

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 22



Telefón 61018.

ROINN COSANTA.

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

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(Dublin).

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Statement by

Charles Cullinane,
8 McCurtain Hill,
Clonakilty,
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Dated 21 August, 1947.

On Lyre, Co. Cork, I.V. Coy.,
1913 - 1916.

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**STATEMENT OF CHARLES CULLIHANE,
8 MACCARTHA HILL, CLOHAKILTY.**

PERIOD: 1913 TO EASTER, 1916.

UNIT: LYRE COMPANY, I.V.

When the meeting for the formation of the Irish Volunteers was held in Cork in December, 1913, Seamus Walsh of Lyre called on Jerry Donovan, Jerry Carey, Jack Cahalane and myself to go with him to the meeting. We attended the meeting in the City Hall and on our return began the organization of a Company of the Volunteers for the districts of Lyre, Kilbree and Letter. That was the Company area from the start up to Easter, 1916. We had only about eight at the start but the Company pulled up fairly quickly to 40 or 50. Eugene and Michael Walsh of Gaggin may have come out to us during the early organizing period and Terence MacSwiney from Cork also visited us. There were very few Redmondite supporters in the area and when the split came in the Volunteers it had practically no effect on the Lyre Company; we lost very few men because of the split.

The following officers were elected at the start and they continued to hold office down to 1916:

James Walsh	-	Captain.
James Leary	-	1st Lieutenant
Jack Cahalane	-	2nd Lieutenant
Charles Cullinane	-	Quartermaster
Jack Cahalane	-	Adjutant

Parades were held two or three times a week and route marches or exercises every Sunday. The Sunday marches were usually to places in the locality and frequently other Companies, particularly Ballinadee, combined with us in these Sunday parades to places such as Lisalevane, Ballygurteen, Kilmeen, Ardfield, etc. There were exercises in Ardfield on Sunday in early 1916, in which several Companies, including Ballinadee and Clogough, took part. A Company was formed in Ardfield that day. Before Easter, 1916, someone, whose name I do not now remember, came out for a fortnight training us.

The orders for Easter Sunday, 1916, were that the Company would assemble for 8 o'clock Mass in Dumanway, with all arms and equipment and rations for three days. We knew that we were going to Inchigeela or beyond it, but we did not know what our destination was. We had no information that anything beyond an ordinary two-days exercise was to take place, except that Jim Walsh had told us to go to Confession before Easter, 1916. The Company was very scattered and word was sent to each individual man to assemble at Dumanway on Easter Sunday morning. On Easter Saturday night we got word that the police were watching us and it was arranged that the men would take different routes

to Dumanway. The whole Company turned out. The names that I can remember are:

- James Walsh - Lyre
- Jack Cahalane, - "
- Arthur Leary - "
- John Crowley - Letter
- Timothy Crowley - "
- Jerry Donovan
- John Carey
- John Cullinane
- Charles Cullinane
- Dan O'Leary
- John O'Leary - Kilbree
- Peter Donovan
- John Donovan
- Ned Sullivan - Kilbree
- Dan Bennett - Slaveen
- Bill Sutton - Kilbree
- John Jones - "
- M. Reilly - Lyre

The arms which we had were - 7 rifles, a few of which were Mausers, 12 shotguns and a few .22 revolvers. We had very little ammunition for the rifles, I think only about 12 rounds altogether, but there was a fair supply of shotgun ammunition. Most of the arms were sent into Dumanway by horse and cart. There were two or three horses and carts went in on Sunday morning. Some of the men cycled to Dumanway and some went on horseback. Four of us - my brother and I, Jerry Donovan and John Carey - cycled and scouted the road into Dumanway. Most of the others who had not gone on horseback went in the cars. It was a beautiful morning but the day changed and turned out to be one of the wettest we could remember. All the men were saturated to the skin. Most of them had no overcoats.

It was usual in our Sunday parades that the police would accompany us and they usually came early in the morning to observe our movements. On Easter Sunday the R.I.C. appeared to know that we were going to Dumanway. Two policemen, fully armed, came to my house in the early morning but we had word that they were coming from Ballineen and we went out about 4 a.m. and went by a different route to Dumanway. They tracked the bicycles for some distance but then lost us and had to come home. Clonakilty police went to Kilbree and Letter and lost their men also. Although it was usual for the police to attend our parades, it was most unusual for them to come so early in the morning. There was no police observation of us until the Dumanway police picked us up on our arrival there. An R.I.C. man named Hussey stationed there knew the Clonakilty men. There were R.I.C. Barracks at Clonakilty, Gurteen, Ballineen and Dumanway.

We went to 8 o'clock Mass in Dumanway and afterwards had breakfast in the Town Hall. Men from the Dumanway Company joined in with us there. Ballinacarrige Company may also have been there. We started out for Inchigeela. Michael McCarthy had bagpipes. We had six bicycles and two horses. I had a bicycle and acted as a scout. Two policemen from Dumanway came with us. We marched into Inchigeela and arrived there about 3 o'clock. We were dismissed there for an hour. We were then

re-assembled. Terence MacSwiney, R.I.P. and Thomas MacCurtain met us after we had re-assembled and some short time afterwards we were told to return home. Both men - MacSwiney and MacCurtain were in uniform and wore high red boots. Con Ahern, Peadar O'Hourihan and - Duggan took charge in Dumanaway. We had been given to understand that the object of the parade was to get arms and that we might have to fight for them. Inchigeela was not the final destination; we were to go on somewhere else and meet other men from the Macroom side. I think there was some message from Macroom brought by a cyclist while we were in Inchigeela.

We all came back to Dumanaway together. It was dark when we got there and most of us put up in Dumanaway for the night. All the men were drenched through and when we got back to Dumanaway Mrs. Ahern got us into a hall with fires, fed us hot drinks and dried our clothes. We were dispersed there and told to go home the best way we could.

The police became active in keeping observation on the men who stayed in Dumanaway. Two or three shotguns were left in Con. Ahern's, and Jerry Donovan and I went for them on Friday and brought them back to our own area. The Company met a couple of times during Easter week but no orders came to us from anywhere.

On the Monday following Easter Monday the Crowleys and the Donovans were arrested in Dumanaway. There were several other arrests, including Jim Walsh. I escaped arrest. No arms were seized by the police on the raids. We had got orders - I do not know from where - to hand in arms but none were, in fact, handed in.

Public feeling was very strong against us. The Company was often booed and attacked in Clonakilty. There was not a man from the town of Clonakilty in the Volunteers before Easter, 1916. We had no idea at Easter that there was to be a general Rising. We thought it would come some time but not then. We had no idea of how we would get arms or from where, but we understood that the police might attempt either to prevent us getting them or to take them from us when we did get them. All the men in the Company were young, with the exception of Jim Walsh, the Captain, who was about 40; all the others were in the twenties.

There was no Fianna or I.R.B. organisation in the area prior to Easter, 1916.

SIGNED:

Charles Cullinane

DATE:

August 21st 1947

WITNESS:

Flavin O'Donoghue

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