

## WS541 Extract from statement of Nancy Wyse Power

Monday: Very early on Monday morning my brother roused me and said I must go to the country on a message. He gave me a sealed envelope addressed to Dr. Dundon of Borris, County Carlow. He said that the arms ship had been sunk. I set off for Kingsbridge station on foot and caught an early train, reaching Borris about 12 o'clock. I had met Dr. Dundon previously at the time of the Compulsory Irish campaign Dundon previously at the time of the Compulsory Irish campaign when he was a member of the Students' Committee. After I reached his house there was delay before he appeared. I realised afterwards that he had been out all night carrying out the orders to demobilise and was asleep when I arrived. He opened the envelope I handed him and immediately dashed out of the room. A few minutes later he returned and showed me the message. This ran as follows, written in pencil on a half-sheet of notepaper "We rise at noon to-day. Obey your orders. P.H.P." 'Ginger' O'Connell was in the house and it was to show him the message that Dr. Dundon had run out. 'Ginger' was a strong MacNeill supporter and was inclined to be critical of my news. This was very natural in the circumstances. There were few Volunteers in the County Carlow and there could have been no question of a rising en masse in that county. There were, however, small groups in key positions at long distances from one another and the two officers had spent the whole of the previous night into the morning in driving all over the country dismissing these men to their homes and stopping them from carrying out the tasks which had been assigned to them, such as blocking the railways. Quite clearly it would have been impossible to get word round again a few hours later. Further, the element of surprise had been lost, and there was the further psychological factor. that people once keyed up and then let down could not rouse themselves to the same pitch immediately afterwards. I decided I had best get back quickly to Dublin but, before I set out, Seamus Doyle of Enniscorthy arrived. He already had word and had come over for consultation. 'Ginger' went back with him to Enniscorthy and some time after I got the train. It was necessary to change at Bagenalstown and when some time had passed without the Dublin train arriving I realised that the revolution had indeed broken out and that communication with the capital had been cut off. It was a curious sensation, which I can still recall, to stand on a crowded platform knowing that no one else in the crowd had an inkling of the reason for the failure of the train to arrive. A young British officer was in a state of fuss as his leave was up and he had hoped by catching the mailboat on Monday night to reach France the following day. He was closeted for some time with the stationmaster and I then decided to move in some other direction. If I could not get to Dublin, neither could I stay in Bagenalstown, so I decided to make for Kilkenny and from there go, as chance offered, either to Waterford where I had relatives or to Wexford to the home of the Ryans. However, I had no money to see me through what would probably be a troublesome journey, so there was nothing for it but to return to Borrie and borrow money from Dr. Dundon. The return journey had to be made on an outside car. Dr. Dundon was very kind and gave me £5. As it was by now late in the evening he suggested that I should remain until morning by that time 'Ginger' would probably be back from Wexford and might have some news. He did, in fact, return during the night but had little to report.

Tuesday:

Both the Doctor and myself had fully expected to be arrested before morning as my arrival twice in a small village must have been noticed, but, in fact, nothing happened and he was not arrested until a week later. He was at the time engaged to be

married and went through the ceremony before his arrest. His fiancée, Miss Flood, drove with me to Kilkenny and it was arranged that if we were stopped she would say that I was seriously ill and that Dr. Dundon had arranged for me to be admitted to hospital in Kilkenny. Before I left, 'Ginger' gave me a long list of instructions for Mr. de Loughry who was, apparently, the Volunteer officer in Kilkenny. I memorised the instructions which were to collect all possible arms and ammunition and have his men ready to obey further orders. During the morning one of the local Volunteers, an engine-driver named Byrne, came in. He was a very brave man who was prepared, if ordered, to block the railway-line by running his engine off. He pointed out, however, that it might be well to keep the line from Borris to Pallas clear so as to facilitate communications with North Wexford. His visit and the Kilkenny instructions caused me to leave Borris in a somewhat happier frame of mind, as it seemed to me that something might happen after all in the district. Kilkenny was reached without incident. Life there appeared to be going on as usual and I visited Mr. de Loughry who did not appear to be very pleased to see me. I explained the circumstances which brought me there, delivered my messages and walked out of the shop. I was not asked where I was going or how I proposed to get there. Altogether I felt that my room was more appreciated than my company.