived off Grand Canal Street. He later went to sea as a fireman, as his father before him. He was lost during the last war on one of our Irish boats, I think the S.S. "Irish Pine".

Eamon Martin, Liam Mellows, the Reynolds and myself used to go to 5 Findlater Place to the "Irish Freedom" office to fold the papers and stamp them for the post. We would then carry them to the G.P.O. and post them. I remember the first night I went down, I had not seen Sean McDermott from the time of my Uncle Hugh's funeral when he marched at the head of the men from Cork Street Hospital to my Uncle's home in Clonliffe Road. He was then a fine young man, but now he was a cripple with a beard. He had had rheumatic fever. He had a lovely face, and used to be amused when people said he was like Our Blessed Lord. I remember one night we were folding the papers when we

heard a band playing and Eamon Martin and I rushed into O'Connell Street. At that time strikes were becoming more frequent, and you could feel the air electrified with revolution.

About this time the I.R.B. built a cinema at the rear of 41 Parnell Square. This was really a pretence, as it was closed down after a short period and used as a drill hall by the I.R.B. We had only one large meeting of the I.R.B. before this drilling started, it was held in this hall, and I remember Sean O'Casey, the playwright, kicked up ructions because we were not taking advantage to rise. Strange to say, when we did rise he was not there. I also remember that Dinny McCullough made what we described in those days as a "green flag speech", that is, he did plenty of stage heroics.

When we started to drill, the work was carried out by the older Fianna officers, Michael Lonergan, Eamon Martin, Frank Reynolds, Jack Reynolds, Harry Ward and Liam Mellows. I gave lessons in semaphore signalling on a couple of occasions. Tom Clarke and a man named Luke Kennedy used to stamp the attendance cards. Paul Galligan, the draper, attended those early drills and has one of the attendance cards still in his possession.

It was on account of the work carried out by the I.R.B. that the formation of the Irish Volunteers was such a spontaneous success. Liam Mellows went around the country as a Fianna organiser, on his bicycle, while at the same time he was organising the I.R.B. He had previously been employed as a clerk in the Junior Army and Navy Stores, which was situated in D'Olier Street where T. & C. Martin's place is now. It was the kind of store that sold everything to people connected with the different

Crown forces at a discount. It cleared out after the Treaty.

I remember we had great preparing for the Bodenstown parade in 1913, for that was the first time the I.R.B. got a chance of stepping out after being trained. The I.R.B. provided a number of railway tickets for the Fianna boys. At that time the total number of Fianna in Dublin would have been about 80, and I do not think the active I.R.B. would have been more than 200.

It was usual for the Fianna to salute each other in Irish from the first. Con Colbert was a great enthusiast and used the little he had on every occasion. We used the form of salute later used by Hitler in Germany. I understand that this was an old Irish form of saluting. We raised our right arm to its full height. The first Irish class I attended was one organised for the Fianna by Pádraig Ó Riain. We had the use of rooms in the McHale Branch of the Gaelic League over a small shop between Máire O'Rahilly's and the corner of Dorset Street. The teacher was Liam Ring, afterwards the first head of the Translation Branch. He also fought in 1916. At that time everybody was very enthusiastic, but there were very few simple books and no one knew how to teach. I remember getting a native speaker for Sluagh Emmet, but he was a railway porter and while he could speak Irish he could not impart a word. I did learn a word here and there, but the first time I heard Irish spoken properly was when Con Colbert brought me to a Modern College of Irish on a Saturday afternoon about 1915 to classes that were conducted by Gearóid O'Sullivan and Sean O'Keeffe.

Before 1916 the songs were sung in Irish and English at the ceillidhthe and there was a fine National spirit. E

think we changed over to all-Irish songs too early because 2% of the people present could not understand them, and as a result we lost that fine heroic spirit that led to 1916.

I think it was in 1913 that we moved back to Liberty Hall from Nelson Street. We were given a splendid room at the rear of the house, and we carried on in this place under Frank Reynolds until the tramway strike took place in August, 1913. At that time Liberty Hall was a hive of activity. There was a brass band and a magnificent fife and drum band and a dramatic society there. There was a large concert-hall on the first floor over the main entrance where they held concerts and produced plays on Sunday nights. The workers were being organised into a solid mass. When the tramway strike started we were cleared out so that they could have room for themselves.

We then moved to rooms in 41 Parnell Square for a few weeks until we got possession of the Hardwick Theatre in Hardwick Street. This was originally the home of the Jesuit Order before they went to Gardiner Street. The cells and cloisters still exist. It is now used by the Dun Eimer Guild for the production of works of art, carpets, etc. It was owned by Count Plunkett.

I was in charge of the Sluagh from the time Frank Reynolds left about 1913 until Sean Heuston came from Limerick in 1914. Then I went over to start a new Branch at Merchant's Quay, where the Third Order Library of the Franciscans is now.

At that time the Michael Dwyer National Club met in a large room in the building now occupied by the Third Order Library. As a number of the members - Paddy Byrne, who is now in the National Army, Martin Mullen, afterwards a Dangerous Buildings Inspector in the Corporation, Jimmy

Dunden and several others - were members of the I.R.B., they were anxious to have a Branch of the Fianna started, and Con Colbert asked me to undertake the work.

The Franciscans, who owned the place at the time, employed a resident caretaker to look after it - a man named Rooney - and he decided, after experiencing the noise of this unruly band for a few nights, that it would be advisable to get rid of us, so he offered us the use of an old three-storeyed building, which had been used as a store and was acquired by the Franciscans for the purpose of extending their Church, for the sum of eight shillings a week. This building was situated where the new entrance to the Church at Skippers Alley is now. It was in a most dilapidated condition, but, as most of the members of the Club were tradesmen, we transformed it into a splendid building. There was a clothier in Winetavern Street named Jimmy Byrne, a generous decent soul, and he made a tour of all the public-houses in the district and collected over £20 - a considerable sum at that time - to buy the material to carry out the necessary repairs. There was a beam of pitch-pine, 12 inches by 12 inches, projecting from the building which was used for hoisting goods to the top floors. This was removed and re-fitted under the top floor to strengthen it so that it could be used for dancing or drilling. The ceilings were plastered and heightened. The walls scraped and painted; unwanted windows were built up; the lavatories repaired, and electric light installed by voluntary labour. We used to work from about half-past six until eleven o'clock every night until it was completed. The result was that we had two splendid drill halls, and by setting one of them two nights a week to the Hibernian Rifles for ten shillings we were rent free. The rooms were used by the Michael Dwyer Club for ceillidhe, games:

and lectures.

It was in this hall I learned from James Connolly all that was to be known about street fighting. He had evidently made a very careful and thorough study of the fighting that had taken place in other countries in Europe, in Russia, and had a very thorough practical knowledge of what was required to neutralise the effect of modern equipment and regular army troops. He always gave a very interesting lecture in a quiet unassuming manner, but backed by that sound conviction that what he was teaching could be applied so that he won my complete confidence and respect. I have no reservation when I say that in my opinion he was the greatest man who took part in the Rising, and that is a big thing to say when you think of the high standard of courage, idealism and ability of the other leaders.

In 1913 I was employed in the Dublin Port and Docks Board Power Station, North Wall extension. This place was just like a happy home until the 1913 strike. This strike started with the building trades and spread from one trade to another. We escaped for a good while. Then the coal merchants became affected. At that time we were receiving our coal from Nicholls. The Chief Engineer offered to get a cargo of coal straight from England, and as the sailors were members of a Trades Union it appeared to be quite a reasonable arrangement, but the Union was not satisfied. When Nicholls sent the first motor lorryload of coal, the trimmer refused to take it in and he was dismissed. The other men were asked in turn and they all refused and were dismissed. Then the crane drivers and the engine drivers were called out in sympathy. Some went out and others stayed in. For the first couple of days there was no one but the two foremen to keep the power-station working, and

they had to fire the boilers. The engineers and fitters did not go on strike so I was not affected because at that time I was an apprentice member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. While I was in full sympathy with the men who were on strike, we thought it was ridiculous of Larkin to take them out instead of making the other arrangement.

The first strike-breaker to arrive was a fellow named Cunningham. He was the son of a harbour policeman, an ex-member of the R.I.C. He was employed in the engine-room as a greaser, and stopped work at five o'clock when I was leaving. I followed him up the North Wall until I came to the Custom House where I met Christy Poole, a brother of Joe Poole, the Invincible who was hanged for what was known as the Seville Place murders, and who was afterwards a member of the Citizen Army and fought in 1916. He followed him home with another fellow and I heard that they hit him on the head with a pot, with the result that he never returned to the power-station. As a result of this attack, the Dublin Port and Docks Board got a supply of mattresses, cooking utensils, food, tobacco and drink for any other strike-breakers who might come along, and for the use of some of our own men who returned after the first few days. It was not long until most of the vacancies in the power-station were filled, because it was one of the best jobs in Dublin and fellows left other places to come in to us. With one or two exceptions the newcomers were of a very objectionable, cut-throat, treacherous type. The old staff did their best to make them as uncomfortable as possible by tying live wires to handles of doors and oilcans and making them work when possible, but they were a cheeky thick-skinned lot, insensitive to insult. As the struggle went on it took on a National outlook. Dublin Castle gave full support to the employers and the Quays were patrolled by mounted D.M.P. and R.I.C.

James Connolly sent down a supply of slings that were made in Belfast, and I remember having a crack at tram windows in Harcourt Street and making a run from police through one of the side streets until I reached the Fianna Hall in Camden Street.

When Larkin said he would defy the police and hold a meeting in O'Connell Street I turned up that morning in Beresford Place with my hurling stick to face the police. We lined up and marched to Croydon Park, with the result we were two miles away and the people of Dublin were beaten into the ground by the Dublin police, after Larkin appeared at the window of the Imperial Hotel, which was situated over Clerys in O'Connell Street. The Countess told me afterwards that the man responsible for sending us away was P.T. Daly, that he rang up Surrey House on the 'phone that morning in an endeavour to stop Larkin. Willie Halpin was in the rank behind me on our way to Croydon Park.

During the strike two boats were sent over from London by the Employers Association. One was an old sailing hulk called the "Lady Jocelyn", and the other was an old paddle-boat called the "Paris". These boats were filled with ex-convicts of the worst type who were used as strike-breakers and unloaded wheat boats at the North Wall extension. These fellows had no intention of ever doing a day's work, but they just kept things moving for the purpose of trying to break the morale of the strikers. The strike dragged on for six months and the sacrifices of the men can be described as heroic. The workers had lost everything - their homes, clothes, jobs - and were depending on parcels of food from Manchester to keep them alive, when one day Larkin ordered them to offer themselves for employment and get their jobs back if they could.



The result was that the best men were victimised. If any man had shown any spirit he was victimised, so that many good men suffered. At the power-station one of the stokers, an old man with a bad chest, was victimised and worked afterwards out in the weather on the G.N.R., loading coal wagons. Another great friend of mine named Billy Moran was victimised because he had nothing but contempt for a friend of the foreman's. This fellow carried stories about him to the office and he was not re-employed. When the war started in 1914 he re-joined the Royal Field Artillery and was killed after a couple of months.

When the strike was finished everyone was glad, but the position was not a happy one. Some of the employers never seemed to recover their lost trade. Where up to one hundred men would have been employed driving horses in the coal-yards the work was now done by three or four powerful motor lorries, and the Gas Company was now distributing gas stoves in every direction.

It was very unpleasant having to work with these strike breakers, and the old comradeship of the past never returned. The old sense of security was gone. In the old days broken time was an unheard of thing in the Port and Docks, but now floats were tied up when there was no work for them, and the men were paid off. We had moved into a new age. However, if the men lost the strike the employers did not win, and for the future they were prepared to negotiate, with the result that the sons of men who suffered now enjoy conditions undreamed of in the old days. I remember when it was suggested that we start work at 8 a.m. instead of 6 a.m. the men would not hear of it as they said they would ruin their health by having to eat their breakfasts after getting out of bed.

The strike was only over and we had settled down to work when the war broke out in August, 1914. I remember that I spent the first Monday of August on Ireland's Eye opposite Howth, with some of the members of the Michael Dwyer Club and we just wondered what would happen.

As soon as England declared war the Port of Dublin became a hive of industry. It was stated at the time that Dublin was only second to Southampton in the facilities for the rapid dispatch of troops. There was a military guard placed on the power-station at once and nobody was allowed on the North Wall extension or Alexandria Wharf without a permit or for business reasons. Troops started to arrive from all parts of the country, horse, foot and artillery, and I was working almost continuously for the first week. I had to stand by in case the electric cranes would break down. I also fitted a telephone on the top of the 100-ton crane at the point of the North Wall, so that a watch could be kept for submarines. The day of the aeroplane had not yet arrived. It was a very sad and memorable time. The number of men who went away was colossal. You can judge the congestion of traffic when you think that men who left the Curragh Camp at six o'clock in the morning did not reach Dublin until evening, and did not sail until perhaps three o'clock the following morning. They were carried away in the mail boats and in liners escorted by destroyers. There would be troops packed everywhere, in the lifeboats, on the bridge, from stem to stern. All the other ships in the harbour would blow their sirens, while everybody sang "Rule Britannia, Britannia Rules the Waves", and "God save the King". Sometimes while they would be loading the stores, ammunition and horses, you would hear some poor fellow singing "No one to say goodbye", or "If they ask you what your name is, tell them it's Molloy".

During this week the Army authorities went round the different firms in the city and commandeered the best horses available for war work. There was hardly a family in Dublin that was not affected, with the exception of the extreme Nationalists, and even these were affected in some cases.

From the beginning of the war the military guard at the power station used our cook-house as their quarters, with the result that we had plenty of food. We became very familiar, and it was only with the greatest effort that I restrained myself from stealing some of their guns, I knew I would come under suspicion. As a matter of fact, a sentry left his gun at his post on the extension gates and went for a drink. When he came back his ammunition, equipment and gun were gone. Enquiries were made as to where I was at the time, as they knew I would not be above taking advantage of such a situation. These soldiers were always short of money and they would sell their shirts, socks, boots and brushes to get drink. When a soldier came home on leave from the trenches he brought his rifle and full equipment with him. After a time, there were so many guns missing, it was arranged to disarm the soldiers in England before they took the boat.

Before the war in 1914 the different regiments wore different and most picturesque uniforms, some of which were very costly. I remember seeing the Fifth Dragoon Guards passing down Sheriff Street on their way to the war, and they certainly looked splendid on their horses. When these regiments reached France and the trench warfare started, they were dismounted and put into the trenches as infantry. This was the end of the spectacular horse regiments.

The first world war did not affect us in the same way as the last war. As a matter of fact it was a God-send because it gave Dublin a great chance to recover after the 1913 strike. There were several firms engaged on war work. There was a shell factory in Parkgate Street and another in the Dublin Dockyard. As a matter of fact I think a lot of the so-called Loyalists were very sorry when the war was over because there was no more easy money. Practically all the men who were dismissed from the G.N.R. and other big firms, for taking part in the 1916 Rising, got employment on this class of work.

The paper I read during the war was the "Daily Mail". At that time the "Daily Mail" was very critical of the British Government and used to give a critical view of the war. We also had Jim Larkin's weekly, "The Irish Worker", Arthur Griffith's "Scissors and Paste" and Sean McDermott's "Irish Freedom".

I think it was in the summer of 1914 I got an invitation from Francis Joseph Biggar to Belfast and to bring a friend with me. I brought Eamon Martin and we were both dressed in kilts. We went by boat and arrived on a Sunday morning at about 8 a.m. The boat always arrived late on a Sunday as there was no hurry to unload. We went up to Antrim Road, and that evening I crossed the city to a place called Willowbank. This place consisted of a number of old military wooden huts which were erected in 1882 to house the military during the riots when the city was divided into Catholic and Protestant districts, at least that is what my mother told me and she lived in Belfast at that time. The Fianna occupied one of these huts and it was used for dancing and language classes. There was a scoruidheacht on that night and I remember Liam Mellows, who was an I.R.B. and Fianna organiser,

arrived unexpectedly. Nora and Ina Connolly, daughters of James Connolly, were also there. Everyone was very excited because one of the Fianna, I think Seamus Dempsey, the son of an old Fenian, was arrested the night before posting up anti-recruiting bills. Some of the lads asked me to ask Francis Joseph to go bail for him, and they were to come up the next morning to know the result of my request. Francis Joseph refused and told me to tell them to go to Dinny McCullough whom he knew to be one of the leaders of the extreme movement. I need hardly tell you I was very disgusted. We fooled about the house for a couple of days and then he sent me down town to a place called Castle Junction to buy him some paint brushes.

While I was away the Connollys rang up on the telephone and Eamon Martin spoke to them and told them I had gone down town. They took the tram from their house to the centre of the city and met me, and we walked back to Antrim Road together. When we came to the gate I went in and told Eamon and he came out to talk to them. He decided he would go down town and he came in and told Francis Joseph - or I came in and told him, I am not sure which. Francis Joseph told Eamon that if he went down town he was not to come back, so when Eamon heard this he decided he was going, but he did not try to influence me. I decided if Eamon was going I would go too, so I told Mr. Biggar and I went up and packed my bag. I really think he was nervous that we would draw the attention of the R.I.C. on him on account of Dempsey being arrested in connection with anti-recruiting posters. He immediately wrote a letter to my mother telling her I had left, and she wrote back. I can tell you she was horrified at my action.

I left with Eamon and the two girls and we went to their house at No. 1 Glenaline Terrace, opposite the city

cemetery on the outskirts of the city. I was sorry for leaving Francis Joseph as he had been very kind to me and I felt I was losing a great friend, but at the same time I was glad I had the courage to assert my independence because I had no wish to be patronised by anybody and I felt twenty times a better man for my action.

When I went to Glenaline Terrace I met James Connolly for the first time, and I got a very favourable impression of him. He was a very quiet, unassuming warmhearted man. He was very quiet-spoken and had not a lot to say. From this time until 1916 we remained great friends, and I think our admiration for each other was mutual. Mrs. Connolly was an adorable woman; she was so gentle and kind and did all in her power to make our visit as pleasant as possible. Nora and Ina were the only two working. There were two or three other girls and Roddy, who was about 10 or 12 years of age.

Liam Mellows invited me down to the Wexford Feis in 1914. I remember going down in the train with Eamon Martin, Con Colbert and Mrs. Mellows. I stayed in the house of a Mrs. Larkin. ~~She~~ He was married to a postman and she was a sister of Sean Sinnott who was very active in organising the Volunteers. I think he is now County Manager. Francis Joseph Biggar was judging the Irish costumes and he awarded me second prize. We stayed over until Tuesday. The reason I think this happened at Easter 1914, is that the Redmond Volunteers were in Dublin taking part in a big parade in the Phoenix Park at the same time.

When I started working in 1908 I attended the night schools at the Central Model Schools for a couple of winters, and then I went to the Technical Schools in Bolton Street, where I was taught by Mick Hayes, now a Senator,

and a professor in the <sup>national</sup> ~~Dublin~~ University. I found it very difficult to attend evening classes as I was very tired after the long day. When I became active in the Fianna this type of study came to an end.

During the years 1910 to 1914 I used to attend the Laurence O'Toole Club rooms where Irish classes and scoireachta were held. They had a large cottage at the rear of Leinster Avenue, off the North Strand. It was here I first met Sean O'Casey, the playwright. At that time he was a dirty-looking fellow with sore eyes, but he was always willing to sing a song, and was very much appreciated on account of being a native speaker. I think he was employed as a labourer on the Northern Railway. I remember calling to a room where he lived over a shop near St. Barnabas Church in Abercorn Road, where I met his mother, a very old woman. I think she was blind.

The O'Toole Club was a great club. The life and spirit of it was a lame man named Frank Cahill. He was a teacher under the Christian Brothers in Seville Place and he was responsible for making his parish one of the most Gaelic in Dublin. I can say that few Clubs can boast of turning out such a number of fighting men from 1916 to 1922. I am sorry to say that most of them followed Mick Collins.

There was a Circle of the I.R.B. attached to this club so a great many of its members were active from the earliest days. The socials were of a most pleasant type. Frank Henderson used to act as M.C. Sean O'Casey would sing "Down by Mulcreasant at Owen Doyle's Wedding". A Civil Servant named Kevin O'Lochlainn used to sing "The Low-Backed Car". Mick Colgan, now a Senator, used to sing "The Old Rustic Bridge by the Mill", and Kitty Keegan,

now Mrs. Colgan, used to sing "Jackets Green". There was a railway clerk and his sister, named O'Growney, who used to step-dance. Frank Cahill would play the fiddle, and if there was no fiddle he often played on a tin whistle. They were a fine honest set of men.

From 1912 to 1914 I used to attend socials organised by the Colonel John O'Mahoney Hurling Club. They were held in a hall in Richmond Avenue, off Richmond Road. This hall was attached to a big house occupied by Mr. Anthony O'Malley, father of the late Christy O'Malley, who was a Commandant in the National Army. Most of the members of this club were in the I.R.B.

In the year 1913 a number of the members of Sluagh Emmet broke away from the Fianna. I think they did not take the organisation seriously and were just in it for a good time. They were about ten in number and were getting to the age of about 17 or 18, when it was considered in those days childish to be a Scout. However, they took a tent or two with them that they, rightly or wrongly, considered they were entitled to, as they were in this Sluagh from the start. The Sluagh was in charge of Frank Reynolds and I was a Section Commander. Amongst the lads who broke away were Willie and Fran O'Brien, Fred Holmes, who afterwards went to the Great War as a dispatch rider and became a great motor cycle racer, and Brendan Gillan, who is now on the Library staff in Pearse Street. You can understand that this was a procedure that could not be tolerated by an organisation that believed in physical force, so we bided our time until we heard they were enjoying a camp opposite the Martello Tower at Malahide. We then organised a nice party which consisted of some I.R.B. members, Peadar McNally, who worked with Sean McDermott in the "Irish Freedom" office in Findlater Place,



Jimmy Dundon, who was a member of the Michael Dwyer Club and is since dead, Paddy Byrne, a tailor and also a member of the Dwyer Club, later a Captain in the National Army at Islandbridge, Eamon Martin, Pádraig Ó Riain, my brother Pat, Paddy and Harry Ward and myself. We took the last train to Portmarnock at about eleven o'clock. We took our time along the coast road and arrived about two o'clock in the morning, when they were nicely settled down. There was a royal battle. We pulled down the tents and tore them up. We cut the tyres off their bicycles so that they could not call the police. Eamon Martin and Jimmy Dundon were our best boxers and they took on the heaviest of the party. We then retired victoriously across country to Balgriffin and arrived in Dublin tired but happy on Sunday morning. We were expecting to hear from the police but nothing happened.

The following week I was passing over Butt Bridge on my way to Eamon when I met three or four of the other crowd. They came over to me immediately, and Gillan, who was stronger than I was, challenged me to fight. We started to box straight away, and, while I gave as much as I got, I arrived at Eamon's with a fine black eye.

At that time Brendan Gillan was working in the Kevin Street Library and he knew the gang would be there to meet him coming out at ten o'clock. We organised a party and waited for them in Kevin Street. When they came out Eamon Martin challenged Brendan Gillan as he was the biggest and gave him a fine beating, and that was the last trouble I got from them.

I made friends again with Willie O'Brien when we were locked up in Knutsford after 1916, and Brendan Gillan and I have been friends for years. We never referred to this unfortunate affair.

I remember Major MacBride gave a lecture to the Fianna in the hall at 34 Camden Street on his experiences in the Boer War, and I was greatly impressed by it. It was very interesting, and we gave him a great reception. At that time he was employed as a Water Bailiff by the Dublin Corporation and in charge of the weighing scales and weights used by the various merchants at that time for weighing coal and grain as it was unloaded from the boats. The coal was weighed in small tubs and the grain by the bag. This gear was given over to the Public Lighting Department after Major MacBride's execution and is still in the Tara Street depot. I used to see Major MacBride every morning walking to his office. He always dressed smartly, and carried his umbrella under his arm like a walking stick or a rifle. When he would be passing the works I would say to Tom Kane, an ex-British soldier, "There is the man who made you run in Africa", and Kane would boil with temper. Poor Tom Kane was blown up in the first world war.

Eugene Allen, who was engineer in charge of the Public Lighting Department and who was a son of Fred Allen who was the head of the I.R.B. until 1912, was very fond of the Major and used to recall the very happy holidays he spent at his home in Westport. The Major spent a good deal of his time at their home, and when he was taken prisoner to Kilmainham after the Rising he sent for Mrs. Fred Allen and she brought him in a change of clothes. It was in Fred's shirt he was executed. His happy, peaceful manner had such an effect on Mrs. Allen that she turned Catholic after 1916.

I remember driving poor Fred from the station on George's Quay to the Meath Hospital for an operation, after which he died. I was wondering that he had not

turned Catholic, but I could not approach the matter as Eugene was a Protestant and the hospital was more or less Protestant. When he died Willie Corrigan, his solicitor, told me that if he had only known he would have sent him in one of the Carmelite Order. I will always regret that I did not think of that as he was a most genial character.

I remember attending a dramatic performance organised by the Dramatic and Choral Society that used the Fianna rooms at 10 Beresford Place. It was held in the Molesworth Hall in Molesworth Street in the winter of 1911. The first play depicted a scene in the Fenian Rising of 1867 in Collooney Wood and the shooting of a Fenian leader, I think O'Neill Crowley was his name. There was also a comic sketch, in which a brother of Tom Donoghue, now a priest in England, took the principal part. These activities were only a cloak to keep the members of the I.R.B. together. It was at this show I remember being introduced to Eamon Martin for the first time. He was sitting in the seat behind me, and we were introduced by Harry Heelan, who was afterwards Assistant Secretary of the Department of Agriculture.

Harry Heelan was attached to the Fianna in Waterford. He passed the Boy Clerks' examination and came to Dublin and became a member of the Dublin District Committee. He did a good deal of work in the early days and was appointed Inspector of the various branches. He took part in our cycle ride to Wicklow, during which we were almost washed out by the rain. He must have dropped out about 1912. I did not see him again until 1913. I met him one Sunday morning and we walked as far as the Bull Wall, Clontarf, together. We spent the morning arguing about the big strike. He was a strong supporter of Arthur

Griffith, who was attacking Larkin's new paper, and I was just as strong in my support of Larkin. We parted the best of friends and I did not see him again until one night during the winter of 1924 or 1925 I was coming down Grafton Street from Kevin Street Technical Schools when I met Joe Thunder, a staunch Republican, at the corner of Dame Street and who was with him but Harry Heelan. They were on their way home from a Vincent de Paul meeting. We were charmed to meet each other, and he invited me to his home at Bullock Harbour, Dalkey. I found he was married to a very charming Belgian girl and that he had three children, two boys and a girl. He was the proud possessor of a small open boat fitted with all the necessary sailing gear, and I had the pleasure of spending many very happy Sundays with him during the following couple of years.

I can never count what I owe to Mr. and Mrs. Heelan for the pleasure I got from those happy days, when my spirit and health were broken after the Civil War, imprisonment, hunger-strike and general disillusionment of the horrible years 1922 and 1923.

Harry's wife had a very hearty ringing laugh. They would both sing songs. They are an ideal couple. It is no wonder that one of their boys is a member of the Society of Jesus. The other son is in the Civil Service and is an enthusiastic worker for the language. The girl is qualified as a doctor.

The night the first public meeting of the Irish Volunteers was held in the Rotunda Skating Rink, which was situated in the grounds of the Rotunda Hospital where the Nurses' Home is at present, I acted as steward on the front door with a man named Peadar McNally, who worked with Sean McDermott in the "Irish Freedom" office. I

remember when the hall was full and the door closed, the crowd broke the glass panel in the door trying to get in and it was necessary to hold an open-air meeting for the overflow. I will never forget the enthusiasm at the opening of the meeting, or my own feelings when the band, James's I think, struck up the tune "Let Erin remember the days of old".

Later on the meeting was spoiled to an extent by Jim Larkin who had a gang in the hall that caused a disturbance when Larry Kettle, the city electrical engineer, stood up to speak. Kettle's brothers were County Dublin farmers and were opposed to Larkin.

The result of this meeting was unimaginable. In a few days everybody was in the Volunteers, and it was providential that the Volunteer Officers were already trained because they were able to take control of the organisation at once. The same thing happened all over the country, and the senior Fianna officers were used to the fullest extent, as well as the members of the I.R.B. who were trained at 41 Parnell Square.

The Fianna were well represented on the Provisional Committee by Bulmer Hobson as Secretary, Liam Mellows, Con Colbert, Pádraig Ó Riain, General Secretary of the Fianna, and Eamon Martin.

I attended the first drill parade at Parnell Square, but when I saw that success was assured I continued my work with the Fianna.

I attended special classes at Volunteer Headquarters at a later date in 41 Kildare Street under Ginger O'Connell, who had been in the American Army and was very good at lectures. He was engaged later as a Volunteer organiser,

and Eamon Martin told me he was in Kilkenny when he got instructions for the Rising on Easter Sunday. He immediately sent a wire to Bulmer Hobson to meet him at Volunteer Headquarters, No. 2 Dawson Street, and returned to Dublin. This was Holy Thursday night. He was later sent to Cork city to stop the Rising. He was the Free State officer who was kidnapped by the Republicans and taken to the Four Courts, as a reprisal for the arrest of Leo Henderson who was arrested by the Free State forces while commandeering motor cars for the purpose of sending Volunteers to the North of Ireland to protect the Catholics in 1922. This incident led to the attack on the Four Courts and started the Civil War. Ginger was not released until the Four Courts garrison surrendered after a terrific explosion, caused by the munitions factory catching fire.

I used also parade with "A" Company of the 3rd Battalion, which was de Valera's Battalion, in order to learn all that it was possible to learn about rifle and field exercises. We also had rifle practice with miniature rifles on Saturday evenings. This Battalion met in a field at Camden Row, off Camden Street. Even at that time Dev. was a very imposing figure on account of his height. He took things very seriously. I remember taking part in manoeuvres with this Company across the Dublin mountains. We proceeded by Rathfarnham, Harold's Grange, over towards the Three Rock Mountain, and finished up at Leopardstown. I remember de Valera was captured very simply, and that he was in very bad humour when we were marching home.

I was also on parade with this Company on a big parade on St. Patrick's Day, 1916, at College Green. The Battalion Mass was held at St. Michael and John's Church and I was on duty outside the Church.

Shortly after this it was decided that Fianna officers would parade with "D" Company of the 1st Battalion, which was Sean Heuston's Company, for special field training.

Con Colbert devoted almost all his time to the I.R.B. and the Volunteers from their formation. His activities were concentrated in the districts surrounding Dublin, Inchicore, Clondalkin, Lucan, Chapelizod, Blanchardstown and St. Margarets.

I remember cycling out to St. Margarets in the evening to drill with the Volunteers at the old Chapel after working from six o'clock in the morning until five p.m.

Everywhere Con went he left a trail of enthusiasm. He was very low in height, he could not have been more than five feet, but he was built powerfully strong, and his soul burned for everything Gaelic and Irish. It would do you good to see him at a ceilidhe. He was a great friend of Fádraig Pearse and drilled the boys for him. He also brought a number of them into our Circle of the I.R.B. He was one of Sean McDermott's and Tom Clarke's most trusted men. In 1916 he occupied Guinness's Brewery offices in James's Street and later went to Marrowbone Lane Distillery. When the time came to surrender he volunteered to act as officer in charge instead of Seamus Murphy who was in charge and was a married man. For that brave act he paid the penalty with his life. I was certainly convinced that this story was true at the time and I was in touch with many members of the Marrowbone Lane Garrison.

Sean Heuston came to Dublin from Limerick, where he had been stationed as a railway clerk, about the end of 1913. He took over the branch at Hardwick Street and continued active in the Fianna up to 1916. He also took a very active part in the staff work of the 1st Battalion of the Volunteers under Commandant Ned Daly, and was Captain

of "D" Company in the Gaelic League Hall at 5 Blackhall Place. He was a very fine type of man. He was well built and was about four years older than I was. He was a very serious type, always wanting to do serious work; he had no time for singing or dancing. He had great energy. He was to have taken charge of G.H.Q. in the G.P.O. in 1916, but, owing to the failure of another officer to turn out, he was sent in charge of the Mendicity Institute on the Quays, where I am satisfied he made the best fight of the week. He also was called on to make the supreme sacrifice.

From the start the Volunteer movement went with a swing, in a way very similar to that when the L.D.F. was formed recently. Evidently there were thousands of men anxious to do their part, some of whom, with the greatest stretch of imagination, you would never expect to come forward. I remember Pádraig Ó Riain telling me how they told The O'Rahilly that the drilling would be good for his health, when they were trying to get him to go on the Committee. Little did they think he would finish up as one of our greatest heroes.

In 1914, about June or July, I got an invitation, through a boy named Mullen, from a man named Ryan, a solicitor in Castlebar, to send down a section of the Fianna to give a display in the asylum grounds. I think about twenty of us went. Sean Heuston was in charge of the drill display. Eamon Martin, Pat Holohan and I were also there. It was a great week-end. We were met at the station by Dr. MacBride, a brother of Major MacBride who was executed in 1916. The O'Rahilly inspected the Volunteers from all the surrounding districts. We gave a display of section drill, signalling and first-aid, and we brought our new trek car and tents.

I remember some of us spent the evening with a Father Meehan. His people were from Dublin.



I will not forget the surprise I got when someone mentioned that The O'Rahilly had stated that the Committee intended to run some guns into the country during the Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire) regatta which was to be held the following month. This will give you an idea of how simple and untrained for revolutionary work he was.

For a long time before that the question of procuring arms was a cause of great anxiety to some of the leaders of the Volunteers. They were often in consultation about the matter. The Volunteers were very strong at the time and many of them were eager to be trained in the use of the rifle so as to be ready to fight if the occasion arose. The vast majority had no training in the use of arms as there were not many available.

In April of the same year (1914) Carson succeeded in landing a large amount of arms and ammunition at Larne for the Ulster Volunteers. The extraordinary thing about it was, that he succeeded in bringing them in in broad daylight. As a result the Volunteer leaders in Dublin decided that they too must get arms. A Provisional Committee for the purpose was appointed, and collections for the purchase of arms were made throughout the country. Roger Casement agreed to make arrangements to purchase them in Germany. In my opinion it was he himself and Mrs. Stopford Green who provided most of the money for the purpose.

The arms were purchased in Germany, but the

transporting of them to Ireland presented many difficulties. At any rate, it was decided to send the arms (15,000 rifles and 50,000 rounds of ammunition) by steamer from Hamburg, Germany, and that it would proceed to a point near the Rutigen Lighthouse on the coast of Belgium, where the arms would be transferred to another ship which would bring them to Ireland. Erskine Childers had a yacht and Conor Cruise O'Brien had another, and both of these were willing to undertake this risky job for the freedom of Ireland. So it was decided that both of these would do the job, Conor with the yacht 'Kelpie' and Childers with the 'Asgard'.

The 'Asgard' left Deganwy, a small harbour near Holyhead, on 5th July and proceeded southwards along the English coast until it arrived at Cowes. It remained there some time with the intention of pretending to the British that they were on a pleasure cruise. Both the yachts met there on July 8th, and having consulted together, sent word to Hamburg that they would be at the Rutigen Lighthouse on the evening of the 9th. O'Brien left Cowes first and Childers sailed out two hours later. On board the 'Asgard' were Erskine Childers and his wife, Mr. Gordon, Mary Spring Rice, and a crew of two. They sailed towards Folkestone where four British naval ships were anchored, and turned towards the coast of Europe and reached the Rutigen Lighthouse late on the evening of the 9th. The 'Kelpie' had arrived there before them and had already taken 600 rifles and 20,000 rounds of ammunition on board. The remainder, 900 rifles and 30,000 rounds of ammunition, were put on board the 'Asgard'. The sea was very rough and as the 'Asgard' was overloaded they had to throw three cases of rifles overboard. On their return,

as on the outward journey, both yachts sailed different courses. The 'Asgard' called at Milford Haven where Mr. Gordon went ashore, with instructions to proceed to Dublin without delay, and to inform the Volunteer leaders that Childers with his cargo of arms expected to arrive at Howth on the following Sunday, July 26th.

The 'Asgard' reached Holyhead on the morning of the 23rd July and remained there all day. In the evening the Coastguards came along to find out what the yacht was doing there and to where they were going. Childers succeeded in convincing them that he was on a pleasure cruise and they did not trouble him further.

They left Holyhead on Friday 24th, and at daybreak on Saturday they were about ten miles south-east of Howth. They had to remain there all day; they were fortunate that there was a slight fog which helped them from being observed. At about 10 a.m. on Sunday 26th, they reached Lambay Island, and sailed around the island for about an hour or an hour and a half, waiting and watching for a signal, which had been arranged would be given from a motor boat indicating that the Volunteers were waiting to unload the arms. Owing to some misunderstanding or whether a motor boat was not available, this part of the arrangement was not carried out. Time was passing very rapidly and Childers became anxious as he knew that if the tide was ebbing the yacht would be unable to enter the harbour. So he decided to take a chance and go into the harbour to see if anyone was waiting for him. In the meantime, following Mr. Gordon's arrival in Dublin with the news, the Volunteer Executive decided that the Volunteers and the Fianna would hold a route march to Howth on the Sunday.

From early on Sunday morning both Volunteers and Fianna, especially the officers, were very busy.

It was arranged that Seán Heuston, Pádraig Ó Riain, my brother Pat and I were to call at Thompson's garage in Shaw Street some time about six o'clock that morning to collect our own trek car which was loaded with batons. My brother Pat, Seán Heuston and I were there to time, and we pulled the car round to Beresford Place where we met Pádraig Ó Riain coming to meet us. We pulled the car to the Hardwicke Street Hall and left it in charge of somebody while we went home to our breakfasts. No one was allowed to look inside the car.

I will never forget that march to Howth. We had collected the batons - they were to be used against the police if they gave any trouble - from Thompson's garage in Shaw Street that morning. I knew there was going to be a load of guns landed but I had no idea of where the place would be.

We proceeded along the Clontarf road, past the Bull Wall and Dollymount, and all the time I had my eyes skinned to see if I could notice any suspicious craft on the sea. When we came to the laneway on the Howth side of Lord Ardilaune's estate we turned towards the main Howth road which we joined at Raheny. I then thought it would be at Kilbarrack or Sutton, but we continued on to Howth.

When the head of the Volunteers reached the pier we were halted for a few minutes, and then the Fianna who were in charge of the trek car were ordered to the front.

When we reached the front of the column we were ordered to double down the pier, and we just reached the end as the boat came alongside.

Childers had taken a chance and came in to see if anyone was waiting for him. He was not disappointed. Tom Clarke, Liam Mellows, Mr. Gordon, Darrel Figgis, Pearar Kearney, Luke Kennedy and many others were waiting for him.

Seán Heuston jumped aboard and some of the others jumped aboard and started to pass up the ammunition and guns which were placed in waiting taxis, while the remainder were distributed along the ranks until everyone was armed.

The 'Asgard' sailed out as quietly as it came in. Some of the ammunition had been put in our trek cart and we started on our return journey to Dublin. As we went down the street a priest on a tram car gave us his blessing when he saw Irish soldiers with rifles on their shoulders preparing to fight for Irish freedom. We proceeded along until we reached the Malahide Road near Clontarf. The police and soldiers were there before us, apparently the news of the gun-running had reached the Castle and they were sent out to disarm us. The Volunteers who had no ammunition for the rifles, were ordered to disperse and proceed across country to the city. We had the trek cart and its contents to save. Some of the Volunteers attacked the soldiers and kept them engaged while the others escaped towards Artane. We succeeded in hiding the cart in Mr. Reddin's garden (father of District Justice Reddin), and buried the ammunition in the ground. We collected some rifles which

had been discarded by Volunteers and brought them safely to the city. Wild rumours were circulating throughout the city and before I arrived home that evening my mother had already been told that I had lost a leg.

As soon as I got my tea I went out with Seán Heuston and Seán Tobin, who was manager of Thompson's motor garage in Great Brunswick Street (now Pearse Street). We spent the night collecting guns which were hidden in different haysheds in North County Dublin. It was a great day.

The soldiers who were sent out to disarm us were very angry, having failed in their task, and were determined to have revenge on the citizens. That evening when they (the King's own Scottish Borderers) were returning to the Royal Barracks (now Collins Barracks) fired on the people at Bachelor's Walk. Two men were killed and several others wounded. It was decided to give them a public funeral. I think it was on the following Tuesday evening. Imagine my amazement when I saw a party of men parading with Howth guns. It appeared that, according to the law, the British could only seize the guns as they were being landed, and, as they had made no effort to take possession of the guns landed by Carson for the Orangemen, an awkward precedent had been established.

I had a large quantity of Howth ammunition in the house. I brought a large quantity of it to Limerick the following year when the Volunteers and the Fianna held a big parade there, and the remainder was distributed by me to the Fianna Officers who were members of the I.R.B.

about a month before the Rising.

I carried a Howth gun for a short period, but I was given one of the first long Lee Enfield magazine rifles that came into the country for the Volunteers. I paid five guineas for it and one hundred rounds of .303 ammunition. I also bought a savage automatic pistol, .32 I think, for £2:5:0 and one hundred rounds of ammunition. I paid for these by instalments to Bulmer Hobson, and they were fully paid for before the Rising. I got my rifle from Seán Murphy; he had a shop in Clanbrassil Street at the time.

I think it was the week after the Howth gun-running, the following Saturday, I had another experience at gun-running. This time it was at Kilcoole, County Wicklow, where Conor O'Brien landed his yacht-load of arms which he had collected from a German boat near the Rutigan lighthouse. At this time the Volunteer Headquarters were in Great Brunswick Street, now Pearse Street, near the Queen's Theatre. I remember cycling with Eamon Martin to where Countess Markievicz lived at Surrey House, Leinster Road, Rathmines, where a number of Fianna Delegates to the Ard Fheis were staying, and then proceeding to the Scalp, County Wicklow. When we reached the Scalp we met a large number of I.R.B. men having tea at Butler's tearooms - I should say about forty. They had arrived by charabanc. There was also a number of cyclists. We had our tea. The cycling party moved off in the Wicklow direction. Up to this it had been a glorious summer day. We had not gone far when we got a heavy shower, and took shelter for a few minutes because we had no coats.

When we resumed our journey we were on a very steep hill, and I was holding on to the shoulder of Paddy Ward

as I had bad brakes. For some reason I released my grip for a moment and shot away from his side. I gathered speed at a frightful rate, but I had no way of stopping myself. When I was on the steepest part of the hill I met a horse and cab coming towards me, but I managed to avoid it. Eventually the ground levelled and I escaped without an accident. I dismounted and waited for the party. When they arrived they told me that they expected to find me smashed up. Shortly afterwards we met Liam Mellows. He was in the sidecar of a motor-bicycle, and was examining the maps with the aid of an electric torch. He was evidently in charge of operations, and instructed us as to the route we would take.

I was told by Eamon Martin some years ago that the young man riding the motor-bicycle was Eamon de Valera. It was dark and I did not recognise him at the time.

I think we passed through Newtownmountkennedy, and eventually Paddy Ward and I were posted on a road which I was told connected Bray and Kilcoole. We had only one .32 revolver between us, and our instructions were that if one or two R.I.C. men approached we were to allow them pass, but that if a large force arrived we were to fire on them.

It was now quite dark and we were very uncomfortable because we had no top coats, but the night was fairly warm.

After a short time we heard the sound of approaching footsteps, and we decided to up-turn one of the bicycles, release the air, and pretend to be mending a puncture. The newcomers were two R.I.C. men on patrol from Bray. Paddy Ward told them we were cycling from Wexford to Dublin, and asked them where we were and if there was any place we could put up for the night. They were very nice, directed us on to Bray and told us to go to a house opposite the



barracks and say they sent us and we would get lodgings for the night. They then continued on patrol, after giving Paddy a supply of matches for his pipe, which was a part of himself and from which he always enjoyed the greatest satisfaction. When the two R.I.C. men reached the main party further on they were held up and kept prisoners for the night.

We had no other experience during the night, until a cyclist came to us at the dawn of day and told us to get home. I remember we cycled through the Glen of the Downs. With the dawning of the day I saw a sight that made my heart jump with joy. I saw a large party of I.R.B. swinging along the road at a good pace in splendid marching order, with a rifle on every man's shoulder. It was our dream coming true, "Out and make way for the bold Fenian men".

Paddy and I cycled on to the Scalp, where a motor-load of rifles passed us. Bulmer Hobson was sitting in the back, very happy and satisfied looking.

I continued into town and I can tell you I was both wet and hungry, because I had got nothing to eat since my tea at the Scalp the evening before. When I reached Butt Bridge I went into a hut that was situated under the railway opposite Liberty Hall, and bought a cup of coffee and a bun. I continued my way until I reached the junction of Gardiner Street and Gloucester Street, now Sean McDermott Street, where I met Seán Connolly, who was afterwards killed at the City Hall in 1916. When I told him what we had achieved he was not a bit impressed, because of the statement and attitude of Jim Larkin to Volunteer leaders.

Eamon Martin was at the actual landing. The guns

were brought in in small boats, and Eamon hurt his knee against one of them, as it was necessary for the men to wade out into the water to unload.

The guns were brought to the home of Pádraig Pearse, at Scoil Éanna, Rathfarnham, and later distributed.

Paddy Ward joined the Free State Army in 1922. His brother Harry was lost on one of the Irish ships during the last war.

When the Irish Parliamentary Party saw the Volunteer movement embraced by the young people of Ireland, they became alarmed and at once set about gaining control of the organisation. However, the I.R.B. were firmly entrenched on the Executive. Their efforts did not meet with much success, and after a time they were forced to show their cards. Eventually a conference was called between the Volunteer Executive representatives, and representatives of the Irish Party. It was easy to get the exact details of the meeting from the newspapers at the time. An agreement was reached that Redmond would be given special representation on the Executive. This decision caused a great deal of ill-feeling in the I.R.B. between Tom Clarke and Sean McDermott on the one side, and Bulmer Hobson on the other. Hobson was accused of favouring the agreement for the purpose of making a job for himself, but I do not believe that such an accusation should ever have been made. I believe he was quite sincere in his belief that if the Redmondites did not get some representation at the time, they were in a position to split the movement in such a way that the result would be disastrous. I am also satisfied that his action justified itself, and gave the I.R.B. an opportunity of contacting some of the finest patriots that Ireland is

proud of. However, the position between Tom Clarke, Sean McDermott and Bulmer Hobson was never the same.

Strange to say, the Fianna officers with, I should think, the exception of Con Colbert, still had implicit faith in Bulmer Hobson, while at the same time we enjoyed the full confidence and friendship of Tom Clarke and Sean McDermott. I must state that I believe they were all equally sincere in their efforts to advance the movement as they thought best.

However, the new arrangement was only an unholy alliance. The Redmondite element had no intention of building up a strong effective military force. Their mentality was to control everything in the interests of the Irish Party, whose approach to the British Government was diametrically opposed to physical force. We who were anxious to keep the movement going had a bad time. I remember going to work the morning after the agreement was announced, and meeting a ship's carpenter named Jimmy Cook, a very enthusiastic Sinn Feiner. He was inconsolable at the idea of the Redmondites being given such a representation on the Committee, and his opinion was that the cause of Irish freedom was completely lost as a result. I spent about an hour trying, without much success, to justify the necessity for giving this concession. Strange to say, when the time to fight came in 1916 this man was one of those who failed to turn out.

When the 1914-18 war broke out, a number of British Army men who were on the Reserve were called up. I remember some of them wrote to Headquarters for instructions as to what they should do as they were not anxious to fight again for England. I do not recollect what reply they got, but they all proceeded to their units.

I remember one of those British soldiers escaping back from France within a few months. He accompanied the 1st Battalion to Finglas district, where he gave us special instructions in how to prepare positions to defend roads, based on his experiences in France. I prepared a loop-hole position at the top of the hill overlooking Glasnevin cemetery at Little Finglas, and he gave me great praise for my work. I remember Seán Heuston and I covered a lot of ground that day. Seamus Murphy was representing the Volunteer Committee at this parade.

The new agreement worked until the Great War started, and the Irish Party started recruiting meetings all over the country. I think it was in County Wicklow that John Redmond made his famous speech pledging support to the British Government in the Great War. This left no alternative but a split, with deplorable results as far as numbers were concerned, being reduced from 200,000 to 15,000, the vast majority following the Parliamentary leader. However, if we were small in number we were great in spirit, and we had got rid of any ambiguous feelings which existed that we were only bluffing.

From now on there was renewed energy and a wonderful feeling of comradeship and trust. On almost every Sunday Aeridheachta or concerts were held for the purpose of raising funds for arms and equipment. They were also availed of to spread the gospel of physical force, as the only way of winning back our country from England. The following artists were in constant demand: Gerard Crofts, who was a lovely singer and a lovable character. It would be impossible to estimate the effect of his singing in reviving the spirit of the Nation. Then there was Joan Burke, a step-sister of Willie Cosgrave, she too can

only be described as magnificent. Arthur Darley would give selections on his violin. Proinnsias O'Sullivan, afterwards a school inspector, and Margaret Ó Riain were amongst the best dancers. Sean Connolly, who was killed in the City Hall in 1916, was famous for his recitations, "The Man from God Knows Where", and "When I was 21".

We were able to purchase a considerable number of old type British Army rifles and carbines, as used in the Boer War, as well as some of the latest pattern. We were also able to purchase a large number from British soldiers in the different barracks, and a number were stolen from soldiers home on leave from France. At that time a man carried home his full equipment from the trenches in France when he came home on leave.

The Redmondites purchased a large number of old Italian rifles of the magazine type, but as they had no ammunition and did not suit the British ammunition they were quite harmless, although they made a great display.

I remember shortly after the split a big meeting was held by the Redmondite party in the Mansion House. I think the British Prime Minister, Asquith, spoke at it, and it was feared that there might be an organised effort to take the Volunteer Headquarters in Dawson Street. A section of the I.R.B. were mobilised to meet at the building, and I was present with other Fianna officers. Liam Mellows was in charge. It was usual to send a relief party of I.R.B. men to any meeting where there was reason to expect trouble from the A.O.H. I remember attending an Aeridheacht at Little Bray as one of the party to protect the speakers if there was any trouble. I had a very nice blackthorn stick, suitable for any emergency. Desmond Fitzgerald, who was afterwards a Free State

Minister, was one of the speakers. He was later prosecuted and got six months imprisonment for a statement he made that day while calling for recruits for the Volunteers.

I was a member of the armourers class in 2 Dawson Street under Tom Meldon previous to 1916. Tom MacDonagh used to call into this place and have a chat with Meldon.

A meeting of the Fianna headquarters staff was to be held at 2 Dawson Street at 5.30 on the Monday preceding the Rebellion. On our arrival we were informed by Barney Mellows that things were moving quickly and that we were to be ready for any emergency. I remember I was standing at the corner of Dawson Street when I heard that. I was with Eamon Martin and Pádraig Ó Riain. While we were standing there Pádraig Pearse, Willie Pearse, Eamon Ceannt and Tom MacDonagh passed into 2 Dawson Street.

When I came home from work at 5.30 p.m. on Holy Thursday, 1916, there was a note waiting for me that Con Colbert had left in during the evening. It informed me that the Rising was about to take place, and instructed me to go to a man named Costello in Abbotstown and to the brothers Mooney in Blanchardstown and mobilise them for 3.30 p.m. on Easter Sunday at the Fifteen Acres near the Magazine Fort for the purpose of capturing the Fort. I did not know where Abbotstown was so I called and asked Seamus Ó Maoilfhinn who had a provision shop in Summerhill, but he had no idea, so, as I thought it would be in the Blanchardstown district, I continued until I came to Whelan's newspaper shop in Ormond Quay, but I was still left guessing. I cycled on to Chapelizod and made further enquiries. I was eventually directed to Lord Holmpatrick's estate, where I located my man and gave him

his instructions. This man afterwards took part in the Rising. I then proceeded to Blanchardstown and found Mooneys' cottage.

I then came back to the Irish National Foresters Hall in 41 Parnell Square, where I was to report to Con Colbert, at eight p.m. He sent me up to a meeting in the large front room just over the caretaker's quarters to represent him at the meeting. This was the Centres Board of the I.R.B. where Farrell, the representative of the Bray Circle, stated that he was to blow up the railway in his district on Sunday evening and gave Bulmer Hobson, the Chairman of the Centres Board and Secretary of the Irish Volunteers, his first information that the Rising was to take place on the following Sunday. As far as I can recollect his exact words were, "Mr. Chairman, is it an order that I am to blow up the railway line at Killiney at half-past three on Sunday". I cannot recollect what reply was given to this as I did not understand then that Hobson had no knowledge of what was taking place. I took it for granted that this was an old man who was just making sure of his instructions.

Con Colbert also gave me instructions to meet Sean McDermott at three o'clock on Good Friday at the Irish Volunteer Headquarters at No. 2 Dawson Street, and to deliver some bayonets I had in my possession, to collect about two dozen automatic pistols and ammunition that I had in safe keeping and bring six of the automatic pistols to a house in Palmerstown Place, near Broadstone, on the evening of Good Friday. I was told afterwards that the girl I met at Palmerstown Place was Lucy Smith, afterwards married to Tom Byrne, later O.C. of the 1st Battalion, Dublin Brigade, and Captain of the Guard in Dáil Éireann.

The following day, Good Friday, I called at No. 2 Dawson Street at three o'clock. I met Seán McDermott and Seán McGarry coming out of the office on the first floor. Seán McDermott gave me a letter to deliver to Eoin MacNeill's home at Woodtown Park in the mountains above Rathfarnham. I cycled to Eoin MacNeill's house. His wife came out to me and brought me into a large drawingroom where I waited until she returned and told me there was no reply. I did not know the contents of the letter. I have since enquired from Seán McGarry, and I find that he has no recollection of what it contained.

I then cycled back to 37 Blackpitts, where the Byrnes lived, and asked Tommy to take part in the attack on the Magazine and to meet me at the Father Mathew Park, Fairview, at nine o'clock. I collected the automatics for Colbert from his sister, Lily Byrne. I also delivered the bayonets to 2 Basin Lane, where the Cooneys lived. You will remember that one of them was married to Dinny O'Brien, the detective who was shot some years ago. Christy Byrne, who was a Lieutenant of "F" Company of the 4th Battalion (Con Colbert was Captain of this Company) lodged with the Cooneys. It was in this cottage that Con Colbert slept the night before the Rising. I then cycled over to Palmerston Place, gave Con his pistols, and I must have returned home for tea.

I next remember calling at Pádraig Ó Riain's house at 48 Clonliffe Road with Eamon Martin on our way to Fairview Park. When we went in we found Bulmer Hobson apparently very disturbed over the turn things had taken. Eimar O'Duffy, a dentist, and Pádraig Ó Riain were present. I understood Eimar O'Duffy and Pádraig Ó Riain were going to the North of Ireland the following morning, which they did. I never got a satisfactory account of



what took place, but they certainly did no fighting.

As Eamon and I were about to leave the house, Joe Cullen, afterwards a Commandant in the National Army, called from Seán Heuston asking us to come and see him at Columcille Hall, Blackhall Place. We then proceeded to the Father Mathew Park, which was situated off Philipsburgh Avenue, where the Corporation Housing Scheme is now built. This was a sports field and pavilion built by the Church Street priests, and had been used from the establishment of the Volunteers as a drill ground. I met Tommy Byrne as arranged, but he told me he would rather fight with his own Company - "A" Company of the 3rd Battalion.

Eamon and I went into the pavilion where we met Thomas MacDonagh and he gave a short address to about a dozen of us. He told us we were about to rise and that if we were able to stand up against the British for one week as a uniformed disciplined force we would be able to claim recognition at the Peace Conference that would be held at the end of the war. He then produced five bags of explosives we were to use and showed us how to light the fuses. I think it was Frank Daly who showed us how to use the explosives, but we had been taught that before.

We then went to the Columcille Hall at 5 Blackhall place, Eamon and I, and had a chat with Seán Heuston. There was a number of recruits, about a dozen I think, drilling in the hall, absolutely innocent of what was to take place on Sunday. Seán Heuston said he just wanted to say goodbye, and gave us to understand he was to be in charge of a Company at Headquarters. This was afterwards altered owing to the confusion due to MacNeill's order, and he was sent to the Mendicity Institute to

replace an officer who failed to turn out. We said goodbye to him at Capel Street bridge, and Eamon and I must have called at Volunteer Headquarters at No. 2 Dawson Street because I remember borrowing a green bicycle from Lieutenant Michael Malone who was on duty there that night, and was killed in Mount Street Bridge area during the following week.

I forgot to mention that as Eamon and I were leaving 48 Clonliffe Road on Good Friday night the men arrived who asked Bulmer Hobson to go to some meeting of the I.R.B. One of the men who called there was Seán Tobin. He was employed at the time at Thompson's motor garage in Brunswick Street, near the Central Fire Station. When Hobson left the house he was taken to Martin Conlon's house in Cabra Park, where he was kept a prisoner until the following Tuesday. Another man who guarded Hobson that week was Seán Larkin, who had a wallpaper shop in Dorset Street.

Saturday was a very busy day. I had to pack my haversack. We carried a supply of food, lozenges, tea, sugar, etc. We had no idea of where the fight would be. I was well equipped. I had a long Service rifle, for which I paid five guineas, with 100 rounds of .303 ammunition. I had a savage .32 automatic pistol and 100 rounds of ammunition, as well as a bayonet, entrenching tool, water-bottle and knapsack for my top-coat.

On Good Friday Seán McDermott had asked me could I get a motor to go to Wexford on Sunday, so on Saturday evening I went to Thompson's garage with a man named Seán O'Grady, who was killed in the fight the following week. We asked a taxi-driver named Joe Dunne if he would go, and he promised to turn up on the following morning. I do

not know if he ever turned up with the car, but he was out fighting during the week and was interned in Frongoch Camp afterwards. He is alive yet. He is a motor driver in the B. & I.

I borrowed Seán O'Grady's motor-bike and called down to Eamon Martin at 62 Shelbourne Road. We then called at my mother's home at 8 Rutland Cottages and arranged for my mother to go and stay in Shelbourne Road until the trouble would be over. She was to go on the Sunday evening.

We called at Tobin's house at 14 Hardwick Street, where some of the leaders were meeting. Eamon was a member of the Volunteer Executive. Just as we were going in the door, it was late and dark, there appeared to be some confusion and it turned out to be that a suspicious-looking man was seen walking up and down outside the house and some of the lads went out and arrested him. He was given over to my charge and I took him to the basement where I watched over him with my automatic pistol until someone came from the Keating Branch of the Gaelic League, Frederick Street, to identify him. He turned out to be Con Donovan, who had accompanied someone from the Keating Branch as far as the door and missed him when he was going out. Con afterwards got penal servitude. We called at Larkin's shop in Dorset Street. Larkin was one of the men who were there, and he brought us over to his own house in Dorset Street where we got a supply of petrol, and then called at Rutland Street on our way to Shelbourne Road, where we spent the night. On our way home we nearly ran into Ringsend Bridge, because I can assure you I knew very little about the motorbike.

The following morning, Easter Sunday, I got up and

went to nine o'clock Mass at Haddington Road and received Holy Communion. I then heard the news about MacNeill and hurried back to Eamon to discuss the situation. He decided I should go at once to Hardwick Street and find out how things stood. When I knocked at the door one of the Tobins opened it; he was in a state of hysteria and started to talk about all the trouble that had been brought on us. I asked him where were the leaders and he told me they were at Liberty Hall. I rode down O'Connell Street and along Eden Quay where I met Nora and Ina Connolly. I asked them was everything over and they said the leaders were inside. I went up the main staircase in Liberty Hall, and as I reached the top of the stairs I saw Pádraig Pearse and Seán McDermott coming along the passage on my right-hand side from the large front room. I immediately asked Seán what was the position and he told me that everything was postponed for twenty-four hours and gave me a dispatch for the officer in charge of Father Mathew Park. I was to come back and take a message to Wexford, but I told him I would have to go to Phoenix Park first to tell Molly Byrne to go home, as she was watching the Magazine Fort in order to obtain immediate information if there was any unusual activity or precautions being taken by the guard.

I went to Father Mathew Park, and on my way met a carpenter named Jim Hunter at the junction of Seville Place and Amiens Street. Jim worked with me on the Dublin Port and Docks Board and was an old I.R.B. man who left the time of the split. He had promised to take part in the attack on the Magazine Fort, so I told him everything was off for the present.

After delivering my dispatch I motor-cycled to the

Fifteen Acres in the Phoenix Park, but could not see Molly Byrne. I was told afterwards that she stayed there until late in the evening. The motor-bike broke down at this point and I pushed it down to the shops on the Chapelized Road, where I got some oil and tried to get it going. After all efforts failed I pushed it to my grandmother's shop on Sarsfield Quay, where they gave me my dinner. At this time my grandmother and Aunt Julia Kavanagh had a fruit shop on Sarsfield Quay. I then pushed the motor-bike as far as Seán O'Grady's house in Bachelor's Walk, where I left it in the hall.

I then went back to Liberty Hall and on my way I met my aunt and uncle at O'Connell Bridge. When I got to Liberty Hall I found the leaders gone and the Citizen Army were just going out for a march round the city. That was about six o'clock.

I met Eamon Martin and some of the men who were to take part in the Magazine Fort attack, and we decided to meet again at 8 Rutland Cottages at 8 p.m. to renew our arrangements. We held a meeting and it was decided to meet next morning at my house at 12 o'clock.

Eamon Martin, my brother Pat and I slept at 8 Rutland Cottages, Lower Rutland Street, and my Mother went over to Eamon's sister at 62 Shelbourne Road.

On Easter Monday Paddy Daly, who was the officer in charge of the attack, called at about ten o'clock with word that the Rising was to start at 12 o'clock. We were to take the Fort, blow it up, but we were not to hold it and we were not to take life if possible. I immediately ran round to 17 North Richmond Street to mobilise Paddy Byrne, and I found he was out mobilising his own Company from six o'clock that morning.

I borrowed a lady's bicycle and cycled down to Tim Roche, who lived in Coburn Place, off Seville Place, got him out of bed and instructed him to commandeer a motor-van, as previously arranged, and wait for us outside the Magazine Fort at 11.30.

I then returned to 8 Rutland Cottages and found the time passing so quickly I suggested to Eamon to go to Liberty Hall and try and get a new set of men. I think Paddy Daly, Pat Holohan, Eamon Martin and I went down to James Connolly's office and told him our trouble. He got four orders typed out, one for each Battalion, for six or eight men. I think Paddy Daly went to the 2nd Battalion, Pat to the 1st, Eamon went to the 3rd as far as I can recollect, and I went to the 4th Battalion. We met a number of Fianna boys at Liberty Hall and sent them up to my house at 8 Rutland Cottages.

I forgot to state that as I entered James Connolly's office in Liberty Hall, Seán Connolly was standing in the passage opposite the door.

While I was waiting for Miss Kearney, Connolly's secretary, to type the notes on her portable typewriter Tom Clarke was putting on his leather equipment, and as his arm was in a sling as a result of a shooting accident, I gave him a hand. "Well, Tom", said I, "Did you ever think you would live to see the day?". He answered, "No, Garry, I did not", and he appeared very happy.

Eamon and I cycled in the same direction for a time, and I continued until I came to Eamon Ceannt's house on the South Circular Road. I gave him the order and when he read it he said he had no men to spare. I remember telling him I would have to get the men. Barney Mellows

was just going out and I suggested "Can't I take him?". The man that opened the door for me was Wilsie Byrne. Ceannt gave me an order to Con Colbert, who had his Company on parade at Weaver Square, off Cork Street. I overtook Barney on the South Circular Road and told him he was to come with me. He wanted to go home to say goodbye to his poor old Mother, but I bullied him and told him I had no time, and he jumped on a tram that was passing for the city and made his way to my house.

I continued on to Weaver Square, where I found Con Colbert with his Company. They were armed with rifles and shotguns and they had a number of pikes similar to the type used in 1798. I gave Con the note and he gave me five or six men without uniforms and with small arms (revolvers) including Séán Ó Briain from Aran, Paddy McGrath and Josh Kennedy. That was the last time I saw one of my dearest and best friends. Poor old Con Colbert. Of all the men who fought in the Rising there was no truer or stouter heart.

I then doubled my small party for Dolphinsbarn Street with all haste and put them on the Glasnevin tram for Parnell Street. They could walk from there to my house.

I cycled back by St. Stephen's Green and I saw the Volunteers already lined up opposite the College of Surgeons. When I reached Rutland Cottages the house was packed with men and they were still arriving on foot and on bicycles. We distributed automatic pistols to the men who had no small arms and made everyone leave his rifle in the house and remove his equipment. Then we sent them to the Phoenix Park in batches; some on bicycles and some on the Ballybough tram. Paddy Daly and I went on bicycles and called at Whelans on Ormond Quay, where we bought a football.

When we arrived at the corner of the Magazine Fort near the Fifteen Acres, the corner next the road, we met Tim Roche. He had brought an outside car. He evidently took the motor-van but met with an accident on his way up and left it where it was, somewhere near Queen Street he said, and engaged an outside car. After a few minutes chat together, as if we were a football team with followers, we moved around to the front of the Fort in a casual way, some of the lads kicking the ball from one to the other. When we got near the gate they rushed the sentry who was standing outside, and then another party rushed in and took the guardroom completely by surprise. I was detailed off with Barney Mellows to take the sentry on the parapet. I rushed straight through the Fort, which is a rather large place, and I had some difficulty in locating him. I eventually saw him looking at me over a roof. I rushed towards him, calling on him to surrender. He came towards me with his bayonet pointed towards me. I fired a shot and he fell, and at that moment Barney came along the parapet. The poor sentry was crying, "Oh, sir, sir, don't shoot me. I'm an Irishman and the father of seven children". Barney tried to stand him up but his leg must have been broken. We told him not to be afraid as we would do him no harm and we would send his companions to attend to him. We took his rifle from him and made our way back, as I was to light the explosives with Eamon Martin.

When I met Paddy Daly he told me he could not find the key of the high explosives store and he had set the charges in the small arms ammunition store. Eamon and I lit the charges and my brother Pat gave us a hand. While we were placing the charges most of the attacking party were clearing away. We informed the prisoners that one



of their men was injured and told them to give him attention. We also ordered them not to go down the Park in the direction of the city. We took the guards' rifles and went to the waiting hackney car. We put the rifles in the car, and the following sat on the car:- Eamon Martin, Barney Mellows, Tim Roche, Paddy Daly, Seán Ó Briain, Pat Holohan and Jack Murphy, a blacksmith from Artane. I followed behind the car on my bicycle.

As the car turned towards the gate leading to the Chapelized Road we noticed a youth of about seventeen years of age running towards the gate. He stopped and spoke to the policeman who was in the middle of the road directing the traffic, and then ran away in the middle of the road towards Islandbridge. I left the hack and followed him, and when he got to the corner of Islandbridge Road he ran towards one of the big houses, evidently with the intention of giving the alarm. I jumped off my bicycle, and just as the door opened I shot him from the gate. At that moment the car arrived at the junction of the road and two large explosions took place in the Fort. The lads on the car started to cheer, and then they thought it wiser to put the rifles that were in their hands into the well of the car.

I again followed the car, and when we reached Parkgate Street we met a military funeral on its way to the cemetery in Blackhorse Lane. I knew a number of the British soldiers in the parade, as they had been on guard at the power station on the North Wall. They did not notice me passing.

We continued down the Quays opposite the Royal Barracks, now Collins Barracks, and noticed that all the soldiers were on parade and were being given ammunition.

When we came to where the cannon plot is, we noticed soldiers lying along the Quays close to the Quay wall. We turned up towards the barrack gate and Paddy Daly, Barney Mellows and Jack Murphy jumped off the car and walked off in the direction of the Four Courts. The car then drove towards the barrack gate and turned into Benburb Street. The side streets were full of soldiers, and they appeared to be taking in the wounded on stretchers. We stopped for a few moments. I slipped a new clip of bullets into my automatic, and we continued on our way without anyone stopping us until we reached the Columcille Hall at 5 Blackhall Street. We found the Hall closed, and were informed by the people around that the Volunteers were in North Brunswick Street.

We continued up to Red Cow Lane, and when we reached North Brunswick Street we found Liam O'Carroll, Dinny O'Callaghan and Seán O'Duffy building a barricade across the street. I threw my bicycle across the barricade, and I can tell you no jarvey was ever so glad to get rid of his passengers as he was. I suppose the poor fellow pictured himself doing 15 years penal servitude like "Skin the Goat" for the Park Murders. I heard afterwards that the jarvey lived in Marlborough Place, but I never met him again.

Thirty or forty of us took part in the Magazine Fort attack; these included Paddy Boland, Costello, who was killed during the week, Eamon Martin, Christy Martin, Paddy Daly, my brother Pat, Barney Mellows, Seán Ó Briain from Aran, Paddy McGrath, Tim Roche, Josh Kennedy, Jack Murphy, Louis Marie, manager of a picture-house, Eamon Murray, Oscar Traynor's brother-in-law Bob Gilligan was supposed to be there, and Sean Ford, the outfitter, who was in Church Street with us all the week. The attack

was to take place at twelve o'clock but the telephone rang while they were in the guardroom. Paddy Daly was a joiner and he was employed in the Fort by Shortall the builder for some weeks before the Rising, and that is how he happened to know the place. That is the reason he was put in charge. The strength of the garrison was about ten or twelve men. We captured about the same number of Service rifles and a quantity of ammunition for them.

The arms we issued for the attack on the Magazine Fort were .25 automatic pistols. As far as I remember they were bought by Seán O'Shea and the Free State Government refused to pay for them until he took an action against the Government; they stated that the automatics were never used in the Rising, but I could have proved that they were used.

After the Magazine Fort attack we spent the rest of Monday putting up barricades, and took up our position in some old tenement houses between the old Richmond Hospital and the new Hospital. These houses have since been acquired by the hospital authorities and have been demolished. They were very dirty. I remember going into one room where birds were kept and I could only compare it with the lion house in the Zoo.

Eamon Martin went to the post office to report what had taken place, and went to our house with The O'Rahilly and his car for the guns and equipment. My rifle was not in my own house but in the house of a neighbour named Mrs. Hoyte in Summerhill Place for safety, and, of course, that was the only thing missing when they returned. However, we had the Service rifles that we took from the Park and we were quite happy.

The Volunteers we joined up with were all members of

the Columcille Hall and were of a very good type. They were Larry Lawlor and Frank Lawlor, brothers, Tommy O'Brien, Liam O'Gorman, the McNulty's, two brothers, Dinny O'Callaghan, Liam O'Carroll, Tom Nolan and his brother-in-law Campbell, both now Directors of the New Ireland Assurance Company, Pat Holohan, Tim Roche, Seán Ó Briain and Eamon Martin.

I remember that on the Monday evening Ned Daly, the Commandant, inspected the positions and gave us the password for the night. I cannot recollect accurately what the first password was but I think it was "Limerick", and on the second night it was "guts".

On Tuesday evening a party of us were selected and brought down to St. John's Convent which was situated at the entrance to the avenue to the North Dublin Union. It is now used by the Richmond Hospital. This Convent was occupied by the French Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, and they lived up to their reputation. They supplied us with hot soup all through the week, and I have no doubt that this went a long way in sustaining our strength and energy to the last.

When we arrived at St. John's Convent we were informed that we were to occupy the Broadstone railway station. We were given a plentiful supply of rifle ammunition and started off, about twelve in number. We were in charge of Dinny O'Callaghan, who was Captain, and Peadar Breslin, who was a Sergeant. Peadar Breslin was afterwards shot dead in Mountjoy Prison following on the attack on the guard in an attempt to break out in 1922.

The party formed up in double file and I was away about one hundred yards in front as the point. Eamon Martin was half-way between me and the party. We

advanced up the middle of the road with fixed bayonets and proceeded up Constitution Hill and Nugents Lane and continued until I was in the middle of the road opposite the front of the building. I then noticed a figure running across the inside of the carriage entrance on the city side of the building. As it was evening light and I could not see distinctly if it was a khaki or a Volunteer uniform I stopped and called back that there was somebody inside but that I could not say if he was a Volunteer. Eamon Martin continued to advance and moved over to my right-hand side to look through the entrance. He had only moved a few yards from my side when a shot rang out. He gave a yell, "Garry, I'm shot", threw away his rifle and ran back towards Church Street. He ran to the point where Upper Church Street meets Constitution Hill and collapsed at the tenement houses. He was taken into the Richmond Hospital, where it was found that the bullet had passed through his arm, into his chest and out through his lung and back. While Eamon was being shot, Seán Moore, now Secretary of the Port Workers Union, moved forward until he was over against the building. Dinny O'Callaghan then decided we should fall back, so after getting Seán Moore to come in our direction we opened fire on the building and retired back towards Church Street without incurring any other casualties.

We were posted that night in the dairy at the corner of Church Street. I was in charge of the top floor and I think my brother, Pat Holohan, was in charge of the floor underneath.

The following morning, Wednesday, Dinny O'Callaghan and some others made an effort to blow a breach in the wall of Linenhall Barracks but did not succeed. He

afterwards took me as one of a party to take the barracks. We went up to the front gate and started to hammer at it, and in a few minutes some soldiers opened the gate. They were evidently unarmed. I think some of them were members of the Pay Staff. There were others who had taken refuge there, including a couple of members of the R.I.C. We took the lot prisoners and brought them down to the Father Mathew Hall. I happened to know the Sergeant in charge of them and he asked me to try and get his suit of civilian clothes that he had in the barracks. I went back to look for the clothes for him but I could not get them.

Dinny O'Callaghan and myself spilled the oils and paints we had brought from a druggist's shop in North King Street in a large room on the first floor, and then piled up the bed-boards. We then lighted the fire. The fire spread with amazing rapidity and Dinny suggested it might be better if we opened the windows. I crossed the room to open the windows and I will never forget the heat. It took me all my time to get back, and the soles were burned off my boots in a few minutes. The fire continued throughout the day and Wednesday night, and we had to use hoses on it to keep it from burning the dwelling-houses in the vicinity.

On Thursday I was transferred back to the houses at the old Richmond Hospital where I had been on Monday, and remained there until we got instructions to go to the coach-builders at the junction of Church Street and North Brunswick Street about dinnertime on Saturday. When I arrived with five or six men from Red Cow Lane, I found the coach-builder's house full of men. Two men had just been shot on the landing; one was Nicholas Laffin who was

shot in the head, and I think the other was shot dead. They were just being taken away by Sir Thomas Myles, the famous surgeon, and Michael Burke, who is now a famous surgeon, who was one of the student assistants. I crawled up the stairs on my stomach, and Seán Duffy passed up my rifle. I made my way into the front room, where you could not raise your head with the bullets pouring into the room. While I was there, Pat Holohan was in charge of Clarke's Dairy and was firing down Church Street, where the soldiers occupied Reilly's public-house at the junction of King Street and Church Street.

In the meantime the party that were in occupation of the right-hand side of Church Street, opposite the bakery, came over to the coach-builders. As I could not see any advantage to us in being crowded into the same house, I took my little party that had come from Red Cow Lane and went into occupation of houses on the right-hand side of Church Street again. We decided to burrow our way through the walls until we came to the public-house where the soldiers were, and try to bomb them out with tin-can hand-grenades we had in our possession. We were carrying out this operation when the priests arrived with a message from Pearse. The priests were Father Albert and Father Augustine, O.F.M.Cap. This must have been about nine o'clock, or later, in the evening and then we discovered that we had not broken our fast since breakfast that morning.

As Pat was in charge of Clarke's Dairy he met the priests and acted as officer for the area. A truce was arranged for the night, and arrangements made for the removal of the wounded from Father Mathew Hall to Richmond Hospital. We made tea, had a good feed and then went for a sleep.

On Sunday morning we got up, washed and shaved and got ready for parade. It was quite easy for anyone to slip away because we were not surrounded, but we all agreed that it was better to stick together for the sake of those who were surrounded. I think it was about 11 a.m. when we were marched into North King Street, and after we turned the corner towards Capel Street we were ordered to lay down our equipment. It was only then, when I had parted with my arms and the British soldiers closed in on us as an escort, that I realised for the first time the bitterness of being a prisoner.

We were marched off to the Castle and paraded in front of the Clock Tower. Then we were marched out through Ship Street gate and along Thomas Street until we came to Richmond Barracks at Inchicore. Here we were lined up in the square and searched. I met here a boy named Tracey from Lower Rutland Street, whose father was a sergeant in the Army, and he promised to bring home word that we were alive. After a time we were brought into the gymnasium, which is now used by the Christian Brothers as a school, and, as we passed in, our names and addresses were taken. Apparently the English officer did not catch the name "Holohan" and wrote down "Nolan" instead. This may have saved my life, as I was transported under that name.

When we went into the large hall we were placed sitting on the floor on each side, while the "G" men of the detective force feasted their eyes on us and at last found themselves in a position to wreak vengeance on us. I remember Tom Clarke and Seán McDermott were sitting just opposite me and they smiled across. That was the last time I saw them alive.



After about an hour some of us were removed to one of the barrack rooms where we were packed in with a large number of other men from different units. While we were there some of the Citizen Army were brought in from the College of Surgeons, including the husband of my first cousin Tiny Byrd, his name is Joe Doyle. He was very worn-looking but was in the best of spirits.

I remember looking out across the square and seeing the soldiers escorting Countess Markievicz across the square. She was in uniform with a feather in her hat. She looked defiant. It was the last time I saw her until the release. I also saw Frank Fahy being escorted across the square.

We were given bully-beef and bread, with water to drink, and after a couple of hours - it was now I should say about 9 p.m. - we were again paraded and marched out of the barracks towards the city. We got a rather coarse reception from the soldiers' wives and the lower classes. It was very depressing.

When we reached Kilmainham we were marched through the Old Men's House, now the headquarters of the Civic Guards, and out through the other gate on to St. John's Road, then past Kingsbridge station and along the South Quays until we reached Butt Bridge. We then proceeded down the North Wall until we reached the London and North-Eastern steamer for Holyhead. As I passed by the electric bridge I shouted to Harry Heapes the man in charge, who was on duty there, that I was alive. He answered me and I was promptly told to shut up. Joe Cullen was along with me. We had no idea where we were going. We had an idea that they might press us into the Navy.

When we went aboard the cargo boat we were all herded below. I remember lying down on the floor at the first opportunity, and I did not awaken until I was pulled up at Holyhead. We were taken out then and placed in a train. After a few minutes we were removed from that train and placed in another. We had no idea of time or place, but we arrived in some English town and were marched into this building in the early morning. It was my first experience of prison. Everything appeared to be very clean, and all the ironwork was shining. We were immediately placed one in each cell and the door slammed. It was like being buried alive. I was so tired that when I saw the bedboards against the wall I put them down on the floor and lay down, falling fast asleep. The next thing I remember was being lifted by the back of the neck and being shook like a rat; I was asked who told me to put down the bedboards, and had I any pocket-knives, matches or cigarettes by a big brute of a Sergeant-Major. I need not tell you that I did not put down the bed again, but sat on the block of wood that was fastened to the floor for a stool, until the breakfast arrived. I cannot recollect the diet exactly now, but I think we got porridge in the morning. I know we got very funny tea, you would think it was made out of sacks. The dinner was very tasty, but there was never enough, and as time went on we seemed to be always hungry.

We were taken out for exercise every day, to walk and run around the ring. We were in charge of Artillery Sergeants and they were very strict. They always loaded their revolvers in our presence, and we were always surrounded by soldiers armed with rifles. This was Knutsford Jail.

The sergeant in charge of our wing - I and Pat were

on the top floor in C.3 - was, I think, the only decent man in the whole crowd. He was from Manchester. While he was strict he did his duty in a very kindly way. This type of treatment continued for about a month. We had no letters, but I had a visit from Mr. Michael Corrigan, afterwards State Solicitor, who was on his way to see his brother, Willie, who got penal servitude. My Aunt Mary had asked him to call on me.

After about a month we got Prisoner-of-War treatment and were allowed to write and receive letters and parcels, and have visits. It developed into a garden-party. We were allowed to associate with each other during recreation, and this gave us a great opportunity to relate our experiences. I met Jim Hunter, the carpenter, who was to have taken part in the Magazine Fort attack, and found that when he was not mobilised on Monday he joined up himself in the G.P.O.

There was a great change in the attitude of the sergeants in charge of us. Those who had been most severe and nasty became crawlers and cadgers, but our sergeant, who was always kindly, maintained his quiet dignity and reserve.

I remember the lads getting such a kick out of smoking that I thought I would like to start, so I borrowed a pipe, a box of matches and a tin of tobacco from Dinny Neary. When I returned to my cell that evening I lit up. I need hardly say that the result was disastrous, so I gave back the pipe.

Before we were given Prisoner-of-War treatment we were completely cut off from each other and the time hung heavy on our hands. I used to be taken out of my cell every day to polish the ironwork along the landing by

the sergeant in charge, and it was a very welcome break. Sometimes I would get an opportunity to whisper a word under a cell door, or see one of the lads going to the lavatory. It was a great concession.

Sometimes members of the Royal Irish Constabulary and detectives would come over from Ireland and we would be paraded. This was an anxious time for me because I knew that they were sure to be looking for me so I changed my jersey and hat with Paddy Stephenson, who is in the Corporation Library, in order to avoid notice.

After a couple of months we were moved to Frongoch Camp in the Welsh mountains. I was sent to North Camp at first. It consisted of a number of wooden huts. I was in No. 4 hut, and we had a very nice set of men. Strange to say I can only remember about three of them - Oscar Traynor, a chap from Fairview named Shelley, Phil Shanahan, who had a public-house, and Jack Madden, who is dead, and Fred Schweppe. We were allowed to go from hut to hut during the day up to count time in the evening. At certain hours we were allowed into a big playing-field. We looked after ourselves and were under the charge of our own officers. We had our own post-office, and we ate in our own dining-hall. We were fortunate in having a good cook, and there was little to complain about in the way of food. The weather was very severe, but as most of us were young and the supply of fuel was good we had very little to complain about.

The authorities asked for volunteers for a working party to repair the huts. I joined this party, although several of the prisoners did not agree with it, but I could never be satisfied to sit idle. There were about six of us in that party; one was a Kerryman named Paddy

Callen, a builder, his father was a builder in Dublin and owned a considerable amount of property. He was a good Irish speaker and we carried on as far as we could with simple conversation in Irish. The other carpenter was Dick Aungier from Lusk. Dick also had a good knowledge of Irish. We also had Seán Ó Briain from Aran, so the Gaelic atmosphere was strong. We certainly spent a very pleasant time together. In the evenings Irish classes were organised and I attended the classes of Micheál Ó Loingsigh, afterwards in the Translation Branch of the Dáil. He is dead since.

The walk around the camp was very pleasant, because it was situated on the side of a mountain and you would not feel hemmed in as you do in a prison. There was a very nice little churchyard at the Northern boundary of the camp and you could see the lonely grave of a poor German prisoner who died in the camp.

We were eventually brought to London to be examined as to our parts in the Rising. We were escorted from the camp by the Welsh Fusiliers. When we came to London we were conveyed in buses across the city and lodged in Wormwood Scrubs. While we were crossing the city the people evidently took us for Germans and shook their fists at us, and we returned the compliment by putting our fingers to our noses.

I remember appearing before the Commission and looking as innocent as I could, telling them that I was in the Boy Scouts and that I joined up when I heard the fighting had started in North Brunswick Street, but I was very careful to leave out the first chapter. However, I must not have impressed them very much because they did not recommend my release and I was kept in until Christmas.

At a later date we were transferred to the Lower Camp, which was in an old distillery. We were situated in the loft on the first floor. Barney Mellows slept beside me and Joe O'Reilly was a couple of beds away. We were surrounded by Wexford men and there was a number of County Dublin men there too. It was here I first got to know Paddy McGrath - afterwards executed for shooting a detective - as we were both interested in the study of electricity at the time.

The Irish classes were again organised and I again joined Mick Lynch's class. We had the Christian Brothers Small Grammar, and "Aids to Irish Composition", and we used every effort to practice what we learned. There was a fine Corkman named Paddy Walsh, who worked in Arnotts, with us in that class. He died a few years later.

Trouble started about this time when the authorities tried to conscript the refugees who had taken part in the Rising, and there was a short hunger-strike. We were without food for about 36 hours.

I remember we used to have a most enjoyable time in the recreation hall every evening about five o'clock with Cathal McDowell, who was a great pianist and would play all the tunes under the sun. There is one tune I will never forget and that is one called "Comrades".

At a later date we were transferred back to the North Camp. This time I was in the hut with Frank Henderson and Seán Ó Briain, and as we always had a full programme and had not reached the age where the cares of the world lay heavy on us, the time passed quickly enough.

We were released a couple of days before Christmas, but it was not possible for all to travel the same day.

I left with the last batch and arrived in Dublin on Christmas morning, I think. It was a great sensation coming up the Liffey. And such a reception! Everybody was charmed to see us. I could hardly realise that such a change could have come over the people in a few months.

Before I pass away from Frongoch I must tell you that there was a wonderful spirit of comradeship amongst the prisoners. The movement at that time consisted of the best men in the country, while very few of the men were over middle age every man had long continuous service in his job before the Rising. The prisoners were not the rabble you would expect to find in such a fight. Most of the men were Teetotallers and all were enthusiastic about Gaelic games and Irish dancing.

I met a number of notable men here for the first time - Mick Collins, M.W. O'Reilly, Dick Mulcahy, Dick McKee, who was murdered afterwards in the Castle, Dónal Ó Buachalla, later Governor-General, and also a large number of fellows from Clarenbridge, Athenry and Galway who were out with Liam Mellows.

We had plenty of talent in the way of singers and actors. It was here I met Paddy Moran, who was afterwards executed for the Mount Street shooting although he was not at it, and Martin Savage, who was killed in the attack on Lord French at Ashtown. There was also a Fallon from Galway. A number of the lads studied drawing under Cathal McDowell, and made good progress. Joe Derham, now an accountant in the Board of Works, was in the censor's office and acted as postman.

Hugh Holohan, my first cousin, who was out in the O'Connell Street area in 1916 was in Knutsford Jail. I

do not remember him in the camp although he must have been there. Paddy Holohan, his brother, was in Ashbourne with Tom Ashe, and he escaped afterwards. He was then sent to America with a message to John Devoy. I do not think he returned again until 1923 - if he did he did not remain long.

My first cousin, Jimmy Bird, was also in Frongoch. He joined up when The O'Rahilly called at our house for the equipment, and fought in the G.P.O.

I will never forget our first Sunday at Mass in Knutsfort Jail. Michael Lynch, who is now Superintendent of the Corporation Markets, was in charge of the organ or harmonium. You should have heard the lads singing "Faith of Our Fathers" and "Hail Glorious St. Patrick". We literally shook the prison, and didn't we feel proud!

Jerry Golden came in to see me some years ago, and as he was with Paddy and Hugh, my cousins, in 1916 he gave me the following particulars. They were members of "B" Company, 1st Battalion, Dublin Brigade, under Captain James Sullivan, who afterwards married a sister of Mrs. Tom Clarke, and Ned Daly, Commandant of the Battalion. Paddy was a Section Leader. This Company held the railway bridges on the North Circular Road and Cabra on the Monday and Tuesday of Easter Week. The British brought up artillery and made their position untenable and they were ordered by their Captain to scatter and join up with other units. Hugh got back to the G.P.O. with Sammy O'Reilly, a brother of Tom O'Reilly who lives on Moibhi Road.

Paddy Holohan crossed over to Glasnevin Cemetery, where he met Jerry Golden and with some others they made their way to Ashbourne where they took part in the fight.



with the R.I.C. under Tom Ashe. At the surrender Paddy got away and was sheltered by the local priest. He was then sent to America by Mrs. Tom Clarke to John Devoy to give him all the news. He stowed away on an oil tanker called the s.s. "Naragansett". He was in the fight until Sunday, 30th April.

After the surrender the British authorities made every effort to identify me on account of the shooting at Islandbridge. They searched the Castle Hospital and paraded some of the wounded. Paddy Daly was interrogated about me, and Joe O'Gorman, a member of Con Colbert's Company, who was wounded in Marrowbone Lane Distillery, was very nearly identified as me. He is dead too. He was about my height and had brown eyes, but he was twenty years older. Then the sergeant whom we captured at the Linenhall Barracks and who had asked me to try and save his civilian clothes, came down to the Dublin Port and Docks Board power station looking for me. He swore he would locate me. That fellow was responsible for getting several of the men penal servitude. As he was a Dublin man and lived in Parnell Street near Phillips' pawn-shop situated somewhere between O'Connell Street and Capel Street, he was able, at the courtmartial, to identify the men who came into the Father Mathew Hall. I afterwards saw him as a jarvey at the hazard at Westland Row railway station. He was of low build and fair complexion.

SIGNED Seamus O'Connell

DATE 7<sup>th</sup> Nov 1949

WITNESS Seamus Brennan Comdt.

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