

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 56



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Telefón 61018.

ROINN COSANTA.

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

(Bureau of Military History 1913-21),

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(26 Westland Row),

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH.
(Dublin).

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Statement by

Matthew Murphy,
Crossmahon, Lisarda,
Co. Cork.

Dated:

9th November, 1947

On:

Kilmurry Coy. I.V.
1915 to 1916.

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORICAL RECORDS
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STATEMENT OF MATTHEW MURPHY, CROSSMAHON, LISARDA,
CO. CORK.

PERIOD: 1915 to 1916.

UNIT: KILMURRAY COMPANY, I.V.

There was an old tradition of Fenianism in the Kilmurray district, and the spirit it inspired never entirely died out. The Captain of the old Gaelic Football Team, Daniel Murphy, was the Fenian Head Centre at Kilmurray. He was always a good nationalist and the initiative in starting the Volunteers came mainly from him.

The Company was known up to early 1916 as the Dooniskey Company. After that it became the Kilmurray Company. It was started at a parade held at Bealnablath about October, 1915. The Cork City Companies paraded there that day. A meeting was held of which Daniel Murphy was Chairman. Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney spoke there that day, and John T. Murphy was the principal local speaker. About 25 men enrolled; some from Kilmurray, some from Bealnablath and some from Dooniskey.

There was a big Company of National Volunteers in Kilmurray before that. They ceased to be active after we started, and they had fallen through altogether before Easter, 1916. None of them joined us.

Soon after the start the following Officers were elected and they continued in office until after Easter, 1916:-

Captain: Tom Neville, Ballytrasna.

Secretary: John T. Murphy, Crossmahon, Lisarda.

Parades were held one night a week and every Sunday. We had no ex-serviceman in the Company, which was drilled by me although I was only about 16 years of age at the time. Tomás MacCurtain, Terence MacSwiney and Donal óg O'Callaghan used to come out drilling us, and Pat Higgins, who was in charge of despatches, came also sometimes. We got copies of the "Irish Volunteer" every week.

Our strength remained at about 25 up to the end of 1915, when a Section was started at Bealnablath, and after that we got a bit stronger. The Bealnablath Section paraded separately as they were five miles away from us. We had about 27 to 30 at the Manchester Martyrs' parade in Cork in November, 1915, but some of them were not Volunteers.

Terence MacSwiney gave us a pattern of a pike and we got about twenty made about the end of 1915 by a Kerry man named Pat Leary at Sweeney's forge, Crookstown. At the same time we had about six shot guns which were owned by members of the Company.

We had nearly 40 men at the St. Patrick's Day parade in Cork in 1916, but this probably included some Newcestown men for whom it would have been more convenient to travel on the Cork and Macroom Railway. We went in and came back by train from Crookstown and Dooniskey Stations. We carried pikes only at that parade.

The Company Captain, Tom Neville, attended the Course carried out at Sheares' Street, Cork, in January, 1916.

The orders for Easter Sunday, 1916, came to us from Macroom. They were to the effect that we were to parade at Macroom at some early hour on Easter Sunday morning with all arms and equipment and three days' rations. We mobilised everybody, but only five men, with bicycles, assembled at Macroom in time for the parade. There was a rumour that the Ballinadee men would pass our way, and, in fact, fifteen more men from the Company came to Macroom later, either with the Ballinadee or the Cork Companies. The majority of them came with the Cork men.

The following five men paraded at Macroom in the morning, having cycled from Kilmurray:-

Matthew Murphy.
Daniel Lehane.
Eugene O'Keeffe.
Denis O'Keeffe.
Jack MacSweeney.

The following fifteen came to Macroom later with the Cork and Ballinadee men:-

John T. Murphy.
Patrick Sheehan.
Con O'Keeffe.
Jeremiah O'Sullivan.
Tom Brown.
Denis J. Long.
T.D. Long.
Con Murphy.
Tadg Murphy.
Pat Leary.
Andrew Lynch.
Tom Cronin.
Joe Murphy.
Patrick McGrath.
Dan Hurley.

The arms we had were eight shot guns, some D.B. and some S.B., and twelve pikes. Bayonets had been made for the shot guns. We had about 40 rounds for the shot guns. We had no revolvers, no explosives and no slugs. An old Fenian, Jeremiah D'Anne, Ceam, Killinardrish, had given us an old rifle also with a three-cornered Russian bayonet. There was no ammunition for the rifle and it was in bad condition. He gave us also a single-barrel shot gun, with bolt action, which was in perfect condition. We had both weapons out on Easter Sunday.

The five men from the Company who had arrived in Macroom in time for the parade marched with the Macroom Company to Carriganimma. The remainder did not go beyond Macroom.

Some exercises were carried out at Carriganimma, and late in the evening Miceal Lynch arrived on a motor bicycle with word that the parade was cancelled and that we were to return to our own areas. We marched back to Macroom.

As far as I know, no orders came to the Company during Easter Week. In the following week there were raids and John T. Murphy and Tom Neville were arrested. Neville was released after about

four days. There were no other arrests in the Company area. No arms were lost in the raids and no arms were surrendered.

There were no Fianna or I.R.B. organisations in the area before Easter, 1916..

SIGNED: Matt Murphy

DATE: 9th. November 1947

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WITNESS: Florence O'Donoghue.