

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 115

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. .... 115. ....

**Witness**

Matthew McMahon

**Identity**

Founder member of Tralee I.V. Coy.

**Subject**

I.V., Tralee, 1913-1916.

**Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness**

File No. ... S. 770

Form BSM 2

# ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 115STATEMENT OF MATTHEW McMAHON  
TERRACE, BOHERBUE, TRALEE, CO. KERRY.

PERIOD: 1913 to EASTER, 1916.

UNIT: TRALEE. I.V.

I was in Dublin on business on 25th November, 1913. *Bushmount*  
Joe Dwyer of Tralee and Terence McMahon of ~~Beechurst~~, *Firies*,  
were with me that night. We saw a large crowd of men going  
towards the Rotunda. I stepped from the sidewalk and asked  
one man what was on. He said they were going to the Rotunda  
for the purpose of forming the Volunteer movement. I went  
back to my two companions, and we decided to go with the crowd.

*Denis*  
Inside the Round Room of the Rotunda we found ourselves  
amongst Larkin's men, none of whom we knew. We heard that  
Dr. Coffey would be on the platform. Terence McMahon was a  
cousin of his. I do not know if Dr. Coffey was, in fact, on  
the platform. Larkin's men took strong exception to one man  
on the platform, Field, I think. When he came on they threw  
fog signals and put up effigies. We heard that he was at the  
time supplying blackleg labour. There was pandemonium for a  
while. Forty D.M.P. men came in, things quietened down and  
the meeting was on. Men and boys were selling tickets or  
membership forms for 3d. When they came to me I said it  
would be no good for me to take one as I was from the country.  
They said, "You are the man we want", so I took one and brought  
it back to Tralee two or three days afterwards.

I was attending an Irish class run by the Gaelic League  
in a room in High Street, Tralee. Father Charlie Brennan was  
Chairman. At the next meeting of the class after I returned  
from Dublin I was sitting beside Tom Slattery, Rock Street.  
I mentioned to him that I was a Volunteer, told him what had  
occurred in Dublin and showed him the membership card. At  
the end of the class he stood up and proposed that something  
should be done about the formation of a Volunteer Corps in  
Tralee. He mentioned that we had one Volunteer here already,  
~~naming me~~. I then told them what had happened in Dublin.  
Father Brennan and eight or ten others were present. I have  
no recollection of Austin Stack being there. Denis Slattery,  
head of Slattery's Bacon Factory, who was present, made a  
speech in favour of starting the Volunteers. It was then  
decided to organise and call a public meeting for the purpose.

The public meeting was held in the <sup>then</sup> County Hall less than  
a week later. It was well attended and the movement was  
launched in Tralee. Maurice P. Ryle presided at the meeting  
and Diarmuid Crean was appointed Hon. Secretary. A Company  
was organised for each of the four wards in the town,  
designated A.B.C. and D. Companies, and organisers were named  
for each. I was appointed organiser for 'A' Company, which  
included the area from St. John's church up to Moyderwell and  
Ballymullen. *and Boherbee*

*being transferred on promotion*  
Crean was in the Post Office *in Tralee at that time but* and he went to South Africa.  
Eamon C. Connor then became Secretary. There was a Committee  
which managed the affairs of the organisation and a Military  
Council which looked after matters like training and equipment.

The first instructor was an ex-serviceman named ~~John~~ *Michael*  
Purtill. Later, Edward Leen, another British Reservist, came

*Denis*  
 along and was a very good instructor. He was called up after the outbreak of war in 1914. He offered to stay if he was paid at the same rate as he would be paid in the British Army. There were two other ex-servicemen instructors, Matt Walsh and ~~Tom~~ McMahon. The latter was in charge of the Fianna Scouts later on.

Parades were held every Sunday from January or February 1914. Early in 1914 the Rink was acquired for drilling. It became Headquarters, and weekly parades were held there for each Company. 'A' Company was the largest in the town; it was nearly 200 strong at the time of the Split. The Split had little effect on the Company; there was not much support for the Redmondites and most of the men remained loyal to the Irish Volunteers.

In September, 1914, the following Officers were elected for 'A' Company and they continued to hold office up to Easter, 1916:-

Company Captain:	Matt Walsh.
1st Lieutenant:	W. O'Connor.
2nd Lieutenant:	J. Shea.
Hon. Treasurer:	J. Mullins.
Hon. Secretary:	J. Moylan.

After Easter, 1916, instructions were given to hand up our arms. I brought down my single shot Martini. Most of the arms were broken before being surrendered.

SIGNED: Matthew W. McMahon

DATE: 26 April 1948

WITNESS: Florence O'Donoghue

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

14 Urban Terrace  
Boherbee Tralee  
26<sup>th</sup> 4. '48 Cokertry

re Bureau of Military Service

W.S. 115  
#06  
A Caps,

Excuse delay in forwarding  
your statement in above. I had the flu  
and that was the cause of delay

I approve of statement as I  
have amended it. So that you may have  
no difficulty <sup>in</sup> following the amendments I  
set them out as follows:-

- 1 - Bushmount - (2) Denis - (3) and  
Boherbee (4) in Tralee at that time  
but went to South Africa being  
transferred on promotion. (5) Michael  
(6) Denis

Hoping you are well and that  
you are getting plenty authentic matter for the  
history

Type le best

Matthew McMahon

Major F. Donoghue

Loe Lein

Eglantine Park

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1918-21

BURD STAIRS MILITARY 1919-21

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