



Grave of Liam Mellowes in the parish cemetery, Castletown, Co. Wexford.

banded. The overwhelming number of Volunteers voted to continue the fight even though it had been pointed out to them that they could offer only token resistance. In this decision the members of the *Cumann na mBan*, who had been with the Volunteers since they were mobilised on Monday evening, heartily concurred.

From Moyode Castle Mellowes sent out scouting parties to search for British soldiers reported to be advancing on Moyode. These parties were to fight it out if challenged. But no military were found in the area.

On Friday it was reported that several platoons of British, almost 1,000 men in all, were taking over the general area around the towns of Clarinbridge, Oranmore and up towards Athenry. Mellowes in deference to the views of those officers, who favoured the men's being disbanded, again offered them the choice of being disbanded there and then or of beginning a retreat into Clare. They answered, "we will stick together", and a line of retreat was formed. The main body of the Volunteers led, followed by the prisoners on carts, then

came a number of motor-cars and after these Mellowes, Albert Monaghan, Frank Hynes, and the other officers who formed the rearguard. The column marched south and numbered, in all, about five hundred men.

At Lime Park, Father (now Monsignor) Thomas Fahy joined the column. He brought very disturbing news. To a conference of all the officers he reported that the posts held by the Volunteers in Dublin had been subjected to bombardment by heavy field guns, that many of them were in flames and that it did not seem likely that the Irish fighters in Dublin could hold out much longer. Besides, reports indicated that the remainder of the country had not participated in the Rising. He further reported that a large body of marines, several hundred strong, was at that moment coming in pursuit of them and would certainly overtake them in a matter of hours. The conference continued into the night and in the small hours of Saturday morning it was decided that, unarmed as they were, resistance would be impossible.

The order was given to disband and though they appreciated the hopelessness of trying to put up a resistance, it was with the greatest reluctance the men began to break up. Many of them wept openly. Very many of the men came up to shake hands with Mellowes and the other officers before leaving. The captured Royal Irish Constabulary men were released. The leaders went "on the run". Galway's men had to abandon their fight but they had struck their blow.

Subsequent to the Rising some hundred or so of the Galway Volunteers were arrested and courtmartialled. Most of them were sentenced to penal servitude for periods varying from life to one year, the most common sentence being for five years. About six hundred Volunteers in all were deported to various British prisons and eventually interned in Frongoch camp in Wales.



Commandant Michael P. Colivet

HOUR by hour, and day by day, as Easter Week passed slowly and agonisingly into history, there must surely have been, among the Munstermen who were taking part in the Rising in Dublin, more than one very disappointed man who found himself echoing the words of an earlier Munsterman about an earlier Rising—

*Is cá bhfuil cianmh Muimhneach
Nó an síor go mairid beo
In arm lóirach líofa
Ná tíd lim sa ngleo,
A ndeacair-phúir do dhíoghailt
Is Gall-bhúir do dhíbirt
As fearann dúchais dílis
Ár sinsir go deo.*

"Where were you that day, Munster?"

The Story of Limerick and Kerry in 1916

By

MANNIX JOYCE

(And where is the help from Munster/
Or do they live at all/That with swift
shining arms/They don't join us in the
war/Their great wrongs to avenge/And
the Saxon boors to banish/From the
sweet native plains/Of our fore-fathers
forever)

Later, when the full story of the events that paralysed Munster in 1916 would be known, judgements would be kinder; but in that supreme hour when Dublin fought, and Connacht and Leinster played their part, the inactivity of Munster seemed to call for words of reproach that would be equally bitter to those that Munsterman, Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, felt constrained to utter after he had borne arms with the Wexfordmen in 1798:—

*Mo léan ar an Mumhain nár éirigh
Nuair d'adhainamar an gleo,
Le harm greanta greidheannhar
Bhí fagharta go leor :
Anois ó táimíd caillte,
Is neart ár námhaid 'nár dtimpeall,
Grá mo chroí na Laighnigh,
Ós iad d'adhain an tine leo!*

*Where were you that day, Munster,
With your ancient fighting fame?
You had men with guns and shining pikes
To help us in the game.
Now the bitter blows are hurling,
And the foe in victory snarling,
But you, Leinster, you're my darling
For your kindling of the flame.¹*

Again, on Easter Monday, 1916, it was Leinster that kindled the flame. But to the question "Where were you that day, Munster?" Munster has its own reply. Events in all parts of Munster followed the same nightmare pattern of confusion and frustration. The story of what happened in south Munster in 1916 will be found elsewhere in this number of the *Annual*. For that reason I shall confine myself to the story of the happenings in north Munster, and more especially to events in Limerick city and county, with Kerry figuring to a somewhat lesser extent in the narrative.

There was a very strong Fenian tradition in Limerick—as there was in Kerry. From Ardagh, in the west of the county, to Kiltcealy, in the east, the Fenians had been active in '67, and one of the most determined fights of the Rising had been the attack on the police barracks in Kilmallock—

*I was down then in Kilmallock—
'Twas the hottest fight of all—
And you see—he bared his arm—
There's the mark still of a ball.
I hope the young lads growing now
Will hold the ground we won,*

*And not disgrace the cause in which
I carried that Fenian gun.*

And, in passing, it might be mentioned that Michael Scanlan, "the Poet Laureate of Fenianism", and author of "The Bold Fenian Men" ("See who come over the red-blossomed heather") came from Castle-mahon, in Co. Limerick. The seeds sown by the Fenians were beginning to come to their miraculous ripening even before the second decade of the twentieth century had dawned.

In the examination for clerkships held by the Great Southern and Western Railway Companies in 1908, first place in Ireland was taken by Seán Heuston who, shortly afterwards, was appointed to a position at Limerick Railway Station. During the five years he spent in Limerick, Seán took a prominent part in the training of the Limerick Slua of Na Fianna Éireann, which he himself had largely helped to found. When recalling Seán Heuston's stay in Limerick, Madge Daly, sister of Ned Daly, the executed 1916 leader, and niece of the old, unconquerable Fenian, John Daly, had this to say of him :

"A fluent Irish speaker, Seán used his own language whenever possible. He was methodical, and planned each year's Fianna programme in advance, arranging classes, lectures, marches and examinations for the boys, and persuading his friends to present prizes. He realised that the success of the Fianna movement depended on keeping the boys fully occupied and interested, and in that work he had the willing help of many adults. History lessons were given by the Reverend Father Hackett ; Joe Dalton had charge of physical culture, while others conducted language classes, and Seán himself took charge of drill, signalling and general scout-training. He spent all of his spare time with the boys, inspiring them with his lofty ideas.

"In 1912, my uncle and some of his Fenian friends had a hall built for the use



Roger Casement, born in 1864, was sentenced to death on 29 June and hanged in Pentonville Prison, 3 August, 1916, after attending Holy Mass in his cell and receiving Holy Communion. His career was marked by great humanitarian work for the people of Putumayo Ecuador, South America and those of the Congo, Africa. His important work for Ireland was done in the United States and in Germany where he sought help in men and arms for the Irish cause. In 1965 his remains were brought back to Ireland, after being forty-nine years in a grave in Pentonville prison, and were given a State funeral ♥

of the Fianna on a plot of ground situate behind our house in Barrington Street. A lovely little hall, capable of seating some hundreds ; it had additional space for exercises and drill, and was noted as being a centre of sedition until burned down by Black-and-Tans in later years. It was

opened with great ceremony in December, 1912, Bulmer Hobson coming specially from Dublin for the event. My uncle was there, too, carried in his invalid chair to make a fine speech—his last one. Later Tom Clarke wrote to my uncle : 'Bulmer gave me a great account of the fine shape you were in. It is grand to find that you have made the Fianna such a great success in Limerick. You are away ahead of anything else in Ireland. In Dublin, they have not yet got the length of even thinking about building a hall.'

"Roger Casement, also, was keenly interested in the Limerick Fianna Éireann. He came specially to inspect the Slua on several occasions, and was ever generous and helpful in every way he could. I well remember the first big Fianna route march in Limerick, which, as well as I can remember, took place in the Spring of 1913. Behind their own Pipers' band marched several hundreds of the boys, most of them in uniform. At their head marched the kindly Roger Casement, Seán Heuston and other Fianna officers, with my brother Ned. It was a heart-stirring sight, the first display of its kind in Limerick, and as the boys swung into O'Connell Street, they were wildly cheered by the crowd."²

A great new chapter in Irish history began with the founding of the Irish Volunteers at the Rotunda meeting in Dublin, on 25 November, 1913. When Éamon de Valera entered the Rotunda on that historic occasion, among the first people he saw were two old acquaintances from his own part of Co. Limerick : Father Eugene Sheehy, "the Land League Priest," a former P.P. of Brucee, and Larry Roche, of Ballynamuddaugh. And elsewhere in the hall that night 17-year-old Con Colbert, from Athea, in West Limerick, was waiting to be enrolled a Volunteer.

Some months after the founding of the Volunteers, Tom Clarke wrote to John Devoy telling him of the wonderful change that had come over the young men of the

country who were volunteering, and remarked "Tis good to be alive in Ireland these times."³

"For what has happened," Pearse wrote in the *Irish Volunteer*, "is that this aged people has renewed its youth . . . We are young to-day as men were young when to be a young man was to be a hero—and the one word *Óg* or *Óglach* covered both . . . and we are about to attempt impossible things, for we know that it is only impossible things that are worth doing."⁴

The second company of Volunteers to be founded outside Dublin was founded in Dromcollogher, Co. Limerick—the first was in Athlone—and its foundation was due to Father Tom Wall (An tAthair Tomás de Bhál), then curate in Dromcollogher—Father Wall was one of the two priests against whom General Sir John Maxwell was to ask Doctor O'Dwyer, bishop of Limerick, to take disciplinary action after the Easter Week Rising. The bishop's reply to the general is now part of Irish history. There were about twenty men in the Dromcollogher company, and they had for drill instructor Maurice Kiely, an ex-British army man.

Following a number of preliminary meetings by a provisional organising committee, a public meeting was held in the Athenaeum Hall, Limerick, on Sunday evening, 25 January, 1914, for the purpose of inaugurating a corps of Volunteers in the city. The Mayor, Alderman P. O'Donovan, presided, and the meeting was addressed by Pádraig Pearse and Roger Casement. It was a large and enthusiastic meeting, and practically every man present enrolled. Thereafter, the work of organising proceeded apace. Offices were opened at No. 1 Hartstonge Street, where enrolments took place nightly. It was decided to organise on a territorial basis, and the regiment was divided into eight companies corresponding to the eight wards into which the city was divided for the purposes of municipal government. Men having

had service previously with the British army were appointed drill instructors.

No account of Limerick's part in 1916 and in the years of immediate preparation for the Rising would be complete without some reference to the Honourable Mary Spring Rice, who resided at Mount Trenchard, near Foynes, in the west of the county. Mary Spring Rice, the daughter of Lord Monteaigle, was an ardent nationalist. With her friends, Mrs. Alice Stopford Green, the historian, and Erskine and Mrs. Childers, she helped to provide funds for the purchase of the Hamburg rifles for the Volunteers. And not only that, but she also sailed with Erskine Childers and his wife aboard their yacht, the *Asgard*, to the rendezvous in the North Sea, where the guns were taken aboard the yacht; and she had the satisfaction of seeing those guns safely landed at Howth on 26 July, 1914.

The strength of the Limerick city regiment of Volunteers in September 1914 has been estimated at 1,250 men. When the split that had been precipitated by John Redmond's great war policy occurred that month, approximately one thousand men of the regiment declared for Redmond. And of the two hundred and fifty or so who, in the critical days of 1914, had remained true to the ideals of the founders of the Volunteers, many subsequently dropped off, and for a time the average attendance at weekly parades was little more than one hundred. The Redmondite Volunteers, once so numerically strong in the city, gradually declined in numbers until by the end of 1915 there remained only a handful. On the other hand, the Irish Volunteer membership again began to gather strength, slowly but surely; and those who joined remained.

The new board of management that took over control of the Volunteers in Limerick city was composed of the following: James Ledden, R. P. O'Connor, Liam Forde, James Dalton, P. O'Halloran, E.

O'Toole, William Ebrill, Seoirse Clancy, Michael Hartigan, Michael P. Colivet and John Grant. Some time subsequently, Father Hennessy, O.S.A., and Michael O'Callaghan were co-opted to the board—the latter fated to be murdered in his own home by British Crown forces in the early hours of 7 March, 1921.

Before the split in the Volunteers, a number of guns and 20,000 rounds of .303 ammunition had been purchased, and these, fortunately, had been entrusted to the keeping of people who had remained faithful to the original aims of the Volunteer movement. The guns were now distributed among the rank and file, up to one hundred and fifty men being armed in this way.

Those who could afford it contributed five pounds for the Lee-Enfield they received; those who could not afford a payment were given the guns free.

The Volunteers met one night weekly in the Fianna Hall, off Barrington Street, to receive instruction in various branches of military science; practically every Sunday was devoted to long route marches and field work; and at intervals bivouacs or all-night marches were arranged.

With the exception of William Lawlor, all the Limerick Volunteers' military instructors went with the dissident majority who sided with Redmond, and the Volunteers would very likely have had their training interrupted to a considerable



A Fianna Éireann physical culture class in Co. Limerick

degree were it not for the arrival in their midst of Captain Robert Monteith, of "A" Company of the Dublin Brigade. Monteith, who had had long service, including war experience, in the British army, and who also had acted as instructor to the Dublin Brigade, had been dismissed from his post in the Ordnance Survey, and had been served with a deportation order on 12 November, 1914, which stated that he should not "reside after 12 o'clock noon, on the 14th day of November, 1914, within the Metropolitan Police District of Dublin. . . ."⁵

Monteith, deported from Dublin, came straight to Limerick, where he was to prove an invaluable acquisition. He began work with the Volunteers on Tuesday, 17 November. And, he tells us, "the material was excellent. All ranks were eager to learn anything I could teach them of the soldier's trade."⁶

Ernest Blythe had already been active in Limerick, organising companies of Volunteers in practically every parish in the county, and Monteith now assisted him in his work, travelling to such places as Dromcollogher and Ballylanders, where he arranged for the training of the Volunteers. In Ballylanders, he organised a training class every week for Volunteer officers from Ballylanders, Galbally, Kilfinane and Mitchelstown. This was largely the famous Galtee district which was later to play so heroic a part in the fight for freedom.

As to the city Volunteers, Monteith tells us: "The Limerick men took their training seriously. The companies paraded on four different nights; the officers and non-commissioned officers had a special drill on Tuesday nights. Almost every Sunday was devoted to route marching, or field work, when we could get the ground for the purpose. The Sunday marches, in addition to their training value, were effective as a propaganda measure. . . ."⁷

And Monteith had high words of praise

for the women of *Cumann na mBan*, stating: "In fact, without their help the Volunteer movement would never have been the success it was. These women did not theorize, they did practical work. At Limerick they accompanied us on all field work in order to train the Red Cross section. Few field days went by without an accident, and whether they were called upon to treat cuts, abrasions, sprains or dislocations, they knew what should be done; they knew how to do it, and they did it."⁸

Monteith, as a quotation in this article has already shown, believed in the effectiveness of the Irish Volunteers' Sunday route marches as a propaganda measure, and he cites the following happening as an instance of this:

A body of the National Volunteers met them on such a march as they were passing through Ballysimon, and were so struck by the fact that the Irish Volunteers were armed, while they had but one rifle in their company—the Ballysimon company—that they immediately held a conference, and at least three-fourths of them decided to come over to the Irish Volunteers. The men who came over included the commander, Lieutenant David Hennessy, the president, John MacCormack, and the secretary, Batt Laffan. These three men were the three largest farmers in the district. Their company now became the Killonan company. The Castleconnell company of National Volunteers shortly afterwards followed the example of the Killonan men.⁹

Batt Laffan threw himself heart and soul into the organisation work and, though secretary of his company, served as a private in the ranks. Whenever the Volunteers required it, he placed his land at their disposal for field work. These manoeuvres, which always took place on Sunday, were attended by men from Meelick, Co. Clare, twelve miles away, Castleconnell, Killonan and Limerick city. Hundreds of people came to see the operations, and, as a rule,

a car load of British officers would be on the scene, and would observe the work from beginning to end.

Meanwhile, the work of organisation and training went on apace in the outlying districts. Every Monday, Monteith visited either Ballylanders or Galbally. In Galbally only four officers attended at first, but on one special occasion Monteith received a note from the secretary of the company requesting him to come to that village instead of to Ballylanders. Upon arrival in Galbally he was pleasantly surprised to find not only the members of the officers' class, but more than eighty men on parade. In addition, the men had resurrected all the instruments that remained of a former band, and all marched out of the village into the lovely and historic Glen of Aherlow to the strains of *The Wearing of the Green*.¹⁰

Writing of the Limerick city battalion and its officers, on 15 February, 1915, Pádraig Pearse said:

*"Is dóigh lena lán gurab é Cath Luimnigh an Cath is treise dá bhfuil againn. Tá fir mhaithe ina cheannas, fir nach bhfuil a sárú in Éirinn, ar dhílseacht ná ar chalmacht ná ar stuaim."*¹¹

(There are many who think that the Limerick city battalion is the best we have. There are good men in command; men whose loyalty, courage and prudence are not surpassed in Ireland).

The inspiration and driving force of the Volunteers in Limerick city was mainly concentrated in three men: James Ledden, Michael Colivet and Scoirse Clancy.

James Ledden, honorary colonel, who was affectionately known as the father of the battalion, was then aged about fifty, and was a tall, white-haired, simple-mannered man, whom, it would seem, nature had never intended for the harsh task of soldiering. But this was the man who, when he had lost faith in the Irish

Parliamentary Party, was moved by his nationalist principles to enrol in the I.R.B., and later to march in the ranks of the Irish Volunteers with young men whose senior he was by a score of years and more.

Michael Colivet, an able and tireless worker, was commandant of the brigade, which comprised the whole city and county of Limerick, Clare, Mitchelstown and some adjoining districts of Tipperary.

His vice-commandant was Scoirse Clancy from Grange, Co. Limerick. A scholar and an athlete, Scoirse graduated from the Royal University in 1904. He spoke Irish fluently, and had a good knowledge of Irish and French literature. For a time he taught Irish in Clongowes Wood College. He is said to be the Cranly of James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. At midnight on 6 March, 1921, he was reading Keating's two hundred and seventy-year-old *Eochairsciath an Aifriain* (Defence of the Mass) in his home. Two hours later he was murdered by raiding British Crown forces.

But 1915, when as yet the Volunteers but trained and marched, was not 1921, and the heart of Ireland had yet to be moved to sympathy and pride by the sacrifice of Easter Week. In 1915 it looked indeed that it could truly be said of our people—with the exception of the Volunteers and a handful of others—that our country's alien rulers had "purchased half of us and intimidated the other half." Events like those which took place in Limerick city on Whit Sunday, 23 May, 1915, seemed to give ample proof of this.

On that day a very large parade of Volunteers took place in the city. The idea of this parade originated with "A" company of the Dublin Brigade, which at first had in mind only a train excursion to Limerick and a march by its own members in full equipment, through the city. Others of the Dublin companies became interested in the projected visit, and the idea of an armed parade through the "City of the Violated Treaty" caught

the imagination not only of the Volunteers in Dublin, but of those in Cork, Tipperary and elsewhere, so that on the day of the parade, Volunteers from many areas poured into Limerick. Two special trains brought six hundred Volunteers and hundreds of sympathisers from Dublin. A special train from Cork brought two hundred and fifty Volunteers from the southern capital; and Tipperary was represented by one hundred and fifty men, chiefly drawn from the area of the Galtee regiment. Limerick itself supplied about three hundred men.

It was arranged that the parade would start from Pery Square at 1 p.m., and after traversing the main arteries of Newtown Pery (the modern part of the city), including O'Connell Street, O'Connell Avenue and Bóthar Buí, pass through the ancient Irishtown and Englishtown, touch on Thomondgate by way of the Treaty Stone, and return to the starting point through Sarsfield Street and O'Connell Street. This was the route followed by all great religious and political processions for almost a century. It was intended that immediately after arrival in Pery Square a review of the Volunteers would be held in the People's Park. Permission had been given by the mayor for the use of the park, but this permission was subsequently withdrawn, and for the first time in a generation the park gates were kept locked on a Sunday.

In all the circumstances of the time it was hardly prudent to have included the Bóthar Buí and Irishtown districts in the line of march, as most of the inhabitants in both areas had relatives or friends serving in the British army. To make matters worse, advertisements in the local press giving information as to the route of the march forewarned the anti-Volunteer elements, and gave them sufficient time in which to prepare a hostile reception. And, later, Limerick Volunteer headquarters was to learn that from some mysterious source large sums of money had materialised to

provide that element in the population with intoxicating drink on the day of the parade.¹²

Punctually at 1 p.m. the parade began, headed by the band of the Limerick regiment. More than 1,200 armed Volunteers marched out of Pery Square and into the city streets. Many of Ireland's best and bravest were among those who marched so proudly through Sarsfield's city that day:—Pádraig Pearse, Tom Clarke, Willie Pearse, Seán MacDermott, Ned Daly, Liam Mellowes, Terence Mac Swiney, Seoirse Clancy, Tomás Mac Curtáin.

As the parade reached Wolfe Tone Street it was noticed that the windows of the new barracks (now Sarsfield Barracks) were filled with British soldiers who, while the marching men were passing, subjected them to a ceaseless barrage of jeers and mockery. In view of the fact that hitherto the British military authorities had always taken the greatest care to ensure that the rank and file did not indulge in political demonstrations, it seemed significant that on this occasion they were permitted to do so unchecked.

Things did not improve when the parade reached the Bóthar Buí area, for here the marchers had to pass between two dense rows of wildly excited women, who assailed them with a fearful, non-stop flow of shrieks and taunts and abuse. But the real trouble did not begin until the parade moved into Mungret Street in the Irishtown district. This area had supplied more than its quota of fighting men to the Munster Fusiliers, and when the "pro-German Sinn Féiners", as its inhabitants called the Irish Volunteers, marched in among them, hell broke loose. This time in addition to the shrieks and taunts and abuse, there was physical violence done as the Volunteers were pelted with stones and bottles and every available type of missile—

*But the marching men marched just the
same
And their hearts were filled with pride.*

Their restraint and discipline and morale in the face of the gravest provocation at Limerick on that Whit Sunday of 1915 showed the stuff the Volunteers were made of, and boded well for the part they would play in the future. The parade continued its way to Pery Square without further incident. The visitors then marched to the Fianna hall and having stacked their arms, went to seek refreshments or do a little sight-seeing. It was thought that all danger of further disturbance had now passed, but this was not so. Groups of intoxicated trouble-makers, men and women, roamed through the streets, attacking not only the Volunteers, but also the ladies who had travelled with them from Dublin and Cork. Éamon de Valera, on going to the assistance of some ladies who had been attacked by a mob in Parnell Street, was himself set upon and had to seek shelter with the ladies in a nearby licensed premises, from where they were eventually brought to safety by a squad of Limerick Volunteers.¹³

With the situation in the vicinity of the railway station deteriorating every minute, it was feared that owing to the opposition of the mob it would not be possible for the visiting Volunteers to entrain without their having to use force to do so. But the serious trouble that for a time seemed inevitable was averted by the arrival on the scene of several of the local clergy, including Father Mangan, C.S.S.R., then director of the arch-confraternity of the Holy Family. Because of his position, Father Mangan was, perhaps, the most influential man in Limerick. Mounting a side car, he appealed to such members of the confraternity as were present to help to secure the safe departure of the visitors. His appeal was successful, and the Volunteers passed safely to their trains through a passage formed by the confraternity men

and members of the R.I.C. A serious incident, perhaps desired by the alien powers then in Limerick, was avoided with dignity and courage.

But there were other areas in Ireland, especially in the rural parts, where the Volunteers could be sure of whole-hearted support. In the summer of 1915 some of the Volunteer organisers were ordered to leave Ireland and take up residence elsewhere. Liam Mellowes and Ernest Blythe were among those on whom deportation orders were served. Robert Monteith, who was still in Limerick, had his own views on how this situation should be handled.

"It was evident," he wrote, "the government intended to strike at the Volunteers by removing their organisers and instructors. Had these men left Ireland, as ordered, it would have been a death blow to the movement. On hearing of these deportation orders, I sent a message to the executive in Dublin by James Ledden, to the effect that if those to be deported chose to come south and join me and one or two men of the Limerick city regiment, we could take to the Galtee mountains, where with arms and a plentiful supply of ammunition, it would give a considerable government force all it could do to get us. The people of this district, an old Fenian centre, were favourable to us, and the nature of the country made it an ideal territory for guerilla warfare. I received no reply, but I am sure the action I suggested would have stopped all deportations effectually. However, these men did not leave Ireland and some or all were later imprisoned."¹⁴

On the day following the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa, Tom Clarke came to Limerick, and Monteith met him at the house of John Daly. In the course of their conversation they discussed the Irish Brigade in Germany, and Clarke spoke of its lack of officers. Monteith asked Clarke to place his name before the Volunteer executive in case officers were required. At the

suggestion of Clarke, they went for a walk down O'Connell Street and across Sarsfield Bridge until they came to the Treaty Stone. And there, while they pretended to examine the stone, Clarke informed Monteith that he had in fact already put forward his name for the command of a company in the brigade.¹⁵

Monteith left Limerick on 24 August, 1915, and began the first stage of his eventful journey to war-time Germany. His journey was a closely-guarded secret, and when leaving Limerick he had let it to be understood that he was going to Kilkenny to take up organization work there.

At this stage in our story, I feel I should give some account of the Volunteer movement in Kerry for, as we begin to follow the final events leading up to the Rising, it will be found that the story of Limerick in 1916 merges more and more with the story of Kerry in 1916.

Kerry's first Volunteer company was formed in Killarney less than a week after the launching of the movement in Dublin. Fittingly, it sprouted from an Irish class organised by the Gaelic League. The teacher was none other than *An Seabhaic* (Pádraig Ó Siochfhradha). He interrupted his class for a lesson in military drill, and that night a company of Volunteers was formed. Appointed section commanders were: *An Seabhaic*, Michael Spillane, Michael J. O'Sullivan, Seán O'Casey, Pat Horgan, and Tadhg Horgan. Secretary was Jim Counihan, post office official, and treasurer, William D. F. O'Sullivan. From Killarney branches were organised in Ballyhar, Fossa, Listry, Beaufort, Glenflesk, Firies and other parts of East Kerry.¹⁶

The man who made the preliminary moves towards establishing the Volunteers in Tralee was Matthew MacMahon, a law clerk of Boherbee, who happened to be in Dublin on the night of 25 November, 1913, and had attended the inaugural meeting of the Volunteers in the Rotunda.¹⁷

Four companies of Volunteers were formed at the inaugural meeting in Tralee, and they were filled exclusively by the men of Rock Street, Strand Street and Boherbee. The Tralee Volunteers got down to the work of organisation with tremendous enthusiasm and additional companies were formed in the district. Ernest Blythe and Desmond Fitzgerald were at that time organising companies in west Kerry, and Tralee sent them men to assist them in their work.

In the meantime corps or companies of Volunteers were springing up all over the county: Anglont, Ardfert, Abbeydorney, Ballybunion, Ballyferriter, Ballylongford, Ballymacelligott, Ballymalis, Bansa, Brosna, Caherciveen, Castle-gregory, Castleisland, Coolbane, Coolroe, Corbally, Cordal, Craughdarrig, Currans, Dingle, Dromin, Duagh, Dungeel, Dunmaniheen, Foylemore, Glenbeigh, Keel, Killorglin, Knockanure, Listowel, Lixnaw, Mastergeehy, Rathmore, Scartaglin, Tarbert, Tuogh, Ventry, Waterville.¹⁸

On Sunday 14 June, 1914, a mass general parade and review of Volunteers took place in the Market, Tralee. Big contingents came from Ballymacelligott, Castleisland, Dingle, Knocknagoshel, Brosna, Currans, Cordal, Ventry and Ardfert. In all, some 2,000 Volunteers paraded through the town.

The next great hosting of Volunteers in Kerry took place on the occasion of the Gaelic League *Oireachtas*, which was held in Killarney in August, 1914. On the third day of the *Oireachtas* several thousand Volunteers drawn from all parts of Kerry and from various centres in Munster, including the cities of Limerick and Cork, marched through Killarney amid scenes of tremendous enthusiasm.

When "The Split" came in September, 1914, generally there was little support for Redmond's policy among the Kerry Volunteers, the majority of whom stood firmly by the aims and ideals of the founders of the Irish Volunteers. In Tralee, twenty

men declared for Redmond's National Volunteers and close on three hundred for the Irish Volunteers. When the men had voted, the following telegram was dispatched to the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers in Dublin.

"Tralee Battalion stands firm for the old Constitution and the old Committee."¹⁹

The telegram was signed by the secretary, Éamon O'Connor, and was addressed to Eoin Mac Néill. One of the happiest men in Tralee when the Volunteers made their decision was their chairman, Father Joe Breen.

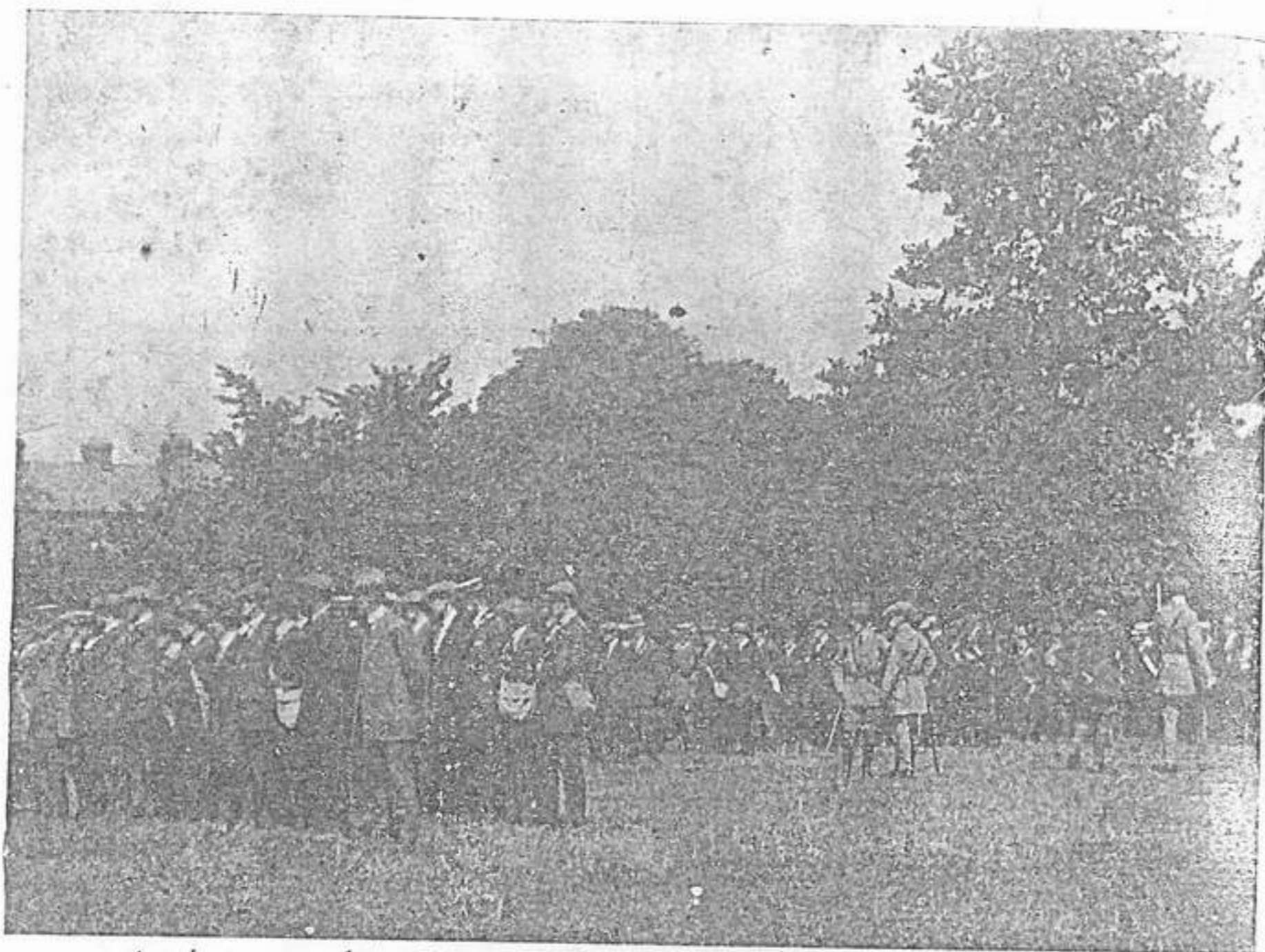
Listowel remained true to the old committee of the Volunteers by 139 votes to 7, as did about four-fifths of the Dingle corps. Caherciveen voted 37 to 27 in its favour, and Ballyferriter and Castlegregory were unanimous, while Cordal was in favour by a vote of 68 to 2.²⁰ "The Split" scarcely affected the Rathmore district, which remained overwhelmingly pro-Irish Volunteer. As for Killarney it remained neutral, having "made use of the diplomatic act to steer itself through the rift." Its purse was in a Redmondite pocket.²¹ But on the night of 7 May, 1915, the whole Volunteer force in Killarney shed its neutrality and declared for the Irish Volunteers. In very few areas in Kerry were those in favour of Redmond in a majority.

Speaking in favour of the Irish Volunteers in Mastergeehy, in October, 1914, Father Tom Curtayne said: "We cannot afford to lose any men except the landlords, and the recruiting sergeants are welcome to them."²²

On 22 November, 1914, hundreds of Volunteers in various parts of Kerry participated in tributes to the memory of the Manchester Martyrs; the Fenians, Allen, Larkin and O'Brien.

By now Austin Stack was the recognised Volunteer leader for all Kerry. It was he who took the salute at a review of Volun-

teers and of colours at Killarney on Whit Sunday, 1915—the same day that the marching Volunteers in Limerick city were subjected to such shameful treatment at the hands of pro-British mobs. An account of the Killarney parade tells us that on "... Whit Sunday, 1915, ... Killarney's old cricket field was the scene of a great display of national advancement and solidarity. In a momentous and tense atmosphere several thousand Volunteers from every nook and corner were reviewed by Eoin Mac Néill, the leader of the movement, and presented with their colours, which were blessed by Rev. Father Ferris. Under the command of Austin Stack, the vast, assembled force of Kerry's marshalled manhood, fully armed with rifles, provided a striking prelusory picture to the grim and graphic scenes that the future was to etch. This was more than a display of physical strength—it was a living, vivid and forceful symbol of the idealistic trend of Irish thought. Ireland was once more emerging from the mists of English tyranny. And, just like that, the mists had not lifted from the Kerry hills that morning when the men of the "Kingdom" were leaving their homesteads to converge on Killarney to demonstrate their unanimity and their determination to oust the ancient enemy. From the remote outposts of Dingle and Ballyferriter they came; from Caherciveen and Annascaul, from Tralee, Listowel and Castleisland, these men flocked to join their comrades of Killarney and East Kerry in a firm and resolute answer to the nation's call. The scene in the town was as romantic as it was colourful and portentous. Huge crowds, open-eyed, with awe and amazement, lined the streets to watch the almost unending procession of bandoliered Volunteers as they marched with heads erect and hearts aflame to the saluting base. The tranquillity of an era of calmly accepted subjection was at an end and fireworks were in the offing. That was the trend of thought that flowed through the



A volunteer parade in Fairview Park. The officers in uniform, right centre, are Commandant Edward Daly and Robert Monteith.

minds of the populace. Strength and resoluteness resounded from those marching feet. The atmosphere at the saluting base was electric. 'We have no fear, we have no doubt that the sun is rising for Ireland.' There was a tense and awe-inspiring hush as these prophetic words flowed from the lips of Eoin MacNeill and floated over the vast assemblage. In his hands were the colours—a symbolic sunburst with an old Irish emblem—the work of Kerry hands. In his heart was exultation—the cream of The Kingdom was around him."²³

On 26 February, 1916, Pearse reviewed over five hundred Volunteers from Tralee, Ballymacelligott, Abbeydorney and Lis-tellick, in the Tralee sportsfield, and was given an enthusiastic welcome. Kerry was ready to strike its blow for freedom.

In the autumn of 1915 Austin Stack and Alfred Cotton, Vice-Commandant of the Tralee Battalion, had a long interview with Pearse at Saint Enda's, Rathfarnham. According to Cotton's account, Pearse informed them, under a pledge of the strictest secrecy, that an insurrection had been arranged for Easter, 1916, and that arms, which it had been arranged to obtain from Germany, would be landed in Tralee Bay, and that local arrangements would have to be made for the landing and distribution of the arms.²⁴

There was to be a general mobilisation of the Volunteers throughout the whole of Ireland, Pearse told them; and he stated, "that in broad outline it was proposed that the Cork Volunteers would move towards Macroom and link up with the Kerry

Brigade, which, in turn, would be in communication with the Volunteers in Clare, Limerick and Galway. Ultimately a line would be held from the Shannon through Limerick and east Kerry to Macroom. Volunteers from Ulster would occupy positions from the Shannon to south of Ulster. The Rising would begin with the declaration of the Republic and seizure of Dublin, with action against the British troops in adjoining counties, while moves would be made by country Volunteer forces towards the capital to relieve the pressure on the Volunteers who had seized the ring of positions inside.

The arms and ammunition landed at Fenit were to be distributed to the Kerry, Cork, Limerick and Galway Volunteers. Stack and Cotton were to have a goods train ready to leave Fenit with the arms. Part of the armament was to be left at Tralee for distribution to the Cork and Kerry Brigades and the remainder sent on by goods train to Limerick, where arrangements would be ready to distribute them to the Galway area. At Fenit a pilot would have to be on the alert for signals agreed upon with the arms ship, meet it, and guide it into the pier. A cable in code was to be sent to the U.S.A. announcing the proclamation of the Republic."²⁵

Pearse ordered Stack and Cotton to preserve secrecy to the very last minute. At the Kerry men's insistence, there was a long discussion on the plan in general, with particular reference to Kerry's place in it. Pearse indicated this in broad outline, but it was left to Stack and Cotton to fill in and work out the complicated local details. Tralee post office was to be seized to control telephone and telegraphic communications; the railway station was to be occupied and the goods train made ready for conveyance of arms at Fenit; R.I.C. barracks were to be either rushed or isolated by snipers covering their exits, and similar measures taken with barracks occupied by small forces of British troops;

any British troops hurrying to Tralee as soon as the arms were landed and the Rising in progress were to be ambushed *en route*.²⁶

Thus, as 1916 approached, were the plans for the Rising being finalised by the men in Dublin. And as Dublin made the vital decisions in the impenetrable secrecy of its revolutionary councils, the rest of the country made ready to carry out these decisions when they should be made known to them. Twice at least in the early part of 1916 Austin Stack had interviews with Pearse; and a month before the Rising he was again summoned to Dublin for further discussions. On this latter occasion he met Terence MacSwiney in Dublin, and travelled back with him as far as Mallow. They "discussed the situation at length, the hope of getting material aid from Germany being a matter which loomed largely before us, as this was bound to have a very great effect on the prospects of the insurrection."²⁷ At Mallow, "the two men parted, each in turn to grapple with a tragic choice that haunted both until their deaths."²⁸

To the unsuspecting public, and to the rank and file of the Volunteers themselves, the great activity in Volunteer circles in the country areas that began to mount to a climax in those April days of 1916 was all part of the preparations for large scale Easter manoeuvres. Only a few men knew how soon Ireland's hour of destiny was to strike.

Three weeks before the Rising, Commandant Michael P. Colivet of the Limerick Brigade was ordered by headquarters to speed up battalion and brigade organisation. He had eight battalions in his command, one in Limerick city, three in County Limerick (the area of one of these three included part of County Tipperary) and four in County Clare. Only the city battalion could be said to be reasonably well armed. Furthermore, his battalions were at less than full strength, numbering no more than some two hundred men per unit,

whereas a battalion should have comprised at least five hundred. The Limerick city battalion, in fact, never mustered more than two hundred men. At the best, therefore, Colivet could count on no more than 1,600 men in all.

The plan of operations on which the Limerick brigade worked had been based on holding the line of the Shannon from the Clare side. On one of his visits to Limerick, Pearse had indicated to Colivet that the holding of that line "in the event of hostilities" would be one of the Volunteers' tasks. Pearse's assumption that the Limerick brigade was numerically strong enough to do this somewhat amused Colivet, who replied that it would be a problem rather than a task as the Limerick brigade would have to be spaced out, one man for every three hundred yards.²⁹ However, the great problem that was eventually to confront the Limerick brigade and other brigades throughout Munster when the hour for action came was one that nobody had foreseen, but one which nevertheless had begun to take shape on Sunday, 9 April, 1916. At six o'clock that morning, a German ship called the *Libau*—next morning to be renamed the *Aud*—had sailed out of the German port of Lübeck, bound for Tralee Bay, with a cargo of arms for the Volunteers. The Commander of the *Aud*, Captain Karl Spindler, states in his book, *The Mystery of the Casement Ship*, that:

"The Irish had insisted that the Rising must take place at Easter, which had for Catholics so very special significance, and against Easter in the calendar stood the words "Full Moon"—the very last thing I could have wished for at the time when I should be approaching land."

There had been an earlier suggestion that the arms ship should sail not to Tralee Bay but to Limerick. A memo dated 16 February, 1916, drafted by the Irish

Revolutionary Directory in America, and submitted to the German General Staff, had stated that the Irish revolutionaries would need from Germany:

"25,000 to 50,000 rifles with cartridges, proportionate number of machine-guns and field artillery as well as a few superior officers to be sent on transport ship to Limerick, taking northern route and escorted by submarines. (Even for 100,000 rifles the necessary number of men would be available.)"

A later communication from the Revolutionary Directory in America to the General Staff, after again enumerating the arms that would be required for the Rising in Ireland, went on to say:

"The British patrol on the west coast of Ireland is not now very effective. Limerick has been selected because our friends could easily concentrate several thousand men there at short notice and they are the best in Ireland, outside of Dublin. Ships of very heavy draught could not go up to the quay, but a vessel large enough to carry all the arms wanted there for the time being could get up, and at Toynes (*recte* Foynes), twenty miles down the Shannon, English battle-ships can anchor. If Limerick were taken, all ports from Galway to south Kerry could be captured in a few days and a number of isolated detachments of British troops in inland garrisons disposed of. . . ."³⁰

But a third message from the Revolutionary Directory in America to Germany showed an alteration in the plans in so far as they affected Limerick. This third communication was based on a message received by the Directory in America from a "trusted friend" in Ireland, and it stated among other things that:

"Limerick was selected only for the shipping of arms from America. For arms from Germany the coast in the vicinity of Dublin is the best place, but landing can take place anywhere in Ireland if notice thereof previously given. . .

. . . Submarine escorting arms transport to Limerick is to signal by wireless 'Finn' and to state how many hours distant from the harbour so that men can be concentrated. Should vessel be destroyed and not come in, it is to give the wireless signal 'Bran'. This applies only to Limerick. . . ."³¹

When eventually the *Aud* sailed from Lübeck for Ireland it carried 20,000 rifles (which had been captured by the Germans from the Russians on the Eastern Front), ten machine guns, some millions of rounds of ammunition, as well as a supply of bombs, land-mines and hand grenades. This fell far short of the aid the Volunteer leaders had hoped for. Karl Spindler, the heroic commander of the *Aud*, was not too impressed by this amount of material support the German Supreme Army Command and General Staff were making available to the Irish revolutionaries "for the purpose of assisting a revolution which, apart from other things, was to serve to thin out the Western Front by the withdrawal of considerable masses of English troops, making it possible for the German army to break through the allied front and thereby end the war."³²

Karl Spindler's instructions were to deliver the *Aud's* cargo of arms in Tralee Bay between 20 and 23 April. These were the dates the Volunteer leaders had originally fixed for the landing and which they had confirmed in messages to the Irish Revolutionary Directory in America. It was when everything had been arranged and the *Aud* and *U.19* (with Casement, Monteith and Bailey on board) were already on their way to Ireland that, in the

words of Desmond Ryan "the Dublin leaders made their most fatal blunder."³³ They decided that "arms must not be landed before the night of Sunday 23rd." This message they sent to the Revolutionary Directory in America, adding, "This is vital. Smuggling impossible."³⁴ By a very roundabout course the German Embassy in Washington had the message conveyed in code to Berlin. But since the *Aud* carried no wireless, the message could not be flashed to her, and neither could contact be made with *U.19*. The foundations had been kicked from under the plans for a nation-wide insurrection in Ireland, and collapse had been made inevitable. But the Volunteer leaders in Dublin, cut off from all direct communication with a Europe at war, knew nothing of this, nor were they to know until it was too late, and they went eagerly ahead with their preparations for the Rising which they hoped would make their land "a nation once again."

On the Sunday prior to Easter Sunday, 1916, Charlie Wall, who was in charge of the Dromcollogher Volunteers, was called aside by Father Tom Wall, C.C., who said to him, "I want to see you at Lil O'Connor's." On arrival at Miss O'Connor's, he was met by Captain J. MacInerney from the Limerick Brigade Headquarters and Captain Comerford from Dublin. These officers told him they had important matters to discuss with him but that before discussing them it would be necessary to "swear him in." Mr. Wall readily agreed to this course and was there and then sworn into the I.R.B. Asked how many men he could muster, he replied, "between thirty and forty." To a subsequent question he said the company had twelve rifles and some revolvers and shot guns. He was then informed that the Rising was to take place on the following Sunday and that he had been appointed commandant of the Volunteers in west Limerick, and that these Volunteers were

to assemble at Glenquin Castle at 3 p.m. on Easter Sunday. He was also told that the arms train from Kerry was due to arrive at Barnagh station, between Abbeyfeale and Newcastle West, at about 5 p.m. and that it should be boarded there by Volunteers, who would help to get it on the turn-table at Newcastle West. By the time the train reached Limerick it was hoped that the city would be in the hands of the Volunteers.

That is Mr. Wall's memory of his interview with Captain MacInerney and Captain Comerford in Dromcollogher on Sunday, 16 April, 1916. Next morning he began sending out mobilisation orders for Easter Sunday, specifying that each Volunteer was to bring full equipment and three days' rations.

Limerick was to have been a pivotal point in the insurrection plans.³⁵ On the Tuesday of Holy Week, Seán Fitzgibbon, a captain on the Volunteer Headquarters Staff, arrived in Limerick with a message that was very much concerned with operations along the Shannon. Fitzgibbon had come on the orders of Pearse, who had instructed him to get in touch with Colivet in Limerick, and Stack in Tralee. Finally, he was to superintend the landing of the arms from the *Aud* at Fenit. These latest orders that Fitzgibbon brought from headquarters clashed with the plan of operations on which the Limerick Brigade had hitherto worked. Colivet's instructions now were that he was to receive at Abbeyfeale the arms which would be landed at Fenit, take what he wanted for his area, and send the rest by train to Galway. According to Seamus Gubbins's account, the arms were to be conveyed by train only as far as Crusheen.³⁶ Police and military positions in Limerick city were to be attacked to cover the transfer of the arms train in safety across the Clare line. These new instructions differed so much from the original instructions he had received, that Colivet, after discussing the

matter with Fitzgibbon, at Fitzgibbon's suggestion, decided to go to Dublin and have the matter clarified by Pearse himself.

Colivet travelled to Dublin next day and met Pearse by arrangement at the North Star Hotel, near Amiens Street Station. Pearse confirmed the instructions he had already sent by Fitzgibbon, and told Colivet to cancel all previous arrangements and concentrate on the arms' landing. Because of the almost constant presence of an embarrassingly over-attentive waiter, the discussion was as far as possible disguised as a bit of hard bargaining between a tight-fisted farmer (Colivet) and a haggling buyer (Pearse). At the approach of the waiter, Colivet might be heard saying: "I can't really let you have more than thirty bushels" and Pearse, who derived great amusement from the game, replying: "But I must have more, and you must find them somewhere."³⁷

Once, when the waiter was well out of sight, Colivet asked Pearse point blank: "Of course, this means insurrection as soon as the arms are landed and we get them."

"Yes," Pearse told him, "you are to start at 7 p.m. on Sunday. You are to proclaim the Republic and, as soon as things are secure in your own district, move eastwards."

Finally, Pearse informed him that he would have to work out the local details for the Limerick area himself without any more definite instructions from headquarters than what he, Pearse, had given him in their conversation, as well as what had already been conveyed to him by Fitzgibbon. Colivet said his final farewell to Pearse, and walked out into the sunny Dublin streets where history was so soon to be made. His own mood cannot have been too sunny, faced as he was with planning in detail, at less than a week's notice, the part Limerick was to play in the Rising.

As soon as he had arrived back home in

Limerick, he summoned his brigade staff to a meeting that night at Scoirse Clancy's house. Details of the plan that was drawn up and agreed on without delay at the meeting are given as follows in Desmond Ryan's invaluable book, *The Rising*:

"Briefly, it was arranged that the Limerick city battalion should march out of the city at 10 o'clock on Sunday morning to Killonan, as if for the announced three-day manoeuvres. The return to the city was timed for 7 o'clock in the evening when all police and military barracks in the city were to be attacked after first cutting telegraphic and telephone wires as well as railway communications with Limerick Junction and Dublin. The police and military garrisons were to be confined to their barracks by the attack, which was not to be pressed home but kept up as a diversion until the Kerry arms train had passed safely into Clare over Longpavement railway bridge. When the arms reached Limerick the barrack attacks were to be followed up with the utmost energy.

As the train had to cross the Limerick lines to the south, unnoticed and uninterrupted, this diversion of police and military attention was essential. At Newcastle West on the following day Volunteer units were to be posted, poorly armed as those in west Limerick were, to take over the train at Abbeyfeale, to attack the police barracks at Newcastle West and see the train through in safety, and to attack and disarm all police likely to interfere with the plans. The Volunteer unit at Newcastle West was to watch the station closely as it was a terminus where all trains and engines had to be reversed, and delay there offered dangerous opportunities for police and military interference. There was an insistent order from Dublin that any armed clash with police and military must at all costs be avoided until 7 p.m.

on Sunday. (This order had been impressed strongly by the Dublin headquarters in all Easter Eve messages to the Volunteer commandants in the provinces. It was to weigh much with Stack when he was faced with urgent demands from some of his officers to attempt the rescue of Casement; it had ended Cotton's scheme to keep a constant Volunteer camp near Banna Strand to cover the landing; it prevented sporadic outbreaks as soon as conflict of orders rained down on the country commands.)

The Limerick plan provided that all available Volunteers were armed and taken aboard the train as it proceeded towards Limerick. All possible reinforcements were to be gathered at the various stations. The Galtee battalion was to attack Charleville Junction and put it out of action, attack all police units in their district, and advance on Limerick to take part in the fighting there. At Limerick Junction the Tipperary Volunteers were to take similar action, and after settling with the local police units, to march to join the Limerick Volunteers. Doon and Castleconnell units were to deal with railway lines from Castleconnell to Killaloe, destroy Birdhill Junction, and make their way to the Limerick and Clare units operating in Limerick city. In the County Clare Captain Michael Brennan and the mid-Clare and east Clare Volunteers were to seize Ennis and all stations to Crusheen, and finally, after disarming the Royal Irish Constabulary in various localities, take up positions on the north side of the Shannon at Limerick, complete its encirclement, and force a surrender of the hostile forces within.

In west Clare Captain P. Brennan was to take command of all available Volunteers at Kilrush, commandeer boats, cross the Shannon at Ballylongford or Tarbert, join the Kerry Volunteers at Listowel, and proceed to Limerick on the

arms train. He was urged to come with as strong a party as possible so as to make sure that there would be no hitch or interference at the danger-point at Newcastle West. The stationmaster at Castleconnell, Lieutenant McGee, was an active, although secret, supporter of the Volunteers. He was given charge of the work of making contacts and arrangements for the safe passage of the arms train. When all these plans were successfully carried through, there was to be a general march on Dublin.

In a word, the Cork, Clare, Tipperary and west Limerick Volunteers were to seize railways and barracks in their immediate areas, disarm the police, surround Limerick and march into the relief of the city battalions. The plan assumed that the barracks would be taken without a hitch, the police overcome, the Limerick attack maintained, that the arms train would pass without interference by police and military, and, most important of all, that the arms would be landed safely from the *Aud*."

On the Thursday of Holy Week, Commandant Liam Manahan, Galtee battalion, Limerick Brigade, travelled to Dublin and visited the Volunteer headquarters in Dawson Street, where he met Bulmer Hobson, J. J. O'Connell, and other Volunteer officers. The publication of the "Castle Document" (a document, stated to have emanated from Dublin Castle, which gave particulars of an imminent British swoop on all leaders of the Irish Volunteers, Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League and the National Volunteers) and rumours of impending military action had made Manahan uneasy, and the reason for his Dublin visit was to find out the truth for himself. But when he asked Hobson and O'Connell if a crisis was near, they told him they expected no exceptional developments.

Signs of the divided opinions at Volunteer headquarters were just beginning to come

to the surface. On his way out from the Volunteer headquarters Manahan met Thomas MacDonagh, who appeared anything but pleased to find him in Dublin at all and not on the alert in Ballylanders. He told Manahan there was an immediate danger of raids and arrests, Manahan's own among them, and he advised him to rush for the one o'clock train home and await orders there.

When Manahan enquired why Hobson and O'Connell had not warned him of these dangers, MacDonagh told him, "They are not in it," and said he would like to give him more information but was not free to do so. He then suggested that Manahan wait for the evening train and see Pearse. Manahan did not succeed in seeing Pearse, and returned that night to Ballylanders.³⁸

On Good Friday night he received an order from the Limerick Brigade headquarters:

"Mobilisation Sunday. All arms. March west and hold railway line between Adare and Newcastle West. Seize any arms possible, and do everything possible to avoid shooting members of the Royal Irish Constabulary."

On Holy Thursday a parade of the Limerick city battalion was addressed by Commandant Colivet, who gave the men very definite hints that a fight was near. They were ordered to parade on Easter Sunday morning fully armed and equipped, with two days' rations. Volunteers who had previously been exempted from public parades had these orders conveyed to them, and all Volunteers unable to parade on Sunday had been ordered to hand over their arms to their company officers. As a further indication of action to come first aid equipment had been distributed.³⁹

As in Limerick, so in Kerry were the local Volunteer headquarters engaged in feverish preparations through all that

fateful Holy Week of 1916. Everything, in so far as Munster was concerned, now hinged on the successful landing of the arms that a German ship was bringing to Tralee Bay.

*Their eyes were straining for the help
to come
Over the sea, as in a far-off day
Men waited for the ships of Spain or
France
Bearing on Bantry or Killala Bay.⁴⁰*

James Connolly had directly interested himself in the preparations for the reception of the *Aud* at Fenit, sending William Partridge, one of his best known organisers, to Tralee to arrange for the handling of the arms cargo by members of his union, Drivers and firemen were detailed to meet Austin Stack on Easter Sunday morning to receive their instructions about the train arrangements at Tralee for the dispatch of arms to Cork and Limerick.

The Volunteers had arranged to dismantle the wireless station at Caherciveen and set up a transmitter in Tralee with which it was hoped to make contact with the arms ship and submarine. Kerry expected the ship on Sunday night, 23 April, or early on Monday morning; these were the new dates the Volunteer headquarters in Dublin had decided on. Karl Spindler, the gallant commander of the ship, unaware of the change in dates, was racing to be in Fenit some time between 20 and 23 April, these being the dates, originally agreed on.

On Holy Thursday night, Con Collins, a native of Monagea, west Limerick, who was employed in the post office in Dublin, arrived in Tralee from Dublin and spent the night in Stack's lodgings. Collins, a close friend of Seán Mac Dermott, had been entrusted with the task of travelling to Kerry and meeting Casement and Stack and later contacting the *Aud*. That Thursday night while Kerry's Volunteers slept soundly in their beds, a brave man watched and

waited on the deck of a ship that lay anchored a bare six hundred yards off the pier at Fenit. The ship was the *Aud* and the man was Karl Spindler. It was a long, hazardous road he had come, by way of the Baltic and the Kattegat and Skager-Rack, and along by the icy fringe of the Arctic ocean, and southward past the lonely Rockalls into a raging sea and storm. He had braved the perils of the waves and the perils of war, sailing into Tralee Bay, dead on time. Karl Spindler had done everything that was asked of him. But because of the change in dates made by the Volunteer leaders in Dublin, a change of which he had heard nothing, there wasn't a soul to meet or greet him when he reached his journey's end.

Spindler has described his final preparations for landing the arms as he neared Tralee Bay on Holy Thursday morning, 20 April:—"A fresh, glorious morning."

First, the false cargo that covered the real cargo had to be thrown overboard.

"In half an hour's time the upper deck looked like a packing department at one of the big stores. Window-frames, door-frames, tin-ware, zinc buckets, tin baths, and the like were sent up in a steady stream from the hold and piled upon the deck. Boxes and straw went into the furnaces, the rest was heaved overboard. Before long our course was marked by a trail of flotsam and jetsam that stretched to the horizon."⁴¹

At noon on Thursday, the *Aud* was a bare forty-five miles from Tralee; in another four hours she would have reached her goal.

"The next two hours were occupied with the final preparations for the landing. There were still a mass of things to get done. Steam-winch and unloading tackle were made ready, the hatches uncovered, and in every hold the top cases were placed in the slings ready for immediate landing. . . ."⁴²

Karl Spindler's rendezvous with Casement was at Inishtooskert. At 4.15 p.m. : "We were at the very spot—exactly a mile north-west of Inishtooskert, a long, low-lying island which was entirely uninhabited. Now with the naked eye, and now with our glasses, we scanned the surroundings. Nothing to be seen. Nothing moving in any direction. Not a boat on the water or any sign of life. The whole neighbourhood seemed to be dead. As there was no appreciable current here in the inner part of the bay, I lay to temporarily with the engines stopped.

When another ten minutes had elapsed and still nothing was to be seen, I began to feel a little uneasy.

Slowly the minutes slid away. The half-hour's grace agreed upon was nearly up. I got out my secret orders and read them through once more. There could be no doubt ; I was at the right spot, and exactly at the right time. But where were the Irish?"⁴³

Captain Spindler's orders were that if no one turned up at the rendezvous, and if there was no possibility of communicating with the Volunteers that he was to use his own judgement as to whether to proceed in towards Fenit or turn back. He decided to head in towards Fenit at half speed. Before long the crew of the *Aud* got their first view of Fenit. Soon the pier was so close that with glasses they could make out every object on it. Gradually the *Aud* turned north-westward and steamed close by the flat coast towards Kerry Head. Spindler showed the agreed signals more and more boldly, but no one took the slightest notice of them ; then, when darkness fell he risked discovery by approaching to within six hundred yards of Fenit pier, showing, this time, instead of flags, a green light. Hour after hour he waited for a signal or a sign that never came. It was after midnight when, very reluctantly, he weighed anchor and steamed slowly back to the rendezvous off Inish-

tooskert. He lay close under the west side of the island where he could count on being in deep shadow until close on the dawn.

"Hour after hour passed, and as morning approached, my hope that the Irish would manage to communicate with us during the night gradually faded away. When, at last, day dawned, I gave up the game for lost."⁴⁴

And at that hour, when Karl Spindler gave up the game for lost, the Volunteers were still unaware that the game had even begun. Austin Stack and the Kerry Volunteers were making final preparations to receive the arms ship on Easter Sunday night or early on Easter Monday morning, in accordance with the instructions they had received from Volunteer headquarters in Dublin. Two weeks before the Rising, Patrick Cahill had gone to Dublin to collect the signalling lamps to be used by the pilot boat that was to meet the arms ship. P. O'Shea, N.T., Castlegregory, had arranged to get in touch with the pilot, Mort O'Leary, and with Maurice Flynn, both of Maherees and the three of them were to board the German vessel. On the evening of Holy Thursday, Mort O'Leary had seen a small, two-masted vessel off Inishtooskert, but as he had not yet been told of the coming of the *Aud*, he took no further notice of her. The fatal hitch due to the change of dates had occurred. And so for Captain Spindler it was obvious that the game was already lost by the dawn of Good Friday. Everything had gone wrong, but no man in Ireland knew that—as yet. And for the next three days, beginning with that pale Good Friday dawn, everything would continue to go wrong. For even as the gallant and unwelcomed *Aud* sheltered in the shadows of Inishtooskert, "a frail boat had hurled three men, Casement, Bailey and Monteith, on the lone Kerry coast with not a friend in sight among the sandhills and the dark mountains. . . ."⁴⁵

*The tide comes in on Banna Strand
And leaves a shimmering line of foam.
It tells a tale of mystery
And how one lonely boat came home.*

Casement and his companions had come in the German submarine, *U.19*. Like the *Aud*, the *U.19* had been unaware of the change of dates, and it too had waited in Tralee Bay for the pilot boat that never came. Then, at 3 a.m. on Good Friday, it approached as close as was possible to the shore and lowered a small boat into which Casement and his companions climbed. The boat bounced on the waves and the occupants had the greatest difficulty in making Banna Strand. Cold and exhausted and deluged with salt water, they had about reached land when the boat capsized and they were obliged to wade the last few yards ashore with the water up to their waists.

Bailey, an Irishman, whose real name was Beverley, was a sergeant serving in the British army, who had been recruited into the Irish Brigade from among prisoners of war in Germany. The three men set off across country from Banna. The ground was marshy, and they had to wade across water. Casement, whose health had been impaired, was in a pitiable condition, and when they chanced to come on Mac Kenna's Fort, he decided to remain in hiding there while Monteith and Bailey made the journey to Tralee in order to contact Stack and the Tralee Volunteers. It was a six-mile journey to Tralee, and when eventually the two men found themselves in the shop of a sympathetic Mr. Spicer, Monteith sent a message to Stack. After some delay Stack and Con Collins arrived and Monteith told them of Casement's predicament ; he also gave it as his opinion that if the Rising was contingent on German help that it would be unwise to go ahead with it. Casement, who, he told them, was of the same opinion as himself, was very anxious to get to Dublin and explain the

position to Volunteer headquarters.

Stack made a brave effort to locate Casement, but as Monteith and Bailey were necessarily somewhat vague as to where they had landed, the search had to take in a large area. To add to the difficulty, Stack mistook the description of Mac Kenna's Fort where Casement was hiding, for Ballymacquin Castle, which was a considerable distance away. The worst blow of all, however, was the discovery by a local man on Banna Strand of the collapsible boat in which the three had come ashore. This man promptly informed the police who were by now scouring the locality to find the strangers who had landed in such mysterious fashion.

Stack's search for Casement having proved fruitless, he went to a Volunteer meeting in the Rink in Tralee where several officers from the Kerry battalions were waiting to hear the final orders for Sunday. Stack had then under his command some three hundred Volunteers with a medley of two hundred rifles and, for the rest, shot guns, and mainly Martini Enfield carbines. During the meeting, Stack was informed by a messenger that Con Collins had been arrested. Shortly afterwards another messenger brought him the news that Casement had been arrested and was a prisoner in Ardfert barracks. Stack informed the meeting of Casement's arrest and one of the officers pressed for an attempt to rescue him. Stack then told the meeting of the imminent landing of German arms, unaware, of course, that at that very moment the *Aud* was sailing away from Tralee Bay with British naval vessels in hot pursuit. And he reiterated the strict orders he had received from headquarters that not a shot was to be fired before the hour for the Rising struck. Faced with a cruel choice of the kind that was to tear many a heart in two in the next few days, Stack decided to obey orders and the meeting reluctantly gave up the idea of attempting to free Casement.

That evening Stack himself was arrested and in due course was to be sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude.

Thus was Kerry paralysed by events no one could have foreseen or planned for. Saturday morning's *Cork Examiner* carried a report of the discovery of a collapsible boat on Banna Strand. There were two other items of news that occurred too late for the *Examiner* to carry. They were: the blowing up of the *Aud* and its cargo by Karl Spindler at the entrance to Cork Harbour early on Saturday morning, and the tragedy at Ballykissane pier which had happened a few hours previous to that.

It had been proposed by Volunteer headquarters to dismantle the wireless station at Caherciveen and set up a transmitter in Tralee with which to make contact with the German arms ship. On Good Friday morning a party of men left Dublin to carry out this work, little knowing they were engaging in an utterly futile task, for the *Aud* had already come—and gone. The party consisted of Denis Daly, Con Keating, Donal Sheehan, Charles Monaghan and Colm Ó Lochlainn. Daly was in charge of the party. Con Keating was the one man of them all who was an expert on wireless installation. The members of the party had separated at Kingsbridge station and were travelling in different compartments. Their immediate destination was Killarney, where two cars from Limerick would be waiting to convey them to Caherciveen and, afterwards, to Tralee.

One of the Limerick cars, a new twenty horse-power Briscoe American open touring car, belonged to John J. Quilty, the son of an old '67 man, the other, a Maxwell, belonged to Tommy MacInerney, a garage owner. Both men were members of the Limerick city battalion of the Irish Volunteers. It had been originally arranged that Quilty would drive his own car, but a domestic circumstance which occurred a few days previously made it impossible for him to travel. He

then decided to select Sam Windrim, a munitions worker in the firm of J. P. Evans and Co., Thomas Street, Limerick, to drive in his place. He called at the works and explained to Windrim that he wanted him to go on a Volunteer job immediately. Windrim asked "what about my job?" and Quilty replied, "Your job will have to go by the board." "All right!" came Windrim's reply. The pair then crossed the street to Tommy MacInerney's garage and went to an upstairs office, where MacInerney and James Ledden, honorary colonel of the Volunteers, were waiting for them. Windrim was sworn into the I.R.B. there and then.

After the oath had been administered, Quilty told Windrim that the enterprise he was to engage in was a very dangerous one, which might even result in the loss of his own life. He then asked Windrim, before any further instructions would be given to him, to say whether he was still willing to go ahead. Windrim replied that he was, whereupon he was told that they were going on a gun-running expedition, and would first have to pick up five Volunteers at Killarney Railway Station. Quilty then told MacInerney and Windrim to be at his house, Western Cottage, Rossbrien, at about two o'clock that afternoon, when he would hand over his car to them. They arrived at 2.15 in Tommy MacInerney's car.

It had been Quilty's intention that Windrim would drive his car, and it was to Windrim he gave the car. However, MacInerney, the senior officer asked Windrim to drive his car, while he drove Quilty's car. MacInerney led the way. As a precaution against identity of the owner, Quilty had altered the number plates on his car so that they now read TI 174 instead of IK 174.

Before setting out, the drivers had been made conversant with the sign and password by which they would be recognised at Killarney station. The Dublin Volun-

teers, on recognising them by a fistful of grass, which one or the other of them would hold in his hand, would ask the question, "Are you from Michael?" to which MacInerney or Windrim would reply, "Yes, who are you?" The Dublin men's reply to that would be "I am from William." After which the Limerick man would show the grass in his hand. When Windrim remarked on the fact that they had nearly six hours in which to complete the journey to Killarney, at that time, at most, a two and a half hour journey by car, MacInerney told him that the extra time was to allow for the repair of punctures, or any other repairs that might become necessary on the road. In the event of their being challenged as to their movements anywhere along the way, they had arranged that they both be on the one word, that they were going to Killarney to pick up a Colonel Warrick and his party.

They reached Newcastle West at about 3.30 p.m. to be confronted by a large force of police, armed with rifles, forming a cordon across the road. Evidently the news of the finding of the collapsible boat that morning at Banna strand, and of Casement's subsequent arrest, had already reached the police here. MacInerney, and Windrim, were ordered out of their cars, which were then thoroughly searched, but without anything of an incriminating nature being found in them—apart from an unusually large supply of petrol. Both had revolvers in their pockets but their persons were not searched. They were next asked to produce their driving licences. Sam Windrim's was out of date and an explanation was asked for, as well as an explanation as to the reason for all the extra tins of petrol.

Tommy MacInerney explained that the two cars had been hired by wire for the Easter holidays, and that he did not know where the tour would take them, but that, in all probability, they would be away from petrol supplies. Regarding the expired

driving licence, he stated that Sam Windrim was not an ordinary motor driver, but that urgently requiring a driver he had asked him to help him out, even though he knew his driving licence was out of date. These explanations seemed to satisfy the police, and both men were let pass.

A few miles beyond Newcastle West, Sam Windrim began to sound his car horn continuously, signalling Tommy MacInerney to stop. MacInerney stopped and Sam pointed out to him a certain anomaly in the registered numbers of the cars. The Briscoe, a practically new car, was numbered TI 174 and the Maxwell, which was more than twelve months old was numbered TI 172, numbers far too close to each other for comfort on such a mission as theirs. But nothing could be done at this stage, and they could only hope that no policemen would be as observant as Sam had been.

The weather was good and the cars were going well. Abbeyfeale was quiet, but about ten miles beyond the town they met an armed patrol of Royal Irish Constabulary on bicycles at a sharp bend. MacInerney rounded the bend rather fast and took the patrol somewhat by surprise, so that they allowed him to pass unchallenged. Sam Windrim, however, was stopped by them. Among the police was a Sergeant Kennedy, at that time a weights and measures sergeant in Limerick, and he recognised Windrim. When he asked Windrim to show his driving licence, Windrim gave the same explanation as had been given to the police in Newcastle West. This satisfied Sergeant Kennedy and he allowed Windrim to pass, remarking that he had recognised Tommy MacInerney in the first car, and expressing a wish to be remembered to both drivers' mothers.

There was no sign of any police activity in Castleisland when they drove through the town at about six p.m. They were now only thirteen miles from Killarney and as they had two hours to spare, they drove

very slowly. When they were about three miles from Killarney, they stopped and divided their revolver ammunition, two boxes of fifty going to each. As well, they collected the fistfuls of grass which would be used for identification purposes.

They arrived in Killarney at 7.15 p.m., three-quarters of an hour before the appointed time. By now the weather had changed and it was dark and misty and had all the appearance of remaining so for the night. Having had nothing to eat since they left Limerick, they stopped at a public house and had two glasses of wine. They then walked to the station in order to familiarise themselves with the place. It was now raining very heavily. At eight o'clock they drove to the station, but Tommy MacInerney who was leading, missed the entrance, due to a rather misleading sign post. Sam Windrim did not make this mistake and drove into the railway yard. In a few minutes, Tommy MacInerney, having realised his mistake, returned, drove into the yard and took up his position behind Sam Windrim's car. This now left Sam Windrim's car in the lead.

Tommy MacInerney got out of his car and was immediately approached by a man who spoke to him. Sam Windrim then got out and joined the other two. The man who had spoken to Tommy MacInerney was one of the five Volunteers who had come from Dublin, and his identity having been established by means of the agreed passwords and sign, he told the Limerick men that they would meet the rest of his party outside the town. He also said that if they were challenged by the police while going through the town he would say that he was Mike Harton's son from Waterville, and that the new car was being taken to his father with a view to selling it, and the second car was to take the drivers home should the sale come off.

The Limerick men agreed to this with the greatest reluctance, as they did not

wish to deviate from the story about their being hired by Colonel Warrick, which they had told the police in Newcastle West. They believed that the Colonel Warrick story had already been phoned ahead of them. The Volunteer from Dublin, whose name they did not learn, then got in beside Sam Windrim, as his was the leading car, and they set off. The night had turned very murky, and once they were outside the town the stranger began to study a map with the aid of a flash lamp. When they had travelled about two miles Sam Windrim noticed four men carrying suitcases walking on the left-hand side of the road. His companion told him to stop. He did so, and seconds afterwards Tommy MacInerney drew up abreast of him. Two of the men got into Sam Windrim's car and the other two got into Tommy MacInerney's.

Sam then asked if any of the men could tell him the way without having to use a map and flash lamp. One man spoke up and said that he could take him there blindfolded; at the same time he told the man who had been sitting beside Windrim since they left Killarney to go into the other car. This left Windrim with two men and MacInerney with three.

Before the cars moved off, Windrim shouted to MacInerney and asked which of them would lead, but before he got a reply the man who said he knew the road ordered Sam Windrim to lead. As this man seemed to be in charge, Windrim asked him how far more they had to travel and how long the journey would take. He was told that they were going to Caherciveen and that they would have to be there by midnight. Windrim suggested that, since they had time to spare, he should drive slowly, but was told to drive on at his normal speed and that they could wait outside Caherciveen if they arrived too early. The man who was acting as guide was, in fact, Denis Daly; the other Volunteer in Windrim's car was Colm Ó Lochlainn.

Before they reached Killorglin, Daly gave Windrim a choice of roads. Up to this time MacInerney's headlights had been constantly visible to those in the leading car. Given a choice of roads, Windrim chose a road to the left in order to avoid a hilly section that lay ahead on the road he had been travelling. At this stage he lost sight of the headlights of the other car. Passing through Killorglin at about 9.15, a policeman made an attempt to stop them but Windrim shot past him. When they were within a few miles of Caherciveen, they stopped and waited for the arrival of the second car. Time slipped by and still there was no sign of MacInerney's car. They began to grow uneasy and wondered what had happened.

What had happened was that at first MacInerney had some trouble with his car, and while he was repairing the defect the leading car became lost to view. Then when they were a short distance from Killorglin, a policeman held them up and was proving so inquisitive that Keating finally drew his revolver and ordered him off. MacInerney was not sure which way he should turn after he had driven through Killorglin and enquired the way of a young girl. She told him, "First turn to the right." Having taken the first turn to the right, MacInerney was still in some doubt and asked Keating if he thought they were on right road—the road, in fact, ended on Ballykissane Pier. Keating replied that he was absolutely certain. MacInerney put on speed and seconds later the car shot over the pier head and into the water. MacInerney succeeded in getting out of the car and so did Keating. The two men swam together for a little while, shouting for help. After a few minutes, MacInerney heard Keating utter the words, "Jesus, Mary and Joseph," after which he sank out of sight. A friendly resident carrying a light came on the scene and with his aid MacInerney reached the shore. He was the only one to be saved. The three who died in the

tragedy of Ballykissane were Donal Sheehan of Rollison's Bridge, Templeglantine, Newcastle West, Con Keating, of Caherciveen, and Charles Monaghan of Belfast. They were the first to give their lives for Ireland at that Eastertime of 1916.

As for the men in the other car, they waited two hours in Caherciveen, and when MacInerney's car had not arrived at the end of that time, they knew something had gone amiss. As Keating was the only one who understood wireless installation, they had no choice but to abandon their plans. Sam Windrim drove them back to Killarney, over a terrifying mountain road, and from Killarney they returned to Dublin by train.

Explaining the inactivity of Kerry at Easter, 1916, after all the brave preparations that had been made, Desmond Ryan, the historian of the Rising, says: "The events that paralysed Kerry were, a tragedy at Ballykissane Pier, the sudden arrival of Casement, the arrest of Austin Stack."⁴⁶

Confusion began to spread through the local Volunteer commands as the news from Kerry trickled through. On Holy Saturday, Commandant Liam Manahan of the Galtee Battalion, Limerick Brigade, issued orders for Sunday manoeuvres at Galbally, but altered company routes and meeting points in order to avoid any clash with military raiding parties. Some of his officers opposed the idea of any parade with arms because it exposed the weapons to the risk of capture.

In Limerick city, Commandant M. P. Colivet spent Holy Saturday wondering what was going to happen the following day. Seán Fitzgibbon of Headquarters Staff had hurried back to Dublin from Limerick on hearing of the happenings in Kerry. Before he left, he had been requested by Colivet to send back a code message that would tell them whether the Rising was "off" or "on".

Colivet then dispatched Lieutenant Paddy Whelan to Tralee to find out what he

could about the position there. When no word came from Dublin, Colivet sent out dispatches cancelling all arrangements in his command for the time being, but with the warning that further orders would follow. Still very anxious to hear from headquarters, he sent Lieutenant Seamus Gubbins to Dublin by an afternoon train. Failing to meet Eoin MacNeill, Lieutenant Gubbins went to the house where Seán MacDermott was staying and spoke with Seán there.

"The place", he tells us, "was a hive of activity. Many men were present and others were constantly arriving; stands of rifles were arranged along the walls. It seemed as if everyone in Dublin must know that an insurrection was due to take place on the morrow. Cumann na mBan girls were serving teas in an atmosphere of cheerfulness and good humour. MacDermott, debonair as usual, exchanged pleasantries with those present."⁴⁷

In reply to Gubbins's query, MacDermott told him that the Rising would definitely take place, and that further German arms ships were expected. He also strongly recommended that Limerick officers should resist arrest should such be attempted, as such resistance would strengthen the morale of Volunteers elsewhere. The code telegram "The books have arrived"—meaning "The Rising is on"—was accordingly sent to Limerick.⁴⁸

Gubbins, stating that he could not now expect to be back in Limerick in time for the insurrection, requested that he should be posted to a Dublin unit, but MacDermott replied that his place was in Limerick.⁴⁹ Colivet had requested headquarters to supply him with some lorries, and on Saturday evening two lorries set out from Dublin for Limerick. Lieutenant Gubbins travelled on one of the lorries.

The anxiety of Colivet on that Holy Saturday afternoon and evening may be judged from the fact that a few hours after he had sent Lieutenant Gubbins to Dublin

he was at the railway station seeing Captain Liam Forde off to the same destination on a somewhat similar mission. And he was not the only one who was seeing Captain Forde off, for also at the station were two "G" men. In order to deceive the "G" men Forde had bought a ticket to Limerick Junction only, and when the train reached Dromkeen he left the carriage in which he was travelling and got into one in which there was only one occupant, who proved to be a soldier home from the front. They got into conversation, and Forde explained to his companion that he was in some kind of political trouble, and asked if he would mind changing his hat, coat and scarf with him. The soldier readily consented, and the change was made.⁵⁰

It could be taken as certain that the police in Tipperary had been notified by their colleagues in Limerick of Forde's having purchased a ticket to Limerick Junction, and, also, that they had been given a description of him. But the exchange Forde had made with the soldier must have completely put them off. Forde reached Dublin without being subjected to any further attention from "G" men or police.

Like Seamus Gubbins a few hours earlier, Liam Forde went to Seán MacDermott's lodgings (where he stayed that night)⁵¹ and conveyed to Seán the latest news from Kerry and Limerick, telling him as well of a suggestion from Colivet that, in view of what had happened, the Rising should be postponed. To Seán, who had toiled for years to bring the day of insurrection near, the suggestion that the Rising should be postponed was intolerable. He said he was determined that the Rising should take place, even if they had only sticks and stones to fight with, and added bitterly that there were too many philosophers in the country. In the intensity of his feelings he became physically sick.

The long-awaited Easter Sunday of 1916 dawned. This was to have been the day of the Great Uprising. Instead, it turned

out to be the day of the Great Confusion. Eoin MacNeill's countermanding order, calling off the Easter "manoeuvres", which was published in that day's *Sunday Independent*, left the country Volunteers in utter confusion. This was their first real intimation of divided counsels in the Volunteer command in Dublin.

Before he was dressed that morning MacDermott was shown MacNeill's countermanding order. Forde tells us that it drove him frantic. He rent the coat of his pyjamas to shreds, crying inconsolably that we were betrayed again. He dressed and walked to Liberty Hall, accompanied by Forde.⁵²

Now in calmer mood, MacDermott agreed that they should rise, if only with pikes and bayonets; that even though defeated, their blood would regenerate the nation. Arrived at Liberty Hall, he disappeared into one of its many rooms. Forde had breakfast with Clarke, Connolly and Ceannt, and was waited on by Countess Markievicz. The other three left after breakfast to attend a meeting which lasted until about 4 p.m. Then Pearse emerged, and placing his arm affectionately around Forde's shoulder, told him everything was "off" for the present, but added: "Hold yourself in readiness for further orders."⁵³

He provided a motor car for Forde as far as Cashel, in order that he would convey a message to Pierce MacCann. Forde conveyed the message, hired another car at Cashel and reported back to the Limerick Volunteer command at Killonan at midnight.

On Easter Sunday morning, The O'Rahilly had arrived in Limerick with written instructions for Colivet from MacNeill, stating, "Volunteers completely deceived. All orders for to-morrow, Sunday, cancelled." The O'Rahilly also told Colivet of the serious differences at the Dublin headquarters, and confirmed that the German arms ship was lost and the arms gone. Colivet at once issued final

orders cancelling arrangements for the outside units of his command, but decided to take the city battalion to Batt Laffan's farm at Killonan to camp out there in the usual way as if nothing had happened. These decisions were taken after he had consulted with his staff. Later in the day Lieutenant Gubbins returned from Dublin with the two lorries sent by Seán MacDermott in response to a request which Colivet had forwarded by Seán Fitzgibbon.

One hundred and thirty Volunteers paraded for the march to Killonan on Easter Sunday morning. All were from the city battalion which, at full strength, never exceeded two hundred men. It was a wet, chilly morning, and as it was now clear that the Rising had been at least postponed, forty or fifty of the Volunteers returned to the city. On Sunday afternoon Colivet received Fitzgibbon's code message stating that the Rising was off. At midnight, as already stated, Captain Forde arrived from Dublin with Pearse's message cancelling all arrangements, but with a warning added to be ready for further orders.

About one hundred and fifty Volunteers assembled under the command of Commandant Charlie Wall at Glenquin Castle in west Limerick. They were drawn principally from the following companies (names of commanders given in brackets): Monegea (Dan Conway and Dan Collins); Templeglantine (Mossie Leahy); Killoughteen (Jim Somers and Dan MacCarthy); Newcastle West (B. Moone and M. J. O'Gorman); Tournafulla (M. Harnett and T. Leahy); Ashford (Mick Begley and Jackie Noonan); Raheenagh (Dick Anglim); Broadford (David Brennan); Ardagh (Paddy Drinane and P. Ambrose); Athca company was ready to march to Glenquin but did not arrive there in time for the mobilisation, due to a delay in the delivery of the mobilisation order.⁵⁴

Two chaplains were in attendance, Father Tom Wall, C.C., Dromcollogher and

Father Michael Hayes, C.C., Newcastle West. These were the two patriotic priests whose names were soon to figure prominently in the historic exchange of letters between Doctor O'Dwyer, bishop of Limerick, and Brigadier-General Sir John Maxwell, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Ireland. Also in attendance was Captain J. MacInerney from Limerick, who, because of previous military experience, was appointed Director of Operations and second in command to Commandant Wall.

Some police also had come along and were taking more than common interest in the proceedings. And Fitzgerald's bread van arrived with three days' rations! As the immediate task of the Volunteers was, according to instructions, to control the railway line from Abbeyfeale to Limerick, along which the arms' train was expected to pass, some of the leaders had been suggesting Barnagh as a more suitable assembly point. But it was Glenquin Castle that was chosen, that lordly pile that dominates a whole countryside near Saint Ita's, Killeedy. O'Hallinans, O'Briens, O'Hanlons, Geraldines, this proud keep had seen them all come and go, but it had never seen such a hosting of true men as it saw on that Easter Sunday of 1916. It must have been some strange ancestral call that drew the West Limerick Volunteers to that storied Castle of Glenquin about which so much legend and song had been woven:

*O stately relic of the past that time
cannot destroy!*

*O noble haunt of Norman Knight and
Limerick's pride and joy!*

*You look so high and haughty—what
thoughts your heart within,*

*As you look down on Killeedy, O Castle
of Glenquin.*

*Below your rugged bosom the plains
of Limerick lie,*

*And stretch to where the Galtees are
pencilled on the sky;
The Feale is not too distant, and the
Shannon is down by Glin—
But you're the host to strangers,
O Castle of Glenquin!*

*Your walls have echoed laughter and
the dreaded battle call;
You sheltered knight and maiden in
your cold and silent hall;
Music swelled from out your chambers,
oft times, too, war's awful din,
In the ages of your glory,
O Castle of Glenquin!*

*Not even far Knockfierna or Knockainey's
storied slopes,
Ever saw the things that you did:
surging tides of clashing hopes—
Gael and Gall in endless struggle
Limerick's fields so fair to win;
Now you gaze on peaceful homesteads,
O Castle of Glenquin!*

*Your towering walls are looking down
where holy Ita trod,
And where hunted priest and people
met in fear to greet their God;
Where the Mass Rock still is treasured
Limerick's hallowed glens within,
There you stand, a timeless sentry,
O Castle of Glenquin!*

*Around you trod in ancient days a
proud and kingly race—
The Gael's own tongue on every lip,
a light on every face;
The peace of God and saintly lore
and tales of Conn and Finn;
Alas! alas! how faded now,
O Castle of Glenquin!*

*Behind you winds the climbing road
to Tour and Inchebawn,
Where grandda lived and Mary Wright*

*—alas! now dead and gone!
They spoke in tones I hear not now,
monnar go deo é sin!
For Ireland's tongue you've seen decline,
O Castle of Glenquin!*

*But keep your haughty head on high,
and lose not clay or stone,
For yet you'll see the Irish race their
Róisín Dubh enthrone;
Is cloisfidh tú arís gan gó ár dteanga
bhlasta bhinn,
Whose flame but fades to flash anew,
O Castle of Glenquin!*

The leaders had arranged that when zero hour arrived, the policemen would be seized and made prisoners. The men would then be told that the Rising had begun, and any man not willing to take part would be free to withdraw. The only condition to be imposed on those withdrawing was that they were not to return home directly, but were to remain all night on the hills.⁵⁵ But before the hour for action struck, an officer arrived from Limerick with MacNeill's countermanding order. Here in Glenquin, as in all parts of Ireland, that fatal countermanding order was like the snapping of the cord of a powerfully bent bow just as the arrow was about to be shot.

The West Limerick men carried out some drill and engaged in some field exercises; and before they finally disbanded and set out for home they were blessed by Father wall and Father Hayes.

In the spring of 1965, Charlie Wall, who was in command at Glenquin, received a letter from Thomas Leahy, a west Limerick man, residing in Pearse Street, Dublin. Mr. Leahy suggested to Mr. Wall that the hosting at Glenquin should be commemorated by the erection of a suitably inscribed plaque on the Castle. In the course of his letter he said:

"I was at Glenquin on that Easter Sunday. I was with the Tournafulla

corps, with Mossie Harnett in charge. Templeglantine were there with Mossie Leahy in charge. Killoughteen—I don't remember who was in charge. Newcastle West, Mick Joe Gorman; Killeedy, Dick Anglim; Monagea, Dan Conway or Dan Collins; Dromcollogher and Broadford, your good self. I don't remember any of the other corps that mobilized there. Athea had a corps and Rathkeale had a corps, but I don't remember them at Glenquin. Father Wall and Father Hayes were there with us for some time, and I can remember Fitzgerald's bakery van parked on the road in front of Glenquin Castle. And I counted twelve R.I.C. on the road, all with carbines; and I can remember twelve of your Volunteers with Mauser rifles and fixed bayonets inside the wall of the yard of the Castle, and the drilling in the fields near the castle. But I would think there were more than 150 Volunteers. We in Tournafulla had about forty men, and I'd say that was about average for the corps. . . ."

Over in south-east Limerick on that fateful Easter Sunday of 1916, the Galtee battalion was already moving off when MacNeill's message was received. The message, which was handed to Commandant Liam Manahan at 11.30 a.m., had been brought into Mitchelstown by The O'Rahilly. Although MacNeill, as chief-of-staff, had ordered the cancelling of all movements of Volunteers that day, Manahan decided to go ahead with some show of manoeuvres until more definite news reached him. He was short of dispatch riders, and the few he had were badly overworked, but still he managed to warn several companies that were poorly armed to route march in their own areas until further orders. That done, he carried out manoeuvres with companies from Galbally, Kilross, Tipperary, Ballylanders, Mitchelstown and some other units. At 7 p.m. he

received confirmation of MacNeill's order from Cork, Limerick and Tipperary.⁵⁶

Officers from different units drew Manahan's attention to the weariness of the men, and stated their opinion that prolonged night marching in the bad weather they were then having would only dishearten their followers. Moreover, there was the urgency of safely disposing of their arms before morning. When no further orders reached Manahan the battalion was dismissed, company by company.⁵⁷

Thus passed Easter Sunday, 1916, in Limerick, a day that belongs to the calendar of the great might-have-beens of Irish History.

Came Easter Monday, 1916. Lieutenant P. Whelan returned to Limerick city from his visit to Tralee, where he had interviewed Monteith. Monteith had told him that no men were coming from Germany, that the arms ship was lost, that "the Germans were out for cheap Irish blood," and that the best thing the Volunteers in the south could do was to try and bluff through.⁵⁸

Between 1.30 and 2 p.m. Miss Agnes Daly and Miss Laura Daly delivered to Colivet a message from Pearse, which said: "Dublin Brigade goes into action to-day. Carry out your orders." Colivet immediately summoned a meeting of all available Volunteer officers. After some discussion, it was decided that, as the orders relating to Limerick were based on the assumption that a successful landing of the arms from the German arms ship would be effected, and that as the arms had not been landed, it was now impossible to carry out the orders. By this time there were, in fact, only seventy-six of the city battalion left in Killonan camp, and the outlying units had been demobilised. There was an unanimous decision that in view of all the facts nothing could be done. The Volunteers at Killonan were marched back to Limerick under dismal rainy skies and

dismissed, after which they returned to their homes with their arms, very much on the alert, as they expected that an attempt by the British to disarm them was imminent. The local British military forces, consisting of 2,000 infantry, two batteries of artillery and smaller units, took over complete charge of the city. They held all the roads, and erected and manned barricades at the bridges. But no attempt was made to arrest any of the Volunteer officers.

The man of all men best qualified to comment on what happened in Ireland at Easter, 1916, was Desmond Ryan, a trained and painstaking historian of great integrity, a close friend of Pearse, and himself a participant in the Rising. This is what he had to say:

"The arms landing had failed, and the fatal hitch in the insurrectionist plans was already spreading doubt and disaster through the provinces, and was soon to cause havoc in the Dublin councils. Already romantic insurrection was proceeding according to history's somewhat fatalistic plan, and 1916 was well on the way to an inglorious fiasco. Only a last-minute and determined act of will in Dublin was to shatter that depressing and too-familiar pattern of history, and change the path of Irish history for ever, even though at a cost of blood, tragedy and tears. Or in a word, seven men in Dublin, who by one slight slip, had ruined months of hard work and planning, saved their cause at the cost of their lives. Fate, which had served them badly, relented then, and gave them victory in their graves."⁵⁹

When news of the fighting in Dublin reached Limerick, Colivet, Clancy and the remaining officers of the Limerick command were greatly distressed that circumstances outside their control should have rendered them helpless when Dublin asked their aid in the fight. They thought that some of the officers might be able to go to Dublin, but Father Hennessy,

O.S.A., their chaplain, told them that their place was in Limerick to take charge in such a crisis. On Tuesday, 25 April, Colivet called a final meeting of his staff, the board of management and all officers who had been concerned in the previous discussions, and the crisis was fully discussed. A vote was then taken, and it was decided by a majority of ten to six that nothing could be done.⁶⁰

After midnight on Easter Monday, Liam Manahan, who was at Ardpark, was roused by a Volunteer captain who told him of rumours that had come from Kilmallock of fighting in Dublin. Next morning Manahan made a tour of various local centres to collect as many dispatch riders as he could, and thus be ready for any definite news or orders that might come. He held his dispatch riders all day, but no news came from Dublin; nothing only rumour. Like the altar in a Greek church, Dublin was shut off and the sacrifice was being offered unseen by the eyes of the multitude. Manahan's dispatch riders stood to all night. On Wednesday, two of them were sent to Limerick to find out how things stood there, and an attempt was made to get in touch with Cork. The messengers reported demobilisation everywhere. At last, at 9.30 p.m., a disappointed and baffled Manahan allowed his dispatch riders to go home.⁶¹

Half an hour later two of the Galbally dispatch riders arrived back with a stranger whom the Galbally officers thought Manahan should meet. The stranger was none other than Seán Treacy, who was then aged about twenty and unknown to Manahan. He had come from Pierce MacCann, County Commandant, Tipperary. He told Manahan that fighting was still going on in Dublin, and that Commandant MacCann and other officers were eager to do something, and for that reason were anxious to get in touch with Limerick. A section in Tipperary, Treacy said, were keen on action, and if the Galtee

battalion was mobilised they would fall in with it.⁶²

Some of the officers present were critical of Treacy's arguments in favour of action at this stage, but Manahan, moved by his earnestness, and still hopeful that the Galtee men might have an opportunity of striking a blow, ordered remobilisation. By midnight he had again succeeded in gathering his dispatch riders together, and these he immediately sent off to get in touch with the dispersed units. By 6 a.m. on Thursday the Ballylanders company was on the march, with Galbally company moving in to join it. Arrangements were made to cut communications, dismantle telegraph and telephone wires and build up a supply of arms and ammunition.⁶³

Soon it was clear that successful mobilisation of the entire battalion area was no longer possible. The confusion of the past few days, the lack of clear directions, the contradictory rumours, and the definite news that Cork had demobilised and that Limerick had decided not to move, all these factors combined to convince the vast majority of the Galtee men that it would be sheer madness on their part to attempt to go into the fight then. But the Galtee men would be heard of again, beginning with a brave day when they would help to snatch Seán Hogan from the jaws of death at Knocklong Railway Station.

Early on the morning of that Thursday of Easter Week, 1916, when the devouring flames were beginning to close in on the Insurgent headquarters in Dublin's General Post Office, Manahan down in Galbally at last reluctantly admitted to himself that nothing could be done in his battalion area.

Seán Treacy was bitterly disappointed, and pleaded with Manahan for some action, and if Manahan's head was not with Treacy his heart certainly was. Treacy then tried to get a few men to go with him to Tipperary and Limerick Junction to blow up

bridges. He had earlier proposed an attack on Ballylanders police barracks, but this was now impracticable. Journeying on his vain mission through the Galtee region of south-east Limerick, and having the reports of general inaction and collapse confirmed at every step, Treacy ultimately came to realise that all that he had heard in Ballylanders was only too true, and that as far as the south was concerned the Rising was already over.⁶⁴

And so no blow was struck in Limerick at Easter, 1916. But weathering the merciless hail of shot and shell in Dublin were Limerick men, who "fought the good clean fight" and are immortal, dead. Twenty-year-old Con Colbert was there. Born at Moanleana, near Newcastle West, Con went with his people to live in nearby Athca when a youth, and so is usually described as being of the latter place. After leaving school he secured employment as a clerk at Kennedy's Bakery, in Parnell Street, Dublin. In Dublin he became a pioneer of Fianna Éireann, which was natural enough for one who was of Fenian stock from both sides; and during his summer holidays he used to cycle through the country in his Fianna uniform endeavouring to enrol new members in the movement. The spirit of this brave west Limerick youth may be judged from some verses that he wrote at this time:—

*May sharp swords fall on Ireland's foe,
May all her hills be rifle-lined;
May I be there to deal a blow
For Ireland, Faith and Womankind.*

*And may the song of battle soon
Be heard from every hill and vale;
May I be with the marching men
Who fight to free our Gráinne Mhaol.*

Pearse asked him to become drill instructor at Saint Enda's, and Con readily agreed. Pearse immediately put him on the pay roll of the school as one of the staff,

but an indignant Con asked that his name be struck out as he was not willing to accept any payment for his services as instructor to the Saint Enda boys. And Con's pay as a clerk at that time was meagre enough. He joined the Volunteers at their inception, and now became drill instructor to the Volunteers. In the fateful weeks leading up to the Rising, he acted as body-guard to Tom Clarke, and when Easter Week came he saw action with the Marrowbone Lane garrison.

Recalling the memory of Con Colbert, Brian O'Higgins wrote:

"Tom Clarke held him in high esteem; Mac Piarais trusted him as a friend and comrade ever welcome at the Hermitage; Éamon Ceannt loved him and he was forever singing his praises. So spiritual was he that he abstained from meat during the seven weeks of Lent and, like Mellows, he was always slipping quietly away to say the Coróin Mhuire in the shadows of some Dublin church."⁶⁵

When the surrender came at the end of Easter Week, Con Colbert, the soul of chivalry always, assumed command of his post in order to save the life of his superior officer.⁶⁶ That explains the reference in *Dark Rosaleen's Last Chaplet*—

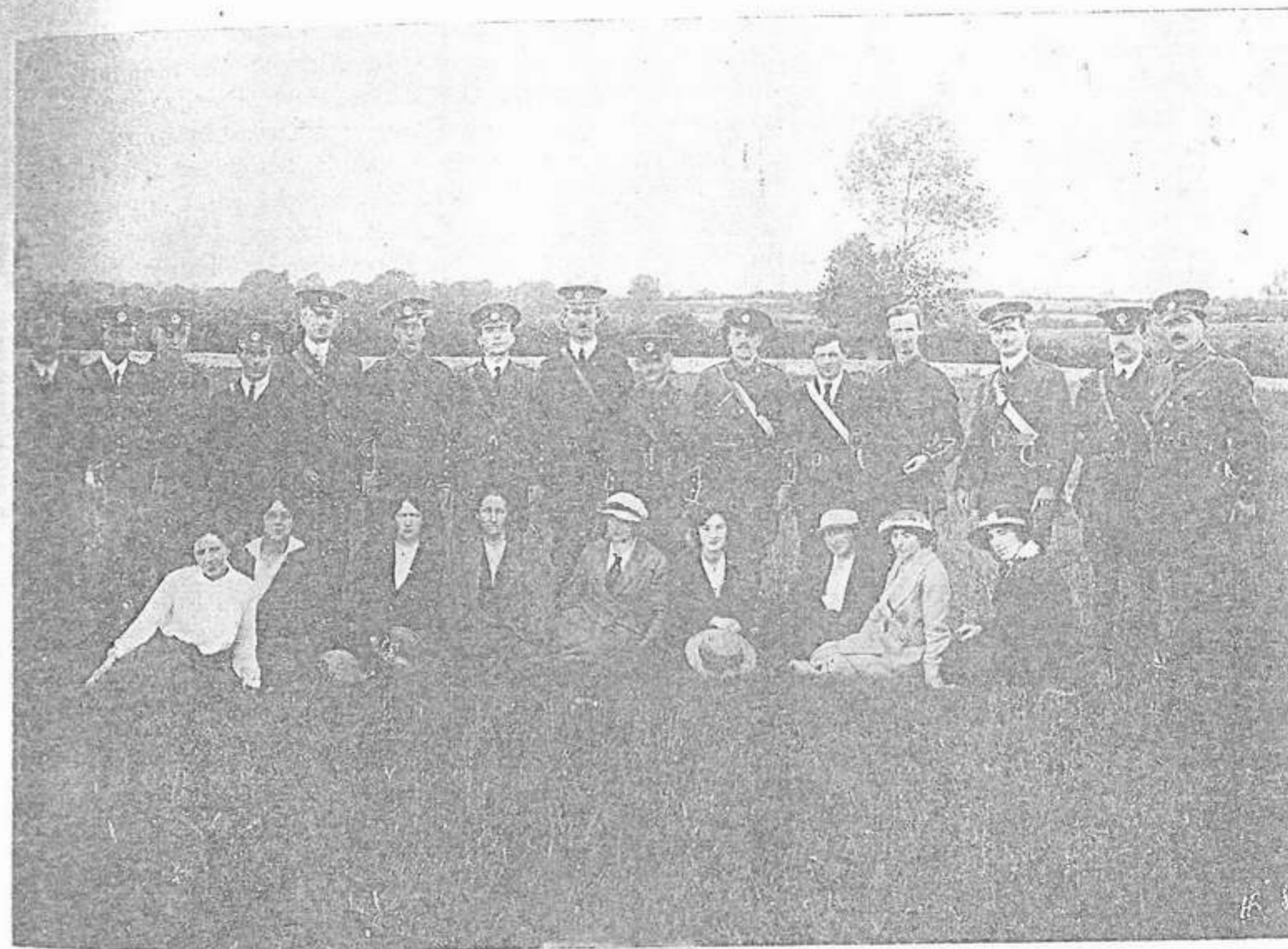
*I saw Colbert choose a felon's death
that a comrade might go free,
And much is pardoned to one who hat-
loved another as much as he.*

Con Colbert was executed on 8 May, 1916. He was the youngest of all the 1916 leaders to face a British firing squad. What Father Augustine, O.F.M. Cap., who attended him in his last moments, wrote of him may be found earlier in this issue.⁶⁷

Ned Daly of Limerick also was in the heart of the fight in Dublin. And again, one could say of Ned Daly, as of Con

Colbert, *Ba dhual dó é*—it was kind for him. He was son of Edward Daly, a Fenian who took part in the '67 Rising, and he was nephew of John Daly, one of the greatest of the Fenians, a man who for his patriotic activities had spent more than twelve years in English jails. It was while he was a prisoner that John Daly first met Tom Clarke, who was later to marry his niece, Ned Daly's sister.

Ned Daly was employed in the firm of May Roberts, wholesale chemists, Westmoreland Street, Dublin. He joined the Volunteers at their inception, and was appointed Captain of "B" Company, First Battalion, Dublin Brigade, early in 1914. Later that year he made a very favourable impression on his senior officers for the efficient manner in which he handled his men at the Howth gun-running. At the



GROUP OF LIMERICK CITY VOLUNTEERS AND CUMANN NA MBAN

Front row, l. to r.: Mrs. Bermingham, Mrs. G. Clancy, Miss Downey, Mrs. MacCormack, Mrs. Crowe, Eileen O'Donoghue, Siún O'Farrell, Madge Daly, Carrie Daly.
Back row, l. to r.: Ned O'Toole, James O'Driscoll, Alph. O'Halloran, John Grant, Jim Ledden, Liam Forde, George Clancy, David Hennessy, Jimmy Kirby, Jimmy McInerney, Stephen Dineen, Michael Colivet, Jim Dalton, Patrick Walsh, Captain Robert Monteith.

beginning of 1915 he was gazetted Commandant of the First Battalion, Dublin Brigade, and at the O'Donovan Rossa funeral in the summer of that year, he had supreme command of the Dublin Brigade.

On Easter Monday, 1916, he marched one hundred and fifty men into the Four Courts area, where some of the fiercest fighting of the week was to take place. Daly, with his grossly inadequate force, not only held his positions intact during the week, but made numerous successful incursions into enemy-held territory. He attacked, captured and demolished by fire the Linenhall Barracks, and after much bitter fighting drove the British military out of the Bridewell, a building that abutted on his own headquarters at the Four Courts. Ned Daly was executed on 4 May, 1916. He was not yet twenty-five years of age.

And from Bruce, in Limerick's Maigue country, had come Commandant Éamon de Valera, who had command of the Boland's Mills area, another area that was to see some fierce fighting, and that was destined to be the last Volunteer position to capitulate at the end of that greatest week in Irish history.

Éamon Dore, formerly of Glin, County Limerick, but now of William Street, Limerick, was another of the Limerick men who took part in the Rising in Dublin. Éamon attended Rockwell College during the years 1912, 1913 and 1914, and while there, was initiated into the I.R.B. by P.C. O'Mahony, I.R.B. organiser. Also initiated on that occasion was the professor of French in the college, Liam O'Donnell, who subsequently joined the Holy Ghost Order, and spent years as a missionary in Africa, returning home only when his health broke down.

In 1914, Éamon went to U.C.D. as a medical student, and on the occasion of his transfer to a Dublin I.R.B. centre was introduced to Tom Clarke and Seán MacDermott by Professor O'Donnell. In 1915, he became courier for the Supreme

Council of the I.R.B., and subsequently visited Belfast and the west several times. In the west he met Liam Mellows, then organising in that region, and in the north his contact was Denis MacCulloch, President of the Supreme Council. It would seem, however, according to Éamon, that it was Clarke who was the real power in the Council.

A week before that fateful meeting in 1915 that decided on the date of the Rising, Éamon became bodyguard to Seán MacDermott. This was in addition to his appointment as courier to the Supreme Council. In January, 1916, he, together with Frank Daly, was sent to accompany Commandant Ned Daly, when it was decided that the time had come for the then Military Council to have "a heart to heart chat" with James Connolly.

Before leaving Dublin for his Easter holidays in 1916, Éamon arranged with Seán MacDermott that if the Rising was to take place as planned, a message was to be sent to him at his home in Glin. The message, which would be wired, was to read "Grind commences on 24th"—which would seem an appropriate enough message for a medical student to receive. On Holy Thursday, Éamon was notified to go that evening to Newcastle West Railway Station to meet Con Collins, who would be travelling from Dublin to Tralee, and who would have orders for him. He did not meet Collins, and went to the station again on Friday in the hope that Collins might show up. What had happened was that Collins had travelled to Tralee via Mallow, and had been arrested with Austin Stack on Friday morning in Tralee.

On Easter Monday, Éamon said good-bye to his parents at Glin, and travelled to Foynes, from where he got the train to Limerick. He left Limerick for Dublin by the 3.55 p.m. train. When the train reached Nenagh, the passengers were informed that it was proceeding no farther. Éamon spent that night in Nenagh, in a hotel

kept by a Miss Ryan. He had been told there might be an early train to Dublin on Tuesday morning, and he was at the station shortly after 6 a.m. A train did arrive, and left for Dublin, with Éamon and a few other passengers, at 6.30 a.m. But when they got to Ballybrophy they were turned back, and Éamon found himself back again in Limerick at about mid-day. As it was clear that there would now be no fighting in Limerick, he decided to go to Tralee, where he felt the Volunteers might have gone into action.

Just as he was about to leave the station, a notice was put on the notice board stating "Usual Train to Dublin at 3.55 p.m.". He decided to make another bid to get to Dublin. The train, when he ultimately boarded it, was packed. He got into a compartment in which were two ladies whose faces he thought he knew. They were, in fact, Laura and Nora Daly, sisters of Ned Daly and Mrs. Tom Clarke. Both of them were, of course, well known to Éamon. That was the first time Éamon met his future wife, for Nora Daly is now Mrs. Éamon Dore and Laura Daly is Mrs. Seamus O'Sullivan, of O'Connell Street, Limerick. Seamus O'Sullivan, like Éamon Dore, fought in the Rising in Dublin, but for Seamus the fight took place on home ground: he was a Dublin man—and proud of it.

The three got into conversation and Éamon recapitulated his odyssey of the previous two days, and when the ladies asked him what he now intended doing, he replied that he intended getting to Dublin, even if he had to walk there. His companions were equally determined to get there, and to take their places beside their brother Ned.

When they eventually arrived in Dublin at about 10.30 p.m. they found that Kingsbridge Station was completely held by British forces. They got out of the station without being searched, and set off down the quays, but were turned back

by British military. They then crossed over by Arbour Hill, and succeeded in reaching the North Circular Road, from where they continued their journey, by way of Drumcondra and Clonliffe Road, to Mrs. Clarke's house in Richmond Avenue. After resting for a little while, they resumed their strange nocturnal march through Dublin in insurrection. Finally, at about midnight, they reached the top of Parnell Street and looked down into O'Connell Street; then, without slackening their pace, they headed for the General Post Office.

"What a sight!" Éamon Dore will still exclaim as he recalls the phantasmagoric scene that met their eyes in O'Connell Street in the weird lamplight of that Easter Tuesday midnight of fifty years ago. British soldiers and their cavalry horses lay dead on the side of the street near the Gresham Hotel, and all the time one heard the sharp crack of rifles and the deadly chatter of machine guns. And above the General Post Office, proud and defiant, and giving meaning to it all, flew the tricolour flag of the newly-proclaimed Irish Republic, now in the process of being baptized in blood.

When they stepped into the General Post Office the atmosphere of calm that reigned there was well nigh incredible. There may have been excitement in the hearts of the men who, with arms in their hands, were guarding this headquarters of resurgent Ireland, but outwardly there was no sign of excitement, and one could almost imagine that this was an ordinary night in the lives of those gathered there. One of the first persons Éamon Dore met in the General Post Office was Jim Ryan, later Doctor Jim Ryan and Cabinet Minister, now a member of Seanad Éireann. He was an old friend and fellow student of Éamon's at University College Dublin, and now had charge of the casualty station. So fatigued was Éamon at this stage that he dropped off to sleep while

still talking to Jim Ryan. A few minutes later somebody awakened him and told him he was wanted by Seán Mac Dermott in a room in the front of the building. Éamon had been courier for the original military council and, since its formation with the inclusion of Connolly, was courier for the new body.

Nora and Laura Daly were already in the room when he entered. Also there were Pádraig Pearse and Willie Pearse, Tom Clarke, Seán MacDermott, James Connolly and Joseph Plunkett, the latter looking terribly ill. A meeting was in progress. Tom Clarke was presiding, and Seán MacDermott seemed to be acting as secretary. Apparently, after the leaders of the Rising had heard of the arrival of the Daly sisters in the building they decided that, as both ladies were known to the Volunteer leaders in Cork and Limerick, that another effort should be made through them to get these areas to rise, even at this stage. Éamon Dore was then asked if he would go out again and escort the two ladies through the British lines, and take them to Kingsbridge, from where, it was hoped, there would be a train at 6.30 a.m.—it was now after midnight on Tuesday—for Cork and Limerick.

Éamon and the Misses Daly then left the Post Office, and made their way, without any great difficulty, back to Mrs. Clarke's house, where they spent some hours. By daybreak they were on the move again and, following the route of the previous night, got as far as Mountjoy prison without incident. There was a military post at the prison at which they were obliged to stop. Éamon was taken away to be questioned by the British captain in charge of the post. He gave his name when asked, and told the captain he was escorting his two sisters to Kingsbridge Station, as they were anxious to get home, and he asked the captain for a written *Pass* that would facilitate their getting past the military posts on the way.

The captain declined to supply the *Pass*, but Éamon was satisfied when nobody had been sent back to ask the ladies their names, as the story about their being his sisters was one he had concocted only when he had been ushered into the presence of the captain. For the rest of the way, he told them when he rejoined them, they should take his name—little thinking that one of them would yet take his name permanently at the altar!

At Doyle's Corner, Phibsborough, Éamon was again taken away for questioning, and this time while the officer was questioning him a sergeant was sent back to ask the ladies their names. They said Dore. All three were allowed proceed. The next time they were stopped was at the corner of Cabra Road. Éamon was taken into a house and after being questioned asked for a *Pass* to Kingsbridge, as he had done at a Mountjoy, only to receive a like refusal.

They arrived at Kingsbridge at about a few minutes to 6.30 a.m. Both ladies succeeded in getting aboard the train, Laura Daly travelling to Limerick, where she delivered the message from the General Post Office to Commandant Colivet and Captain Clancy; Nora Daly travelling to Cork where she eventually found Commandant Tomás MacCurtain and Vice-Commandant Terence MacSwiney. She stayed that night at the MacSwiney house and was to be given a message for Dublin the following morning, but when morning came the two Cork officers decided that there was no message to send.

Éamon Dore got back from Kingsbridge to O'Connell Street by following much the same route as he had followed the previous night. Before reaching O'Connell Street, he had stood for a few seconds at the Hibernian Bank at the corner of Parnell Square and Parnell Street, and was surprised to hear English voices coming from almost over his head. He then realised that the Rotunda was occupied by British troops. In spite of that, he set off towards O'Connell Street,

endeavouring to appear like some casual stroller who was largely unaware of what was happening about him. He could now hear the sound of an artillery bombardment. There was a civilian standing at the corner of Henry Street, and Éamon asked him what the artillery was firing at, for the firing seemed very near. The stranger replied that Liberty Hall was being shelled, and as he spoke with an English accent Éamon concluded he was a British military spotter.

There were a few strands of barbed wire strung across the street, and Éamon decided at this stage to run for it. He had, however, to crawl under the wire, which made him a target for the British in the Hibernian Bank. Having come unscathed through this danger he now dashed for the gate leading into the General Post Office, which at that time was directly in the centre of the front face of the building under the pillars. During the few seconds he waited before being admitted, bullets struck to the right and left of him. Once inside, he straight away reported to Tom Clarke and Seán MacDermott that the Misses Daly had got to Kingsbridge and were now on their way to their separate destinations. He also reported where he had last seen British troops. James Connolly did not appear to believe that they could be in the Hibernian Bank area and went out into the street to see if he could find out for himself, and was slightly wounded.

The fires started on the opposite side of O'Connell Street, next day, Thursday, and the heat in the Post Office was almost unbearable. But the men stood at their posts firing from time to time and awaiting attack. Sometimes the noise was deafening, especially when the "Howth guns" were in action. On Friday the first incendiary shells hit the General Post Office and the garrison was gradually forced from floor to floor.

Eventually they were all gathered together on the ground floor, where they

awaited further orders, while the flames raged all round them—by now the flames had reached the cellars on the Prince's Street side. While they were waiting, a few men, Paddy Murray, Pat Weafer, Diarmuid Lynch and Éamon Dore, went into the cellars to move the stock of home made bombs away from the track of the fire.

Éamon Dore recalls having a meal at about 3 p.m. on Friday in a room in the second storey with Tom Clarke, Seán MacDermott (Éamon always speaks of him as Seán Mac Diarmada), Diarmuid Lynch and Seán MacGarry. Despite the grimness of the situation, it was a light-hearted meal, Tom Clarke, in particular, being in a mood for joking. Also present in the room was Father Flanagan of the Pro-Cathedral, who had come to the Post Office to attend to some of the dying and had been unable to leave the building because of the firing. In a humorous mood Seán MacGarry asked Father Flanagan: "Father, will we be damned for eating meat on Friday?"

"Why do you ask that Seán?" said Father Flanagan.

"Because, Father," said Seán laughingly, "we are going to chance it".

At about 5 p.m. on Friday, it was decided to evacuate the Post Office, and Éamon Dore was posted to take charge of the door into Henry Street, which was the only exit not under fire. A group of Volunteers were standing near the door, and Pádraig Pearse spoke to them and said that by their deed they would be remembered forever. Some of them were young, and being young were inclined to treat Pearse's prophetic words in light-hearted fashion.

When The O'Rahilly set off with a party of Volunteers in an endeavour to fight his way to Williams and Wood's factory in Parnell Street, Éamon Dore and his comrade Paddy Murray joined him. They dashed up Henry Street and soon ran into a hail of bullets. Éamon remembers

how he would instinctively jerk his head from side to side to avoid bullets. He saw The O'Rahilly shot dead, and saw Paddy Murray fall, badly wounded. He himself was hit in the heel, but didn't discover this until next day.

Éamon and about twenty Volunteers endeavoured to make their way in the general direction of Parnell Street, but were hampered at every step by gunfire and burning buildings. They spent Friday night on the alert in a disused building. On Saturday the order to surrender reached them. They marched out into O'Connell Street. The main General Post Office garrison was drawn up two deep along O'Connell Street, facing the Gresham Hotel. Éamon Dore's group were ordered to form up in twos across the street at the Parnell Street side of the main group and facing O'Connell Bridge. Buildings were still flaming and houses were collapsing, buckling storey by storey, and falling down in heaps of dust and rubble.

*And houses hailed down granite tons
To smash our wounded underneath.*

Then into O'Connell Street from the Quays marched a splendid body of men, their arms at the slope, their heads held high. It was the Four Courts garrison, and at their head marched twenty-five year old Commandant Ned Daly of Limerick. They took up their allotted position near their comrades of the General Post Office garrison.

While they still had arms in their hands the Volunteers were treated with respect by their captors, but immediately they had laid down their arms their captors assumed an aggressive attitude. The prisoners were kept for a considerable length of time in O'Connell Street before being marched to the Rotunda Hospital grounds, where they spent the night, lying on the grass. One could sit or recline, but dare not stand. Éamon Dore saw one man, Frank

Henderson (since deceased, R.I.P.), stand, only to be knocked unconscious with a blow from a rifle butt. And at about day-break he saw Captain Lee Wilson, officer in charge of the North Staffordshires, take Tom Clarke, Seán MacDermott and Ned Daly to the point of the Rotunda railings and strip them to their boots, to search them. Tom Clarke's arm was in a sling, as he had been wounded in the elbow, and when Lee Wilson could not get off the prisoner's coat quickly enough, he dragged it off, thereby reopening the wound in Clarke's elbow and leaving him in agony.

Next day the prisoners were marched to the Richmond Barracks, where they got their first meal since their surrender. It was in the Richmond Barracks that the "G" men singled out many of the men who subsequently faced the firing squads or who were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. In due course Éamon Dore was deported to a prison camp in Stafford. Later he was transferred to London, and finally, to Frongoch. He was released at the general amnesty in 1917.⁶⁸

Other Limerick men to fight in the Rising in Dublin were Gearóid MacAuliffe, of Newcastle West, who returned from England to play his part; Jim Flanagan and his cousin, Matt Flanagan of Monagea, and Pat and Jim MacNamara of Knocknaboula, Loughill. And, of course, in addition to these there was Donal Sheehan of Templeglantine, who lost his life in the Ballykissane tragedy.

And now a word or two about what happened in Kerry after the great confusion of Good Friday which was to culminate in Stack's arrest. After the arrest, Monteith told the Vice-Commandant, P. J. Cahill, that he, Cahill, should take charge on Easter Sunday. Cahill replied that he was utterly unsuitable for such a responsibility, as he had no military experience whatever, and he asked Monteith to take over command. After much discussion Monteith agreed to do so. But when

Monteith met the other officers and enquired what the general plans for Sunday were, he was told that Stack had made all the plans and that none of his subordinates knew anything about them. They had only a general idea that they included the taking of military barracks, police stations, telegraph offices and railway stations; also that they were to unload the arms ship at Fenit and provide a train for the dispatch of arms to Limerick and Galway.

In view of the fact that there were five hundred military in Tralee barracks and about two hundred fully armed police in and about the town, and that his own men had not had much training and were poorly armed, Monteith considered the military situation desperate.

Early on Easter Sunday morning Monteith sent scouts to Fenit, Ardfert and Killarney in an effort to get first-hand information as to the situation in these centres. Shortly afterwards, Brigade Quartermaster William Mullins, of Moyderwell, arrived from Dublin, bringing a message from Connolly, the gist of which was to go ahead as everything was all right. At 8.30 a.m. Monteith was informed that the Dingle contingent was on the march and could be expected to reach Tralee about 11 a.m. More than a hundred strong, they arrived almost dead on time. After their long march, they were weary, footsore and hungry, but on Monteith's instructions, the women of the local Cumann na mBan had made a good meal ready for them.

Whilst the Dingle men were eating, the Ballymacelligott company, numbering forty men, arrived; and smaller parties continued to arrive from other districts, so that eventually Monteith had about three hundred and twenty men under his command. Of these some two hundred were armed with a variety of weapons ranging from Lee Enfield rifles to single barrel shot guns.

Some time after noon Lieutenant Patrick Whelan arrived from Limerick with Mac

Neill's countermanding order. On learning that everything had been cancelled, the Volunteers expressed bitter disappointment. Monteith advised against any rash action on their part, which might lead to an armed clash with the military and police, and declared that, in view of the changed circumstances, he was handing back command of the Volunteers to Vice-Commandant Cahill. Monteith now decided to get out of Tralee as quickly as he could. He was by now a man very much wanted by the British authorities for Sergeant Bailey (*alias* Beverly), who had travelled in the U.19 from Germany with himself and Casement, and who had been arrested on Good Friday, had told everything about their mission to the police.

In order to show reason for the mobilisation of the Volunteers, some military exercises were carried out in a nearby field. Then, after dark, Monteith marched out of the town in the centre of the Ballymacelligott men, and that night was harboured in the home of Volunteer Tom MacEllistrim. From there he went to the house of Arthur Lenihan, and then to the house of Seán Thaidhg Óig Lenihan at Glenacenta, before finally succeeding in reaching Batt Laffan's at Killonan, in Co. Limerick, where he spent some months. Eluding all his would-be captors, he ultimately reached the safety of the U.S.A.

Kerry was well represented in the fighting in Dublin in Easter Week; and the following heroic sons of Kerry fell in the fray: The O'Rahilly, who was a native of Ballylongford; Patrick Shortis, of Ballybunion; Patrick O'Connor, of Rathmore; Michael Mulvihill, of Ardoughter, Ballyduff, Lisnaw. And to this list must be added the name of Con Keating of Renard, Caherciveen, who was drowned at Ballykissane.

Jack O'Reilly, of Tralee, took part in the Rising, and died from the rigours of his imprisonment shortly after his release. And last, but certainly not least, there was

Thomas Ashe, of Kinnard, Dingle. He, too, fought in the Rising; and seventeen months later, when he died tragically on hunger strike, his name became a household word in Ireland. He is remembered for his heroism—and his poem, *Let me carry your Cross for Ireland, Lord*.

Towards the end of Easter Week, Sir Anthony Weldon, the British Commander in Limerick, sent a demand for the surrender of their arms to the local Volunteers, through the Mayor of Limerick, James Quinn. A meeting of the combined board and officers decided to refuse this demand, which was several times repeated through the mayor, and as often rejected.

Sir Anthony Weldon was, in fact, a strong anti-Carsonite, and he contented himself with a parade through the city of three infantry regiments, a cavalry regiment and an artillery brigade with eighteen guns; and it was only when pressure was exerted on him from Dublin that arrests were made.⁶⁹ When, ultimately, the Limerick city Volunteers were faced with seizure of their arms, they decided that, in order to avoid bloodshed, the arms should be handed over to the mayor. But to this decision was added the proviso that, first each Volunteer should hand over his arms to Colivet, who would then surrender them to the mayor as guardian of the peace and security of the city. The surrender of arms took place in the Council chamber of the Town Hall, on Friday, 5 May, in the presence of Weldon and other British officers. The Volunteers had, in fact, rendered most of the guns useless before handing them over. A number of arrests were made on 11 May and on subsequent dates, but by 16 May all the prisoners had been released unconditionally.

The pattern of events in Limerick was repeated with minor variations in Cork, where the surrender of arms took place sooner than it did in Limerick. But the story of Limerick in 1916, was not to end with the surrender of the Volunteer arms

on 5 May. On the very day following the surrender, the following letter was addressed to Dr. O'Dwyer, bishop of Limerick:—

*“Headquarters, Irish Command,
Park Gate, Dublin.
6th May, 1916.*

My Lord,

I have the honour to request your Lordship's co-operation in a matter connected with the present deplorable situation in Ireland, the settlement of which I am confident you desire no less keenly than I do.

There are two priests in your diocese, the Rev. Father Michael Hayes, of Newcastle West, County Limerick; the Rev. Father Thomas Wall of Dromcollogher, County Limerick, whose presence in the neighbourhood I consider to be a dangerous menace to the peace and safety of the realm, and had these priests been laymen they would have already been placed under arrest. In this case I would be glad if your Lordship could obviate the necessity for such action by moving these priests to such employment as will deny their having intercourse with the people, and inform me of your decision.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

*J. G. Maxwell, General,
Commander-in-Chief,
the Forces of Ireland.*

The Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer.”

On 9 May, Dr. O'Dwyer, on a visitation to Kilmallock, had Canon O'Shea, P.P., Kilmallock, reply on his behalf to the letter from Maxwell which he had received that morning. Without revealing his hand, the bishop requested the general to specify the grounds on which he considered Father Wall and Father Hayes a dangerous menace

to the peace and safety of the realm.

On 12 May, Maxwell wrote his second letter, and specified the charges against both priests. One of them had spoken in his church against conscription on 14 November, 1915; was said to have attended a lecture by P. H. Pearse on *The Irish Volunteers of '82*; had attended a blessing of Volunteer colours on 2 January, 1916; had spoken at a Volunteer meeting on 17 March, 1915. The other was said to have been active with “a certain E. Blythe”, organising Irish Volunteers; had got printed a large number of leaflets appealing to young men of the Gaelic Athletic Association to join the Irish Volunteers; was said, in fact, to be president of a corps of Volunteers; and was said to have been present at an Irish Volunteer meeting “when a certain John MacDermott delivered inflammatory and seditious speeches on 17 March, 1916.”

Having delivered himself of this list of charges, the general was confident that “it should not be difficult for your Lordship under such disciplinary power as you possess, to prevent at any rate priests from mixing up with and inciting their flock to join an organisation such as the Irish Volunteers have proved themselves to be.”

Doctor O'Dwyer was at that time on a round of visitations of his diocese, and he replied to the general's second letter from Ashford, in the south-west of County Limerick—the reply was, in fact, written in the townland of Glenquin, in the shadow of which the West Limerick Volunteers assembled on Easter Sunday, 1916. And in that historic letter “armed arrogance” received an answer it had never bargained for:—

“Ashford, Charleville,

17th May, 1916.

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter

of 12th instant, which has been forwarded to me here.

I have read carefully your allegations against Rev. Father Hayes and Rev. Father Wall, but do not see in them any justification for disciplinary action on my part. They are both excellent priests, who hold strong National views, but I do not know that they have violated any law, civil or ecclesiastical.

In your letter of 6th inst., you appealed to me to help you in the furtherance of your work as the military dictator of Ireland. Even if action of that kind was not outside my province, the events of the past few weeks would make it impossible for me to have any part in proceedings which I regard as wantonly cruel and oppressive.

You remember the Jameson raid, when a number of buccaneers invaded a friendly State and fought the forces of the lawful Government. If ever men deserved the supreme punishment it was they, but officially and unofficially, the influence of the British Government was used to save them and it succeeded. You took care that no plea for mercy should interpose on behalf of the poor young fellows who surrendered to you in Dublin. The first information which we got of their fate was the announcement that they had been shot in cold blood. Personally, I regard your action with horror, and I believe that it has outraged the conscience of the country. Then the deporting of hundreds and even thousands of poor fellows without a trial of any kind seems to me an abuse of power as fatuous as it is arbitrary, and altogether your regime has been one of the worst and blackest chapters in the history of the misgovernment of the country.

*I have the honour to be, Sir,
your obedient servant,
Edward Thomas,
Bishop of Limerick.*

*To General Sir J. G. Maxwell,
Commander-in-Chief, the Forces in Ireland”*

Doctor O'Dwyer, it has been said, made up their minds for the bishops of Ireland with regard to the Rising of Easter Week, and from all over the country came resolutions passed by public bodies congratulating him on the stand he had taken. In acknowledging one such resolution from the Tipperary Board of Guardians, he wrote:—

"The Palace, Corbally,
June 23rd, 1916.

Dear Sir,

I beg to thank the Guardians of the Tipperary Union for the resolution which they were so good as to adopt in approval of my attitude towards that brute, Maxwell, who, in my opinion, is only one degree less objectionable than the Government that screens itself behind him. But Ireland is not dead yet; while her young men are not afraid to die for her in open fight and, when defeated, stand proudly with their backs to the wall as targets for English bullets, we need never despair of the old cause.

And your resolution will be a comfort to those who reverence the memory of Ireland's martyrs, and will assure them that our countrymen, in spite of all the corruption that is at work, distinguish between genuine patriotism and all the spurious stuff that has been disgusting us of late.

Personally, I am particularly glad that your resolution has been proposed by a Cullen man, Mr. Quinlan, to whom, and to his seconder, Mr. M. Ryan, I send my blessing, my sincere thanks.

I am, dear sir, yours very truly,
Edward Thomas,
Bishop of Limerick.

To the Clerk of the Union, Tipperary."

Some time in 1917, the executive of the Irish Volunteers appointed a committee to inquire into the failure of Cork, Limerick and Kerry to take military action during the Easter Rising, and in March, 1918, the following report was submitted by the Committee:

"We regret delay in completing the investigation re action of Cork, Kerry, and Limerick during Easter Week, 1916. This delay was unavoidable. Our decision regarding Cork is that, owing to conflicting orders, no blame can be attached to them for their inaction. Against Kerry no charges have been made; consequently their action through the whole matter was, we consider, justifiable. With respect to Limerick, we have read statements from all the principal men concerned. We have also in-

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to record a very special word of thanks to Séamus Gubbins, Liam Forde and Éamon Dore, all of Limerick City, and to Charles Wall, of Dromcollogher, for the valuable help and information which they so kindly and willingly gave me when I was preparing this article. All four were prominent participants in the events narrated therein.

I am also under a debt of gratitude to the following who supplied me with documents and papers, or who assisted me in other ways: Proinsias Mac Giolla Losgáidh, Séamus Ó Cinnéide, Pádraigín Nic Mhathúna, Tadhg Smalle, all of Limerick City; Bryan Mac Mahon, Listowel; Muiris Ó hAodha, Downpatrick; Diarmuid Ó Mhaoláin, T.T.G., Dromcollogher; An tAthair G. de Bháil, S.C., Broadford, Co. Limerick; Lorcán Ó Maonaigh, Athlone. Máirtín Ó Dívéain.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (Used in connection with references)

LFS	..	..	Limerick's Fighting Story, The Kerryman Ltd.
TIR	..	..	The Irish Republic, Dorothy Macardle; Irish Press Ltd.
CLA	..	..	Casement's Last Adventure, Robert Monteith; Michael F. Moynihan, Ltd.

vestigated the dispatches alleged to have been received by them from Dublin and Kerry. Some of these dispatches they did not, in our opinion, receive at all and those they did receive were so conflicting that we are satisfied no blame whatsoever rests on the officers and men of Limerick. With regard to the surrender of arms, it is to be deprecated that at any time arms should be given up by a body of men without a fight. But we do not see that any good purpose will be served by any further discussion on this matter as far as 1916 is concerned. This opinion will, we hope, be weighed should any similar circumstances arise in the future."⁷⁰

This report was accepted and ratified by the Irish Volunteers' Executive at a meeting on 10 March, 1918.

Michael Colivet was very dissatisfied with that part of the report dealing with the surrender of their arms by the Limerick Volunteers, and he demanded from the Headquarters Executive not merely a pious wish but a definite verdict as to whether or not the surrender of arms in Limerick in the circumstances prevailing there at the time were justified.⁷¹ To his representations he received the following reply:

"The Irish Volunteers,
General Headquarters,
Dublin.

17th September, 1918.

"Statement by Irish Volunteer Executive regarding report issued March, 1918, by Committee of Enquiry into affairs of Easter, 1916.

"Commandant Colivet of Battalion 1, Limerick City, has, on behalf of self and said Battalion, objected to above report out of grounds (1) that he was not furnished with particulars of evidence tendered to the Committee, so as to enable him to meet any adverse evidence or charges: (2) that in consequence of (1) the report has, in his opinion, pronounced unjustifiable the surrender of arms by the Battalion at the period mentioned.

"The Executive have considered the matter, and desire to say in regard to No. 1, as the report has not condemned Commandant Colivet, it was not necessary to furnish him with evidence. In regard to No. 2 the report made no pronouncement on this head. This statement is being circulated to those persons to whom the original report was circulated.

Signed for and on behalf of the
Irish Volunteer Executive.

(Signed) CATHAL BRUGH⁷²

KFS	..	..	Kerry's Fighting Story, The Kerryman Ltd.
TR	..	..	The Rising, Desmond Ryan; Golden Eagle Books.
TMCS	..	..	The Mystery of the Casement Ship, Capt. Karl Spindler; Kribe-Verlag, Berlin.
LLA	..	..	Limerick Leader Articles, being text of lecture on "Limerick in 1916", delivered by Séamus Gubbins, and published in Limerick Leader between July 7th and August 6th, 1952.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

1. From Blánaid Ó Brocháin's translation of "Maidin Luan Cincise"; 2, LFS; 3, TIR; 4, *Ibid*; 5, CLA; 6, *Ibid*; 7, *Ibid*; 8, *Ibid*; 9, *Ibid*; 10, *Ibid*; 11, LLA; 12, LFS; 13, *Ibid*; 14, CLA; 15, *Ibid*; 16, KFS; 17, *Ibid*; 18, *Ibid*; 19, *Ibid*; 20, *Ibid*; 21, *Ibid*; 22, *Ibid*; 23, *Ibid*; 24, TR; 25, *Ibid*; 26, *Ibid*; 27, *Ibid*; 28, *Ibid*; 29, *Ibid*; 30, TMCS; 31, *Ibid*; 32, *Ibid*; 33, TR; 34, *Ibid*; 35, *Ibid*; 36, LLA; 37, TR; 38, *Ibid*; 39, LFS; 40, From "Resurrection", by Father Pádraig de Brún; 41, TMCS; 42, *Ibid*; 43, *Ibid*; 44, *Ibid*; 45, TR; 46, *Ibid*; 47, LLA; 48, *Ibid*; 49, *Ibid*; 50, *Ibid*; 51, *Ibid*; 52, *Ibid*; 53, *Ibid*; 54, LFS; 55, From Charles Wall's personal narrative to the writer; 56, TR; 57, *Ibid*; 58, *Ibid*; 59, *Ibid*; 60, LFS; 61, TR; 62, *Ibid*; 63, *Ibid*; 64, *Ibid*; 65, LFS; 66, *Ibid*; 67, p.304; 68, Based on Éamon Dore's own narrative to the writer; 69, TR; 70, LLA; 71, *Ibid*; 72, *Ibid*; 73, TR; 74—See "From a Hermitage", by Pádraig Pearse.
The account of the fatal journey to Ballykissane Pier is based on the signed statements of Tommy MacInerney and John J. Quilty.
The poem, "O Castle of Glenquin", is by Maitiu Ó Cinnéide, a native of the Glenquin district, now living in Dublin.



*The Most Reverend Doctor O'Dwyer,
Bishop of Limerick, who died in August, 1917*

Looking back with the objective eye of the historian at all the "confusion, broken plans, divided counsels and inaction" that "prevailed outside Dublin with a few exceptions," Desmond Ryan, seeing the Easter Week Rising at a remove of almost a third of a century, could say:

"The countermanding order, the failure of the arms landing, the poverty of armament, uncertain communications, the very limited training of many of the country Volunteers, all combined against

any widespread attempt at a general insurrection. Much agony of mind was endured by the country Commandants and the rank and file alike as soon as it was known that Dublin was in arms. Many unjust and unmerited reproaches were afterwards thrown upon even such men as Austin Stack, Terence MacSwiney, Monteith, Colivet, and the rest. . . ."

"Nor was it the failure of the arms landing and MacNeill's countermand alone that checked the impulse towards insurrection outside Dublin. The circumstances in Dublin and in the country were radically different. Dublin communications were better, it was easier to concentrate forces there, and the Dublin Volunteers were far better drilled and armed. Little attention had been given by the country fighters to guerrilla tactics. . . ."73

It was Pearse above all others who gave to the Easter Week Rising its tremendous depth of spirituality. And Pearse in his grave has captured the imagination of Ireland; still speaks to the heart of Ireland. And for the Volunteer leaders down the country who, like Meagher, Duffy, MacGee and Stephens of an earlier time, had hesitated to strike when their plans went awry, Pearse has words of Christian kindness and understanding:

"I do not blame these men; you or I might have done the same. It is a terrible responsibility to be cast upon a man, that of bidding the cannon speak and the grapeshot pour."⁷⁴



*Tomás MacCurtáin, Commandant in Cork,
who became Lord Mayor of Cork and was
shot in cold blood in his home by British
forces on 20 March, 1920*

THE meeting to inaugurate the Irish Volunteers took place in the City Hall, Cork, in December, 1913, a few weeks after its formation in Dublin. The people who sponsored this meeting did not spring up suddenly; they had been in either the Gaelic League or members of a group known as the Celtic Literary Society, or both, in the early years of the century. As a boy I joined the Gaelic League in

The Position in Cork

By

LIAM RUISÉAL

September, 1907. The members in the various branches of the Gaelic League were much older than I was, but as the years went on I got to know intimately everyone in the various movements in Cork and elsewhere.

Tomás MacCurtáin was connected first with the Blackpool branch of the Gaelic League; afterwards he belonged to the O Growney branch. Traolach MacSuibhne

see a man going to confess and wearing his hat. A jailor put his head into the cell, and then entering, undid the handcuffs behind the man's back, and allowed him to remove his hat. It was nearly dark and there was only a candle for lighting.

The other three prisoners were together in an adjoining room, among them Joseph, by whom Father Albert was attracted. Joseph, seeing him looking at him, walked across the room to Father Albert and said :

"Father, I want you to know that I am dying for the glory of God and the honour of Ireland." "That's all right, my son," answered Father Albert. In a few minutes the firing squad carried out their orders. And that was Joseph's first—and last—meeting with Father Albert here on earth. God grant they have met in heaven.

JOSEPHINE MARY PLUNKETT

Con Colbert

It is to be regretted that the late T. M. Healy in his memoirs, LETTERS AND LEADERS OF MY DAY (Vol. 2, p. 564), thought it well to repeat a garbled story of Con Colbert's last moments. The following letter signed "F.A." (the Very Rev. Father Augustine, O.F.M.Cap.) which appeared in the EVENING HERALD, Dublin, June 1st, 1916, gives the true account.—ED.

DEAR SIR,

In last evening's issue of your paper, towards the end of the second news column of the front page, under the heading "Last Moments of Volunteer Leader", it is stated that Cornelius Colbert "died joking the men who were preparing him for death." It is also asserted that when one of the soldiers was fixing the white cloth on his breast, to indicate his heart, he told them "his heart was far away at the moment."

This version is quite inaccurate and fanciful, and I owe it to his memory to give the true one.

There was no joking, not even the semblance of it. Poor Colbert was far too beautiful and too reverent a character to joke with anyone in such a solemn hour. I know very well where his heart was then. It was very near to God and to the friends he loved. What really happened was this. While my left arm linked the prisoner's

right, and while I was whispering something in his ear, a soldier approached to fit a bit of paper on his breast. While this was being done he looked down, and addressing the soldier in a perfectly cool and natural way said: "Wouldn't it be better to pin it up higher—nearer the heart?" The soldier said something in reply, and then added: "Give me your hand now." The prisoner seemed confused and extended his left hand. "Not that," said the soldier, "but the right." The right was accordingly extended, and, having shaken it warmly, the kindly human-hearted soldier proceeded to bind gently the prisoner's hands behind his back, and afterwards blindfolded him.

Some minutes later, my arm still linked in his, and accompanied by another priest, we entered the dark corridor leading to the yard and, his lips moving in prayer, the brave lad went forth to die.

F.A.

How Seán Heuston Died

from a letter by

THE LATE FATHER ALBERT,
O.F.M.Cap.

I AM glad to be able to comply with your request for "some particulars about the closing scenes of Seán Heuston's life." Shortly after Easter Week, 1916, I gave a rather full account for publication in *The Catholic Bulletin*, but owing to the censor restrictions it could not appear in print. The following is a brief summary of what came under my notice on Sunday night, May 7th. Father Augustine and myself were notified that we would be required at Kilmainham jail the following morning as four of the leaders in the Rising were to be executed.

At 1.30 a.m. a military motor car came for us to Church Street, and on our arrival at Kilmainham we were brought to the wing of the jail in which our friends were confined.

Father Augustine went to Eamonn Kent's cell and I to Commandant M. Mallin's. I did not remain long as he was on his knees in prayer with two friends. Having visited Con Colbert and Eamonn Kent I went to Seán Heuston's cell at about 3.20 a.m. He

was kneeling beside a small table with his Rosary beads in his hand and on the table was a little piece of candle and some letters which he had just written to some near relatives and friends. He wore his overcoat as the morning was extremely cold and none of these men received those little comforts that are provided for even the greatest criminals while awaiting sentence of death. During the last quarter of an hour we knelt in that cell in complete darkness, as the little piece of candle had burned out, but no word of complaint escaped his lips. His one thought was to prepare with all the fervour and earnestness of his soul to meet Our Divine Saviour and His Sweet Virgin Mother, to Whom he was about to offer up his young life for the freedom and independence of his beloved country. He had been to Confession and had received Holy Communion early that morning, and was not afraid to die. He awaited the end not only with that calmness and fortitude which peace of mind brings to noble souls, but during the last quarter

of an hour he spoke of soon meeting again Pádraig MacPiarais and the other leaders who had already gone before him. We said together short acts of faith, hope, contrition and love; we prayed together to St. Patrick, St. Brigid, St. Colmcille and all the Saints of Ireland; we said many times that very beautiful little ejaculatory prayer: *Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.* This appealed very much to him. But though he prayed with such fervour for courage and strength in the ordeal that was at hand, Ireland and his friends were close to his soul.

In his last letter to his sister—a Dominican nun—he wrote:

Let there be no talk of "foolish enterprises". I have no vain regrets. If you really love me, teach the children the history of their own land and teach them that the cause of Caitlín ní hUallacháin never dies. Ireland shall be free from the centre to the sea as soon as the people of Ireland believe in the necessity for Ireland's freedom and are prepared to make the necessary sacrifices to obtain it.

In his last message to me he said:

Remember me to the boys of the Fianna. Remember me to Michael Staines and to his brothers and to all the boys at Blackhall Street.

At about 3.45 a.m. a British soldier knocked at the door of the cell and told us time was up. We both walked out together down to the end of the large open space from which a corridor leads to the gaol yards. Here his hands were tied behind his back, a cloth tied over his eyes and a small piece of white paper about four or five inches square, pinned on to his coat over his heart. Just then we saw Father Augustine with Commandant Mallin come towards us from the cell where they had been. We were now told

to be ready. I had a small cross in my hand, and, though blindfolded, Seán bent his head and kissed the Crucifix, this was the last thing his lips touched in life. We now proceeded towards the yard where the execution was to take place, my left arm was linked in his right, while the British soldier who had handcuffed and blindfolded him walked on his left. As we walked slowly along we repeated most of the prayers that we had been saying in his cell. On our way we passed a group of soldiers. These I afterwards learned were awaiting Commandant Mallin who was following us. Having reached a second yard I saw there another group of military armed with rifles, some of them were standing and some sitting or kneeling. A soldier directed Seán and myself to a corner of the yard, a short distance from the outer wall of the prison. Here there was a box (seemingly a soap box) and Seán was told to sit down on it. He was perfectly calm and said with me for the last time, *My Jesus, mercy!*

I scarcely had moved away a few yards when a volley went off, and this noble soldier of Irish freedom fell dead. I rushed over to anoint him. His whole face seemed transformed, and lit up with a grandeur and brightness that I had never before noticed.

Later on, his remains and those of the others were conveyed to Arbour Hill military detention barracks, where they were buried in the outer yard, in a trench which holds the mortal remains of Ireland's noblest and bravest sons. Never before did I realise that man could fight so bravely, and die so beautifully and so fearlessly as did the heroes of Easter Week. On the morning of Seán Heuston's death I would have given the world to have been in his place, he died in such a noble and sacred cause, and went forth to meet . . . *

*Rest of letter is missing—Ed. C.A.

Fight at Ashbourne

By

COLONEL JOSEPH LAWLESS

PRIOR to the Rising of 1916 the Volunteers in Fingal were organised as the Fifth Battalion of the Dublin Brigade, and consisted of four companies located at Swords, Lusk, Skerries and Saint Margarets, each with a nominal roll of about thirty men. Some weeks before the Rising, the command of the battalion was assumed by Commandant Thomas Ashe, in succession to Doctor R. Hayes, who became battalion adjutant. The position of the battalion quartermaster was held by my father, Frank Lawless.

Early in Holy Week we became aware that the Rising was imminent. On Good Friday, Frank Lawless, drove into Kimmage in a pony and trap with myself as escort cycling behind, and brought home from that place about twenty single-barrelled shot-guns, a quantity of buckshot ammunition, sixty pounds of gelignite, detonators and fuse, a quantity of field dressings and surgical kit. The field dressings, and other medical goods were handed to Doctor Hayes at Taylor's of



Thomas Ashe got his love of Ireland in his own home, near Dingle. He became a trained teacher and was teaching in the national school in Lusk, Co. Dublin, in 1916 and was commandant of the North County Dublin Volunteers. He wrote some patriotic poetry and his *Let me carry your cross for Ireland, Lord* was an inspiring poem of the troubled times. He was sentenced to death after the surrender but the sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. He was released in the general amnesty of 1917. Thomas Ashe took up the fight immediately and before 1917 was out, he was courtmartialled because of a speech he made and condemned to a year's hard labour in Mountjoy jail. He went on hunger strike because of an effort on the part of his jailers to treat him as a criminal. They tried to feed him forcibly and in the process pumped some food into his lungs and he died of pneumonia in the Mater Hospital on 25 September, 1917. They had murdered him. Unprecedented crowds of people attended his funeral at Glasnevin cemetery.