

WS167 Christopher Byrne - extract

While Con was with me, one of my Company, a chap called John O'Neill, came to my home at ten a.m. an Easter Sunday and said he was looking for Eoin MacNeill's address. Con knew it and he directed the man where to go. O'Neill told us that the reason for his visit was that he had a brother-in-law named Jack Byrne, an engine driver, who used carry dispatches, and he gave him a dispatch he got from Dr. Dundon of Borris for MacNeill. O'Neill went off then to find MacNeill, and that was the last we saw of O'Neill until after the Rising. I was questioning O'Neill afterwards about it, and it appears that when O'Neill got to MacNeill's house, MacNeill asked him who was his Company O.C. O'Neill told him con Colbert was his O.C. MacNeill said, "Do you know that I am his superior officer, and you will obey my orders?" MacNeill gave O'Neill £5 and a dispatch, and told him to get a taxi and go to Dr. Dundon with it. Seemingly when O'Neill got to Borris Dr. [6]-Dundon was not in, so O'Neill stayed around and went back some time later and Dr. Dundon was in. Dr. Dundon told him that he had got the same dispatch from The O'Rahilly in Limerick.

Before O'Neill left MacNeill's house, MacNeill gave him the dispatch to read so that he could memorize it in case he would have to destroy it. As far as I can recollect O'Neill told me that the dispatch to Dr. Dundon contained an instruction "calling off" the Rising.