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# My Limerick

A weekly series by  
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## Limerick's 1916 volunteers

**THIS is the second instalment of a three-part series of 1916 in Limerick. The series will conclude next week. We begin with the fact that it was decided not, in fact, to rise here, but that was not the end of the story ...** During the week, and after hostilities had broken out in Dublin, the mayor, Councillor Sir Stephen B. Quin, conveyed a demand from Colonel Sir Anthony Weldon for

the surrender of arms. The demand was rejected.

The citizens, most of whom were openly hostile, became alarmed at the prospect of bloodshed in the city, and immense pressure was exerted by the Mayor, by the Bishop, Dr. O'Dwyer, by the clergy and others, to have the arms surrendered.

Tribute is due to Weldon for his tact and patience during this time. A less humane man, confident of his overwhelming strength, might have precipitated bloodshed by raiding for the

arms, as the Volunteers had orders to resist, and many desperate would undoubtedly have done so. A Irishman and a Home Ruler, he stated later that there was danger of his supersession at this time. Colivet held out until the Friday following Easter Week, during which time the surrender had taken place in Dublin, Cork and other places. It then became evident to Colivet that Weldon would raid for arms and he held a final meeting which decided to surrender the arms, not to the British military, but to the Mayor.

This decision was taken, not without opposition, but no counter proposal was put

to the meeting, and no vote was taken. When the result was conveyed to the Mayor, he suggested that the Battalion should march to the surrender under a white flag, or that a white flag should be attached to each rifle, a suggestion which was peremptorily rejected.

And so, on the 5th. of May, 1916, the surrender took place. A dark evening; R.I.C. men posted singly in the streets adjacent to the Town hall; curiously silent knots of onlookers stood at corners. British military patrols were posted inside and outside the building. The men arrived singly or in small groups. They had been instructed to render

the arms useless, and this order was effectively carried out. The rifle bolts were missing in most cases, corrosive acid had been poured down the barrels; Some of the barrels were bent into half hoops, some were so thoroughly destroyed that they had to be delivered in haversacks. Each man handed his rifle to Colivet, who then laid it before the Mayor. He in turn handed it to the officer in charge of the British military.

A tense situation developed at one stage. The Mayor left the Council Chamber temporarily, and a British officer took his place. Colivet immediately

stopped the proceedings and refused to hand the arms to the British officer. The tension was relieved by the return of the Mayor and the proceedings continued.

A few days later most of the Battalion officers were arrested but were released after 11 or 12 days, a further example of Weldon's magnanimity.

So ends the true story of Easter Week in Limerick, recorded as a tribute to the courage and loyalty of the Limerick battalion. They were ready and willing to do their part, and if they did not go into action the fault was not theirs.

Next week - the aftermath...