

STATEMENT BY

MR. BULMER HOBSON

ON

I.R.B. AND IRISH FREEDOM.

A copy of this statement was sent at Mr. Hobson's request to each of the following, and any comments received in the Bureau as a result are registered and filed, as indicated hereunder:

<u>Name.</u>	<u>Relevant Register No.</u>
Dr. P. McCartan	S.63
P.S. O'Hogarty	S.49
D. McCullough	S.62
P. O'Riain	S.32
S. O'Conner	S.53
S. Fitzgibbon	S.54
Captain R. Montcith	S.50

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W.S.  
E.H.  
ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRS MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 84

PÁDRAIG PEARSE.

After the formation of the Irish Volunteers in October, 1913, Pádraig Pearse was sworn in by me as a member of the I.R.B. in December of that year. I cannot recollect which Circle. The circumstances leading to this were as follows: Being in financial difficulties with his school, St. Enda's, Rathfarnham, and being afraid of bankruptcy, Pearse came to me in December 1913 with his problem. He had started his school on a promise of £500 which had never materialised.

I arranged a lecture tour for him in the United States after correspondence with John Devoy, Joe McGarrity, Judge Keogh of the Supreme Court <sup>of the State of New York</sup>, and, I think, John Quinn. When these arrangements were made, and in view of the fact that Pearse would almost certainly have been brought in to the I.R.B. at a very early date, I swore him in before his departure for the States.

Pearse went to the United States. I followed a fortnight later. Pearse was quite unaware of my intention to go there and was surprised when I turned up. I deal with the reason for my visit to the U.S.A. in my statement on Roger Casement.

Pearse's development towards Left Wing Nationalism was remarkably rapid. As late as 1912 he spoke at a Redmondite meeting in Dublin, and a little over a year later he became a member of the I.R.B. Six months after I swore him into the I.R.B. he was writing to people in America, to whom I had introduced him, telling them that I was not sufficiently reliable, from a revolutionary point of view, to be entrusted with funds or given support. Copies of some of his letters are

still extant and I have given them to the National Library.

He was a sentimental egotist, full of curious Old Testament theories about being the scapegoat for the people, and he became convinced of the necessity for a periodic blood sacrifice to keep the National spirit alive. There was a certain strain of abnormality in all this. He did not contribute greatly to the hard grinding work of building up the movement, but as soon as we had succeeded in getting a small organisation and a handful of arms he seized the opportunity to bring about the blood sacrifice.

*Richard Ashen*  
26.1.48

26 January, 1948.

Witness:

*W.S. P.*

Director Bureau of Military History.

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