

# **ROINN COSANTA**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY

**STATEMENT BY WITNESS**

**DOCUMENT NO. W.S 699**

## **Witness**

Dr. Josephine Clarke (neé Stallard)  
Dispensary House,  
Rathcoole,  
Co. Dublin

## **Identity**

Member of Cumann na mBan, 1916 - :  
Widow of Liam Clarke

## **Subject**

- (a) Her activities as member of Cumann na mBan  
1916 - 1922;
- (b) Biographical note on her husband who was wounded in the G.P.O. Dublin,  
1916

File No. S 1993

Statement by Mrs. Clarke (née Josephine Stallard)  
Dispensary Residence, Rathcoole, County Dublin

### **I bring a letter from Dublin to Peter de Loughrey.**

I was a boarder at Dominican College, Eccles Street, and at the end of 1915 I went on to Dominican Hall in order to attend the University. Before Easter 1916, when I was preparing to go home on holidays, Ted O'Kelly, a Kildare man, who was organiser for the Volunteers in Kilkenny, Wexford and Waterford, came to see me at the Hall and asked me to take a letter to Peter de Loughrey of Kilkenny whom I knew all my life as I was born in that town. Peter was a great friend of all my brothers and we were all very fond of him. I am not sure what day I took home that message but I shall discuss it with my sister and may be thus able to fix the day. At that time Ted was very friendly with my sister, Maisie, whom he married at the period of the conscription scare in 1918.

Of course I knew nothing of the Rising, nor was I at that time a member of Cumann na mBan. I did not know Ted at all and the excuse he gave for coming to see me was that my sister, Maisie, would like him to meet me. The next day I delivered the letter to Peter. I did not think it very urgent as Ted did not impress upon me that it contained anything of importance. I never discovered what was in the letter.

Ted O'Kelly led the Maynooth contingent of the Volunteers up to the General Post Office to take part in the Rising. My sister, later his wife, and himself jealously guarded the mobilisation order he got from Pearse until 1940 when their house was blown up in the blitz in London and Ted, who was practising there as a doctor, was killed. When the fighting was on in Dublin probably on Monday or Tuesday night of Easter Week, my two sisters and myself visited De Loughrey's shop where we found Ginger O'Connell and some of the Volunteers. Peter was in great distress and my reading of his state of mind was that Commandant O'Connell restrained them from going out to fight, while Peter and the others were anxious to do their part in the Rising. During his whole life Peter worked for the liberation of Ireland and certainly did not lack courage. As a proof of this I should mention that on the occasion of a Royal visit to Kilkenny he and my three brothers erected a black flag on the tower of St. Frances Abbey where it was plainly visible from the Castle where the King's party were staying. It is my impression that he was in the I.R.B. and he and my brothers were always looking forward to the time when they could do something to bring about the independence of Ireland. They were always Sinn Feiners.

It was, as far as I can remember, in De Loughrey's house that 'Ginger' was arrested and Peter himself was arrested the following day. I have the impression that it was during the week after Easter I'll get more information about all these matters from my brother, Tom, who has a good memory about these things.

I have since had a letter from Tomas on the subject, and am handing it to the Bureau [Appendix A.]

### **How Ted O'Kelly escaped arrest.**

There was no word from Dublin as to what had happened Ted O'Kelly and my sister was very upset. I came back to Dominican Hall to continue my medical studies. Some time later probably a couple of weeks Ted sent a messenger, a Dr. O'Carroll, to me to ask me to call over to him. He was a patient in Jervis Street Hospital, having been wounded in the heel either during the fight in the General Post Office or during the evacuation. One of the nuns in Jervis Street Hospital, Sister Assisium, was an aunt of his. He told me he would have to leave the Hospital as the military were rounding up the Volunteers in all the hospitals. I advised him to go to our home in Kilkenny, but he would not unless he got an invitation from my parents.

I wrote to my sister and she came up and arranged that he should go home to Kilkenny disguised as a priest. She went back to Kilkenny that same day and got a Dominican priest in Kilkenny, Father Conlan, to co-operate with her. He proposed to come to Dublin as he thought two priests could get away from the hospital more easily than one. In the meantime I collected the necessary clerical garb from priest friends of Ted's in Marlboro' Street and elsewhere, and when I arrived on a side-car in the

hospital he got ready and the two priests walked out, climbed into the side-car and drove to Kingsbridge. He stayed in hiding in Danville House about a mile from Kilkenny, where we had been living for some years, having moved out there from the shop we had in Kilkenny city. He was still there when I went home for the summer holidays. His wound was healed and he was getting restless, wanting to be up and doing again. He asked me to bring a letter up to Dublin, to Tommy O'Loughlin who had a shop in Parliament Street. I delivered the letter which enclosed another and Tommy asked me to come back later in the evening for the answer. I did so and brought the answer back to Ted. It was to the effect that a visitor would arrive shortly.

### **Liam Clarke arrives.**

In due course I got a letter that Tommy would arrive on the following Sunday with a friend. I went to the station to meet them and Tommy emerged from the train with Liam Clarke who at that time was travelling through Ireland ostensibly in connection with the Dependants' Fund, but in reality he was re-organising the Volunteers. He was still lame from the wound and he had to walk the mile from the station, as we did not want to attract attention by hiring a car. That was the first time I met Liam and when I discovered that he had been a close friend of Con Colbert, for whom I had been cherishing a deep admiration, I became struck on him, feeling it was a great honour to know somebody who had been out and wounded in the Rising. After the visit to Ted, Tommy and Liam left that evening.

### **I join Cumann na mBan**

I came back to Dublin in September or October and shortly after Liam brought me to Central Branch of Cumann na mBan of which I became a member officially. I regularly associated with the members of the University Branch also and attended their practical work, such as making bandages &c., but I was not officially a member of it. After a short time I was told not to associate myself openly with any of the branches, as I could be more useful for messages &c. if I were not identified with Cumann na mBan. First it was Liam and afterwards Cathal Brugha who gave me this advice. This was the position during the whole period up to the Treaty I qualified as a doctor in May 1921.

### **Despatch carrying for Cathal Brugha.**

On a couple of occasions I was sent to Liverpool. I got a shock the first time I was told to go, as I had never been in a boat before but I did not pretend anything. About 4 p.m. I was told to take the night boat and to stay at the Station Hotel in Liverpool. I was given full directions by Liam as to how to get to Murphy's to whom the message was to be delivered. Liam drew a diagram which I memorised. Murphy's was a little paper-shop. The message was a written one and I ripped open the collar of my coat, hid it there and sewed up the collar again.

I stayed in the hotel and called down to Murphy's and gave them the letter. The war was still on at the time and the searchlights were in operation. I had to stay on in Liverpool for a couple of days because, apparently, the message was about something that was expected from America on a certain boat which had not yet arrived. When it did arrive after a few days the expected message was not on it. I came back with a letter from Murphy's to Cathal Brugha. It was to Lalors on the Quays that I used to bring the messages for him. This was the first message I carried and it must have been 1916 or 1917.

What fixes that for me is that the Murphys, who astounded me by the open way they talked about dangerous things to a perfect stranger like myself, told me that Monteith had just passed from Liverpool to America. Cathal made no comment except to give me a word of praise, when I gave him the message.

I used to go home for the summer holidays and I used to collect at the hurling matches for the Defence Fund. I was sent twice to Galway with messages and stayed at Maud Kyne's house. She afterwards married a man who had lost his arm in the Rising. It was always Liam who brought me the messages from Cathal Brugha but I always reported to Cathal direct on my return. I was never informed of the contents of these despatches in either direction. I was sent to Waterford once with a message which had to be delivered at Powers' Hotel. I forget the name of the man it was addressed to.

I went to some place in County Mayo, getting out at a small wayside station. I had to cross, some fields to a cottage where the Volunteer lived whom I had to see. He was not in and his mother did not show me any great welcome, making some remark such as "Another of these ones from Dublin". However, she allowed me to stay till he came which he did eventually.

His mother gave us some tea and then He took me to meet some other Volunteer who would be at some ceilide a couple of miles away in Ballaghadereen. We took a short-cut through a wood and became very- friendly, so much so that I made an appointment to meet him at Nelson Pillar on a certain day. I stayed a couple of nights in Ballaghadereen and came back with a message for Cathal Brugha. When I told Liam about the appointment he put his foot down and advised me to keep strictly to business. The strange thing is that I cannot remember the name of the Volunteer who was a very nice lad. I have an impression that he afterwards became a T.D. and had a chemist's shop somewhere in Dublin.

My father died a week after I was qualified. He, my mother and Liam were at the conferring of Degrees. My brother wired for me to come home as my father was dying in a hospital in Kilkenny after an operation.

### **I am arrested and brought to the Castle.**

After the funeral I returned to Dublin. I was in mourning, of course. About a week later Liam and I were to meet for lunch at the Red Bank where we usually met. I arrived before him and as usual I waited for him in the smoke room upstairs. In a short time seven or eight carloads of Auxies arrived on the premises. Then one of them came into the room and asked me what was my name. I told him. He went away and brought back an officer who asked me the same question to which I gave the same answer. They told me to come with them. Going down the stair I saw Hattie Kelly, a brother of Sean T., who was assistant manager, standing beside the banister. She whispered to me had I anything. I said no. I had only just come from watching an operation in Vincent's Hospital.

I was brought out and put into an armoured car which was roasting hot. Then they blew their whistle and we all went away followed by all the other cars. When I got out it was in the Castle yard. I was brought into the guard-room where there was a Black & Tan. He kept talking to me but I sang dumb as if I did not hear him at all. He hoped it was not for someone close to me I was in mourning. I did not reply and he then said, "Do you want to talk to me". I said, "No". Afterwards the officer who had arrested me in the Red Bank came for me. He brought me across the Castle yard to another building and to give him his due he apologised for bringing me in the armoured car but thought I would prefer it to the "crate"

When I got into the next building there was a grey-haired man there in plain clothes. He asked me the usual questions Where I lived and what I was doing. Then he came finally to the real question. He understood I met Liam Clarke in the Red Bank every day. I said yes. He said was I his Secretary. I said no. Then he said wasn't it extraordinary for a young girl like me to be meeting a young man in the Red Bank every day. I said no, that we were engaged (although we weren't actually). He said, "We arrested Liam Clarke to-day".. I began to wonder what was going to happen. He said, "By the way, where does he live?" I said gently, "If you have arrested him why not ask him?" I did not want to put their backs up. So he said, "But he won't tell us". So I said, "I don't know where he lives". Then he said, "You're after telling you're engaged. Surely you know where the man you're engaged to lives?" I said, "I don't". He then asked, "Is it that you won't or you can't?" I answered, "I won't". He said, "Fair enough! We'll have to search you". He went out. He had treated me very nicely. But in came a Black & Tan, a proper gutty He wanted to know who arrested me. I told him the Black & Tans. He was furious. "There is no such force as Black & Tans". I said, "I am sorry, I don't know them under any other name. They have a mixed uniform on". He brought me out of that room and brought me to a smaller room and it was there that two girls came to search me. I was surprised at them. I thought they would be a rough wardress type. But they were very nice looking; they were English, I'd say. I told them I had nothing but they said I would have to strip. I did strip to my pelt. I never felt so awkward in my life. They searched my clothes my case had been taken from me in the guard-room but found nothing, of course. They let me go then. The original officer brought me back down to the gate. There we met a Black & Tan, a red-headed devil, who did not want to let me out at all. He said anyone who came in should stay in. The officer was very nasty to him. He told me to examine my case and to see

was anything missing. They mustn't have been good pals, these two. I came out, went and had a cup of tea at Bewleys. I thought the best way to dodge them was to go into a picture house.

When I came out I went to tell F. X. Coughlan, who was Liam's second-in-command, that Liam had been arrested in Tallaght while riding along on his bicycle so that he might get any stuff out that, Liam had in his digs.

I spent the next few days visiting every barracks in Dublin looking for Liam. He had nobody belonging to him except a brother with whom he did not get on. Eventually I found he was in Arbour Hill in a padded cell. He was taking morphia and they had knocked him off it immediately. That has a terrible effect. He had had several operations for the wound in his head and in 1918 Mr. McConnell for the first time operated on him and this was actually the first time Mr. McConnell performed an operation for gasserian ganglion on anybody. He gave him morphia to kill the pain and this led to the morphia habit which he never could give up.

It was when England stopped the supply of vital, drugs to Ireland in 1941 that Liam had to be admitted to the Richmond Hospital again under a friend of mine, Jerry O'Brien. The hospital even could not allow enough morphia as their supply, which was limited, had to be divided among all their patients and it was spinal anasthesia that Dr. O'Brien gave him until he died. He died from the lack of morphia which his system could not do without. He never complained though he must have suffered always. I used to give him the first couple of doses of morphia in the morning. After that he administered it himself.

At Arbour Hill when I went to look for Liam I met a soldier and said I wanted to see the officer in charge of the hospital. I got right through and told the officer in charge that I was a doctor and wanted to see a patient. At first he was very nice and courteous. He asked me where he had been wounded. When I said in the G.P.O. in Easter Week his tone changed, He told, me he knew nothing about him and that I should not have been allowed in. The only thing I could do then was to bring in food every day.

He got over his attack in Arbour Hill and was transferred as an ordinary prisoner to Kilmainham gaol. When he was there, about August I said to Dr. Rose McLaverty, "Wouldn't it be great if we could see Liam". She suggested I should ring up the Commandant in Kilmainham. We were both in the Coombe at the time. I rang. We never thought it would succeed. It turned out that this Commandant was open to flattery. At first he refused, saying no visits were allowed. I answered that I was sure he could allow it if he wished. He said, "What would the Castle say if they knew of it". I replied that I had no contact with anyone in the Castle.'

I flattered him until he yielded and I went up the following night, asked for the Commandant who brought me along to a room arid, went himself to fetch Liam who thought he was playing a joke on him. Liam came along and could not believe his eyes when he saw me. We then had to go back into a big guardroom, the door of which the Commandant locked. The Commandant went away saying he would give us ten minutes. There was a sort of guardroom on the left. Liam's pals went into it and told the guards to get out, that they were going to take over the room and prepare tea for themselves.

They got the tea and gave me and Liam some. Before we were finished the Commandant was back and I said I would require a little more time to finish my tea. To the amazement of the lads he gave me five minutes more. The Volunteers made fun of me, saying I had been too nice to him on the 'phone. I had to get out at last.

### **Liam and I get married.**

The next time I saw Liam was in September when he came out on parole for ten days to have his head seen to. He was not taking morphia at that period. He came out on Thursday and came early on Friday to see me in the Coombe, but I wasn't up. I got up and spent the day with him. He was not to come on Saturday until dinner time. He arrived with. Joe Martin, another prisoner out on parole, because he suffered from T.B. He was always cracking a joke and laughing. Liam was in great form and said to me, "Girl, we are going to get married to-morrow". I said, "we are indeed". He kept repeating it and said he had made all the arrangements. They had spent their morning seeing the priest and buying the ring which he produced. I said he had got that at Woolworths.

At last I realised he was serious . There was a fly in the ointment, however. My family who were very fond of Liam and very republican thought it was unwise of me to marry him on account of his

wounds, and had extracted a promise from me that I would not marry him without telling them beforehand. My brother, Tom, had said he would try and stop the wedding. Another little flash came into my mind. I had often heard my mother say, "It is unlucky to stop a wedding if the priest has been spoken to". I wrote that day to my mother to say I was getting married but I knew the letter would not be delivered until the Monday. In fact she read the announcement of the wedding in the paper shortly after she got my letter. My family fell out with me for twelve months and we did not make it up until I went home to see my mother during the Civil War after I came back from the column.

We got married in University Church on a Sunday after 12 o'clock Mass. Dr. Rose McLaverty was my bridesmaid. Liam was in uniform because he had no other suit. Father Sherwin kept the organist back after Mass to play the Wedding March for us. Paddy Duffy, now Dr. Duffy of Ballaghadereen, was best man.

We went to the Red Bank for our breakfast and the sub-manager, Mr. Hess, who knew us, treated us to a bottle of champagne. We then got on the tram for the Phoenix Park and spent the evening walking there. We came back to the Broadway Cafe for tea and when Liam went to pay for the tea he had no money, so I had to give him back the two shillings he had given me during the wedding service earlier that day. The tea cost 1/9d. and he gave the three pence to the waitress.

Then we went back up to the Coombe where Rose and Paddy expected us to supper. Dr. Pat McCartan, who was doing a course in the Coombe, was there for supper too. Liam had some messages from prisoners to their relatives in Dun Laoghaire and we went out there to deliver one to the wife of Simon O'Reilly who was a prisoner in Kilmainham. While we were there a few Volunteers turned in. We then began to wonder where we were, going to stay. I wanted to go to Greystones as I had never been there, but the Volunteers suggested Cliff Castle Hotel in Dalkey which was run by a Spaniard they believed who went under the name of Murphy. Simon's brother-in-law brought us there in his car to introduce us and we were in the sitting-room, waiting for the Spaniard to arrive, when Tim Murphy from Kilkenny whom I knew very well came into the room. The lads thought he was a Spaniard because he was so dark. He exclaimed, "What are you doing here".

I told him that we had just got married and were looking for a place to spend our honeymoon. There was no question of looking any further then. We stayed a week there. We went back then to the Coombe and had our last tea there and Paddy and Rose and I went and left Liam back at Kilmainham. He remained there till December when the general release took place. When he came out we went to spend Christmas at Cliff Castle as invited guests this time.

### **Our struggle for a living after Liam's release.**

We had bad times after that. We were going from digs to digs. Liam got a job as Food and Drugs Inspector from the Dublin County Council which was republican. He did the work on his bicycle and he was not able for it. His head and face gave trouble again and he was taking morphia to relieve the pain. I began again to give lectures in First Aid to Cumann na mBan who had not given up the fight and Liam remained still active in the Volunteers. We got tired of the digs and took an unfurnished flat in a Jew's house in Sydenham Road. We had £10 saved for furniture. We bought the bed from the Jew and, apart from that, we had only boxes and packing cases. Liam went down the Quays one day to pick up a few useful things and Jim Lawler came that night at my mother's request to see how I was getting on, as she was not corresponding with me. We had our tea off the boxes and were sitting on boxes but we were quite happy. He reported that at home to my mother who was quite satisfied. I was regretting that what Liam was buying on the Quays had not arrived before Jim came.

The next day a lovely little mahogany table, a little side table with drawers and a flower stand arrived. They were nice but they were certainly not useful.

### **The Civil War,**

We stayed in that flat until the Civil War broke out at the end of June. The shelling of the Four Courts woke us up and I tried to persuade Liam that it was only thunder. When we realised what was happening Liam went to Cathal Brugha to the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion and I had to remain in the flat all day waiting for word from Cumann na mBan. About tea-time word came that I was to go down to Grand

Canal Street and start a First Aid Station there. I left a note in the flat saying where I had gone, in case Liam came back. The Cumann na mBan girls and myself worked hard that night fixing up the station and about midnight Liam arrived, having got my note in the flat and gone back to Cathal Brugha for permission to take me with him on the Column which had started in Rathfarnham.

We went out that night walking along the canal and started a First Aid station in Rathfarnham over a chemist's shop. It remained open until after the debacle at Blessington. We were then raided so often by the Free Staters that we were obliged to close it.

I remained with the Column which was shifting around now in Glenmalure, now in the Pine Forest, now in Glenasmole and now in a farmhouse between Rathfarnham and Tallaght. Paddy Brennan was with us, I think, all the time. The owner of the farm in Tallaght who was a very decent man, a republican but not a fighting man, was afterwards killed in a bus accident. His name I can't remember; it might be Billie Young

During that time another girl Lily something and myself were used for carrying weapons in a motor-car from place to place. On one such occasion in Glenmalure the car in which were four of us, Liam, Lily, myself and a man from Bray whose name I can't remember, broke down. We had to hide the weapons while Liam went to commandeer another car at the point of the revolver, as the owner of it cursed and swore vengeance against us.

Finally sometime in August, having wandered over the hills during all that time with no chance of coming home for a change of clothes we used to wash our underclothing and put it on again we were around Blessington. During our wanderings a funny incident happened. Michael O'Kelly, Sean T's brother, against everybody's advice decided to come in to Dublin to buy some shirts. Having got them he came back by tram to Rathfarnham, strolled up the hill to where we were encamped and discovered on arrival that he had left his parcel of shirts in the tram. It caused a good laugh that cheered us up.

Blessington, where we were going to make a final stand, was completely taken over by the Republicans, all the houses being commandeered and the inhabitants ejected. We slept on mattresses on the floor. All the leaders were at Blessington, Ernie O'Malley, Oscar Traynor, Jim Ryan, &c.. Surgeon Charlie McAuley was Chief Surgeon and was in charge of a little hospital which we set up in a house in the square of Blessington. He appointed each of us doctors in charge of different sections. I was in charge of instruments. Father Dominic was there and officiated at the funeral of a boy who was killed in some skirmish on the hills.

We must have been in Blessington three or four days. Cars were coming and going to the hills where the boys were fighting. The last night we were there we stayed up till about 2 or 3 a.m. expecting an attack by the Free Staters who had by this time practically surrounded us. About 1 o'clock Surgeon McAuley made us go to bed, saying that probably we would not be attacked that night. I was awakened about 7 o'clock by machine-gun fire, got up and stole out of the house while the other girls slept. There were probably seven or eight of us there including Katty Barry. I went towards the hospital there were very few Volunteers about to find out what was happening and a Volunteer asked us did we know what had happened. The Republicans had all slipped away under cover of darkness, leaving the wounded, the Red Cross and a skeleton force of Volunteers who were to keep on sniping during the night. Liam had remained with the Column out on the hills.. Therefore, the expected battle at Blessington did not take place. I went to the house where we used to have meals. This was in a state of complete disorder and showed signs of a hastily prepared meal before the Volunteers left. I went back to our house to call the girls. We were about twenty-four including the wounded but not including the Volunteers who had orders to stay and hold the place. I remember there was one woman from Tipperary who had followed her son up to Dublin. He was the of the boys who were ordered to stay. She was in a terrible state when we asked her to come with us. She stayed behind. Father Dominick took charge of our little band we called ourselves the lost tribe of Israel. There were motor cars galore but none of them would go, as they had no petrol. There was nothing for us only to walk. So we started to walk towards Brittas. It was a fine summer day. We carried the Red Cross flag and the wounded hobbled along with us. We were stopped a couple of times by the Free State soldiers once by Hugo McNeill whose brother was fighting with the Column. Father Dominick on each occasion read out some clause from the Treaty of Geneva about the immunity of Red Cross workers and each time we were allowed to pass.

Father Dominick said that we would stop at the next house we would come to and ask for a cup of tea. It was a little bit in from the road through a field. The people of the house refused to give us tea. Then

Father Dominick demanded tea and an egg for each of us. The people of the house were bitter Free Staters, but we got the meal. We got as far as Brittas. I knew I would be all right there as I had attended a woman in confinement in a house there when we were going around with our Red Cross van. So we all were standing outside Brittas while Father Dominick was talking to a Free State officer or soldier. He said to us, "This Free State officer is very kind. He has offered to bring the Red Cross unit in his car down to the tramline". I asked Father Dominick did he believe that. He said yes and told me and Lily and two of the wounded to go on the first trip. We went into the car which was driven by the uniformed man. We got as far almost as Tallaght when the car stopped. The driver got out, opened the bonnet and told us the car could not proceed and we had only a short way to go to the tram. We got out. I said to him, "Thanks, if you are honest and, if you are not, you know what I think of you" We walked round the bend of the road to find a bread-van and a Company of Free State soldiers drawn across the road. We had been led into a trap. I told the two wounded Republicans not to run as the soldiers would shoot. I faced the Sergeant in charge, saying I was a doctor in charge of this little Red Cross group and, according to the Treaty of Geneva, we were immune. I spouted the clause that I had heard Father Dominick use on the previous occasions. The Sergeant said, "For goodness sake, we are waiting long enough for you to come down. Get into the van and tell them all that in Tallaght".

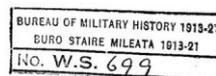
We were brought to the Aerodrome in Tallaght which was filled with Free State troops and while we were waiting there who should come in but Liam Tobin all decorated with stars and stripes. He and I knew each other in Kilkenny and played together as children he was Billy Tobin then. He got an awful drop when he saw me and said, "For God's sake, Josie, what are you doing here". "You see I am a prisoner" said I. He took me aside and asked me where was Liam. I told him he was with the Column around Rathfarnham. He said, "You had better get in touch with him. I'll have you sent in the first car that leaves here, and tell him I have orders to get all those fellows, dead or alive". I'll remember that to Billy's credit as long as I live. I said we wanted a wash and in a short time a soldier came in with a basin of water and another with a tray of tea and food. There were lots of cars there but like ours in Blessington they had no petrol and it was not till after 11 o'clock that night that a lorry arrived and took Lily and me as far as Terenure. From there we walked to Rathfarnham where I found Liam and told him what Liam Tobin had said. We came into town and went to Cliff Castle for a couple of days during which time I bought an outfit at Pims where we had an account.

Then I decided I would go down to Kilkenny. I was not sure how my mother who had not been speaking to me during all this time since my marriage would receive me. So we kept the side-car that took us from the station to Danville where my mother lived, waiting until I found out how she would receive me. She welcomed me and Liam very heartily. I stayed there until I had my baby a few months afterwards. Liam returned to Dublin after a couple of days. He took a tram at Kingsbridge, went to the Dolphin for a meal and was arrested there by some Free State soldiers who recognised him.

He spent the next twelve months in prison, where he suffered a lot. In fact he continued to suffer all his life until he died in 1941, occasionally relieving his pain by the use of morphia as long as he was able to get it; yet I never heard him complain.

Signed: Josephine S. Clarke  
(Josephine S. Clarke)  
Date: 19<sup>th</sup> June 1952  
19th June 1952.

Witness: James Clarke  
S. Ni Chiosain  
(S. Ni Chiosain)



#### APPENDIX A.

June 5 1951.

Dear Josie,

In reply to yours. Cahel Bruga came down here about March 1916 arid, told us there was. going to be a rising. As it was the first we heard of it we held a meeting and sent Peter de Loughry and Pat Corcoran up to Dublin to see McNeill (Eoin) to know something about it. They saw him and he said

the first he knew about it himself was when a few more lads from other parts of the country went to him on the same mission. Anyway they came to an agreement that if McNeill did not give orders to Kilkenny to rise, Kilkenny would not rise. We would do whatever McNeill ordered and he never ordered us to rise. Ginger O'Connell was in Kilkenny on either Easter Sunday or Monday and I don't remember if he was; here the whole week or not as he was going between Wexford and Kilkenny during the week. As to the date Ginger was arrested I would say it was; about May 2 or 3. This; is how he was arrested. Head Constable Frizell went over to de Loughry where he was staying to arrest him but they came to a decision that there would be no arrest but that if Ginger would go up to the jail himself it would suit Frizell all right, so he went up.

About Easter Week P.D. told me at the time while the fight was on that some girl called to him. I think her name was Price, so if he told her he was carrying out any orders they were McNeill's orders. I don't know if P.D. was very anxious to fight or not. Of course Ginger was acting at the time on behalf of McNeill as were other people from Dublin (such as Bulmer Hobson) in other parts of the country, but at the same time if Liam Mellows had been here he would have brought the Kilkenny lads out.

Now Bob Brennan published a book a few months ago. He published it in serial form in the Sunday Press and in one of the early chapters dealing with Wexford he stated that a despatch arrived from Kilkenny saying that under no circumstances would Kilkenny turn out. When we saw this we held a meeting of the few that are left and no one knew anything of such a despatch. I wanted the lads to write to Brennan asking him to leave, that reference out of the book and that if he did not do it to write to the Sunday Press asking him to produce the dispatch or withdraw the reference. They wouldn't agree to do what I wanted and decided to send Jim Lalor to see him and put the request to him. He said he wouldn't do that but would agree to put in a footnote saying that the Kilkenny lads were mobilised on Easter Sunday and Monday nights but he didn't withdraw the charge and it's a pity someone wouldn't write the Press about it. If you would look at the Book you would see the reference. I understand that before the rising took place that Pearse and Co. got on to McNeill and that he agreed to fall in with rising on condition that the German ship landed the arms, but as they were never landed his agreement never came into action. So the despatch that Brennan states was sent to Wexford before Good Friday, the day the ship went down, how could the alleged despatch be correct?

A few months ago an officer, Commandant Sean Brennan of the Bureau of Military History called in here and said he was collecting all the information he could get. He also called on Tom Treacy, Tom Furlong, Jim Lalor and Ned Comerford. As a result we held a meeting and Tom Treacy was deputed to collect all the information he could get from anyone who could give it to him and he is still engaged on that job.

Now I think that is all I can give you. If you think there might be more you can drop me a line. You must excuse this being written in pencil but as my mind is more or less confused it's easier rub out mistakes in pencil than in ink. We are all well here and I hope you are in the same way. I hope Tom's printing business is going on all right.

(Sgd.) Yrs.