

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 18



éire

Telefón 61018

ROINN COSANTA.

BURO STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21

(Bureau of Military History 1913-21).

26 RAEDH NA NIARTHARACH,
(26 Westland Row),

BALÍF ÁTHA CLIA'IN
(Dub'm)

DOCUMENT W.S. 18.

Statement by

Denis Lordan,
Christopher's Drive,
Montenottee Park,
Cork.

Dated 21 August, 1947.

On Fianna, Cork, 1912.

Kilbrittan Coy. I.V., Co. Cork,
1914 - 1916.

4 pp. - Typescript - F'scap.

File S. 287.

ORIGINAL



1915 18
BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913 21

No. W.S. 18

STATEMENT OF BENIS LORDAN, 13 ST.
CHRISTOPHER'S DRIVE, MONTENOTTE
PARK, CORK.

PERIOD: 1912 to Easter, 1916.

UNIT: Kilbrittain Coy., I.V.

In the year 1912 I was living with my aunt in Kinsale and attending school there. An effort was made to form a Sluagh of Fiance Éireann. Seamus Breathnach invited some of the Cork men who were interested in the Fianna movement to come to Kinsale, and Tomás MacCurtain, Seán O'Hegarty and Martin Donovan came down. A Sluagh was formed with about six boys, of whom I was one. In a short time three of these withdrew from the organisation and by the end of the year only two were left - Ted Mahony and myself.

We kept going. Sometimes we would get a few recruits but they would fall away again for one reason or another. I think it was in 1913 that the two of us attended a Fianna gathering at An Dún in Cork, which was attended by Countess Markievicz, her husband and daughter. Liam de Roiste was at An Dún that day; he was at the time a part-time teacher of Bookkeeping in Kinsale at the Technical School.

Early in 1914 the Volunteers were started in Kinsale and as there seemed no prospect of the Fianna developing Ted Mahony and I decided to join the Volunteers. We had some difficulty in getting accepted as we were only a little over 16 years of age at the time, but eventually Tadg Lynch got us enrolled. That ended the Fianna in Kinsale.

Before the outbreak of the European war the Kinsale Volunteers were between 300 and 400 strong. A large number of them were Reservists and were called up after the war started. There was a Committee in charge of which Samon O'Neill was Chairman. Edward Malloran was a member of the Committee. Tadg Lynch was a member and an Officer of the Volunteers. There were O'Brienites and Redmondites in the Volunteers and when the split came most of the Redmondites and many of the O'Brienites joined the British Army. By the end of 1914 the Irish Volunteer strength in Kinsale was between 30 and 40. Tadg Lynch was Company Captain. The majority of the men were shop assistants and not natives of the town. The organisation fell through completely in Kinsale before Easter 1916.

I returned to Kilbrittain to live with my uncle there early in 1915. There was then no Volunteer organisation in Kilbrittain but some men from the eastern side of the parish were in Ballinadee Company. Ballinadee had then, and up to Easter 1916, perhaps the strongest, best armed and best equipped Company in the County Cork.

We decided early in 1915 to start a Company in Kilbrittain. We got about twenty men and that strength did not vary very much up to Easter 1916. There was no ex-serviceman amongst us - we drilled ourselves. I had had training in the Fianna and in the Volunteers in Kinsale; and Dan and Denis Manning and John O'Brien of Clounbowig came along to give us a hand

at the start. They were in Ballinadee Company. We had no rifles; we had about six shot guns and some pikes. The pike heads were made in Bandon. I acquired a .32 revolver early in 1916. Uniform consisted of peaked cap, putties, belt and haversack. The Officers were:-

Captain: Denis Lordan.
1st Lieutenant: Dennis Manning.
2nd Lieutenant: Jack O'Neill.

There was no Adjutant, Quartermaster or Section Commanders.

The following is a list of the Officers and men of the Company at Easter, 1916:-

* Dan Manning	...	...	...	...	Kilbritten
* Denis Manning	...	...	...	...
* Denis Lordan	...	Ardacrow	...	...	Kilbritten
Jackie O'Neill	...	Maryboro	...	...	Timoleague
* Michael O'Neill	..	...	...	...
* Jeremiah O'Neill	...	...	...	...
* Timothy Holland	..	Ardacrow	...	...	Kilbritten
* William Kearney	..	Knockbrown	..	...	Bandon
* Michael Kearney	..	Cloundreen	..	...	Timoleague
* William Griffin	..	Burrin	...	...
Tim O'Mahony	...	Clougheen	...	...	Kilbritten
Jeremiah Ahern	...	Gurranreigh	..	...	Kilbritten
* Patrick O'Sullivan	...	Glounduv	...	...	Kilbritten
Jeremiah Hayes	...	Clougheen	...	...	Kilbritten
Jeremiah O'Mahony	...	Cloundreen	..	...	Timoleague
* David O'Sullivan	...	Glounduv	...	...	Kilbritten
David Cowhig	...	Burrin	...	...	Kilbritten
Maurice Healy	...	Ardacrow	...	...	Kilbritten
Jimmy O'Mahony	...	Garreendrouig	...	...	Kilbritten
Michael Holland	..	Ardacrow	...	...	Kilbritten

Those marked * marched to Macroom on Easter Sunday 1916.

We always maintained close contact with Ballinadee Company and on the Sunday parades, which were a normal feature of training in 1915 and early 1916, we combined with them in exercises either in their area or our own. These Sunday parades were sometimes held in a village or town for the purpose of obstructing a recruiting meeting for the British Army arranged to take place there. The Volunteer movement was strong in the rural districts of West Cork and weak in the towns. Conversely, the towns were the chief sources of recruitment for the British forces. Weekday parades were sometimes as frequent as three a week. These, of course, were held at night - the only time when they could be held in an agricultural district - and men often travelled on foot three to six miles to the place of parade. Their earnestness and enthusiasm spread a new spirit in the countryside; papers like the "Irish Volunteer", "Irish Freedom," and "The Spark" were introduced into many homes and the principles and policies they advocated became subjects of discussion and comment.

The men purchased their own equipment and subscribed for the purchase of arms.

One Sunday route march in 1915 was from Ballinadee to Innishannon. There we were met by the Cyclist Company from Cork, who brought a number of Howth Mauser rifles to the Ballinadee Company. Members of the R.I.C. accompanied all these parades and route marches.

On a Sunday in March, 1916, there was a mobilisation of a number of Companies at Clonakilty, including Kilbrittain, Ballinadee, Bandon, Cloughagh, Kilpatrick, Ballinhassig, Lyre and Aiohill. The parade was inspected by Terence MacSwiney and Daiti Barry and after the whole body had marched to Ardfield field exercises were carried out there during the evening. We also took part in the St. Patrick's Day parade in Cork in 1916.

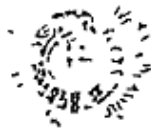
On Sunday, 16th April, 1916, notification was given the men for the parade on the following Sunday (Easter Sunday). They were to have all arms and full equipment. Most of the men thought it was only a test mobilisation, with perhaps two days' marching for training purposes. I got my orders from Tom Hales on that Sunday at Ballinadee. I asked a few questions and although I was told nothing definite I realised that something serious was intended. My orders were to meet the Ballinadee Company at Ballyvodane graveyard, just east of Bandon, on Easter Sunday morning. I do not remember the hour, but it was early. I had no information as to where we were to go after that.

On Easter Sunday morning the ^{ELEVEN} ~~six~~ of us from Kilbrittain Company who paraded marched to Ballyvodane and met the Ballinadee Company as arranged. We had no service rifles; we had either 4 or 5 shot guns and one .32 revolver. Anyone not armed with a shot gun carried a pike. On meeting the Ballinadee Company I was told that we were going to Macroom.

We marched into Bandon and picked up the few men of the Bandon Company there. We then proceeded via Gorteen cross roads, where we were joined by the Cloughagh and Kilpatrick Companies, to Bealnablath. At this point the Ballinhassig Company were waiting; they joined us and we went on to Kilmurray. After about an hour the Cork Volunteers arrived there. There were rumours about the capture of Roger Casement and to the effect that we were to go to meet the Kerry Volunteers who had received a cargo of arms.

Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney arrived in a motor car. They conveyed the news to Tom Hales that Eoin McNeill had ordered off the intended operations. There was a short discussion during which Tom Hales questioned MacNeill's authority to issue such a counter order. It was decided that the whole force assembled at Kilmurray would march to Macroom and return home from there. I did not see Tomás MacCurtain or Terence MacSwiney after we left Kilmurray.

We marched into Macroom and were dismissed. If there was a meeting of Officers in Macroom I was not present at it.



-4-

We returned to Crookstown station by train and as the evening was very wet it was decided to remain in Crookstown until the rain cleared off. It did not cease raining until about 5 o'clock on Monday morning. The march to Bandon was then resumed and we returned to Kilbrittain.

On Tuesday night, 25th April, we were again mobilised and were standing to for the remainder of the week until the news came that the surrender had taken place in Dublin.

Kilbrittain Company got no order to surrender arms and none were, in fact, surrendered.

There was no I.R.B. organisation in Kilbrittain before 1916.

SIGNED:

Denis J. Lusk

DATE:

26/8/47

WITNESS:

Florence Donohue

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1013-21
BURO STAIRÉ M-LEATA 1013-21
No. W.S. 18