

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BUNO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 693

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 693

Witness

Patrick Maguire,
90 Talbot Street,
Dublin.

Identity.

Quartermaster 2nd Brigade, 2nd Northern
Division 1919-1923.

Subject.

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Division, 1919-1923.

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C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
1. Start of the Volunteers, 1919.	1
2. Brigade and Battalion organisation.	1
3. Raids for poteen and dealing with poteen makers.	2
4. Raids on mails.	2
5. Arrival of Charlie Daly from G.H.Q.	3
6. Road breaking, Belfast boycott work.	3
7. General raid for arms.	3
8. Cutting of Shanaragh Bridge.	4
9. Wounded, sent to Mater Hospital, Dublin.	5
10. Collecting I.R.A. levy.	5
11. Raiding shops for Belfast goods. Burning Bread carts. Shooting.	6
12. Planned Rising in Co. Tyrone.	6
13. Orangemen carry out reprisals in Dromore.	7
14. Counter reprisals by I.R.A.	8
15. Ambush of B. Specials at Ardfield.	8
16. Reprisals by B.men for the shooting of other B.men. Burnings.	9
17. Arms available pre Truce.	9
18. Training in arms.	10
19. Truce period.	10
20. Hold up and arrest of Monaghan officers in Dromore.	11
21. My house raided. I and brother arrested.	11
22. Derry prison and the question of release of Northern prisoners.	12
23. I.R.A. reprisals for the Northern Governments refusal to release Northern prisoners.	13
24. Counter reprisals by B.men	14
25. Shootings and burnings.	14
26. I.R.A. evacuate Dromore area. Donegal activity including Pettigo fight.	14
27. Northern I.R.A. go to Curragh, Co. Kildare.	15
28. Attempts by Northern police to drive me out of Northern Ireland.	16
29. I leave Co. Tyrone.	16.

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Statement by Paddy Maguire.

90 Talbot Street, Dublin.

I first joined the Volunteers about January 1919. This was immediately after the General Election held on the 14th December, 1918. The first man who got active in organising the Volunteers in my area was Rory McGinn. This man was, I think, a native of Dublin. He had friends around Fintona area Co. Tyrone and was sent by Headquarters to organise the 2nd Brigade and McGinn started his organisation in my Company Area - A Company - and travelled into each parish or Company Area and when it was possible he started Companies after he made a tour of the whole Brigade area. He returned to Dublin and he was arrested there. The next man who came to us was Charles Daly who took up where McGinn had left off and formed the Companies already in existence into Battalions and Brigade areas, and had Officers appointed in both Brigade and Battalion areas

The Second Brigade Staff appointed by Daly were as follows:

O.C. Ned Gallagher, Tummery, Dromore,
Co. Tyrone.

Vice O.C. Mick Gallagher

Adjutant Tom Maguire (my brother)

Q.Master Patrick Maguire (self)

1st Battalion Staff:

O.C. Paddy Donnelly, Omagh

Vice O.C. Mick McGuire

Adjutant Tommie Donnelly, The Restaurant, Omagh.

Q.Master Francis Donnelly, Now in Canada

2nd Battalion

O.C. James Gallagher
 Vice O.C. Mick McNulty
 Adjutant Thomas McGuire (Brother)
 Q.Master Patrick McGuire (Self)

3rd Battalion

Sir Patrick J. Maguire - about further details.
 O.C. James Goodman - Dead.
 Adjutant Patrick J. McGuire, 50, Newmarket,
 Dublin
 Q.Master Hugh Dawson, Tattyreagh, Fintona.

One of the first activities carried out by the Volunteers under McGinn's orders was a raid for poteen in 1919. We had information about the manufacture of poteen by a man who lived in a mountain district. This man made the poteen for sale to the Orange Hall people and for local dances. We raided his place and captured the worm and still-head, a quantity of manufactured spirit, and wash, and grain, sugar, and etc.; used in the course of manufacture. We confiscated all the stuff and we took the man, James Gorman, prisoner. We tried him before a Sinn Fein Court and he was fined £30. 0. 0. which he promptly paid within a week of his conviction. Our next activity was a raid on the mails at Dromore Station. This raid was carried out under the orders of McGinn also, about December, 1919. We were waiting at Dromore Station for the arrival of the mail train which arrived about 4 a.m. and when the postman who met the train there got the local letters we held him up, seized all the letters, took them to a local vacant house and censored them, keeping all the R.I.C. letters. All the letters, except the R.I.C. letters, were put back into the postman's bag and left at night at the doorway of the police barracks where they were

got the next morning by the R.I.C.

The next item of importance was the arrival of Charles Daly to replace McGinn who as I have stated above was arrested in Dublin. Daly arrived in our area early in 1920. The first activity ordered by Daly was the cutting of the County Bridge between Tyrone and Fermanagh(Lack Bridge). About 12 men mobilised from "A" Company, 2nd Battalion. We commenced breaking down the bridge about 1 a.m. armed with an assortment of tools for the job, crowbars, pickaxes, shovels etc. We had been working at the job for about 1½ hours when police came near the scene of our operations. The police were attracted to the bridge by the sound of the stones falling into the river. They opened fire on us from a distance and we had to abandon the attempt of destroying the Bridge with the work only partly done.

The next activity of note was in connection with the Belfast Boycott. We got a number of Boycott Black Lists which contained the names of persons and firms who were found guilty of disobeying the Boycott Regulations. We posted those lists at all Chapels and all Churches and in Towns and Villages in our area. Some of the Volunteers doing this work carried it out in an open and reckless manner and were seen by persons who reported their activities to the R.I.C. The R.I.C. raided a few volunteers' houses and arrested Terry Slavin and Mick Mimmugagh and charged them with putting up Boycott Posters. Both got two months imprisonment which they served in Derry Prison.

General Raid for Arms 7th September, 1920

This raid was carried out in a widespread area embracing all our Brigade in the various Battalions and Companies. Three or four Companies

4.

were mobilised for this raid at the one place and a list of four or five houses to be raided was given to each I.R.A. man in charge of seven to ten men. In my case we raided six houses, all the property of Unionists. The Nationalists had already given up their arms voluntarily. One man named John Knocks, Shanaragh, Dromore, recognised three of the raiders. Those men were arrested by the R.I.C. the next day, charged and tried by British Courtmartial. Their names were Thomas Martial, Mullanbog, Dromore, Felix Nolan, Mullanbog, Dromore, Mickey Laughran, Church Street, Dromore. Each got sentenced to two years imprisonment which they served in Perth Jail and were released after the signing of the Treaty at the end of 1921.

Cutting of Shanaragh Bridge

About November 1920, Charles Daly ordered us to cut the above bridge which was on the leading road from Dromore to Onagh and was used very much by the British Military and Special Constabulary. Our orders in this case were to use explosives on the Bridge. As the bridge was so substantial and well built no other means would be effective. We went to the bridge on the night arranged - 7 men brought in the explosives and about nine men armed to give protection. Charles Daly, Mick Gallagher and myself were amongst those armed to do protection duty. The holes for the explosives were made on the Bridge and the explosives placed into position. Several attempts to explode the charges failed or partly failed owing to dampness or defects in the explosives which had not been properly stored, as it was dumped outside and not in a house. In several of the charges the damage done was negligible owing to partial failure of the detonation. We had to

make repeated attempts before we got effective results. We eventually got the bridge down. The series of explosions, which was necessary before the operation was completed, aroused the countryside and John Knocks who lived convenient and was responsible for the sentence of the three men who raided his house for arms, got up and went around to a number of B/Specials and mobilised them. Those B/men waited for us at Shanragh, lying in ambush for us at a crossroads. The B/Men opened fire on us when they heard our footsteps coming on the road. They wounded two of our men - Joe McCourt and myself. In our reply to the B/Men's fire one of them got wounded - Bob Gourley, Galbally Lough. McCourt's wounding was slight. He got hit on the hand by a rifle bullet. I got a charge of buckshot in the stomach. I had to be carried home, and was taken to Dr. Caragher, Tempo, Co. Fermanagh, who treated me and had me sent to the Mater Hospital, Dublin. I was discharged from the Mater in January, 1921.

When I returned home from Hospital I resumed my I.R.A. activities at once. At this time a levy was imposed on all non-Volunteers in our area. This Order to collect the levy came direct from Owen O'Duffy. I took charge of the collection of the levy in our Battalion area. The Volunteers went around from house to house and made the collection. In all I received £229. 10. 0. Some of this money was sent to G.H.Q. Dublin and some was paid out to the dependents of the three men doing sentence for the raiding for arms. Some of the cash was used for the purchase of arms. We purchased two Webley Revolvers and an Automatic pistol for about £15. 0. 0. of it. About this time we had great activities in connection

with the imposition of the Belfast Boycott. We visited public houses and shops in both Dromore, Trillick and Drumquinn and in isolated country pubs and shops. In the pubs we examined the place for whiskey supplied by Hollywood and Donnelly, Belfast and in the shops for tobacco and cigarettes supplied by Gallaghers - Tobacco and Cigarette Manufacturers. In all cases where we found pubs or shops selling goods of Belfast origin we had their names published on a Boycott Black List. In all cases where traders wished to have their names taken off the Black List they had to pay a fine and promise to stop dealing in Belfast goods.

In March 1921 we found an Inglis Bread Cart selling and distributing bread in our Company Area. We held up the driver and burned the bread cart. In this instance we warned the driver not to attempt to sell bread in our area again. Inglis carts continued to do so. So on a second occasion we intercepted an Inglis Bread Cart. When we were about to burn the bread cart a Specials car which had been on protection duty on the bread cart approached within about 50 yards from us, and a pitched battle opened. There were seven of us - I.R.A. men - in our party. All were armed with Webley and Smith and Weston Revolvers. The Specials numbered five and were armed with Revolvers. After considerable firing on both sides we retreated suffering no casualties. We heard later that one of the attacking Specials was wounded and was sent to Omagh Hospital.

Planned Rising for Co. Tyrone ordered by General Owen O'Duffy

On the 5th April, 1921 as a result of orders issued by General Owen O'Duffy a simultaneous series

of attacks were made in Co. Tyrone in about ten villages. Those attacks should have been general but in many places nothing happened. At Dromore Mick Gallagher and four others attacked a B/mens Patrol going into Dromore R.I.C. Battacks after being on duty on the roads. This attack took place at 2 a.m. I can't tell exactly how many were in the Patrol as the night was dark. We threw a hand grenade into the party and then opened fire with revolvers. Two of the Specials were seriously wounded and the Barrack window was damaged. The Specials wounded were Francis Boyde and Thomas Hill; both those men were seriously wounded and are still crippled as a result. The following took part on the I.R.A. side - Mick Gallagher in charge, John Gallagher, Hugh McGolderick and myself.

On the 6th April 1921 the Orange Men in all their lodges in Co. Tyrone mobilised and concentrated in large numbers on the town of Dromore as a reprisal for the general rising of the previous night. The town was completely cut off from the surrounding districts and no person was allowed by the Orangemen to leave their houses. The invaders indulged in terrorising tactics, shooting up the town the whole night. They broke into three houses and took out three men - John Devine, Dan Dogherty, Charles Slavin. Those three men were taken a half mile outside the town and murdered.

It was most significant that Dromore was selected for this reprisal by the Orange Order. Older people then alive remembered that in the year 1884 a Land League Meeting was advertised for the town of Dromore and that some Orangemen were killed on that day and that they had to wait for nearly forty years for an

opportunity to get their own back.

On the 14th May 1921 Mick Gallagher carried out counter reprisals for the Dromore reprisal on B/Specials and Black and Tans mixed. Those men were guarding a Head Constable of the B/Specials who was responsible for the Dromore Murders. This Head Constable's name was Mat Henderson. A Patrol of nine police usually conveyed this man from the town of Dromore to his residence about a quarter mile from the town. Seven Volunteers on the night of the 14th May, 1921, attacked the Patrol of nine police, with the result that four of the police were wounded and Ed. McCusker, Corladergan, Dromore - one of the attacking party - was shot dead at my side. During the course of the shooting a lorry load of tans came on the scene shooting wildly from the time they left Dromore. When they arrived on the scene of the ambush we had to retreat and we had no means nor the opportunity to remove the remains of Ed. McCusker. The police found him in a field near where he fell and took him into the Barrack Yard. They were looking for identification and the parents of McCusker would not risk the consequences of identifying their son and the police later buried him as an unknown person. This young man was only 19 years of age when he was killed and as he lived in a country district the police had no knowledge of him.

The next activity before the truce was at Five Mile Town, Co. Tyrone, on Saturday 11th June, 1921. At a townland named Ardfad a patrol of B/Specials were ambushed at 6 p.m. About nine I.R.A. men which included some men sent to us from Co. Monaghan by Owen O'Duffy lay in ambush along the

roadside. An Officer named Jim Kelly was in charge of our party. A patrol of B/men came along to a cross roads to hold up and search passersby as was their usual custom. They stood at the crossroads smoking and talking when we opened fire on them. Three of this party fell - shot dead - Bond, Gibson and Hall were their names. That night as a reprisal for this shooting the B/Men burned six Catholic Houses including the Local Schoolmaster's named Monaghan and arrested a man named Lowery who had nothing whatever to do with the ambush. Lowery was tried by Courtmartial with being on the road near the scene of the ambush and with aiding and abetting those who carried it out. Lowery was in prison in Derby until after the signing of the Treaty.

This was the last operation before the 11th July, 1921, date of the Truce.

Arms Available to the Volunteers pre-Truce.

When the Volunteers were first organised we had practically no arms. We were handed a few shot guns by friendly Nationalists. Those shotguns were used by the Volunteers for drill purposes, and proved most useful. We sent a Volunteer named John McCusker to Glasgow to purchase small arms. From collections we furnished McCusker with money to purchase some of those arms. McCusker had a good job in Glasgow and used a lot of the cash he earned at his work for the purchase of arms for us. McCusker sent the guns he purchased made up in parcels of clothes which he addressed to me. I cant speak too highly of the usefulness of McCusker's work to the Volunteers in my area.

In the general raid for arms we captured about

six of Carson's Mauser rifles, a Martin Henry Single Shot Rifle, one Bull Dog Revolver and about eleven shotguns together with several boxes of sporting ammunition.

Training in Arms.

We were fortunate in having an ex-Lieutenant of the British Army, Jack O'Brien, Letteree, Dromore, a member of the Volunteers. This man was invaluable for training purposes. He took classes on farmers lofts and gave the Volunteers a grounding on Drill Musketry training, Tactics etc. O'Brien was helped by another man Hugh McGoldrick who was Naval Marine. McGoldrick was very useful for training purposes and was also a good soldier in many of our operations.

Truce Period.

When the Truce came all of us on the run came home. After the Truce about late August or early September I attended a training camp at Glenelley, Sperrin Mountains for two weeks on the first visit and again for a further two weeks. All during the Truce period we drilled the various Companies openly. We also put the screw on as far as the Belfast Boycott work was concerned. The B/Men during the Truce became very quiet. One of the terms of the Truce was that there should be no provocation displayed by either parties. The B/Men obeyed this to the letter. The I.R.A. were guilty of provocative conduct as they marched back and forward through Orange districts carrying arms. Most of the Arms carried were captured in Unionists houses during the general raid for arms.

We put pickets on the shops selling Belfast goods during the Truce period and this picketing prevented people from trading in those shops. There

was no effort made by either the British Authorities or the B/Men to interfere with the Volunteer activities of the Truce period up to 11th December, 1921.

When the Treaty was signed in London by the Irish Delegates the Northern Government took immediate steps to function as a Government in the Six Counties. One of the first local activities was the raiding of my home by a platoon of A/Specials from Dromore. The next activity was the holding up of the Monaghan Footballers on their journey to Derry to play a football match with Derry. This hold-up took place in the town of Dromore. I.R.A. men in this Monaghan party who carried arms were arrested. The arrested men on this occasion included Dan Hogan, O.C. 5th Northern Division, Eamon Carroll, Pat Winters, Tommie Donnelly, John McGrory and some others - all Divisional and Brigade Officers.

On the 28th January 1922 my home was raided a second time within a few weeks. During this raid the Specials found an old pre-Truce dump in an outhouse which contained a rifle, a bomb and a shotgun and documents, and they arrested my brother Tom and myself. We were tried by the Civil Courts. Tom was sentenced to five years and myself to one year. I served that time in Derry prison. When I was released I attended a dance which was raided by Specials and I was again arrested and I was told by a Head Constable of the Specials on my release a short time later that I would have to leave the Six County Area within 24 hours.

When I was released from prison I was in bad health and I was attending a Protestant doctor named Hamilton. When Dr. Hamilton heard that I was ordered from the Six Counties he immediately got in touch with

the police authorities and this order was cancelled as he held that implementing this order would be most injurious to my health.

During the time I was imprisoned in Derry General Owen O'Duffy's men made a raid or a series of raids into Northern Ireland and captured a number of Northern Loyalists. Officers and men from General Sean MacEoin's area also took part in those operations. All Loyalists captured were taken into the 26 County Area and were held as hostages for to await as prisoners the release and the safe return of the Monaghan prisoners captured at Dromore going to the Football Match in Derry. After the capture of the Northern Loyalists negotiations were carried on between Owen O'Duffy and the British Government on the one hand and the Northern Government on the other. Naturally we prisoners in Derry were taking a keen interest in all that the newspapers reported about those negotiations and when the news of the agreement to release the Derry prisoners was published we felt that all prisoners in Derry Prison would be covered by the promise to release.

It turned out, however, that only O'Duffy's (Monaghan) men were released. General MacEoin's men including Sean McCourtain, Charlie Reynolds, Joe Reynolds and Willie Reilly were retained and had to serve the sentences imposed on them. None of the Six County Prisoners who had been arrested and were in prison when those release negotiations were going on were covered in the release agreed on.

As far as I can remember about April 1922 when the Craig-Collins Pact was agreed to amongst the provisions agreed to was the release of Northern Republican prisoners and the recruiting of 50%

Catholics in the Northern Police Force, on Craig's part, in exchange for the calling off of the Belfast Boycott and the cessation of armed activities by men from Southern Ireland and on Collins part. The Belfast Boycott was called off but none of the agreements made by the Craig Government were carried out. In Derry prison there were high hopes amongst us prisoners that a general release of all prisoners in Northern Government custody would be carried out. We expected that at least MacEoin's men were certain of release.

As a reprisal for the refusal of the Northern Government to release us Northern prisoners, Charlie Daly, O.C. 2nd Northern Division and the O.C. of our 2nd Brigade, Michael Gallagher, decided on a wholesale burning of the residences of leading Loyalists. Those reprisals were carried out and were in turn followed by counter-reprisals by the B/Men who commenced a widespread campaign of shootings of in many cases inoffensive Nationalists. In a short time a campaign of wholesale arrests by the Northern Government Forces all over the Six County Area were carried out. Northern prisons were filled and a prison ship named "The Agenta" was used as a place of internment for a large number of Republicans arrested, against whom no charges could be brought in a law court.

I can give a list of the Houses of Loyalists which were burned in my (No. 2.) Brigade Area after my arrest as a reprisal for the refusal of the Northern Government to release us prisoners.

Anthony Russell, Corboley, Dromore, Tyrone.
Residence burned.

Archie Elliott, Moneygone, Dromore.
Residence burned.

William Stewart, Knockhorn, Dromore,
Residence burned.

Samuel Clarke, Tedd, Irvinestown, Co. Fermanagh.
Residence burned.

All burned on the same date.

Reprisals carried out by B/Men who were seen travelling on a Police Tender to the scene of the reprisals.

Ned McLoughlin, Glenging, Dromore, Tyrone taken from his home and shot dead.

On the following night the I.R.A. shot a B/Man named Sam Laird, Glenging Lodge, Trillick, Co. Tyrone.

The following night again a Catholic named James Kelly, a Shoemaker, by trade, was taken from his home at 5 a.m. and shot dead by B/Men.

On the next night a man named Sam Chiddick from near Trillick was taken from his home and shot by I.R.A. men.

The night following a man named Cassidy, a Cattle Dealer, was followed out the road by B/Men and shot dead.

This was the end of the shootings and burnings in my area.

The I.R.A. men who carried out those activities in my area had to leave the district owing to fierce police activities, raiding and searching day and night. They went into Donegal and were put in charge of the Barracks at Pettigo. Those men attacked a post held by B/Specials near Pettigo in Co. Fermanagh. The Specials had a Camp at this position, Glennelly, which was attacked in daylight and the Specials were forced to retreat in the direction of Kesh, Co. Fermanagh. At a point some distance from Glennelly the Specials made a stand at a crossroads and a sharp engagement ensued in which two Specials were killed. They retreated past Kesh and were followed up by the I.R.A. to within a short distance of Kesh which is a

Unionist stronghold. The I.R.A. took up defensive positions near Kesh and they remained there until detachments of the British Army arrived from Derry, Omagh and Belfast. The I.R.A. forced then retreated back to Pettigo and the British Forces followed them and commenced shelling the town of Pettigo. In the shelling the following I.R.A. were killed in Floods Hotel by shell fire - McCarney, Flood, McKenny,

After the Pettigo incidents many of the Northern I.R.A. including the 2nd Northern Division left Donegal for a Camp at the Curragh, Co. Kildare, and remained there training in the use of arms. Those men were under the command of Tom Morris who was appointed pro-Treaty Divisional O.C. to replace Charlie Daly who was then fighting on the anti-Treaty side in the Civil War in Donegal. Those Northern I.R.A. had no interest in the Civil War, as their concern was the protection of their kith and kin in the Six Counties and the eventual Unity of the country which was then carried up. Pressure was put on the 2nd Northern I.R.A. in the Camp in Co. Kildare to join the National Army - pro-Treaty Forces - by Tom Morris. This effort failed generally as only a very small number joined the Army. The remainder were forced to leave the Curragh. Some to emigrate to Great Britain or U.S.A. A small number - five or six - were arrested by the Free State Government and interned in prison camps. None of those men returned to their homes in Northern Ireland for years. Some are there now working at home in the North on their little farms or in some cases as farm labourers or road workers.

All the information contained in this narrative up to the time of my arrest, 28th January,

1922, is from my personal knowledge and from personal experiences which I had. The events and incidents I have recorded which happened after my arrest in 1922 are based on reliable first hand accounts given to me by many of my former comrades both in prison in 1922 and after release from prison in January 1923. and are as far as I could check up on and judge, accurate.

From 1923 onwards I was forced to live down an attempt by the Northern Police Authorities to drive me out of my home district. Our house was repeatedly raided by police and B/Men. Some of the raids were supposed to be for concealed arms. Some other raids were for the capture of potteen. The main purpose was to drive me and my family out. On the night, for instance, that my dead mother was being waked a raid was carried out on my home. This state of affairs continued up to 1939 when I got information from a local Unionist that I was on a list for arrest and internment due to the I.R.A. campaign then being carried out in England. This man told me that he was asked by the police to keep an eye on me as they intended to arrest me but that they were delaying in order to give me enough rope as the saying goes to hang myself. An Orange Hall was blown up at a place named Aughnacloy a long distance from my home. The police called on me after this and questioned me as to where I was on the night the Hall was destroyed. On the way home they called on the friendly Unionist I have mentioned above and asked him to assist them in watching my movements.

I then decided to leave Northern Ireland and I came to Dublin where I now live. I procured Government employment in a small way as a messenger

in Dublin Castle and my only visits to my former home
is confined to a short holiday each year.

Signed Patrick Maguire
(Patrick Maguire)

Date 23/6/52.
23.6.52.

Witness John McCoy
(John McCoy)

Date 23rd June '52
23rd June 1952.

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