

W.S.
106
ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 106

STATEMENT OF DENIS HEGARTY, KILGARVAN,
CO. KERRY.

PERIOD: 1914 TO EASTER, 1916.

UNIT: KILGARVAN COMPANY, I.V.

Early in 1914 Terence MacSwiney and Fred Murray attended a public meeting held in Kilgarvan on a Sunday after Mass for the purpose of forming a local Company of Irish Volunteers. Terence MacSwiney was in uniform. He stood opposite the church after Mass and addressed the people. Members of the R.I.C. were present taking notes. At the conclusion of his speech he asked those men who were willing to be enrolled as Volunteers to move to the right. The following did so and the Company was formed:-

Richard O'Sullivan.
Daniel O'Shea.
Dan Patsy Sullivan.
John Hegarty.
Paddy Galvin.
Jeremiah Sullivan G.
Dan Sullivan G.
Timothy K. Healy.
Michael Leary.
Jeremiah Hegarty.
Thomas P. Randles.
Michael Lyne.
Stephen P. Leary.
Michael Murphy.
Charles Leary.
Michael Healy.
Denis Hegarty.

A short time after that Tadg O'Shea, who was an Irish teacher in Kenmare, organised an I.R.B. circle in Kilgarvan. Michael Leary was Centre and the following were members:-

Richard O'Sullivan.
Dan Shea.
Dan Patsy Sullivan.
John Hegarty.
Timothy K. Healy.
Michael Leary.
Thomas P. Randles.
Michael Murphy.
Denis Hegarty.

This circle continued to function down to Easter, 1916.

The Volunteer Company held weekly parades, at which literature was read and drills carried out. Tadg O'Shea came frequently and gave drill instruction. In the Summer of 1914 an ex-serviceman, Patrick Holland, took over the drilling of the Company and continued training us until he was called up after the outbreak of war. He was a native of Kenmare and worked for a merchant in Kilgarvan. During 1914 the strength of the Company increased to 26 when the following members were enrolled:-

John Randles.
Mottie Sullivan.
Paddy Buckley.
Tommy Healy.
Denis J. Healy.
Timothy Herlihy.
Edmund Sweeney.
Daniel Sweeney.
Dannie McCarthy.

An election of Officers was then held and the following were appointed:-

Michael O'Leary,	Captain.
Denis Hegarty,	1st Lieutenant.
Timothy Healy,	Adjutant.

These were the only Officers and they continued to hold office up to Easter, 1916.

The Split did not affect the Company at all. Every man remained loyal to the Irish Volunteers Executive. Parades continued to be held one night a week and every Sunday.

In September, 1914 Miss Polly O'Leary, Shandrum, Kilgarvan, was arrested and held for some time on a charge of distributing anti-British recruiting literature.

Early in 1915 Michael Murphy, a baker who worked for my father, became local agent for "Nationality", and it was widely distributed from here. A branch of Sinn Fein was started, comprising many Volunteers and a number of older men. William Drummy used to come from Tralee, and he kept us in contact with the Tralee Volunteers. We were in touch with John Joe Rice also.

We had no arms in the Company before Easter, 1916, but we had made some wooden guns for training purposes. We had no equipment except first aid outfits. I had a uniform breeches and cap. It was the only one in the Company.

We received no special mobilisation order for Easter Sunday, 1916. We held the usual Sunday parade, but we had no information that anything was on that day. When we heard of the Rising we kept together during the week, but no orders came to us from anywhere.

On the Saturday night of Easter Week I made a tri-colour flag by painting the colours on a piece of cloth. I erected it that night on the chimney of a building next to the Catholic Church. It took the police until noon on Sunday to get it down.

SIGNED: Denis Hegarty

DATE: March 12th 1948

WITNESS: Florence Donoghue

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