**ALICE STOPFORD GREEN 1916**

**NLI 36,207/2 – 4 items (formerly in Acc 4902 (19))**

**“Facts told me by Roger Casement in Brixton & Pentonville prisons. At different times and in guarded manner because of the presence of wardens.” Signed on sheet 15: Alice Stopford Green. *15 sheets*.**

**Beginning: “On Friday, 4 days before the police proceedings began …”. *1 sheet*.** [Addendum page to above)

**“Told me by ‘Napoleon’”. *4 sheets*.**

Transcripts below.

[See also NLI 36,204/1 & 2 – Extracts from some of these letters MS and typescript. With notes by R.C. made while in prison. *15 sheets*.

One a 24 April 1904 typed letter “There is so much to be done in the Congo matter…”.]

**“And Shall Our Casement Die”. Poem. Typescript. *1 sheet*. [This Yeats poem is also in NLI 36204/1 in typescript.]**

Goodbye for the Moment.

Yours ever & always,

Roger Casement.

The Lover Tells of the Rose in his Heart

All things uncomely and broken, all things

worn and old

…a rose in the deeps of my heart.

W.B. Yeats

**NLI 36207/2 15 sheets**

**Facts told me by Roger Casement in Brixton & Pentonville prisons. At different times & in guarded manner because of the presence of wardens.**

He spoke with horror of his sufferings in the Tower & mentioned the vermin with a shudder – He had only got rid of that after a time in Brixton. He said neither I nor any human being could know what agony he had gone through. In this I am confident he referred to the failure of his desperate effort to save the brave boys he wanted to rescue from death & ruin. The first day I saw him he laid his face down on the back of hands on the table and wept. He said “Do not misunderstand me. It is not for myself, it is for others I am so broken down”.

He said his life in Germany was “hell”. Afterwards I asked what he meant. He explained that he had very soon seen that his first hopes and plans were utterly destroyed. The course of the war had made them vain. He then attempted to leave Germany but failed. English submarines or vessels were in wait to capture him. He wrote to “a far country” & sent messages to “a nearer country” with urgent warnings not to enter into any German schemes, as all must be hopeless – To his despair no one believed him. They answered that he was alone & depressed & cd. not see things clearly. His misery was to see them go on with projects to which he was utterly opposed, and to feel his powerlessness to persuade them to renounce following their dangerous intentions. If he had got away he thought he could have convinced them of what he knew.

He never suspected Christiansen of treachery to himself until this year – He made no other comment. In this case and in every other where he was disappointed of friendships or help he never once expressed any trace of anger or condemnation. He simply never mentioned the name again.

He asserted that the story of the plot by the British Minister in Christiania was absolutely true. He had not then intended to go to Germany, but to Sweden, and it was in consequence of the plot that he decided to go to Germany. “I am guilty of high treason” he said, “but not of the high treason charged in this trial.”

On Dec 3 & 4 1914 he went to the Limburg Camp. On the 4th he made a speech there, the only speech he made. On January 4, 1915 he went again to see a certain individual. A sergeant sent a message saying he was in bed, and asked him to see him. He found the sergeant's room was at the far end of the camp, so he crossed the space, which was then empty as the men were all out at work. When he came near the gate on leaving the men were coming in from work, & some recognized him, and they gathered round him, & asked him questions, which he answered, but made no speech. Some of the men on the outskirts laughed or jeered a little, but there was no violence – no pushing of knocking down. With strong emphasis he repeated that “that had never happened”. He never offered a free passage to America, or a gift of £20. Not one word of any such proposal was made by him. (I think he told me once that he was absolutely frank & told them they had to take their chance of a rope round their neck, and he had no promises to give them.)

The Germans dealt fairly and honestly with him. They were perfectly definite & clear & he had no complaint of them. “I got what I asked for”, he said, “I got for Ireland more than Wolfe Tone ever got – more than you imagine. No one ever got so much.”

“My plan was to save life, not to destroy it.”

He spoke with indignation of the standard of honour which allowed Sir Richard Cave to interview the Alsatian deputy Welterle, and hear from him & repeat in the Times information as to German preparations for war as early as 1902 or 1904? which Welterle had learned as member of a confidential committee or sitting of the German Parliament. He contrasted this with his own action. A high German official (the name was not given) asked him in Berlin on some special matter about England which RC knew from his connection with official life. His answer was “I wonder that you

can dare to ask me such a question.” The German blushed – and turned to another subject. “They never on any occasion”, said RC, “heard from me the slightest fragment of information about England.” **[!!]**

He felt the indignity of his own accusers seeking out the “traitors” of other countries to learn their secrets on equal terms. (I was unable to find the passage in the Times between Jan & April 1916). The agitation & distress of his position made him very ill & he was for two months in bed in a hospital under the care of a specialist – “nervous prostration”, he said touching his forehead – from the middle of January.

He suddenly heard by accident of plans made, without his knowledge, for an Irish rising. Against the doctor's orders he got out of bed & went to Berlin. He had determined to go to Ireland & stop the attempt. “How did you persuade them?” I said, “What did you say?” “I said nothing at all. I let them talk and made no answer. They wanted me to take the Irish soldiers with me. I refused. I was going to save life.”

I asked him if he ever used the words “fight against England.” “Never once” he said. I said I had been sure of that, and that these words were put into the soldiers minds & used in the witness box out of the circular which he had told me before he had never seen till it appeared in court, & had been written by some one else. I asked now who wrote it, and he said J.P. [**crossed out:** (Count Plunkett told me afterwards that when I asked) (Before this I had asked Count Plunkett about it, and if he could not help R.C. by making a statement. He said the circular had been printed & used in Dublin before it was sent out to Germany, that he would gladly help R.C. That I had better ask in Dublin of Connolly's friends as possibly it was he who wrote it). It was at this same time that R.C. told me that he had never made any promise to the Irish about America or money – that he had been very plain & frank with them.

On the second time he told me of his earnest entreaty to the three men of the intelligence departments on Easter Sunday to give warning of the rising if they would not let him do it – and the answer of one: “It is better to let a festering sore come to a head & then we know how to deal with it.” Two or three times he alluded to the “festering sore”, & asked if I remembered it. On the last time but one that saw him I asked who it was made the remark. Did his name begin with an H. He said there were two with that initial letter, & that it was the higher in rank of the two – Major Hall.

**[“But which Hall? The assumption has been that the person who spoke of a festering sore was Captain Blinker Hall. Yet it is possible it was Major Frank Hall who used the phrase. According to Alice Stopford Green, Casement told her it was the higher in rank of the two who alluded several times to the festering sore. A Major is a higher army rank than Captain but junior to a naval Captain, so confusion has lingered. However, the rank of ‘Captain’ is given by Casement in his 64-page typed brief to counsel, so it was Blinker Hall not Frank Hall, although they were two of a kind.” - Dudgeon book extract]**

Many times at Brixton he begged me to see Mrs. MacNeill and assure her that her husband would soon be free. “I can save him. I know I can. I can certainly do it.” I asked if he had sent him a message on landing. He said no – he had no time. He did not know whether “the other man” (Monteith) had done it. (I have since ascertained he did not.) R.C. said he had no communication with MacNeill except the one letter of Dec. 1914 which never arrived.

In Brixton prison he spoke much about the coming trial. “They talk of fair and equal justice. There is no equal justice to a prisoner. If I had the prosecution under lock and key, and I kept the key, and they saw people just as I chose, and had access to just such books & witnesses as I allowed, then we might talk of an equal & just trial.”

To a man so singularly free & unfettered as he had always been it was terrible to be locked in one room, and especially never to be for a moment alone – one warder locked in with him all day, and two at night, which made sleep almost impossible. Once only he was irritable, when he praised (on my second visit) the German administration of conquered provinces & their increased wealth, and I told him in his defence not to mix up that question with his real business of Irish nationality. He never referred to it again. After the trial he regretted rather bitterly that he had consented to abandon all personal reference to himself, with regard to an explanation of his position towards his official salary, and the knighthood – and lamented that a wrong & injurious use of these two points was being made by his enemies.

He gave as an instance of injustice in the charges against him that the Government charged him with being on a certain day at Limburg; and that they certainly knew he was in Hamburg on that day, where he was photographed for an article about him in the Hamburger Nachrichten; for the Government sent to stop the steamer carrying this paper to America, & seized from it the 20,000 copies of the Nachrichten; and it was from one of these copies that the photograph was taken which was put, as required by law, on the warrant of his arrest. This he told me in Pentonville.

He spoke of Sergeant Sullivan’s speech before the Court of Appeal, on which his feeling was very strong. When Sullivan sat down after the first part of the case was ended, without giving notice to his client or the solicitor that he meant to drop the second part, R.C. in his excitement rose hastily, & hurried down the stairs. “I was nearly at the bottom when I heard the Judge say “Then I understand that the other counts in the case are entirely abandoned (or some such words I do not remember them.) “Yes, my Lord.” “You must remember” continued R.C. “that a prisoner becomes a prisoner, not in body only but in mind. If I had all my faculties in full use, as a free man has, I should immediately have turned and gone up the stairs and said “No, my Lord, I do not consent. If my counsel refuses to continue the case I will take it up myself, and argue it myself.” But I was almost at the bottom of the stairs. My faculties dulled, & my mind hardly working. I lost the one moment, and all was gone. The impression on him was most painful. I think he had strong hope of reprieve until Aug 2 when his cousins said goodbye to him & brought no message of hope. I followed them & I think I saw him under the first shock of this conviction. His face was grey and lined in a new way, and his manner had lost animation for the first time. Once more as on the first visit he laid his face for a moment on the back of his outspread hands. He spoke gently & with dignity & sweetness. I told him all I could say, of the appeals that I alone had been sending in to Downing St three times a day since the appeal to the Lords was refused, from officials of all kinds J.P.'s, Boards of Guardians, Town & County & Rural Councillors, bishops, priests, whole communities in a body. He asked me if they came from every part of the country. I said everywhere, north, south, east & west – from hamlets, villages, & towns, and said the time had been short because of the universal belief that the appeal to the Lords would have been allowed. He said – “If the time had been longer I think four fifths of Ireland would have signed.”

“Yes”, I said, “but the Government has had enough from me and all the others who have been passing in petitions to know quite well what the feeling of Ireland is.” He was tired, and in a few minutes rose and said “The time is short now. I will say goodbye.” I held up both my hands & so we parted.

A few days before when I ran to go he slipped rapidly past the warden on his left, and suddenly I found him almost at my side – at least within reach if I had put out my arm. “I am so lonely” he said. He had said that once before. I could only put up both hands, & leave hurriedly but I should never be allowed in again.

He left a book with the Governor, hoping it might be given to me. It was a vain desire. I cannot see when a civilised Government chooses to take a man's life, that it need snatch from him also every consolation that a dying man desires.

Alice Stopford Green

**Beginning: “On Friday, 4 days before the police proceedings began …”. 1 sheet**. [Addendum to above 15 sheet item]

On Friday, 4 days before the police proceedings began I went to the Horse Guards to ask leave to go to the Tower. Major Arbuthnot advised me to wait till R.C. was moved to Brixton. “It is inconvenient at the Tower. If a visitor goes we have to turn the officers out of the billiard room. Sir Roger is so sorry to leave the Tower. We have tried to make it home-like & comfortable for him.”

**“Told me by ‘Napoleon’”. *4 sheets*:**

[Who was Napoleon? Bulmer Hobson himself??]

On Thursday Ap. 22. 1916 in the evening a man came from beyond Bray to report orders sent to the Volunteers to blow up a bridge destroy the railway & march on some spot with arms. He was sent to ask if these orders were from headquarters. Later the same evening, about 11 p.m. men came from Kilkenny to announce similar orders sent to them & ask their ??. B.H. took a taxi and drove to Eoin arriving about 2 a.m. They discussed the situation all night. I think they then decided to countermand the Sunday parade & began to send out orders. Eoin's fear was that these wd. not be obeyed. His one anxiety was how to ensure obedience. B.H. was lured into a house, and kept there prisoner till Monday so that he was unable to send out messages.

The document about military movements against the Volunteers was forged by Joseph Plunkett, and given by him to Colum O'Loughlin, to give to O'Connor, to give to Little, by whom it was sent to Eoin. If J.P. had not known it to be fake he would naturally have given it himself. “We” printed 40,000 copies, believing it to be a genuine document.

The men who plotted the rising J. Plunkett, Ceannt, Connolly, Pearse, MacDiarmuid, Daly - ~~I think~~, and one more. Pearse had been engaged in it since the Xmas before. Probably no one outside these knew of the German negotiations. The Volunteers knew nothing whatever of it. I spoke of rumours I had heard from Wexford. He said the Volunteers were not strong in Wexford & it must have been people outside. (His statement that the Volunteers were absolutely ignorant of all is confirmed by Mr Barton who tells me that not one of the prisoners to whom he has spoken had had the slightest idea of an impending rising. They felt very bitterly about the trap laid for them. For example a troop was marched up Thomas St. thinking it was a route march, and were suddenly turned into the South Dublin Union, served out ammunition and ordered to fight. Their officers spoke with bitter indignation of such a betrayal.)

Napoleon knew of no Americans working or organising independently through the country. For the last two years nine thousand pounds was received by the Volunteers from America. At least £4000 of that came in cash, which the police could not have traced, so any sum above £5000 reported to the Castle must have been invention.

Rumours among the military that Bulmer Hobson sent a telegram to the War Office to warn them of the rising – that a Sinn Feiner in the Post Office stopped it and took it to Connolly and that he had B.H. arrested & kept out of mischief in a house. Told me by Robert Barton. Sept. 1916. Date not given

Dec 1916 Darrell Figgis, coming out from prison told me Bulmer Hobson had been supposed a traitor & had been arrested by the Sinn Feiners on the Wednesday & kept prisoner in the country. I suppose the date to be wrong because, in the presence of Mr. MacNeill B.H. told me he had first heard the alarm at 11 p.m. Thursday night, had gone to MacNeill's house at 1-2 a.m. Friday morning – discussed with him till 9 a.m. & then started to stop the rising, & was then arrested.