

**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BUREAU STAIRS MILITARY 1913-21

NO. W.S. 159

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. ....159.....

**Witness**

Mr. Alexander Nowlan,  
Charleston Hill,  
New Ross, Co. Wexford.

**Identity**

Founder Member New Ross Company  
Irish Volunteers 1913-1916.

**Subject**

New Ross Company Irish Volunteers 1913-1916.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. ...S.1134.....

Form B.S.M. 2.

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Charleton Hill  
New Ross  
Nov 11/48

Dear Sir

Having seen in the Irish Press that you are collecting information about the Irish Volunteers I am sending you my bit of information of how they were started in <sup>New</sup> Ross. Collesford in Oct 1913 A friend of mine Dan Murphy of Cross Lane New Ross was a footballer & runner he was a friend of Sean Etchingham Dan met him at some sports in Enniscorthy some time before Oct 1913 Dan told me that Etchingham asked him would he get up a company of Volunteers in Ross. I went out to William Lennon of Linshogue and also to Thomas Lacey Irish town & William Dalton Maudlins The 4 of us met & agreed to form a company of Irish Volunteers We got about 40 boys from Three bullet gate, Irish town & Maudlins to form the company We started to drill about the first of Nov 1913 Our drill instructor was William Dalton. Dan made it a rule that we have no British ex soldiers to drill or no ex soldiers in the company We used to drill on Sundays and Wednesday nights

and everytime we met we had a policeman after us  
 named Constable Bryan Donelan a detective. In 1913  
 Father Guigley got up a brass band all boys, with Tim  
 Fein wrote on their caps. He asked us to carry out the  
 commeration to the Manchester Martyrs on Nov 24 and  
 his band led us. Another Volunteer Company was started down  
 town after the Commemoration by Phil Lennon Linchogal  
 there shop assistant in Ross. He asked me to try to get the  
 2 companies to come together. We agreed and 5 of our company  
 and 5 of Phil's met in Dan Murphy's house. Phil's men were  
 William Murphy, Joe McCarty, Patrick Hayden & Martin  
 Deegan & Phil Lennon. Dan's men were William Lennon  
 Thomas Lacey William Dalton Dan Murphy myself  
 The combined companies carried out drill & rifle  
 practice on Sundays & week nights. The war having  
 broken out all sections & crews joined us in Ross  
 we had about 200 Phil Lennon was Comdt & Joe  
 McCarty vice Comdt. A parade was called one Sunday  
 in the summer 1914 Phil Lennon told the assembled  
 volunteers that he was resigning as John Redmond MP  
 and his Volunteers was recruiting for England

And that any man in the parade who wished to join  
 Phil to step out, the most of the old crowd came  
 over to the Irish Volunteers. Our new Company now  
 numbered about 40. With Phil Lennon Comdt & Joe Mc  
 Carthy Vice Comdt we kept to drilling & rifle practice  
 We took part in a parade at Castle Hill Ennisceorthy  
 Whit Sunday 1915 with all the other Irish Volunteers in  
 County Westford. P. H. Pearse and other leaders reviewed  
 us. I remembered some man saying that day that we  
 were a small crowd only about 300 in the County  
 Westford. During the summer we carried out drill &  
 rifle practice. We carried out the Manchester Martyrs  
 commemoration in 1915 we had the police after us all the  
 time. Father's Quigley band & <sup>primarily volunteers</sup> took part in the recruiting  
 meetings at this time. The first time I heard about  
 the rising was from Phil Lennon Comdt about the 1<sup>st</sup>  
 April 1916 when he asked me for an American revolver.  
 He told me we might be ~~fighting~~ fighting before the  
 month was out. The company paraded on Good Friday  
 night and Phil told us all to be ready at any time

to fight. We had all kinds of rifles, shotguns, revolvers. I had some pike heads made only to put in the handles when fighting started. I met Phil Lennon on Easter Sunday evening and he told me the rising was off. That a man named O'Connell told him, this man was from H. G. Dublin. At about 4 o'clock on Easter Monday evening I got word from Phil Lennon to go out to Ballynaboola about 5 miles from Ross and find out how many police were in the barracks. About a mile from Ross I met all the Ballynaboola police coming into Ross in a car to reinforce the police in Ross. I believe we <sup>were</sup> going to attack it that night if they had to be in it. We could do nothing in Ross as there was a lot of armed police and Redmond's Volunteers also employees of certain firms done guard duty in town. The people in Ross were very hostile to us. If we made any attempt to fight we would be outnumbered as there was only about 30 in the company in Easter Week. There was no volunteer company any place near Ross in 1916 only a small company in Ratharogue about 4 miles from Ross.

The week after the rising a column of soldiers came to Ross and arrested all the company and others who were not volunteers, but members of the Gaelic League. One man was arrested named John Fanning some time before the rising a recruiting agent named Founnden of Enniscoorthy wanted to address the council on recruiting. Mr Fanning objected as he said the country has come to a nice pass when a descendant of a '98 soldier wanted them to recruit Irishmen ~~for England~~ to fight for England. Dan Murphy who formed the first Volunteers in 1913 to <sup>kill</sup> and died in 1916 This is a true statement of events in Ross from 1913 to 1916

Yours Truly  
Alexander Nowlan

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