

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 893

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. **W.S.** 893

Witness

William J. Kelly, Jun.,
7 Donaghmore Road,
Dungannon,
Co. Tyrone.

Identity.

Member of Irish Volunteers, Dungannon, 1913- ;
O/C. Dungannon Battalion, 1921;
O/C. 1st Brigade, 2nd Northern Division, 1921.

Subject.

National activities, Co. Tyrone,
1913-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.2197

Form B.S.M. 2

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893

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM JOHN KELLY (JUNIOR),
7, Donaghmore Road, Dungannon, County Tyrone.

My father, William John Kelly (Senior), in his young days had been an associate and close friend of Tom Clarke, the 1916 leader, when the latter lived in Dungannon and taught school there up to the time he emigrated in the year 1880.

My father and Tom Clarke became members of the Irish Republican organisation in or about the year 1880. In that year on the 15th August a Hibernian demonstration was held in Dungannon at which a riot broke out and some nationalists were shot by the police. My father, Tom Clarke and a few other I.R.B. men opened fire on police on the streets of Dungannon. My father subsequently left Ireland with Tom Clarke and emigrated to America. In America he and Clarke joined the Clan na nGael. Clarke later came to England with a Doctor Gallagher and got involved in dynamiting activities in London which led to his arrest and sentence.

My father was in ignorance of the plans and the fate of Tom Clarke, Gallagher etc. until he recognised Clarke's photograph in a London illustrated paper showing the men on trial for dynamiting activities in London. He then left his employment in America and returned to Ireland to be at hand to render to Clarke any help that the British authorities would allow.

When Tom Clarke was released about the year 1898, my father resumed his association and friendship with him. Clarke visited my father in Dungannon on several occasions and I understand he was instrumental in reorganising the I.R.B. in that area. Both my father and Clarke were prominently identified with the local organisation of the I.R.B. in County Tyrone.

In 1913 when the Volunteer organisation was launched in Dublin the I.R.B. took over the work of starting Volunteer Companies in all the areas where the I.R.B. had been organised. I joined the Volunteers at the start of the organising in Dungannon when I was about 17 or 18 years of age.

I remember leaders in the Volunteer movement visiting Dungannon and other local areas in Tyrone and holding reviews of Volunteers and addressing meetings. These men included Dr. Patrick McCartan, Herbert Moore Pim, Roger Casement, Captain White, Denis McCullough, Sean McDermott and others.

I remember one large mobilisation at Carrickmore where Volunteers attended from Donaghmore, Dungannon, Carrickmore, Gortin and Pomeroy. This mobilisation was held in the year 1915. There was another mobilisation and parade of all the local Volunteers on a Sunday sometime after the Carrickmore organisation. The principal man from headquarters in Dublin at this mobilisation was J.J. O'Connell (better known as "Ginger"). In addition to mobilising at Donaghmore the Volunteers had a route march of four or five miles over the local roads. Sean Corr could supply the names of the officers and the leaders who attended there better than I can now recall.

The great pity about our organisation in, say 1915, was the scarcity of arms. We had practically no arms available in Dungannon area.

An item of importance in connection with the Volunteer organisation at this time was the appointment of a man named McRory or Rogers as a drill instructor. This man visited each Company in rotation and drilled and trained the men. In Dungannon we had a hall at Lower Scotch Street where we drilled and attended military lectures given by McRory. We had an old rifle here for target practices or aiming practice.

McRory's procedure in this exercise was to have a large sheet of paper mounted on a tripod in a fixed position on a stand. Each Volunteer would take turns at aiming at a disc that was held by McRory close to the sheet of paper on the tripod. The person aiming would instruct McRory about where to move the disc until he had the sights of the rifle in alignment with the centre of the disc. McRory then marked the position of the centre of the disc with a pencil through a hole in the centre. This was done by each Volunteer three times and the resulting three marks when connected to form a triangle gave what was known as a triangle of error for each of the Volunteers. The best shot in theory was the person who had the smallest triangle of error.

Some of the Howth rifles came to Donaghmore before Easter week. I cannot now remember how many came. Some other rifles came to Dungannon before 1916. Tom Clarke came to Dungannon in connection with a supply of rifles promised sometime between 1912 and 1914: I cannot be more definite about the date. Clarke was able to supply the Dungannon Company with a number of rifles and I remember that he personally gave my father one of them.

I have only a vague idea about who the officers from the various local Companies were before 1916. I think a man named McGuiggan was Captain in Dungannon. I was too young at this time to be trusted with an officer's position in the Volunteers. As far as I can remember the I.R.B. had a big hand in the selecting of officers. Not being a member of the I.R.B. myself I know this from my observations that all the officers pre-1916, to my knowledge, were member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The fact that I did not join the I.R.B. may seem strange since my father, as I have already stated, was one of the original organisers of the I.R.B. in County Tyrone and perhaps one of the earliest members of that organisation in Ulster. My brother Tom was a member of the I.R.B. I was not asked to join the I.R.B. and I did not endeavour to join the organisation.

In October, 1921, after a Brigade meeting in Galbally at which Charlie Daly, who was then Divisional O/C., attended, when the business of the Brigade meeting was finished we came into Dungannon and Charlie told me that all the officers down to Company officers in each Brigade should be sworn into the I.R.B. organisation. I told him then that I did not agree with the policy of the I.R.B. and during a discussion on this matter Charlie himself seemed surprised that I was not myself a member.

When 1916 came along I was used as a mobiliser of the men who were called together in Dungannon on the Tuesday of Easter Week with orders to march to Carrickmore. These men were to my knowledge all members of the I.R.B. and no other men except those who were members of that organisation got orders to march. This was all the service I was asked to render during the week. As a matter of interest these Dungannon men on their march to Carrickmore were joined by other Volunteers from Donaghmore on that Tuesday on their way to Carrickmore. I think some of the men who marched from Donaghmore were not members of the I.R.B.

Late in 1917 a move to reorganise the Irish Volunteers was made by officers of the I.R.B.. The men who were active at the reorganising were Jack Shields, Frank Dorris, Mick McCartan and probably Albert Tally.

On the reorganising of the Volunteers after 1916 some of the pre-1916 officers still retained their officerships in the Volunteers. In the years after 1916 when a younger and more enterprising group of officers took over the Volunteer organisation the old officers of the pre-1916 vintage who had been all members of the I.R.B. became a problem to deal with as they wanted to retain their influence to cancel or change things.

During the first half of the year 1918 two by-elections took place, one in South Armagh and the other in East Tyrone. These elections brought home to the minds of all northern Republicans the necessity of organising local Companies of the Volunteers and local branches of Sinn Fein. During the by-election in East Tyrone, which took place in April 1918, all the prominent Dublin leaders in the Sinn Fein organisation and in the Irish Volunteers and the I.R.B. came into the East Tyrone area to do election work. A lot of contacts were made by those men with local Republicans all over the constituency and the various Republican organisations such as the Volunteers, Sinn Fein and the Cumann na mBan were got going. Companies of the Volunteers were started in the following places :- Dungannon, Edendork, Killyman, Coalisland, Ardboe, Donaghmore, Galbally and Pomeroy. In the year 1918 a Battalion was formed and all County Tyrone was organised into one Brigade area. This was known as the Tyrone Brigade. Jack Shields, I think, was the first Brigade O/C. Hugh Rogers and Mick McCartan were associated with Shields on the Brigade Staff. Sometime early in 1919 a reorganisation of the Tyrone Brigade staff was carried out and Frank Dorris was appointed O/C., Albert Tally, Vice O/C., and Mick McCartan was appointed Adjutant.

In the year 1919 a G.H.Q. officer named Eamon Fleming came to Tyrone on an organising visit and called on all Volunteer Companies in the Brigade area to find out the state of the organisation and make a report to G.H.Q.

The organising of the County Tyrone area as one Brigade continued up to the year 1920. The Brigade was divided into a number of Battalions; I cannot now state how many Battalions. I can, however, name the following Battalion officers who held office about this time. These were Joseph Mallon, Coalisland Battalion,

Thomas Leonard, Dungannon Battalion, Sean-Corr, Carrickmore Battalion, Tom McGrade, Omagh Battalion. I would not be safe in trying to name any more of the Battalion officers.

This Tyrone Brigade organisation became disorganised, as far as a Brigade Staff was concerned, in or about Sept, 1920. Mick McCartan, Tally and Dorris were arrested and no effort was made to fill the vacancies on the Brigade staff caused by their arrest. For some months after those arrests all the County Tyrone Battalions were working independently under General Headquarters. Towards the end of 1920 I was appointed Battalion Adjutant under the Battalion O/C., Thomas Leonard. I don't know who preceded me as Adjutant of the Battalion.

In April, 1921, I was appointed Battalion O/C. At the time of my appointment as O/C. of the Battalion, all the Battalion officers were either arrested or were on the 'run'. About March, 1921, Owen O'Duffy came into the County Tyrone area. When the 2nd Northern Division was organised I was shortly afterwards appointed O/C. of the 1st Brigade. When he arrived in County Tyrone, O'Duffy had been appointed by G.H.Q. as O/C. of the 2nd Northern Division which was outlined to embrace nearly all County Tyrone and South County Derry. The Clogher Valley side of County Tyrone went into the 5th Northern Division with County Monaghan. I think a small portion of County Fermanagh around Tempo was included in the 2nd Northern Division. O'Duffy's first job was to get the Division organised, Brigade areas defined and officers appointed on the staffs of the Division, the Brigades and, where necessary, in the Battalions. In some areas O'Duffy made small adjustments in the Battalion areas. I now give the Divisional and Brigade Staffs as far as I can remember :-

Divisional Staff :-	Owen O'Duffy,	O/C.,
	Charles Daly,	Vice O/C.,
	Frank Stronge,	Adjutant,
	Joseph McGurke,	Quartermaster.
1st Brigade:-	W. J. Kelly,	O/C.,
	Frank Curran,	Vice O/C.,
	Vincent Shields,	Adjutant,
	John Ogle,	Quartermaster.
2nd Brigade:-	Mick Gallagher,	O/C.

I cannot at the moment remember any more of the officers. O'Duffy remained in the Divisional area up to June, 1921. In June, 1921, he was appointed to a position on G.H.Q. staff. On O'Duffy's departure Daly was put in charge of the Division as Divisional O/C.

Charlie Daly had been, previous to O'Duffy's arrival, working over County Tyrone and County Derry as a Volunteer organiser. Daly took part in various military actions during his period in Tyrone. He did very valuable work all over the county and was very popular with Volunteers generally. He travelled the area night and day and did not spare himself in his efforts to get results. He came to the area some time in 1920 and remained here up to early in 1922. At the time of his departure he had some differences with G.H.Q. When he left this area he went into County Donegal which was then known as the 1st Northern Divisional area. On his departure from the 2nd Northern Division he was replaced by Tom Morris as Divisional O/C.

I am convinced that O'Duffy's appointment as Divisional O/C. by G.H.Q. was a mistake as Charlie Daly was a better man for the job. He knew the area much better and worked with the men for about twelve months beforehand. He knew all the officers in the area intimately and was a general favourite with all who had contact with him. This feeling of mine about Daly's superior qualifications for the position

of Divisional O/C., 2nd Northern Division, was generally shared amongst the Volunteer officers over the whole Divisional area.

When I was appointed Brigade O/C. in 1921, the organisation in the battalions was as follows as far as I can remember :-

Coalisland Battalion: O/C. Robert Crawford (R.I.P.),
Vice O/C. John O'Neill,
Adjutant, Joseph Quinn, U.S.A.,
Quartermaster, Bernard Donnelly,

Dungannon Battalion: O/C. Thomas Kelly (my brother),
Vice O/C. Thomas Kelly, Galbally,
Adjutant, Archie McDonald,
Quartermaster, Pat Rafferty.

Carrickmore Battalion: O/C. Sean Corr,
Vice O/C. Patrick McKenna,
Adjutant, Edward Donnelly,
Quartermaster,

Company Activities:

About May or June, 1918, Sean Corr called on me to attend a mobilisation of men that were to attempt to capture an R.I.C. barracks at a place named Broughderg. Corr and I went to Jack Shields of Benburb to inform him of the plans. Later Albert Tally and I went by car to a place named Gortavoy near Pomeroy to await Jack Shields and men he was taking from Benburb. We waited at this rendezvous for a few hours and then had to go home. This mix-up about plans that had been agreed on was a serious lapse as the barrack and its arms were then wide open to any few Volunteers who had initiative enough to walk in and take it. The fault here was mostly a matter of want of organisation amongst us.

After this there was little else in the year 1918 except the usual dull routine of drills, parades, training exercises etc.

In 1918 we had no arms of much military value. We had a number of rifles which came to us from the 1916 period. These rifles were of little practical value from an operational point of view as they had been sadly neglected and were in a bad condition. We got a few shotguns from friendly people, a few old revolvers some of the bulldog pattern and others of ^{such} small bore as rendered them of little military value. We used the rifles, and the shotguns were available for drilling purposes.

In the year 1919 we had the usual training and general routine. When Eamon Fleming came as an organiser to Tyrone Brigade area I accompanied him on his visits to a few of the local Companies. At the time of Fleming's visit Jack Shields was Brigade O/C. and all dispatches for Jack were delivered at ~~Wohh~~ McElvogue's of Dungannon. These dispatches for Shields I took out and delivered to Benburb doing the journey by cycle. This handling of dispatches was a regular job which I carried out at this time.

One of the results of Fleming's visit to this Brigade area was the appointment of Frank Dorris as Brigade O/C. I don't remember if Jack Shields was arrested at this time which event would cause a vacancy for a Brigade O/C., or that for some other reason he was displaced by Dorris.

One of the first operations which resulted from a general order issued by General Headquarters was to destroy all the Income Tax Offices in the Brigade area. I was mobilised with about twenty others to destroy the Income Tax Papers and documents in an office in Thomas Street, Dungannon. Some of the men who took part in this operation were from Edendork and Donaghmore Companies. The remainder were from Dungannon Company. The offices were located close to the police barracks and on account of its proximity to the police the job presented a difficult and dangerous job to

accomplish. Albert Tally was in charge of this operation. The plan adopted was that we went along about 12 midnight and gained admission to the offices through a window which enabled the front door to be opened. There were some people residing in the upper portion of the office building and it was decided that they should not be alarmed while we were carrying out our duties. When all the men detailed for the inside of the offices were in position I was detailed to take up a position on the stairs leading to the upper portion of the house to prevent any possible surprises from that direction. I got orders to remain in position until I heard the whistle which was the signal for calling off those engaged. I waited a long time for the whistle which I did not hear and the raid was over some time before I realised it. When I started to investigate what happened I found that the men raiding the offices had cleared off and had closed the front door behind them. This closing of the door probably accounted for my not hearing the whistle which was blown outside the house.

This raid on Income Tax offices proved very successful as all the papers in the offices were carried out and burned. The men removing the papers carried several bagfulls. As far as I can now remember this raid took place in May 1920. This raid did not cause any repercussions such as the British authorities raiding houses or attempting to arrest suspects.

In or about mid. 1920, the R.I.C. evacuated Castlecaulfield Barracks. As soon as the knowledge of this evacuation became known to the Brigade staff an order was issued for the destruction of the evacuated barracks. This order was promptly carried out and the barracks destroyed.

The attempted attack on Donaghmore R.I.C. Barracks.

About the 2nd or 3rd June, 1920, we had all arrangements made to attack Donaghmore R.I.C. Barracks. All the roads leading to Donoughmore had been blocked. For some reason this attack was called off although all the necessary preparations had been made. Some of the other local officers can explain better than me why this affair was cancelled at the last moment. You may be able to get further

details from my brother Tom. After this abortive affair at Donoughmore the police evacuated the barracks at Donaghmore and came into Dungannon barracks. As already stated we burned the evacuated barracks.

Attack on Cookstown Barracks, 16th June, 1920.

On the 11th June, 1920, after some negotiation had gone on with one or two friendly R.I.C. men, stationed in the barracks at Cookstown, I was instructed by the Battalion O/C., Tom Leonard, to meet a Constable Conway. I travelled to Cookstown and met Conway who brought me around the rear of the barracks and explained all about the layout of the inside of the building, the number of rooms and the number of police in each room and any other detail that would be useful to know during an attack on the place. It appears that before I was asked to make contact with Conway, a Police Constable Denis Leonard, stationed in Cookstown who had been previously stationed in Keady, County Armagh, visited a hotel in Armagh City where he met an I.R.A. man whom he knew. He informed this man that he was prepared to give away the barracks in Cookstown to the I.R.A. if they would get in touch with him. My contact with Conway directly resulted from instructions that this Leonard gave my brother Tom. Tom can give more information about Leonard than I can as he had contact with him before I had. After my first contact with Constable Conway I met him on a later occasion accompanied by Constable Leonard. At this meeting we arranged all the details for the rushing of the barracks by the I.R.A. The night arranged for the attack was fixed to correspond with the night that Conway would be on guard duty in the Day Room of the barracks.

It was arranged as part of the details for the rushing of the barracks that one of our men would go into Cookstown as a visitor to the house next door to the barracks and that he would remain in the garden of that house and watch any unusual movements of police or

military visiting the barracks during the day preceding the rushing of it. It was arranged that the two friendly policemen were to get in touch with our men if it was necessary to make any change in the plans we had arranged. The scout, through some error in observation or for some other cause, got alarmed by something he noticed and sent on to us an agreed coded telegraphic message. This message should only have been sent to us in the event of it being necessary to call off the barrack attack.

When the message was received the attempt on the barrack was called off for the time being. It turned out when we checked up on the message afterwards that our scout had seen a few soldiers on the street and he rushed up to the Post Office and sent on the coded message without getting in touch with either Constable Leonard or Constable Conway.

There is little doubt that had we not received the misleading message coded/and had carried out the plans made with Conway and Leonard we would have walked into the barrack and captured it without any difficulty as Conway, who was on guard, had left the barrack door open and was expecting us. Another favourable matter concerning that particular night was that the Head Constable who resided in the barrack was absent from it and was in Dungannon all that night. This Head Constable, as it turned out later, was the only danger that could have upset our plans as I will show.

When we did not turn up for the pre-arranged attack, Conway, the next day, went to the Market in Cookstown and inquired from fowl dealers from Dungannon who were present what happened to me when he did not see me in the Market. I was in the fowl business at the time but as it happened was not in Cookstown that day to see him. By later arrangement I met Conway and Leonard on the following Tuesday and it was decided that we make an attempt on the barrack again the next night. On the following evening I cycled to

W. J. K.

Cookstown where I met Constable Leonard who told me that Constable Conway was sent on temporary duty to ~~Cross~~^{CO&GH} Barracks which was nearby but that he had arranged with another Constable who would be on duty that night to leave the barrack door open or in such a position that it could be easily opened from the outside. This suggestion from Leonard appeared to us and I am sure would appear to others as a dangerous risk to take as we only had Leonard's word that a man we did not know anything about would prove friendly whereas he might be a party to leading us into a trap. However, our belief in Leonard overcame our fear and we took the risk and as it turned out the Constable on guard was friendly. I would like to be able to give this Constable's name. I think it was Hargadon. I will, however, write to Conway and get his correct name for record purposes. After my interview with Leonard I returned to Dungannon.

The men selected for the attack from Dungannon started for Cookstown that Wednesday night. I travelled with others by car and when we arrived at an arranged point in Cookstown we were met by Constable Leonard. When Leonard saw the number we had with us he said he considered the party small for the job. But there was nothing for it but to attack it as there was to be an inquiry into the leaving of the barrack door open on the previous Friday night and some other recent irregularities that had been noticed in the barrack routine. We had only about twenty men altogether including two motor drivers and three other men who were detailed for scout duty. The police in the barrack numbered eleven.

Before I proceed any further with this narrative I should mention that Cookstown is an Orange town. There were no active Volunteers in the town from the neighbourhood. The friendly police in Cookstown would not trust any of the Cookstown men and none of the local men knew of the attack. This placed us in the unfortunate position that

we had no local guidance in planning this affair or the valuable help that local men could give during the attack.

When everything was ready we entered the barracks by the backdoor which was left on the latch. About fifteen men in all entered. Before we entered the barrack each man knew exactly what his duty inside was. The first thing that was done as soon as we entered the barrack was to take possession of the Day Room where the two Constables, on duty there, were tied up without showing any resistance. The Head Constable and his family occupied the second floor of the building and over this on the top floor the Constables not on duty occupied four bedrooms. As the guardroom was being captured the men allotted to the top floors proceeded up the stairs past the Head Constable's door. Three men were detailed to look after the Head Constable's portion of the house. The Head Constable's door was locked and it was hoped to get it open by a ruse and the men there knocked on the door and asked that it be opened. When this request was made the Head Constable opened the door slightly and pushed his daughter out through it on to the landing. One of the men brought her down to the dayroom for safety. During the time she was being taken down firing started from the Head Constable's room through the door. When this firing commenced we knew that our plans had become upset as the whole element of success depended on our getting through our work without shooting taking place. We had not enough men available to deal with the situation that the shooting brought about. Even under the most favourable circumstances, therefore, the shooting made our work hopeless. The firing on the second landing prevented the men on the top landing getting quietly into the R.I.C. Constables' rooms upstairs. We were forced to evacuate the upper portion of the building and we proceeded to make our retreat from the barracks through both the front and backdoors. A Volunteer named Patrick Loughran was wounded during the exchange of firing inside

the barracks. Albert Tally and another Volunteer named Loughran removed a wounded man out the front door and put him into the motor car that conveyed the Dungannon men to Cookstown. We took the wounded man to Dr. Owens of Pomeroy. He gave him immediate medical attention and called in Father Larkin who administered the last rites necessary for a seriously wounded man. Loughran was removed to the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast where he died two days later. Arthur McElvogue should be asked to explain how Loughran's removal to hospital took place as he was the motor driver that removed him from Pomeroy.

The total results that accrued from the attack on the barracks was what we could pick up in the dutyroom or dayroom. As far as I can remember we got a Service gun, a shotgun, a webley revolver, a verey light pistol and some ammunition.

Ambush of Police in Dungannon - 31st October, 1920.

There was a general order issued to carry out operations all over our Brigade area as a reprisal for the death of Lord Mayor McSweeney. It was usual at this time for the police to go out on patrol from Dungannon town in parties of three men each. We arranged to ambush a patrol or patrols on the night of the 31st October, 1920. As it turned out we could not get a chance to ambush these patrols in the nationalist part of the town so we had to go out into the unionist section to carry out this operation. The main attacking party took up a position in an entry about the centre of Scotch Street. This party comprised three men. We had two other parties of men mobilised at two other points to protect our alternative lines of retreat from the scene of the action.

The patrol came down the street on the opposite side from where we were placed. When it came nearly opposite us we had to come out of the entry on to the street to get within firing distance of them. The exchange of fire lasted whilst we were

emptying our revolvers and we then cleared off. The police returned our fire. There was a second patrol out on that night and they were attracted to the scene of the ambush by the firing. These men were also fired on by one of our outpost parties. In the exchange of fire with us one of the policemen was wounded.

Later that night the police got out on the streets after being primed with liquor and fired into nationalists' houses. They threw a bomb into my father's yard and fired shots into his dwelling house.

In November and December, 1920, and January, 1921, there was little major activity in our area. We carried out several raids for arms in private houses. In some of the Unionist houses we raided we got nothing as the information we received about arms being kept in individual houses proved inaccurate. In some other houses we got arms. All the houses raided belonged to Unionists and little opposition was raised to our raiding activities. In one instance a householder attempted to fire on us but we overpowered him.

The Nationalists at this time had handed us in shotguns which were considered useful, on the promise that they would be returned at a later date.

The cutting of communications such as telegraphic wires was done on several occasions. In Dungannon the mails came to the station at about 1 a.m. each morning and on one occasion at least we held up the van containing the mails on this journey from the railway station to the Post Office. All the mails were taken out of the vans and examined by our censors before being returned to the Post Office.

We held up the train at Donaghmore on one occasion and removed the mails from a train which was going to Derry. Those mails were in a special sorting carriage. On removal of the mails from the train they were bundled into a waiting motorcar and taken away to Galbally district for censoring.

I did not hear that much useful information was got from this raid on the mails. However, a description of one particular communication will give some idea of the usefulness of raiding mails. Some time about 1920 two men who resided in Derry City were suspected of being I.R.A. sympathisers. Those men were taken out of their homes by the local R.I.C. and shot. One of the letters captured in a raid for mails was an application from two police constables named Downes and Cavanagh of the Derry City R.I.C. force addressed to R.I.C. Headquarters in Dublin. This application was to get the replacement of two rounds of rifle ammunition which the two constables claimed they lost on the night the two Derry Nationalists were shot. The capture of this application seemed to suggest that both these men were probably involved in the shooting.

In January, 1921, the idea of starting a Flying Column was mooted in Dungannon area. I was asked to proceed to Dublin with a despatch addressed to the Adjutant General, Gearóid O'Sullivan. The despatch was from our Battalion O/C, Tom Leonard. As per instructions received before starting for Dublin, I took the despatch to the shop of Brennan and Walsh in O'Connell Street, Dublin, and handed it in there. I was told by the person receiving the despatch that I was to call back the next day for an

answer. I called back on three subsequent days without getting any result and on the fourth day I was directed to call at an office in Bachelor's Walk. This office, I remember, was next to the office of a solicitor. When I arrived at the place I was ushered in to a room where I met Gearóid O'Sullivan. He explained to me that the delay in getting in touch with me was caused by the vagueness of the wording of the despatch I carried which said "This is to introduce the bearer", without giving the bearer's name or rank in the I.R.A. O'Sullivan asked me some questions in connection with the despatch routes in Co. Tyrone which I answered, apparently to his satisfaction. He then informed me that he had no responsibility for the supplying of arms to I.R.A. units in the country. He arranged, however, that I should see Richard Mulcahy next day at the Engineers' Hall in Gardiner Place. I went at the appointed time and met Mulcahy and discussed with him the arms business. He informed me that G.H.Q. had not got the arms to give us as all the other areas in the country were pressing them for arms. He mentioned that Frank Aiken was also anxiously seeking arms from G.H.Q. This effort of the Dungannon area to get arms for the equipment of a column proved abortive. About this time the police authorities became very active in the Dungannon area and were continually raiding and searching for men on the run.

I got a summons from Charlie Daly to attend a meeting at Beragh. At this meeting, officers attended from all the old Tyrone Brigade area. This meeting was held on the 31st October, 1920. The instructions given at the meeting were that all the police patrols out on the streets or roads from their barracks should be attacked that night. This order was issued as a

reprisal following the death of Lord Mayor MacSwiney in London.

In March, 1921, we received orders to ambush police patrols on the same night in the various R. I. C. barrack areas. For some reason, probably a leakage of information, the police patrols did not come out in either Coalisland or Dungannon districts. A patrol came out in Pomeroy and Carrickmore areas and in both instances were ambushed.

Tom Leonard, our Battalion O/C, was arrested after the March activities. The Vice O/C, Cush, resigned and would not take any further part in the I. R. A. movement. After Leonard's arrest I attended a meeting at Carrickmore at which Eóin O'Duffy, the Divisional O/C, was present. At this meeting he appointed me O/C of the Dungannon Battalion. He then asked me to give him the names of the men I considered suitable for the positions of Vice O/C, Adjutant and Quartermaster in the Battalion. Thomas Devlin was appointed Vice O/C; Archie McDonald, Adjutant, and John Ogle, Quartermaster. Shortly after his appointment Devlin was arrested and Patrick Bennett was appointed to replace him. Bennett was, shortly after his appointment, arrested.

In April, 1921, three men were murdered at Dromore, Co. Tyrone. Following these murders, Eóin O'Duffy ordered that reprisals be carried out against the 'B' men in Dromore. I received orders to mobilise a number of men and take them into Dunmoyle area, where we were to meet the Carrickmore men. I mobilised 10 men and proceeded to Dunmoyle a day before the Carrickmore men were due to join us. When the Carrickmore men joined us, Seán Corr was in charge of

them. We had our written instructions from O'Duffy in connection with this mobilisation, and the Carrickmore men also had their written instructions from him. When we checked up our instructions we found that our date for arrival at Dunmoyle was a day in advance of the Carrickmore men's instructions. This was apparently a mistake on O'Duffy's part. Both ourselves and the Carrickmore men got instructions to travel from Dunmoyle to Dromore on foot. In our case this meant a tramp of about 30 miles. This order was expecting too much of any body of men, as the return journey would mean 60 miles in all. The type of area we were to pass through made our orders impossible to carry out as our march would have taken us over a very hostile area, with very few friendly people living in it. When Seán Corr and I discussed our orders, we decided to return home. This decision was prompted by the impossibility of carrying out the orders and also by the contradictory nature of the orders we received. The fact that we were ordered to march on foot showed that O'Duffy did not understand the difficulties involved in carrying out his orders.

When we returned to Dungannon after our visit to Dunmoyle we found that all our homes had been raided by Crown Forces in our absence. We all then decided to go on the run and as it was impossible for any of us to survive in Dungannon, we moved into Galbally area, about 6 miles from Dungannon town, and operated from there.

About the second Sunday in May, 1921, a Crosley tender containing about 10 armed policemen appeared on the roads in Galbally area and commenced a patrol round the various roads and by-roads. As this lorry came

from Dungannon direction we expected it to return to Dungannon. We went to a position on the Dungannon/Galbally road and lay in ambush to attack it on its return to Dungannon. The police, however, did not come our way but went towards Cappagh area. In the Cappagh area the policemen stopped at a publichouse. When we heard this we evacuated our position on the Galbally/Dungannon road and went towards the Cappagh/Pomeroy road. This meant about two miles of a walk from our original position. We had barely time to take up position at a place called Altmore when we heard a lorry approaching. The usual preparations for taking up an ambush position had to be dispensed with and the rapid approach of the lorry forced us into the nearest position available. Our force numbered about 12 men: I do not know whether all our men had got into position when the shooting started. Our weapons were one rifle, 4 or 5 shotguns and the remainder were armed with revolvers. The firing lasted about 10 minutes. As soon as we opened fire, the police got out of the lorry and took up positions in reply to our fire. Seeing that we were in^a rather poor defensive position and that our inferior weapons put us at a great disadvantage, we were compelled to retreat. One of the R.I.C. received a head wound: none of our men were hit. In connection with this affair, on our way to Cappagh we met two local members of the 'B' Special constabulary. Both these men knew me very well and we could not take the chance of letting them go about their business after they had seen us, as it would certainly give an alarm of our presence in the locality, so we took them prisoner. In order to keep them quiet we had to place two of our men on guard over them until the attack was over.

The Battalion staff - Ogle, Bennett, McDonald and I, - left Galbally district after this affair and went into Dungannon to attend a Company parade. On the following night we attended the parade and afterwards we decided to remain overnight in Dungannon. On the following evening, around 6 p.m., we proceeded to attend a retreat in St. Patrick's Church. Earlier on this particular day, the Dungannon Company had burned two Belfast bread vans as part of the campaign against the selling of Belfast goods.

At the time we were going to the retreat we saw D.I. Walsh engaged in a discussion with two of the bread van drivers (in Thomas Street) whose vans had been burned. When we got close to the D.I. he saw John Ogle and apparently recognised him as an I.R.A. man. He came over to us and asked Ogle his name. Ogle gave the name of Donnelly: the D.I. then took him by the arm and told him to come along to the barracks. Ogle went along with the D.I. for about 20 yards and I walked a few yards behind them. I then saw that Ogle was making an attempt to draw the revolver he had in his pocket. I then drew my revolver and we both fired at the D.I. The D.I. screamed and fell on the roadway so we cleared off and left him as he fell: he had got one bullet wound in the hip.

After the shooting of the D.I. I mixed up with the people going to the retreat and went along with them to the church. On arrival there I went into the vestry and hid my revolver there. I told some of the altarboys where it was hidden and I gave them instructions to take it out to me at Galbally. Later on they did this.

During the time the retreat devotions were on in the church Crown Forces came along and surrounded the place. When the congregation were leaving, all were searched. I got through this ordeal all right. Bennett, who had gone to devotions, was also searched. No revolver was found on him during the search. Later, he was arrested on the street, still unarmed. Ogle did not go to devotions and got away from the scene of the shooting safely.

This shooting was not planned and D. I. Walshe was not considered a very dangerous enemy of ours. The shooting was directly due to his arrest of Ogle which, at the time, we had to prevent. The D. I. recovered from his wound.

On the night following the shooting of D. I. Walshe, the 'B' Specials raided some houses in the Rock district near Dungannon. During the raid on Hayden's house the Specials shot dead one of the family and wounded another member. The Haydens were Nationalists but had no sympathy with the I. R. A. The 'B' men involved in the shooting of the Haydens were later on arrested and were tried for the shooting. The charges against them were dismissed and no disciplinary action was taken.

At the time the Haydens were shot we were in Galbally. The British military arrived in that district and surrounded the whole area. The force involved in this round-up was about 200 military and a large number of police. They cordoned off the whole district, surrounding the area where we were. All the young men of the district were brought from their houses to a point near Cappagh where they were

inspected and checked over by R. I. C. men. One of the men arrested in this round-up was a stranger to the district: he was apparently on the run from Belfast and, being a stranger, he was arrested and detained. Accompanying me at the time of this round-up was my brother, Tom, Archie McDonald and John Ogle. We were not able to penetrate the cordon which surrounded the district but we evaded arrest by watching out and getting to houses that we knew the military had already raided.

During the month of June, 1921, I was appointed Brigade O/C and from this time onwards my time was mainly taken up with Brigade work, organisation, etc. During this month a Brigade levy had been made to provide the cash for purchasing arms, etc. Each householder got a notification of the amount of levy placed on him and after a reasonable time for payment had elapsed, we had to go round to various localities to enforce the payment of the levy. During this month a number of road bridges were destroyed to prevent the free movement of Crown Forces. Shops were visited in connection with the enforcement of the Belfast trade boycott. I remember Liam Gaynor coming to the area in connection with the boycott work: he was attached to boycott headquarters in Dublin at this time. Bread carts and trucks carrying Belfast goods into the area were intercepted and destroyed.

Early in July, 1921, we made plans to burn a train carrying Belfast goods between Belfast, Omagh and Derry. On the night of the 14th July we mobilised the Galbally and Aughnagar Companies for this operation. We held the train up at a place called Gortavoy by lifting one rail of the railway line. At the back

of this train was a box van of horses going to a show at Omagh. We had to disconnect this van and push it back some distance from the train before we burned the train: the train was then completely burned out. The wreckage blocked the line for a few days.

On Sunday, 10th July, I went to Carrickmore area and with the Carrickmore and Pomeroy Companies I held up the train from Belfast to Derry. We got the train to stop at a point where the train was climbing a steep incline and going slow. Some fog signals were placed on the line and as a final inducement to the driver to stop we fired a few shots. Here, we burned three or four wagons which were carrying Belfast goods and all the other wagons were left untouched.

I received a message from Charles Daly about 1 or 2 a.m. on Monday morning, 11th July, 1921, to proceed to Dunamore and to bring a few men with me to assist the Dunamore Company and a few other volunteers from other areas in burning Doons Creamery, Cookstown. This burning was a reprisal for the burning of a local hall used by the I.R.A. at Dunamore. We travelled from Dunamore to Doons in a lorry and a few motorcars. Charles Daly was in charge of this operation. Also mobilised for this job was ^{DANL.} ~~John~~ McKenna, later Chief of Staff of the Army, and Paddy Diamond, O/C of South Derry area. Before we carried out the burning, we took two R.I.C. men whom we found in the premises and stores, and the manager of the creamery as prisoners. The creamery and stores were completely destroyed and the whole operation completed before 12 noon. We also released our prisoners before noon. This meant the whole job was completed before the Truce came into operation.

W J K.

Notwithstanding the mixture of Orange and Green in most districts in Co. Tyrone, the county should have done better than it did during the Tan War and would, I am sure have done better had we been blessed with good leaders in the early periods between 1917 and the end of 1920. I do not want to go into this matter of our leaders in any detail as, by doing so, I might cause or give reason for offending, and I might be in some instances unfair to some individuals.

Signed : W. J. Kelly
(W. J. Kelly)

Date : 24th Sept. 1953

24th Sept. 1953.

Witness:

John McCoy
24th Sept 1953.

(John McCoy)

24th Sept. 1953.

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