

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MÍLEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 34



ÉIRE

Telefón 61018

ROINN COSANTA.

BURO STAIRÉ MÍLEATA 1913-21

(Bureau of Military History 1913-21),

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(Dublin)

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Statement by

Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan,
Aghada,
Co. Cork.

Dated: 22nd October, 1947.

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1914-1916.

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STATEMENT OF DR. PATRICK O'SULLIVAN, AGHADA, CO. CORK.

PERIOD: 1914 to MAY, 1916.

UNIT: KILNAMARTYRA COMPANY, I.V.

There were a few members of the old I.R.B. organisation in the Kilnamartyra district in 1914, of whom my uncle, Daniel Harrington, and Henry A. Brown were two. There were other members but I do not remember their names, and I do not know if they had an active organisation at that time. There was an old tradition of Fenianism in the Harrington family. One elder brother had served a sentence of eleven months in Limerick Jail for drilling in the 80's and had to go to America afterwards. They used to go drilling to Bandon and someone informed on them. Dan Harrington had joined the I.R.B. when young, and at the time the Volunteers started it was his influence that encouraged many of the young men locally to join the movement.

The original Company, which was started early in 1914, had a membership of 60 to 70. Most of the men who subsequently were members of the Irish Volunteer Company were members of the original Company, though few of them were supporters of Redmond. Politically, public feeling in the parish was about equally divided between the Redmondite and O'Brienite parties. The parish was largely Irish speaking and the Gaelic League had no influence on the start of the Volunteers. Neither had the G.A.A.

An ex-Irish Guardsman, Johnny Brown, gave the Company initial training, and weekly parades were held. That went on until after the outbreak of the European war. The Company was paraded on a Saturday night. We were to go to Cork next day for an inspection which was to be carried out by Captain Talbot Crosbie. Miah O'Connell spoke to the Company on parade on the purpose of the parade on the following day. My uncle, Dan Harrington, asked if Captain Talbot Crosbie was an Officer of the British Army, and if our attendance in Cork next day would pledge us to support England's war effort. Not receiving any satisfactory reply, my uncle and I and two others stepped out of the ranks, indicating our disapproval of any attempt to identify the Volunteers with England's war. That finished the Company. The result was that only about 20 of the 60 to 70 men in the Company went to Cork next day. Even those who were not entirely with us had no desire to join the British Army, and, in fact, no new recruits for the British Forces were got from the ranks of the Volunteers except some Reservists who were called up. The Company never functioned as an effective organisation after that.

Nearly a year later, in August, 1915, I met Seán Nolan at a dance in Ballyvourney and invited him to come to a meeting in Kilnamartyra for the purpose of starting a Company of Irish Volunteers. The meeting was held on a Sunday after Mass, and Seán spoke. About 23 men signified their intention of joining and the Company was started. Soon afterwards an election of Officers was held and the following were elected:-

| | |
|-------------|---------------------|
| Captain: | Henry A. Brown. |
| 1st Lieut.: | Patrick O'Sullivan. |
| Treasurer: | Dan Harrington. |

There was no change in these Officers down to Easter, 1916.

Parades were held on two nights a week and on Sundays. Sometimes Terence MacSwinsky or Seán Nolan attended the Sunday parades, and on some of them we went to Inchigeela and Ballyvourney for the purpose of recruiting for the Volunteers. About 20 men from the Company attended the Manchester Martyrs' parade in Cork in November, 1915, and about the same number the St. Patrick's Day parade in 1916. In 1915 there was a British recruiting meeting at Kilnamartyra at which D.M.J. O'Connell spoke. Some members of the Company wished to break it up, but were not allowed. We paraded three or four miles away and did not interfere.

We paid 2d or 3d a week into a Company fund for the purchase of equipment. By Easter, 1916, all the members of the Company had haversacks, belts and bandoliers.

The orders for Easter Sunday, 1916, came to us from Macroom. They were to the effect that we were to parade in Kilnamartyra after first Mass, with all available arms, ammunition and equipment, and march to Carriganinna. We had no definite information as to what the purpose of the parade was, but for some weeks before that there had been a tenseness which made us anticipate that we may be in a fight at short notice any time. A few weeks before Easter Dan Harrington and Seán Ruadh Riordan had raided houses for arms in the Ballyvourney district. There may have been one or two others with them. They got a quantity of arms and brought them to Kilnamartyra. At a parade about a week before Easter word came that a car with police in it was approaching. H.A. Brown ordered me to get ammunition and issue 100 rounds to every man. That was done and we took up positions to defend ourselves. It turned out that the car did not contain any police.

The following paraded at Kilnamartyra on Easter Sunday:-

Henry A. Brown.
Patrick O'Sullivan.
Michael O'Sullivan.
Con Connell.
Patrick Connell.
Jim Connell.
Dan Riordan.
John Riordan.
James Riordan.
John Delaney.
John H. Brown.
John T. Brown.
Jeremian Sullivan.
Dan Harrington.
Tim Buckley.
Joe Roche.
Patrick Galvin.
Batt. Galvin.
Dan Murphy.
Con Manning.

Dan Tadhg Sweeney of Ballyvourney also paraded with us. There was no organised Company in Ballyvourney at the time.

We marched via Mons to Clondrohid, where we were joined by Clondrohid Company, and both marched to Carriganimma. On the way my uncle, Dan Harrington, asked me "Do you expect to come back to-day?" I said I supposed we would go out some day and not come back. He said "We will be fighting". I do not know whether he had definite information or knew what the plans were, but it appeared to me that he was expecting a fight to begin that day. He had the idea that we were to take Millstreet R.I.C. barracks and Millstreet Railway Station, and also that Mallow Railway Station was to be taken and held. It is difficult for me to say now whether he knew the whole plan, and that these were the only parts of it he mentioned to me, or whether he had himself worked out these ideas as part of a probable plan. I am certain, however, that he did discuss these points with me on Easter Sunday.

The arms which we had that day consisted of:-

- Twelve shot guns, with about 1200 rounds.
- Two miniature rifles.
- Four .22 revolvers, with about 20 rounds.
- Eight or nine pikes.

All the men were armed; those not having shot guns had pikes. The pike heads had been made in Kilnamartyra by a blacksmith named Mangan. We had no bayonets for the shot guns, and no explosives.

JANN MANNING

Some exercises were carried out at Carriganimma and it was late in the evening when Miceal Lynch came with word that we were to return home. The night was very wet and we stayed in Carriganimma, returning to Kilnamartyra on Monday.

On Tuesday Dan Harrington and Seán Ruadh Riordan were arrested in the Hibernian Hotel, Ballyvourney, where they were at a funeral. Harrington resisted but was not armed and was overpowered. Riordan was not in the I.R.B. The Company was mobilised that day with the intention of making an attempt to rescue them. We believed they would be in Macroom R.I.C. barrack and we intended to attack it. Most of the Company turned out and we were half way into Macroom when we learned that they had been moved to Cork. They were interned until the end of 1916.

No orders came to the Company during the week. In the following week there were a number of raids. They raided for Henry A. Brown and they raided for me a few times. Brown and I, Joe Roche and G. O'Connell were on the run for some time afterwards.

There were no Fianna or Cuman-na-mBan organisations in the Company area before 1916.

SIGNED:

Padraig O'Sullivan

DATE:

22nd June 1947

WITNESS: *Flannce O'Dowd*

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BUREAU D'HISTOIRE MILITAIRE 1913-21
NO. W.S. *34*

TELEPHONE 7
WHITEGATE 7
FARSID VILLA,
ROSTELLAN,
CO. CORK

"pilled" on the way, & the party
(if any) who arrived at the Parade
was very small. However that
is a very small matter, & not
worth recording.

Jack O'Shea - a Cad from here -
also works in the Cadbury
Manalan & Watson's (Golicitors)
Office asked me if you had
that there was a Company in the
Ballymacorda way early in the
time, & who were always in
touch with Dublin?
You probably know already, but
if not, you can get in touch
with him any day at his office
in the South Mall.

Benjamin Florie
T. J. Sullivan

TELEPHONE 7
WHITEGATE 7
FARSID VILLA,
ROSTELLAN,
CO. CORK

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-24
"BURO STAIRS & HEATA 1913 21
NO. W.S. 34

Dear Florie,

I am returning the Statement

signed, I don't think there is any need
for major alterations. (Substantially)
The name of the blacksmith who
forged the pikes is Manning
(John) - he is down in the
statement as Morgan. I made no
change but you can correct it
if you wish. I inserted the
figure 1200, before rounds, as we
had about that number.

I was talking to Mick the other
day & he could not add anything
to what I told you beyond the
fact that some of the party who
started for Cork to be inspected
by Captain Talbot Corbie,