**Denis McCullough**

**Bureau of Military History witness statement**

The Dungannon Clubs concerned themselves particularly with an anti-recruiting campaign which they carried on by means of our outdoor meetings, the postcards and particularly the pamphlets.

One of these had special value for our purpose. It was written by Mrs. Stopford Green and edited for our use by Roger Casement. It caused great offence to the British Authorities, who finally, acted, by arresting Mr. Stephen Clarke of "An Tuirne Beag, Ballycastle, County Antrim, who distributed some of these pamphlets at a fair in that town. A charge of Sedition was preferred against him. He was given a kind of State trial in Belfast. The British made every possible effort to get a conviction so as to make an example of him, but through the efforts of friends on our side, they failed in this.

Roger Casement, Mrs. Stopford Green, Francis Joseph Bigger, Miss Ida McNeill of Cusbendun and some others got up a fund for his defence, and Chambers, K.G. was briefed. Steps were also taken to go through

the Jury Panel to prevent the packing of the Jury. All Catholics likely to be called were instructed not to take the Oath on the Bible, but to "affirm", with uplifted hand, as was common practice with Presbyterian Jurors. In the event, a few Jurors were called, including two Presbyterian descendants of '98 men, who were determined that a verdict of "Guilty" would not be obtained. They succeeded in this and Stephen Clarke was released. Before the trial several attempts were made to induce him to tell the source from which he got the pamphlet. He was promised a withdrawal of the charge and instant release for this information. But all inducements failed and he stood his trial with the result stated. As I had sent him the pamphlets and had determined to say so, if he was found guilty, I remained in the Court all day for this purpose. I was greatly relieved at the result. I believe this was the first prosecution for Sedition in our time. Several other minor prosecutions followed, at later periods, mostly for sedition. One against Pat Lagan, a Dungannon Club member and one against an elderly newsagent named Butler, for selling our pamphlets.