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BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S.

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BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

(Bureau of Military History 1913-21).

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(Dublin).

DOCUMENT W. S. 5.

Statement by

MICHAEL RIORDAN,  
Castlelack,  
Bandon,  
Co. Cork.

dated 4 September, 1947,

on

Kilpatrick Company I.V., Co. Cork,

1913 - 1916.

3 pp. - Typescript - F<sup>t</sup>scap.

File S. 295.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL RIORDAN,  
CASTLELACK, BANDON, CO. CORK.

PERIOD: 1913 to EASTER, 1916.

UNIT: KILPATRICK COMPANY, I.V.

Early in 1913 we started a Company of Volunteers in Kilpatrick. There was a hurling club and a hurling team in the district, and it was from the boys associated in these that the initiative came. We had no directions from anywhere; we started on our own, and the only policy we had was opposition to the Carson Volunteers. There were between 25 and 30 of us, all young, and the organisation was not very perfect at that time. An ex-British soldier, Michael Crowley from Clonakilty, who was working for Jerry Connor, drilled us, and we used to do marches.

When the general start of the Volunteers took place at the end of 1913, we joined up with them. Willie Riordan of Bandon took up drilling us, and our numbers went up to 64. The Company was inspected in Kilpatrick on a Sunday evening by Colonel Moore and J.J. Walsh some time in 1914. About this time there was a form of swearing in which the members were asked to sign on for service in Ireland. John McSweeney of Bandon was the man who carried it out. He was in the National Volunteers but had Fenian ideas. Only eleven signed. When the others heard about the possibility of fighting they would not sign, although they held on in the Company.

When the split came the eleven of us kept in the Company and the remainder went over to the Redmond Volunteers. The Redmond Volunteers did not carry on for long afterwards in this district, and I don't think any of them joined the British Army.

We started reorganising after the split, and our numbers went up to 24. We held that strength until after Easter, 1916. The following Officers were elected and held office until after Easter, 1916:-

Captain: Bob Walsh, Brinny, Ballinacurra.  
1st Lieut.: Mike Riordan, Castlelack.  
2nd Lieut.: Jerry Healy, Kilpatrick.

We paid 2d a week into a fund for the purchase of equipment, and by the middle of 1915 we had got haversacks, waterbottles, belts and few bandoliers. We had no caps or puttees at that time, and no arms. Parades were held about twice a week, but not too regularly at that time.

When the Ballinadee Company started in 1915 they got in touch with us, and from that on we used to have frequent Sunday marches in which we joined Ballinadee and sometimes other local Companies. We marched to Innishannon to meet the Ballinadee Company one Sunday. There was a British recruiting meeting there that day, and we marched up and down through it. On the occasion of another British recruiting meeting at Farnivane the Ballinadee and Tinkers' Cross Companies met us there and we marched through

it also. That meeting was addressed by Lord Bandon, Gardiner Wallis and some Military Officers. There was also a British recruiting meeting at Knockavilla, addressed by D.D. Sheehan, M.P., Gardiner Wallis and local sympathisers. With Ballinadee Company we held a parade there that day.

Training now became more regular and we drilled three times a week. Pat Higgins often came out to us from Cork. Some of the men owned shot guns, and we got others on loan from farmers. We did not buy any arms, but we got some pikes made by Con Lehane, Timoleague. One Sunday, with Ballinadee Company, we went on a recruiting tour of the district. We marched to Knockavilla and had Mass there, from that to Crosspound, and from Crosspound to Crossbarry, from Crossbarry to Killeady and back to Kilpatrick. That must have been late in 1915 as the days were getting short and it was dark before we were home. We got caps and belts about this time for most of the men. Almost all had puttees. We had no uniforms in the Company. Everyone had now either a shot gun or a pike.

We were at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Cork in 1915 and also in 1916, and we were at the Manchester Martyrs' procession in Cork in 1915. We had about 24 on each occasion, and went up and down by train. We were also at Ardfield on an exercise and recruiting march about the end of 1915. In addition to the 24 members of the Company we had seven or eight young lads under fifteen that we did not count. The police always kept a watch on us, and were at all our parades.

The Captain told me about a month before Easter, 1916, that there was to be a long march on Easter Sunday, but neither he nor I knew what it was for. The order was for a parade with all arms and equipment and two days' rations. We had a meeting on Easter Saturday night, and it was decided that we would parade at Kilpatrick at 6 o'clock next morning.

The following fourteen Officers and men paraded at Kilpatrick on Easter Sunday:-

Bob Walsh, Brinny:	Captain.
Mike Riordan, Castlelack:	1st Lieut.
Jerh. Healy, Kilpatrick:	2nd Lieut.
Dan Lordan, do	
John Lordan, do	
Michael Lordan, do	
William Coveney, do	
Denis Riordan; Castlelack:	
John Doyle, Kilmore.	
Michael Doyle, do	
John Canniffe, Finnis.	
Patsy Sullivan, do	
Jerome Donovan, Mishells.	
Denis Murphy, do	

We were armed with eight shot guns and six pikes. The average ammunition for the shot guns was five or six rounds each, but a few had more. We had no rifles, revolvers or explosives.

The following is a list of the remaining men in the Company at Easter, 1916:-

Dan Riordan.  
Denis Desmond.  
William McDonnell.  
John Coveney.  
Denis Coveney.  
Tim Healy.  
William Healy.  
Timothy Lordan.  
Denis Healy.  
James Doyle.

We marched to Bandon bridge on Easter Sunday morning and met the Ballinadee Company there about 8 o'clock. The Kilbrittan and Bandon men were with Ballinadee. Sergeant Deegan, R.I.C. followed us from there to Gurteen Bridge on a bicycle. We marched to Tinkers' Cross and met the Gurteen and Tinkers' Cross and Clogough Companies there. From that on we marched with advance and rear guards. We went through Farnivane Cross, past Mount Pleasant police barracks and on to Bealnablath. The Ballinhassig Company met us at Bealnablath. We went on to Kilmurray and had 12 o'clock Mass there. We met the Cork Companies at Harding's Cross and we all marched into Macroom.

We got a fall-out there, and after some time we learned that we were to return home. I do not remember what we were told. We came back on the train to Crookstown and marched home. It was a bad night and we were drowned.

On Easter Monday we got an order to stand to and we assembled at Kilpatrick. We were in readiness all the week, the men being away only while they were getting meals. The police kept a watch on us all the time. We got no order about arms, but I think some Companies got orders to go into Cork to bring out arms. As far as I know, we got no order to this effect.

The raiding began the following week. We got word from Kate Long's in Bandon that we would be raided and I kept away. Scotch Highlanders raided for me and searched the house. The Captain, Bob Walsh, Redmond Walsh and William McDonnell were arrested in these raids. I kept out of the way for a month. The R.I.C. Sergeant from Upton used to come two or three times a week looking for me and for the gun. They got a revolver and a shot gun in McDonnell's, and these were the only arms that were got in the raids. Two or three old shot guns were handed in to the police by young lads. They were not told to hand them in by anyone in authority in the Company, but neither were they stopped from handing them in. The rest of the Company arms were put away safely, and later the shot guns we had on loan from farmers were returned to them.

Signed Michael Riordan  
Date September 4<sup>th</sup> 1947

Witness Florence Dowling

