

SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEMBERS

BIOGRAPHIES

- ❖ Blunden William Percival
- ❖ Brady Hugh Constantine
- ❖ Cashman William
- ❖ Cremen Michael
- ❖ Fahy Edward
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BLUNDEN, William Percival [1891-?]

William Percival Blunden was born on 6 February 1891 and resided with his father John Edward at 8 Belgrave Park, Rathmines, Dublin when he was successful in a competitive examination and appointed a clerk in the 2nd Division of the Civil Service for duty in the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on 16 March 1910. He held a "Chamber of Commerce Certificate" in book-keeping and graduated BA from University College, Dublin in 1912.

Blunden was transferred "on loan" from the Department of Agriculture to the Adjutant Generals office, Ministry of Defence on 24 January 1923 with the rank of Executive Officer (Lower). He worked directly to Lt Gen Gearoid O Suilleavain and his permanent transfer was authorised by the Minister for Finance in the grade of HEO on the 8 August 1923. On 1 December 1924 he was appointed Deputy Army Finance Officer, this title being subsequently classed "finance officer" (he features prominently in correspondence and files in the SPG (1924-1928) series). On the reorganisation of the civil side of the Department in

1930-1931, Blunden was the HEO appointed in charge of *Section F 3*, Accounting Side with responsibility for Officers Pay, Reserve Pay (all ranks) and Pensions (all ranks). Records at this time indicate that he was married and the father of two children less than 16 years of age.

WP Blunden was promoted to Assistant Principal on 24 July 1934 in the Administrative side of the Department. He was appointed as officer in charge of the Air Raids Precautions (ARP) Section on the civil side on 10 March 1937 and was promoted to Principal on 2 September 1938. Blunden underwent a course of training in the British ARP School in Gloucestershire and was seconded to the British ARP Department of the Ministry of Home Security in 1937/38. He functioned as the officer in charge of administration and organisation of the ARP Branch, responsibility for which was placed by the Government in the Minister for Co-ordination of Defensive Measures during the Emergency period, reporting directly to Mr. Sean Moylan, T.D., and Parliamentary Secretary.

By the end of the Emergency, an extract from a report to be found on *Estab 802 (personnel file)* indicates that the Department of Defence believed “...that the system of defence organised through local authorities is no longer adequate to meet the position arising from the development of greater bombing power and from the atomic bomb” (2pp dated 14 December 1946). Blunden would go on to head a Civil Defence section of the Department, be involved in the setting up of the Civil Defence School, undergo further specialist training in the United Kingdom, and prepare allocation of responsibilities, training and instruction with the Defence Forces and local authorities. He was promoted to Deputy Assistant Secretary on 2 August 1947 and retired from service on 6 August 1956 as head of the Civil Defence Branch of the Department.

BRADY, Hugh Constantine (1900-1973)

Hugh Brady was born on 7 June 1900 in Dublin and first commenced work as a Boy Clerk in the Oifig Oideachais, Londain (Education Department, London) where he was employed from 10 July 1916 to 20 December 1916. Thereafter he transferred to the Land Commission office in Dublin. He joined the Irish Volunteers in August 1917; serving as a member of “C”

Company, 3 Battalion, Dublin Brigade under Joe O'Connor as Company Commander until August 1919, when he was dismissed from the Civil Service for his "political" activities. These activities included participation in operations by "C" Coy –first as a Volunteer and later as a Squad Leader/ Non Commissioned Officer-in placing an armed guard on the Mansion House in August 1918, the garrisoning of No 6 Harcourt Street in November that year; a raid for arms on the United Services Club, St Stephens Green, an armed guard on Volunteer General Headquarters in Parnell Street and other armed actions in 1919.

Brady was then promoted to officer rank, assigned to IRA GHQ Organising Department under Michael Collins, and despatched to re-organise the South Donegal Brigade. In February 1920 he was elected as Battalion Commander, Killybegs Battalion and took part in activities there including, the burning of Glencolmcille RIC Barracks, enforcing boycott on unloading coal at Killybegs for Military or Police use and the ambush of an RIC patrol at Bavin, near Killybegs, for example. He was ordered to return to Dublin in August 1920, resumed duty with "C" Coy and participated in the seizure of Dublin Castle mails at Westland Row, the operation at Pembroke Street on 20 November, ambushes at Dame Street, Redmond's Hill and Wexford Street and the Belfast Boycott raid. In March 1921 he was ordered to return to Donegal, and was arrested at Strabane, when recognised by an RIC officer from Killybegs, while en route and sentenced to 5 years in Dartmoor Prison.

On his release he was employed as a clerk in the Police Department of the Home Office, Dail Eireann up to March 1922 when he left for "political reasons" and returned to Donegal to reorganise the West Donegal Brigade, as Brigade Adjutant. He commanded Finner Camp, Donegal and organised cross border raids on "B" Special and RUC forces/stations into Northern Ireland up to the outbreak of the Civil War.

Commandant General Brady was appointed Divisional Adjutant on 1 July 1922, and took part in fighting against National Army forces at Letterkenny, at Glenveagh Castle and at Tullyclave, Ardara, being actively sought by National Army forces

By October 1923 he had made his way to Derry, travelled to Scotland and immigrated to the United States. There he married Margaret Theresa Ryan, daughter of John, a Publican of Ballygar, County Galway in Brooklyn, New York on 25 October 1925.

On 6 February 1933 he was re- employed as a clerk in the Land Commission office and worked there until he transferred to the Department of Defence on 1 January 1938 on promotion. Here he was successively promoted. He was appointed a member of the Advisory Committee to the Referee on 6 April 1947, serving until the committee concluded its investigations on 31 July 1947. On the reforming of the Committee, consequent on the passing of the *Military Services Pensions(Amendment) Act, 1949* he was re-appointed and served in a full time capacity during the period 6 December 1951 to 31 December 1955. Hugh C. Brady finally served as Secretary to the Department from the 31 March 1958, taking over from Lieutenant General Peadar MacMahon. He died on 10 March 1973 and his widow Margaret died on 10 March 1985. The family home was at 95 Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9.

CASHMAN, William M. /Liam Michael O Ciosain (1909-1971)

William Cashman was born on 7 November 1909 in Fermoy, Co Cork and commenced employment in the civil service as a tax clerk with the Revenue Commissioners on 29 December 1927. Less than a year later, while retaining that grade he is recorded as working with the Metropolitan District Court until his promotion to Junior Executive Officer in the Department of Defence on 18 June 1930. Promotion to Higher Executive Officer followed in October 1938, to Assistant Principal Officer in February 1941 and to Principal Officer on 8 October 1952. Cashman served as Finance Officer to the Department of Defence, until his promotion to Deputy Assistant Secretary in June 1954. He again served as Finance Officer from May 1958 until his death in service on 19 July 1971. He had replaced Mr. John J. Moran as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Referee for a short term in 1943. William Cashman was survived by his sister Ellen of Bantry Road, Dublin 9 and by his brother Robert of Crannagh Park, Rathfarnham, Dublin.

CREMEN, Michael (1882-1956)

Michael Cremen was born in 1882 and joined the Irish Volunteers at the inaugural meeting held in the Rotunda on 25 November 1913 and served with "E" Company, 4 Battalion, Dublin Brigade in the GPO during Easter Week 1916. At the time he was a civil servant

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serving with the Post and Telegraphic Service at Aldborough House (Portland Row, Santry, Dublin, dominant position overlooking the Five Lamps Junction) and the original plan was to take over that house, in company with Sean Heuston, and to hold it under arms. Due to the difficulties raised by the “countermanding order” that objective was changed and he found himself mobilised with his company on Easter Sunday morning at Liberty Hall and then escorting munitions from there to the GPO, where he fought until the evacuation to Moore Street. He was jailed at Stafford and released early in July 1916.

Cremen resumed his civil service career in early 1917, playing a prominent role in organising resistance to the British Government conscription threat through his presidency of the Civil Service Organising Body, arguing that the refusal of civil servants to implement Government decisions regarding conscription would go a long way towards defeat of the Government purpose. He led a delegation with Dermot Hegarty (Diarmaid O hEigearthaigh) to the anti-conscription conference held in the Mansion House and was appointed to the Volunteer Executive as a proxy for Cathal Brugha. Cremen was dismissed from the civil service towards the end of 1918. He then carried out electioneering and organising work in Monaghan and South Down and in early 1919 was appointed Company Commander 4 Coy, 5 Battalion, Dublin Brigade and his activities are fully recorded in the papers of *The Bureau of Military History 1913-1921* viz *Witness Statements* (WS) 563 and 903.

Michael Cremen was appointed Director of Purchases in April 1922, under Liam Mellows as Quartermaster General. He continued to serve on the Staff of GHQ up to September 1923. He later resumed his career in the civil service and was serving as an HEO in the Department of Post & Telegraphs, GPO, Dublin when he was transferred to the Department of Defence “on loan” in 1944.

He had earlier been awarded a Military Service Pension of 14 years in the rank of Colonel on 31 August 1943. Michael Cremen was appointed a member of the Advisory Committee to the Referee in a full time capacity on 14 November 1944 and served in that appointment up to 31 July 1947. He was promoted to Assistant Principal, Department of Defence during this period.

Michael Cremen died on 26 March 1956 and was survived by his wife Mary Alice, Harold’s Cross, Dublin.

Military Service Pensions Collection

FAHY, Edward [1876-?]

Edward Fahy was born on the 1 July 1876 and resided with his father William at 8 Sackville Place, Dublin when he commenced work as a Temporary Boy Copyist, at the Public Works Office on 12 March 1894. He was successful in a competitive examination held under the auspices of the Civil Service Commissioners and appointed a Clerk in the 2nd Division of the Civil Service on 10 April 1896 for duty at the Public Works Office. On 1 September 1897 he was assigned as a 2nd Division clerk to the Treasury Remembrances Office, promoted to examiner in 1904 and as clerk in that office in August 1915. Edward Fahy was “assimilated to Higher Executive Grade” on re-organisation in 1921 and he later served as Chief Clerk in the Paymaster Generals Office before he was appointed Deputy Army Finance Officer, Department of Defence on 15 December 1924. He was assigned as (Army) Finance Officer, replacing Mr. Thomas Gorman, on 1 August 1928 and served in that appointment until 13 September 1934 when he was assigned as a full time member of the Advisory Committee under the *Military Service Pensions Act, 1934*. He retired on the 30 June 1941. Edward Fahy was married (Civil Service Census, 1932), but, no details of family have been sourced. He held a BA (Mod) from Trinity College, Dublin and was a B.L. His last recorded address was at Elm Mount, The Grove, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin.

LENNON, Daniel (1896-1957)

Daniel Lennon was born on 8 October 1896 and resided at 7 St Albans Road, Dublin 7, when he was successful in a limited Junior Executive competition run by the Civil Service Commission in December 1934 and was appointed to Contracts Section of the Department of Defence.

Lennon had been educated at the Christian Brothers, Synge Street and Mungret College, Limerick and had previously served as a boy clerk from 1912 to 1914 in the Revenue Commission, until his resignation in 1914. Thereafter he was engaged as a Director of a Printing and Publishing Company, editing and producing a monthly periodical and a weekly paper. He claimed to have worked in Scotland on behalf of the “Executive of the Dail” in a voluntary capacity in 1920, producing a weekly newspaper for circulation in Northern Ireland.

His career in the public service resumed when he was appointed a clerical officer in the Office of the Revenue Commissioners in 1926 and transferred on promotion to the Dublin District Court as a Court Clerk in 1935. He was serving as a staff officer, Unemployment Branch, Department of Industry and Commerce immediately prior to his move to Defence.

Lennon was promoted to Higher Executive Officer in Contracts Section on 14 September, 1939 and dispatched to the United Kingdom to negotiate the purchase and delivery of pedal and motor cycles to the value of £30,000. He continued to act for the Department at times in England during the years up to 1944, negotiating the purchase of military stores with elements of the British Government. By 1947 he was assigned to the General Section of the Department and his duties included the Departmental work connected with the National Blood Donation Centre while it was in operation and the post-war recruiting drive for the Defence Forces. He received a letter of commendation from Colonel James Flynn, Adjutant General, through the Secretary for his contribution in that campaign to the design of posters and the booklet "*Life in the Army*". In 1949, he was assigned as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Referee and promoted to Assistant Principal Officer on 15 August 1951.

Daniel Lennon, a widower, died in service on 8 March 1957.

MacMAHON, Peadar / Peadar Mac Mathghamhna [1893-1975]

Peadar Mac Mahon was born on 10 January 1893 and joined "C" Company, 2nd Battalion, Dublin Brigade, Irish Volunteers on its formation. He served as a Section Commander in the College of Surgeons and in Jacobs Biscuit Factory during Easter Week, 1916 and was imprisoned in Knutsford and interned in Frongoch until August 1916. He had been employed as a book-keeper in a shipping company and was not reemployed on his release. He linked up with the reorganised 2nd Battalion and in October 1917 was attached to the Limerick City Battalion, having been employed as a clerk by Daly's in that city. He formed the 2nd Battalion, Limerick Brigade and served as Vice-Commandant before being appointed Brigade Adjutant at the end of 1917. During the period from April to November 1918 he served with the Limerick Brigade and was attached to the Dublin Brigade as a staff officer on his return to the city. He was appointed as a full time organiser for the General Headquarters

Organisation Department from April 1919. His organisation work was carried out in Counties Leitrim, Mayo, Kilkenny, Kildare and Cavan.

He was arrested on 28 December 1920 and imprisoned in Arbour Hill Barracks before being interned in Rath Camp in the Curragh, Co Kildare, being released in December 1921. Peadar Mac Mahon enlisted in the National Forces at Beggars Bush Barracks on 1 July 1922 at the age of 32. His address on enlistment was Coose, Laragh, Castleblayney, Co Monaghan.

He served in the rank of Major General as General Officer Commanding the Curragh Command until his promotion to Lieutenant General and appointment as Chief of Staff succeeding General Sean Mac Mahon in that appointment.

Lt Gen Peadar Mac Mahon submitted his resignation on 30 March 1927 and took up the appointment of Secretary, Department of Defence.

He was awarded a Military Service Pension of 14 years service on 15 November 1926. He also made a *Witness Statement to The Bureau of Military History 1913-1921* (WS 1730).

Lt Gen Peadar Mac Mahon died on 27 February 1975. He was survived by his wife, Anne, sons, Liam and Peter and Rev James (Secretary to the Archbishop of Dublin at the time) and his daughter, Audrey.

MORAN, John James (Sean) [1892-1970]

John J. Moran was born on 21 July 1892 and took up employment with the Land Commission as a boy clerk on 20 February 1908. He served as a temporary clerk in the Valuation Office from November, 1911 and was promoted to Clerk 2nd Division in May 1912 in that office. He was later promoted to Junior Executive Officer and “loaned” to the Ministry of Defence in August 1922. Promotion to Higher Executive Officer followed in December 1923, to Assistant Principal Officer in October 1929 and on 3 January 1933 he was appointed Secretary, Valuation Office. He then became Director, Gaeltacht Services in January 1935 (on loan) and served in that office until 8 July 1940, when he was appointed a member of the Advisory Committee to the Referee and served therein until his promotion to Assistant Secretary, Department of Defence on 9 December 1942. He contributed a *Contemporary Document* (CD 123) to *The Bureau of Military History 1913 - 1921*. John

Moran was married to Eileen Mary and retired from service on 21 July 1957, his address at that time being "Somerton", Donabate, Co Dublin. He died on 2 February 1970.

MURPHY, Patrick / Pádraig O Murchadha [1913-1987]

Patrick Murphy was born on 9 January 1913 and entered service through the Open Competition Examination for Junior Executive Officers and Customs & Excise, July 1932. He achieved 3rd place in the latter and commenced employment as an officer of Customs & Excise in December 1932. In May 1933 he was appointed a Junior Executive Officer and assigned to Pensions Branch, Department of Defence. In July 1937 he was assigned as Private Secretary to Parliamentary Secretary, Department of Industry and Commerce; in September 1939 assigned in addition as Private Secretary to Parliamentary Secretary, Department of Defence and promoted to Higher Executive Officer in the Air Raid Precautions Branch of the Department in February 1941. Promotion to Assistant Principal (Acting) in Pensions Branch followed in December 1951. He was appointed by the Minister for Defence as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Referee, set up under the 1934 Act, with effect from 22 March 1957. This appointment was full time. Patrick Murphy continued to serve in Finance/Pensions Branch, until he was promoted to Assistant Secretary on 24 June 1965 and to Secretary Department of Defence on 1 July 1975. He retired from that appointment on 1 May 1977. Patrick Murphy was married to Ann Teresa, nee McGroarty, and was father to Una Marie Teresa, Pádraig, Michael Sean and Maire Maigread. He graduated from UCD with a BA in the 1940's. His date of death is recorded as 23 July 1987.

O'BRIEN, John [1916-?]

John O'Brien was born on 14 October 1916. He was a native of Killickane, Mitchelstown, Co Cork where his father Cornelius farmed. He was educated at the Christian Brothers Schools, Mitchelstown and following his success in the Clerical Officers Examination of 1934, commenced work in the Department of Agriculture on 3 December 1934. Military records show that he was attested as a member of 3rd Battalion, Regiment of Dublin, Volunteer Force on 7 October 1935 at Collins Barracks, Dublin under service number 112851. On 21 November 1936 he transferred to 2 Field Signal Company. It was to this Unit that he was

called up for service in September 1939. Reservists were then stood down in October/November and Corporal O'Brien was called up on full time service on 29 May 1940. He was promoted to Sergeant in October of that year and selected for training and promotion to the rank of 2/Lt in November 1940. On commissioning he was appointed Troop Commander, 6 Cyclist Squadron, Cavalry Corps. Capt O'Brien later commanded 11 Cyclist Squadron and served as Assistant Operations Officer, Headquarters 4 Brigade, Finner Camp, Co Donegal. He was appointed to the Reserve of Officers, First Line when he was stood down and resumed duty with the Civil Service in April 1946, as HEO in the Department of Local Government.

In July that year he married Peggy Moylan, daughter of Sean Moylan, T.D., and Minister for Lands.

John O'Brien was transferred from Local Government to the Department of Defence on 22 March 1957 as Private Secretary to Mr. Kevin Boland, T.D., and Minister for Defence. He was promoted to Assistant Principal on 7 May 1958 and he served as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Referee from that date up to 30 September 1960. On 17 November 1966 John O'Brien transferred to the Department of Local Government. His military career continued with annual training with 2 Infantry Battalion and the Eastern Command Training Depot at Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin. Capt O'Brien was called up for service in Aid of the Civil Power on the 16 August 1969. He was stood down on 22 September 1969 and relinquished his commission on age grounds on 14 October 1970.

O'GRADY, Thomas Standish - Tomas O Grada [1909-1990]

Thomas O'Grady was born on 30 May 1909 and received his primary school education at Ballyclough National Schools and secondary education at the North Monastery, Cork. He entered the Civil Service as a clerical officer in September 1926, being employed in the Department of Defence, Stores Audit section. He was appointed as Junior Executive officer in January 1931, as a result of open examination of July 1930 and assigned to Claims section of the Department. He was appointed to the post of assistant auditor in the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General on 27 January 1935 and reverted to the Department of Defence, at his own request on 2 August 1937, being appointed then to Officers Pay section (F3). In September 1938 he was promoted and assigned as a HEO to Air Raid Precautions

Section (S 5), dealing with the administration of the Auxiliary Fire Services and Transport Services being organised by local authorities, annual estimates and grants, for example. On 9 February 1951 he was appointed a member of the Advisory Committee to the Referee and promoted to Assistant Principal on 30 November 1951.

Later he was appointed Assistant Finance Officer, in charge of the sections of the Army Accounts Branch dealing with central accounts, officers and soldiers pay and stores audit section. Promotion to Principal was effected on 13 June 1964 and he was appointed to R 4 section. Thomas O'Grady was promoted to Finance Officer on 19 August 1971 and served in that appointment until his retirement on 18 August 1974.

Thomas O' Grady married Nora Mary Keogh on 3 September, 1941. His death is recorded on 2 September 1990.



**Military Service
Pensions Collection**