

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 458.....

Witness

Sean Corr,
27 Dingle Road,
Cabra, Dublin.

Identity

Company Captain Irish Volunteers, Co. Tyrone;
O/C. Battalion do.
Quartermaster of Brigade, I.R.A.

Subject

- (a) National activities, Armagh and Tyrone
1917-1924;
- (b) Conscription Threat 1918;
- (c) Attacks on R.I.C. Barracks 5/4/1921.

Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness

Nil

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ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

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STATEMENT BY SEAN CORR, 27 DINGLE ROAD,

CABRA WEST, DUBLIN.

After the Rising in Easter Week 1916, there were eight men arrested in our district-battalion area - James Grogan, Barney McCartan, Peter Fox, James McElduff, ... Fitzsimons, Boh Slane, Hugh Rogers and Captain McRory.

Dr. Pat McCartan went on the run and evaded capture until he got away to America after Christmas 1916. The arrested men were all interned in Frongoch; some were released in July 1916 and the remainder before Christmas 1916.

56 After the release of the interned men we reorganised the companies in our battalion early in 1917. We re-formed Kildrumney^{ESS} Donamore^{RE} Carrickmore, Sixmilecross and Dunmoyle Companies. The first activities, outside the usual drilling and training and organising, was the South Armagh election which took place on 1st February 1918. Forty men from our battalion volunteered for duty at this election and proceeded, on the evening of the day prior to the election, to our local railway station and took train for Armagh city. We did our day's work at home before we started. We arrived at Armagh around 7 p.m. and were met at the station by Eamon Donnelly who welcomed us. We were detailed for duty at a place named Cladymiltown, about nine miles south of Armagh city. We marched from Armagh to Cladymiltown and, when we arrived there, were given billets in a farmer's barn where we made ourselves a bed on straw and remained there until morning. When we reported for duty on the morning of the poll we found that there were about 100 other Volunteers on duty in Cladymiltown. I was officer in charge of the Tyrone men and wore Volunteer uniform. Paul Galligan was the officer in charge of all the Volunteers in Cladymiltown at the election.

The first duty we were asked to do was at the polling booth

We lined along the road to control traffic. We put up Sinn Fein flags on a number of trees. We were not long on duty when a crowd of Hibernians arrived from Armagh city marching in military formation. Paul Galligan approached the man in charge of the Hibernians and informed him that the Volunteers were on duty for the protection of the voters and to keep the peace and that we were not looking for trouble. The Hibernian leader was a very decent man and told Galligan that he was not out for any trouble but that some of his men were a rough element and would like to cause trouble. Towards evening we got white armlets to wear, as it was felt that in case of trouble we should wear some distinguishing mark so that we could recognise each other in darkness. The man in charge of the Hibernians came to us and told us that at the conclusion of the poll both the Hibernians and the Tyrone men would be travelling the same road into Armagh and that he would take his men home a different road to avoid trouble.

When the booth was closed and whilst awaiting the removal of the ballot boxes, I saw a number of prominent leaders of the Sinn Fein party in the vicinity of the polling station:- Michael Collins, who was a personating agent in the booth; Con Collins, Limerick; Dan Doherty, Strabane; Harry McKenna, Armagh, and Paul Halligan were the only men I knew.

After the election was over we marched back the nine miles to Armagh city and were accommodated at Gormley's house, Cathedral Street. We were very tired and got good beds. I may mention that each man paid his own train fare to the election. We returned home by the first train next morning.

The next item of importance was the election in East Tyrone which took place on 4th April 1918. The Carrickmore Coy a week before the date of the election went to the town of Pomeroy to organise that district. We started a company of Volunteers; Arthur McElvogue was appointed Company Captain.

On the Sunday before the election the Carrickmore Coy. and the Pomeroy Coy. marched to Kildress - where a Sinn Fein meeting was being held - to protect the meeting.

For the election campaign a number of Dublin men and other prominent leaders were each put in charge of a district. I will try and give the names of the men in charge of the different districts:

Col. J.V. Joyce	was in charge of	Pomeroy	
		Lower Rock.	
Joe Stanley &	" "	"	Kildress and
Jack (?) Grace,	Dublin	"	Dunamore
Richard Mulcahy		"	Coalisland and
		"	Stewartstown.
Countess Markievicz &		"	Dungannon district.
Old Wm. John Kelly			

The only unpleasant incident of the election was an attack, by stoning, on Peadar Clancy in Cookstown. The Irish Parliamentary Party candidate won the election.

Although the election was a failure as far as electing our candidate, the general effect was very good. We made a lot of converts to the Sinn Fein cause. We were also able to organise new companies of the Volunteers in Stewartstown and Coalisland, Cookstown, Arboe and Ballinderry.

After the election a meeting of the Volunteers was held to put the area into proper organisational order. The following appointments were made:-

Brigade staff. O/C. Francis Doris, Clogher
 Vice O/C. John Shields, arrested about 1918,
 succeeded by Albert Tally.
 Adjutant Michael McCartan, Carrickmore.
 Q.M. Bob Slane

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Battn. Staff: O/C. Sean Corr, Stuggan, Carrickmore.
 Vice O/C. Patk. McGuire, Tromag, do.
 Adjutant Francis Donnelly do. do.
 Q.M. Patk. Casey do. do.
 I.O. Edward Donnelly do. do.

When the Conscription menace became acute about mid-April 1918, all 'Co. Tyrone was joined in a country-wide organisation to resist the enforcement of conscription by every means. All

classes of nationalist opinion joined up to defeat the conscription threat. A solemn pledge was signed by all young men, and men not so young, at all chapels in the country to resist the enforcement of compulsory military service on the Irish people. This threat only lasted for a few months and then fizzled out. As far as I can remember, there were a series of public meetings held in all important centres in the country and the greatest enthusiasm existed. The ranks of the Volunteers were swollen by recruits. At this time the Nationalists - Irish Parliamentary Party - knew very well that Home Rule was dead; so Sinn Fein was reaping a lot of recruits from the former Irish Party supporters. At the period of most danger the Volunteers had pickets out each night watching for the first move to lift our young manhood. A scene was created by a train load of soldiers who came from Portadown direction and when the train arrived at Pomeroy it dropped a number of soldiers and did the same at each station all the way to Omagh. Each detachment of soldiers, when dropped, at a station, proceeded to march along the railway line and the train would stop every four or five miles until the soldiers came up to train and again boarded it. The Volunteers could not understand what the soldier tactics meant and the incident caused much excitement and alarm and made a lot of Volunteer officers go on the run to evade capture.

The next item of importance was a raid which took place at the end of 1918 or early in 1919 on the residence of Captain Coote, Ballygawley. The raid was carried out by Bob Slane, Hugh Rogers, Peter Mullen, Captain of Sixmilecross and Dunmoyle Companies. I cannot give a first-hand account of the event, but I know that 16 German rifles and 10 petrol cans of ammunition were seized. The ammunition did not fit the rifles and it was disposed of to an area where it could be used. After this raid Bob Slane was arrested and took part in a hunger-strike in Mountjoy prison.

At the General Election in December 1918 there was no contest in Mid-Tyrone and it was one of the seats allotted at the conference between Cardinal Logue, ~~Sean~~ MacNeill and Joseph Devlin. There was a contest in South Tyrone and some of the Volunteers from our area took part in the election there.

The years 1918 and 1919 were the period where the Volunteers devoted a lot of time to training and organising. Eamon Fleming was sent from G.H.Q. to Co. Tyrone to organise and visited every company in the county. Mr. Fleming started a few new companies in areas where no organisation existed. Aldrummond was organised in our battalion. Fleming remained 3 or 4 weeks in each battalion district. After Fleming's period with us ended, Ronnie McGinn, a Dublin Brigade officer, was sent to us by G.H.Q. This man remained with us for about 3 or 4 weeks and when he was leaving Tyrone, he was arrested leaving Amiens St. Station in Dublin.

About this time - end of 1919 - Judge Rosse's was raided and a few old shotguns of little value were seized. A raid was carried out by Dunamore Coy. on Duruan Lodge, near Cocks-town. Some ammunition was seized on this raid.

At the end of the year 1919 a reorganisation of the I.R.A. took place in the brigade area which embraced the whole county. The brigade officers appointed were as follow:-

O/C.	Wm. J. Kelly, Dungannon
V/O/C.	Francis Curran, Aldrummond, Carrickmore.
Adjutant.	Vincent Shields, Dungannon.
Q.M.	John Ogle do.
Engineer	Sean McDermott

Frank Doris and other brigade officers were in prison when this reorganisation took place. There was no change in the officers of my battalion from 1918.

Early in 1920 - about April - we burned the books and papers of a man named Quinn, Collector of Taxes, in Dunamore Company area. We also burned an evacuated R.I.C. barracks at

a place named Broughderg. Mountfield evacuated barracks was destroyed by Aldrummond and Carrickmore companies. This barracks was situated in an Orange district. We destroyed the building with explosives. In the summer of 1920 the I.R.A. raided all the houses in each company area for arms. Both Nationalist and Unionist houses were visited. In some cases the Unionists resisted the raiders. In Aldrummond district one of our men was wounded in the raid on a Unionist house. We collected a lot of shotguns in those raids. We also got ineffective revolvers and pistols. About September, Charles Daly arrived from G.H.Q. to take charge of the Tyrone Brigade.

After his arrival he made an inspection of each company in the brigade and got to know all his brigade, battalion and company officers. He became in a short period most popular with both the Tyrone officers and the rank and file in the brigade.

sls About October 1920, Carrick^{MORE}~~more~~ and Pomeroy Companies carried out a raid on a mail train. We captured all the mail and censored all the letters and returned censored letters to the railway station at Carrickmore. Some of the matter collected in this raid was in code and all coded communications were sent on to G.H.Q. in Dublin. Eamon Donnelly some time later informed me that this raid on the train was responsible for saving his life, as he got a timely warning in Donegal from G.H.Q. that he was being raided for.

In October 1920 also, an ambush was carried out at Dunamore. The attackers were Sean McDermott, Patrick McKenna, ... Colton and a few others. Two R.I.C. were disarmed, one of them being wounded. The week following this ambush a large contingent of R.I.C. arrived in Dunamore from Cookstown to raid the district. They were met by a contingent of Volunteers from the local companies and a fight took place. The R.I.C., when they came under fire, retreated in haste, leaving a number of their cycles behind them - 8 or 9 in all. Some of the

police were reported to have been wounded, but we did not see any of them fall. Some little time later, about 1st Nov. 1920, the mails coming to Dunamore district were commandeered. Also about the same time the Volunteers carried out an extensive raid for poteen, in which a large number of stills were captured and destroyed. In one case the owner of a still put up a vigorous fight armed with a shotgun. He had to be shot before he could be overcome and he died the next day.

About Oct-Nov. 1920, Charles Daly planned a raid on Beragh Barracks with the intention of capturing it. I went with Charlie to the barracks to reconnoitre the surroundings and it appeared that the capture could be effected without much trouble. On the night appointed for the attempt, Charlie Daly decided to call it off after the men detailed for it had been mobilised. It appears that the district, being an Orange one, some of the local Volunteers feared that reprisals would be carried out on all Nationalists living in the district after the attempt on the barracks and that the Volunteers would not be able to protect the people threatened by a local parson named Marshall who had promised to carry out terrible reprisals on the Catholics in his district if anything were attempted there by the I.R.A.

In Nov. 1920, two Volunteers were under arrest on some charge relating to Poteen. Both men refused to recognise the Court. Their trial was fixed for Omagh and they were being removed from Derry jail to Omagh for the trial. A new District Inspector of the R.I.C. named Ferris had come to Ballygawley. This man, it appears, had been at the shooting of Lord Mayor McCurtain in Cork and was to some extent on the run, as it was kept a secret where he was stationed. Charles Daly got information from G.H.Q. that he was in Ballygawley and planned to have him ambushed during the transfer of two I.R.A. prisoners to Omagh for trial. There were about 16 or 17 I.R.A. mobilised

for this operation in addition to others whose duty was outposts and blockading of roads. Of the 16 odd in the attacking party, about 14 were from my battalion area.

The night before the attack we were billeted in an old disused house about 3 miles from the site of the ambush. Early in the morning of 23rd November two Volunteers, Hugh Bogue and Hugh McGinn who had been detailed for scout duty by Daly came and informed us that 2 motor cars containing police including D.I. Ferris had gone towards Derry early that morning for the prisoners. We decided to ambush the police on their journey back from Derry. When darkness fell we proceeded to the site of the ambush and took positions. The scout who led us across country to the position was named Turbett. We took up positions along the road at a bend on the road. The majority of our men were on one side, but past the bend we had a number of men placed on the opposite side. About an hour after we arrived and took up position. A scout we had placed about half a mile from the position gave the signal that the police cars had passed him. On their approach we were ready for them. Paddy McGuirk who had charge of the bombs fired the first bomb which exploded near the first car and knocked the car out of action and wounded one of the R.I.C. The second bomb, which he threw at the second car, failed to explode and we all opened fire on the second car with all we had. The car passed through our position at a high speed and up the road overtook some of the occupants who had escaped from the first car and lifted them and all got away. Charles Daly and I advanced on the car which got immobilised with the first bomb and found a wounded policeman in it whom we disarmed of two revolvers and a .450 and .380. We pushed the car to a local farm house of a man named Montague. We took the wounded policeman into the house at this stage. He appeared to be in a bad way. We asked him what religion

he was and he said 'Catholic', so we told him we would send on a priest and a doctor to attend him. He then told us that he was a Protestant and that he did not want a priest. When we were leaving the house we heard a motor bike coming. We stopped this man to ask him to get a doctor for the wounded R.I.C.+ The motorist turned out to be a schoolteacher from Co. Kerry who knew Charlie Daly very well. There were three R.I.C. and two 'B' men, who drove the cars, wounded. This operation was carried out in pitch darkness; otherwise, I think that none of the R.I.C. would have escaped.

It transpired later that D.I. Ferris was not with the party ambushed. He either went another route home to Ballygawley or did not travel that evening. Ferris was soon after this transferred to Belfast where an attempt was made to execute him. He was wounded and recovered.

About the end of 1920, Michael McCartan, who had been adjutant of the Tyrone Brigade from 1917 up to the reorganisation in 1920, was arrested by Crown Forces. He was tried and received a penal servitude sentence of 3 to 5 years. About Xmas 1920, Sean McDermott, brigade engineer, was arrested and also Charlie Daly. McDermott was courtmartialled and sentenced to a term of penal servitude. To explain what adventures happened to Charles Daly, I cannot do more than quote an account of it written for me by Muiris O'Cathain, N.T. Marlboro St. Model Schools, Dublin.

"About a fortnight or so preceding Xmas Eve 1920, Charlie and I were staying in Whelan's Hotel, Eccles St., a familiar and fraternal meeting place of Kerry Gaels. On this particular evening Charlie, who was usually the gayest of spirits, approached me with a careworn serious expression and, stroking his chin in a rather fretful mood, said: "Muiris! I don't often feel a strong presentiment of things to come, but I can't get it out of my head all this day that Whelan's Hotel

is going to be raided by the Tans tonight. What do you think of that hunch?"

I had to laugh outright at seeing the gay Charles in that sombre mood and hearing him give in to foolish presentiments about places being raided when raiding was the order of the day or rather the night.

On questioning him about the matter and finding no tangible reasons for his feelings I said: "Charlie, boy, we can't always have a cosy bed in a comfortable hotel and I can't see any good reason for quitting tonight, so forget it and stay here".

So I stayed and Charlie left to sleep with his friends the O'Mahonys of 36 de Courcy Square and, as strange fate would have it, there was a raid that very night; not Whelan's Hotel, but 36 de Courcy Square! Charles was arrested and gave the name Con Moynihan, N.T. employed by the Christian Brothers in Dungannon. The Tans were very curious about Charlie's handsome face and the uncombable cowslick which persisted in springing up on his forehead, no matter how they tried to keep it down. Charlie told me afterwards that they had an idea that he was Mick Collins and, having heard of Collins's cowslick, this untameable type of Charlie's must have fascinated them.

I heard no more of him for 10 days and then an oldish man called to see me at Whelan's Hotel, said he was a released prisoner from the North Dublin Union Barracks and had instructions from Charlie that I was to proceed immediately to Dungannon, call to the Christian Brothers, get them to wire Dublin Castle that their assistant teacher, Con Moynihan, was urgently required by them to take up his duties, that they were certain he was innocent of seditious tendencies, etc.; also that I was to get possession of a bicycle in the hall of some shop - the bicycle was that of the sergeant of the R.I.C. who was killed in an ambush some time previously; also that, in a room upstairs

in same shop there was a trunk of Con Moynihan's in which there was a .45 pistol.

I carried out my orders and landed the luggage from the north into Whelan's Hotel. The wire from the Brothers performed its mission; Charlie was tried on a Friday, under his alias, post haste and released!

On Saturday morning Charlie arrived gleefully at Whelan's and was about to start for the north road on his famous bicycle. Just as he was about to leave, an I.R.A. courier came tearing up Eccles St. on a motor bicycle with a dispatch that General Mulcahy's office in Dawson St. was raided early on Saturday morning and that Charlie's name was found on a list under the alias of Con Moynihan now in North Dublin Union Barracks. On hearing the news Charlie rushed towards me, put his arms around me in a close hug and said smilingly: 'Muiris, that wire of yours save my life this time' and then he pushed me off my feet with urgent orders that I was to watch Kingsbridge Station every night till Con Moynihan returned from his Xmas holidays in Kerry and that Con was to return home to Kerry immediately. Imagine Con's cavalier unconcern on hearing that he was to relinquish his job and return home to Kerry! Them were the days! Con threw back his head in a comical grouse, smirked his nose and said: 'I am often thinking of joining the Kerry Flying Column' and he did".

Charlie Daly returned to his duties as soon as he was released in Dublin. About the end of January 1921, Eoin O'Duffy came to Co. Tyrone on a mission of some sort which took him to various districts in Co. Tyrone and Co. Derry. I personally looked after his comforts in my battalion area. I was also in a position to get O'Duffy accommodation with a Father McNamee who was a relation of mine at Feeney in Co. Derry where Fr. McNamee was a Catholic Curate.

About March 1921, an important meeting of I.R.A. officers took place in my battalion area at the house of a man named Micky Gormley, Eskerboy, Trooney. As far as I can remember, the following officers attended:- Eoin O'Duffy, Joe McKelvey, Dan Hogan, Charles Daly. There may have been others present at the meeting whom I didn't know then. I made all the arrangements for this meeting and took precautions to ensure the safety of the officers. The object of this meeting was then a matter of the utmost secrecy and I was not told any details about it. I believe, however, that the purpose of the meeting was a discussion on the formation of divisional areas in the north.

During the month of March 1921, a lot of meetings were held in Co. Tyrone at which Eoin O'Duffy attended. These meetings were the occasion of a lot of extra work for the local Volunteers. O'Duffy had to be escorted from place to place and guarded wherever he was staying. O'Duffy's order to each unit of the Volunteers was to carry out some operation each week it didn't matter how simple it was, cutting of wires, trenching roads, etc. Any opportunity of attacking special patrols should be availed of. He spent a lot of his time in Co. Derry about this time. He had to pass through our battalion area on his journey to and from Co. Derry. In our battalion area there were two very safe "digs" ready for him at any time, Hugh Grogan, Tromague, and Keenan's, Greencastle. On one occasion whilst O'Duffy was staying in our area Con Ward, later T.D. for Monaghan came to see him and they had an important conference which lasted for some time. O'Duffy told me afterwards that Ward's visit was caused by Ward's endeavour to get O'Duffy to allow Ward to stand as a T.D. for Monaghan. I heard from another source at the time that Ward's visit was due to his position as Divisional I.O. to the 5th Northern Division and concerned the execution of a woman spy named McKenna who was later executed. O'Duffy introduced the imposition of an I.R.A. levy in Co. Tyrone which was collected by the Volunteers all over the country. All volunteers,

officers and men on the run were paid £1 per week out of this money.

In April 1921, O'Duffy issued a general order that all armed enemy patrols were to be attacked on a certain night. In the village of Carrickmore a patrol was attacked near the barracks; two constables severely wounded. I was in charge of this operation; 8 or 9 took part in the attack; other members of the company were doing duty as outposts.

In Aldrummond Coy. the operation selected was a patrol of R.I.C. at Mountfield. This patrol did not leave barracks that night and the Vice Brigade O/C., Francis Curran who lived in the district, decided on attacking the barracks at Mountfield. The attack opened at about 12 midnight and I myself heard firing going on at 6 a.m. next morning. This barrack was a strong position, as the old barrack had been evacuated for the new barrack which was a strong defensive position. The barrack was not taken.

Another attack on the same night was on a patrol at Pomeroy. Two men from Carrickmore area went in to help Pomeroy Coy. to carry out the attack; on the way into Pomeroy the two Carrickmore men ran into the patrol; they opened fire on them. The R.I.C. ran down a lane and ran into the Pomeroy Coy. who were on their way to the place planned for the attack. The Pomeroy men immediately opened fire on the police from a bad position having to fire up a hill where the police had good cover. A friendly R.I.C. man named Staunton was on the patrol being attacked. This man created a panic amongst the police by raising the cry that the patrol was completely surrounded. The police then rushed across gardens to the barracks. No casualties on either side.

All those attacks in Co. Tyrone took place on 5th April

1921 and were confined to the following company areas:- Pomeroy, Carrickmore and Aldrummond. It was reported in the Press that the R.I.C. suffered 10 wounded in all the night's operations.

About mid-April 1921, Eoin O'Duffy was recalled to Dublin by G.H.Q. He did not return to Tyrone until after the Truce. He was appointed by G.H.Q. as Deputy Chief of Staff and remained in Dublin until the Truce.

About this time a series of raids and round-ups took place all over Co. Tyrone. No Volunteer of any importance was captured. During the months of May and June 1921, there was little military activities. A vigorous campaign was carried out in connection with the Belfast trade boycott.

On 10th July 1921, we held up a train on the line between Carrickmore and Pomeroy; it was the night mail between Belfast and Derry. We set fire to the train and burned wagons containing all classes of goods. Some of the carriages contained bicycles. Charlie Daly was i/c. of this operation. It was carried out by Pomeroy and Carrickmore companies. After burning the train, all the men engaged walked from Tromague to Dunamore and burned Doon's Creamery before the Truce on 11th July 1921. At this Creamery we met the following officers:- Lieut. General Dan McKenna; Comdt. Sean Haughey; Pat McKenna; Frank Curran and a lot of the local Dunamore Company men. At this place we found only one man in the Creamery. He was armed and put up a fight until he was overpowered. We captured a motor bike, a rifle and a revolver.

Immediately after the Truce in July 1921, a number of officers were selected for training at Glenasmole Camp, Co. Dublin, and went there for a few weeks' training. I remained at home and did not go to Glenasmole.

Battalion training camps were set up - one at Dunamore

and another at Aldrummond. A divisional training camp was set up at Cranagh. Officers from Dublin were in charge of training Capt. Sean Daly and Lieut. Sean O'Neill. Each officer of the battalion, brigade and divisional staffs did one week's training and, after a lapse of some weeks, when other staff and company officers were being trained, the battalion, brigade and divisional officers were recalled to the camp for another period of training. Those training camps lasted for at least two months during Sept. and Oct. 1921. In December 1921, General Mulcahy impressed on all the officers the necessity of recruiting new members into the I.R.A. I did not like this idea at the time, as I looked on the men who remained out of the Volunteers during the Tan war as wanting in national outlook and of little military use to us.

When Gen. Mulcahy was leaving us he went into Derry city where a meeting was held in the Guildhall, Derry city. I went with Mulcahy to Derry and waited there until the meeting was over. This meeting was for the divisional, brigade and battalion officers of the 1st Northern Division.

From the beginning of 1920 onwards we had republican courts in operation in Co. Tyrone and we settled a large number of cases which would otherwise have gone into the British Courts. In one instance in Galbally district a Unionist shopkeeper sued a nationalist customer of his, for a debt due. The case was tried before the Republican Courts and the plaintiff got a decree for the amount due which was promptly paid. The Republican police were organised and carried out all police work found necessary by the Courts. Occasionally it was necessary to effect arrests when ordered to do so by the Courts. In all, the Republican Courts were found to be most effective and fair to all litigants and their decisions were always accepted with the respect that fair honest dealings always inspire.

In our battalion area there were two Justices, Malachy McGuone, Fomeroy, and Michael Ward Mullislin. Patrick Marshall Carrickmore, was clerk of the Court.

From the start of Sinn Fein in 1907 or 1908 there was an organisation in existence in Co. Tyrone. We had a local branch in Carrickmore from the beginning. Branches were later organised in other Co. Tyrone districts after 1916, but there were branches in existence before 1916 in Dungannon, Coal-island, Clogher, Donoughmore, Strabane, Greencastle and Beragh. When the Sinn Fein organisation spread over the county generally in 1917-1918, the young men were active in Sinn Fein as well as in the Volunteers. Branches of Cumann na mBan were in existence generally everywhere a company of Volunteers existed and a great unity of effort existed between those three organisations.

In the early months of the year 1922 the Volunteers in Co. Tyrone had undergone a course of training in camps and in local company areas and were well organised. The position of the organisation and training of the Volunteers in early 1922 was the peak that was reached. We had not made much progress in the matter of providing arms during the Truce period. Thirty or forty rifles in serviceable condition was the approximate strength and, at the end of February 1922. Those rifles, about 300 shotguns and about 100 revolvers were our total armament.

On 16th March 1922 Charlie Daly was recalled to Dublin. This was the last we saw of him in our part of Co. Tyrone. I do not know what was the reason for his recall to Dublin. Before he left Tyrone we had plans made for a raid on Fomeroy R.I.C. Barracks. A Constable Staunton, a native of Co. Mayo, was serving in Fomeroy Barracks and he had promised to give the barracks away to us by opening the door at an arranged

time on the night of 18th March 1922. We had two of our officers in constant touch with Staunton for some days before the raid was to take place and everything was planned to the smallest detail. As Charlie Daly had to leave the area two days before this raid, he, when bidding us goodbye, wished us good luck in the success of our plans.

The general plan for the raid was that all the 25 men taking part were to approach the barracks at the appointed time in stockings, so that we should make no noise to alarm the police or a few Unionists who lived opposite the barracks. In preparation for the removal of the arms etc. in the barracks we had to commandeer a lorry and a private car, the property of Paddy McCullough, Greencastle. Those vehicles were taken to the vicinity of Pomeroy that evening.

At 1 a.m. on the morning of 19th March 1922, 25 of us approached the barracks whilst the local company guarded all the approaches leading into Pomeroy and cut wire communications. We arrived at the barracks and knocked on the door. Constable Staunton opened the door; all the rest of the garrison were in bed, most of them sleeping so soundly that we had trouble awaking some of them. We had each a length of rope and when we got into the barracks we proceeded to tie up each man of the garrison including Staunton. None of them showed any resistance and the whole operation of getting control in the barracks took up only a few minutes. The garrison, as far as I can remember, numbered approximately eight men. We got going immediately, carrying out all the arms, ammunition and bombs and loading them onto the lorry and car. In all, we got about 18 service rifles, about 20 service revolvers and a large number of bombs. We took everything in the barracks of military use, straps, belts, etc. The whole operation was completed in three quarters of an hour from the time we entered the barracks. We handed over some of the stuff to Pomeroy Company and some to

Carrickmore Company; the remainder of the stuff was dumped at Greencastle. The handing over and the dumping of the arms, etc was all planned as part of the main operation and went off like clockwork. None of this material was ever captured although it was raided for all over the place.

When we were leaving the vicinity of Fomeroy after the raid, all roads were blocked to prevent us being followed and no trouble in getting away ensued.

As far as I can now recall, the following officers and men took part:- Major Morris, Frank Stronge, Patrick McKenna, James McElduff, Frank Lynn, John Milvy, Tom Lucas, Patrick McAleer, Charlie Gillan, Frank Ward, Patrick Slane, ... Hagan, Frank Donnelly and Sean Corr, etc.

This raid was followed by the most intensive raids by the British military, police and Specials. The chapel was surrounded at Mass time and all the congregation searched and interrogated. After this raid on the barracks, a platoon of Specials was established in a large house, the property of Colonel Lowery and those men carried out a reign of terrorism in the surrounding district. One night a small car came from Col. Lowery's to Daly's of Dryarch. One of the Dalys was a partner of mine in a butchering business and our books and papers were in this house. The Specials sprinkled the house with petrol and set fire to it, burning all the contents. Luckily none of the men were in the house; the women were removed before the fire was started.

About this time an ambush took place at Dunamore. 7 or 8 Volunteers took part in an attack on a party of Specials who were raiding in the district. One of the Specials was killed; no Volunteers were wounded. The Specials had to retreat from the engagement. Two nights later a small car drove up to the pub owned by John McCracken, an old man 78 years of age. The

men in the car knocked at the door after dark and when old McCracken came to the door, the men at the door shot him dead. This shooting took place about two days after the Dunamore ambush. Some days after this shooting, a party of Specials, under the command of Col. McClintock, raided Carrickmore district. At Loughmacrory, near Carrickmore, a number of Volunteers were billeted in a disused house. They saw Colonel McClintock's party coming in lorries and six of the Volunteers got into position and opened fire on the Specials. The Volunteers had to retreat and a running fire took place across the Copney mountains in the direction of Greencastle. The Specials' lorries moved around two roads that circled the mountain with the intention of cutting off the Volunteers when Specials on foot had forced them into a trap on the opposite side of the mountain. During this retreat one of the Volunteers named Hagan was wounded. His comrades carried him for a good distance and he was eventually left in a farmhouse, dressed in old clothes, and they were able to make their own escape. Hagan was caught, savagely tortured and, under torture, he gave the names of the other men in the ambush. A week later two of the ambush party were arrested - P. McAleer and Charlie Gillan - officers of the Aldrummond Company. Hagan swore against them in their trial for the raid on Fomeroy Barracks and they got five years' penal servitude each. This man afterwards joined the Special Constabulary and some time later disappeared out of the country.

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 On the night of the signing of the Collins-Craig Pact in London, ^{IT WAS} ~~Dunamore~~ decided to knock the bridge at Dunamore so that raiding parties could not use it for motor transport. Patrick McKenna was in charge of this operation helped by other members of the Dunamore Company. Lieut. Frank Ward of Aldrummond Company, and a battalion officer, was second in command of the operation and was going guard on the road some distance from the bridge. He didn't go far down the road

when a police officer stepped out on the road and called on him to halt. Frank opened fire on the officer and shot him through the right lung. The Specials, who were in ambush behind the fence, opened fire on Frank. He received two bullet wounds in the stomach. He was able to get back to the men who were working at the bridge and get them away. He walked two miles afterwards. He was taken to a house and a priest and doctor sent for. The next morning a round-up of the area started and Frank Ward was captured. He was removed to a Belfast hospital where he died a few days later. It was later found out that this alerting of the Specials was the work of a spy named Quinn who was a Volunteer and lived in the district and who knew of the plans to knock the bridge. A volunteer officer found a letter of Quinn's which disclosed the fact that he was giving the enemy information. We arrested Quinn and, as we had no local facilities for keeping him, we sent him to Draperstown district to await courtmartial. He escaped from Draperstown and went to live in the police barracks in Cookstown.

About the first week in April 1922, attacks were taking place in Dungannon, Coalisland, Dromore and other parts of Co. Tyrone. As a result of these activities, Volunteers came into our district as a safe resting place from the areas where attacks took place. As our funds were running short, we had no money to meet our liabilities. A brigade meeting was held and it was decided to send a courier to Charlie Daly, who was then in Donegal, for money. The split in the I.R.A. was at this time coming to a head and our courier came back to inform us that he could not get any money from Daly. A meeting was called to consider the courier's report that no cash was available. Wm. J. Kelly presided at this meeting. Those present included Sean McDermott, John Ogle, Paddy McKenna, Sean Corr, Archie McDonnell and several other officers from the brigade. The majority at the meeting decided to recognise

the provisional government. Against the proposal were Wm.J. Kelly, Archie McDonnell, John Ogle. This difference of opinion was not the cause of any bad feeling between officers and it did not produce any ill-feelings afterwards. We divided fairly all the staff rifles, arms and equipment. A courier was sent to Draperstown to explain the situation to Major Morris and Daniel McKenna. This courier brought us back a sum of money to cover our pay as officers and we used this money to cover the expenses of keeping men on the run with us from outside areas.

Later on, as so many could not live at home or could not be safely put up in quiet districts on the run, a camp was started in Co. Donegal where all those men could go and undergo a course of training for operations later on in the Six Counties area. During this period also arms and ammunition were being sent into Northern Ireland. Willie John Kelly, Archie McDonnell Tom Kelly and a lot of men from Dungannon area went into Co. Donegal and joined up with Charlie Daly on the anti-treaty side.

In May 1922, a general rising in the Six Counties was planned for. I am somewhat vague about the sequence of events here but I know that we had orders to cut all communications and take up the railway line. We did this, and soon afterwards there was a big round up of all Volunteers and republicans all over the Six Counties area. A very large number of people was arrested in many places. Five or six were arrested in Pomeroy area. We were all on the run and had been so for months at this time. In Carrickmore we were able to move about without much danger, but we could not sleep at home. I kept moving about through the battalion area keeping things going up to July 1922.

On 12th July 1922 Hugh O'Rourke and I procured a horse and cart and started for Cranagh near Plumbridge to take a load of ammunition to Greencastle. At Cranagh there was a large dump of arms stored which had been sent in from Donegal some time previously for use in Northern Ireland. When we arrived at

Cranagh we were met by a man named Tracy who was captain of the local company. We got 25 rifles, 35 revolvers, 1 Thompson machine gun and a lot of ammunition loaded on the cart and returned to Greencastle where we dumped the stuff. We had only dumped the stuff in Greencastle when a severe raid of the district took place. The following week Hugh O'Rourke and another active Volunteer, named McCreesh, were captured in a round-up. The only officers left in the area now were James McElduff, Pat McKenna and myself. On the first Sunday in August I was arrested whilst attending Mass at Creggan Chapel. I was taken to Pomeroy - Col. Lowery's house - and got a good hammering. Two days later I was transferred to Cookstown. In Cookstown I met O'Rourke and many others of my comrades who had been arrested earlier. They did not know me when I was put amongst them - I was so badly beaten up.

After a week in Cookstown I was taken out of the Workhouse where we were imprisoned for an interrogation by the County Inspector, who asked me what had happened to me. I told him that the Pomeroy Specials had beaten me and stolen £9 from me; also other religious objects. He asked did I know Gearoid O'Sullivan; I said I did; ^{not;} the Co. Inspector then told me that O'Sullivan was in the pay of the Russian Government. Two days later I received my £9 and I was well treated in the Cookstown Workhouse. There were about fifteen of us prisoners there. Whilst in Cookstown one day, O'Hagan - the spy - turned up in Specials' uniform and came to me saying: "I will not give you away, Sean". O'Rourke and McCreesh were charged for the raid on Pomeroy Barracks; O'Hagan proved the case against them. Each got five years' penal servitude. I was not charged. After O'Rourke and McCreesh were taken to Belfast for trial, we were taken to Derry prison; after a month in Derry we were again transferred, this time to the Argenta, a prison boat in Belfast Lough. I was released from Larne Workhouse on 18th December 1924.

Before finishing these memoirs I would like to pay a tribute to the people who kept us while we were on the run:

Mrs. Hackett, Glenbeg, Galbally;
 Barney McCartan (Daly), Altenagh.
 Hugh and Bridget Grogan, Tromague.
 Conlon's & Daly's, Aughnaderia, Carrickmore
 Christy Meenagh, Creggan, Avasky
 Slane's and McElduff's of Granagh, Carrickmore.
 Keenan's and McCullough's of Greencastle.
 McCracken of Dunamore.
 Denis Grogan, Altanagh, Carrickmore.

All those people gave to us of their best; they neither expected nor got any recompense for the attention and kindness given to me and many others. Our presence amongst them entailed a financial strain which many of them never overcame. Many of them are now dead; at least one was shot dead as a result of his help to us - John McCracken.

Signed: Séan Carr

Date: 9th Dec. 1950.

Witness: John Mc Coy

9.12.50.

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