

WS 1005 Liam Walsh, Waterford

Early in Easter Week 1916, there were rumours that the Rising was to come off on Good Friday. I got a dispatch from Dublin per the late Peter de Loughry (an I.R.B. man). It came about 5 p.m. by motor bike and said that the Rising was to take place on Easter Sunday. About 4 p.m. on Easter Saturday a dispatch came from Eoin MacNeill countermanding manoeuvres for Easter Sunday. I was at a loss to know what it was all about so I called on the principal officers of the battalion to discuss the matter. The men I consulted were Peadar Woods, J.D. Walsh, Sean Matthews and P. Brazil. After a long talk it was decided that I should go up to Dublin, see Eoin MacNeill and find out what exactly was to happen. I might add that I was a county delegate to the annual G.A.A. Convention which was [5].being held in Dublin in Croke House, Jones's Road, on Easter Sunday; that is why I was selected to call on MacNeill when I was up at the Convention.

On Saturday, the 22nd April 1916, I went by the 6 o'clock evening train to Dublin and, on arrival there, I went to MacNeill's house in Rathfarnham and saw MacNeill. He was alone when I got there and I told him about the two dispatches which I had received and asked what was the meaning of it all - was the Rising on or off? MacNeill told me that, in his view, the Rising would be a holocaust if it took place and that was why he called it off. We hadn't enough arms or ammunition to put up any sort of fight at that time, he said. I should explain here that I had arranged to wire Peadar Woods in Waterford "going to Fairyhouse Races" if I learned that the Rising was off and, if the Rising was on, I was to wire him "Going to Waterford".

On Easter Sunday 1916, I met Harry Boland at the G.A.A. Convention and asked him if he had any definite news about the Rising. He told me he wasn't sure as to what was going to happen. He couldn't give me any definite information. We waited until 2 a.m. on Easter Monday in Croke House, the residence of Luke O'Toole, at that time the Secretary of the G.A.A., for any further information, but none came.

On Easter Monday 1916, I thought that all operations were off so I wired Peadar Woods at Waterford about 10.30 a.m. saying "Going to Fairyhouse today". I met J.J. Nowlan who was President of the G.A.A. then and a Kilkenny man, and went for a walk. We decided to go home on an afternoon train. When we came back to town (Dublin) after our walk about 1.30 p.m. we heard that the Rising had started and when we came to Usher's Quay we heard shooting down around the Four Courts.

We had dinner in a house on the quays in the neighbourhood of Usher's Quay and then we went up to Kingsbridge railway [6].station with a view to getting home as we didn't know what might be happening there. At Kingsbridge there was a big crowd of passengers. After waiting a long time we were all informed that there would be no trains going out that day, so we went off to the house of a friend nearby and slept there on Easter Monday night.

The following morning we made our way across to Phibsboro' on the north-west side of the city, and went to the house of Harry Kenny in Connaught St. Phibsboro'. Harry was a Kilkenny man and a great G.A.A. man. He put us up for Tuesday night and for the rest of that week until the Rising finished I stayed with J.J. Nowlan in the house of people by the name of Liddy near Harry Kenny's house, and friends of his. During Easter Week I made several attempts to get in to the city but was stopped by cordons of British military who would not allow me to pass through.