

W.S. 1,063

ORIGINAL

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,063

Witness

Jerome Buckley,
Glynn,
Mourneabbey,
Co. Cork.

Identity.

O/C. Analeentha Company, Mallow Batt'n.,
I.R.A.

Subject.

Analeentha Company, Irish Volunteers,
Mallow Batt'n., Co. Cork, 1914-'21.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S. 2365

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILCATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 1063

063

STATEMENT BY JEROME BUCKLEY

Glynn, Mourneabbey, Co. Cork

I was born at Glynn, Mourneabbey, in February 1891.
My parents were farmers.

I joined the Irish Volunteers at their formation in Mourneabbey early in 1914. Some of the pioneer members of the Volunteers in the district were:- Jack McCarthy, Tadhg Mullane, Jerome Buckley (witness), Paddy Buckley (his brother), Pad Donoghue, Phil O'Shea, Jack Looney, Batt Riordan, Maurice Curtin, Paddy McCarthy, Jack Buckley, Con Crean. These were all residing in the Analeentha area and there was also a strong body of volunteers - all members of the Mourneabbey Company - in the Burnfort end of the district. The strength of the company about this time would be in the neighbourhood of 60. The O/C. was Liam Jones.

The district was visited in the early stages by Tomás McCurtain and, a little later, by an officer from Dublin named Captain McCarthy.

The only drilling carried out in the early stages was ordinary foot drill and arms drill with wooden guns. Captain McCarthy was the instructing officer. When he left the district this aspect of the work was taken over by an ex-British soldier whose name I cannot remember.

When the split occurred in the Irish Volunteers due to Redmond's appeal for recruits for the British army, all members of the Mourneabbey Company remained members of the Irish Volunteers. The usual training and parades continued under Liam Jones, O/C. up to Easter Week 1916. The company was an independent unit of Cork Brigade.

On Easter Sunday, 1916, the whole company to the number of about 80, marched to Beeng Cross. The parade assembled

at Analeentha Church after 9.30 a.m. Mass. Practically all members of our unit carried shotguns with a good supply of ammunition for same. There was a big muster of men from the surrounding districts of Donoughmore and Courtbrack at Beeing where the parade was in charge of Micheál Lynch, Kinsale. During the day the members of the combined units took part in skirmishing exercises and about 4 p.m. Tomas McCurtain, Tom Kent and, I think, Terry McSwiney arrived.

Tomas McCurtain ^{REVIEWED} ~~received~~ the parade and delivered an address to the effect that the job we had been called out for was off for the time being and we would probably be called on again at some future date. The parade was then dismissed and, having had some refreshments, our company marched back to Mourneabbey. When news of the events in Dublin leaked through next evening, we all assembled again and were ordered by our O/C. (Liam Jones) to stand to and await further orders. All members of the company were on the alert for the remainder of Easter Week but no orders arrived. There were no arrests in the area following the events of Easter Week.

Some days after the surrender in Dublin a meeting of the members of the company was held at Greenhill. At this meeting a proposal was made that the arms held by the Volunteer should be surrendered to Fr. Sheedy, C.C. In support of this proposal, it was stated that the surrender of the guns would save the leaders. This proposal did not meet with general approval and the men from our area - Analeentha - left the meeting, having made it clear that they would not surrender their guns. After this incident our section did not have any contact with the others in the Burnfort area until the reorganisation in early 1917. In the meantime, our section held the usual drills and parades as before 1916. Our section at this time was being drilled by, I think, Paddy McCarthy.

On the reorganisation in early 1917 all members of the

unit prior to 1916 rejoined. The officers elected were:-

O/C. Liam Jones
1st Lt. Paddy McCarthy.

Drilling and parades were held in secret - usually at night - in the fields in the district. About this time, Sean Sullivan, Cork, who was acting as organiser, spent some time in the area while we were visited occasionally by Tomas McCurtain.

The first happening in the area, which appeared to stir up the national spirit, arose out of the decision of the members of the company to fly the tricolour from two of the highest points in the district on the occasion of the anniversary of Easter Week in 1917. One flag was flown from a high tree in Analeentha, while a second flag was flown from the top of Mourneabbey Castle. The flags were fixed in position on the night preceding the anniversary of the Rising and when the R.I.C. saw them next morning they immediately took steps to remove them.

Two members of the local R.I.C. (Sergeant Clarke and Constable Dempsey) made several attempts to remove the flag at Analeentha, but failed to reach it, so they procured a crosscut saw and set about saving down the tree. After several hours' hard work they succeeded but, in the meantime, a large crowd of Volunteers and members of the general public had collected to view the work. When the tree crashed the flag was seized by the Volunteers. The R.I.C. attempted to recapture the flag - several scuffles ensued - but they did not succeed. The flag on the Castle was removed, but it was replaced that night and the approach to it was so blocked that the second flag remained in position until blown to shreds by the winds.

Following the incidents at Analeentha a number of Volunteers were arrested. They were charged with unlawful assembly and obstructing the R.I.C. None of the men who actually took part in the rescue of the flag were charged,

but some of those, who were spectators, were brought to trial. The Volunteers charged on this occasion were, I think :-
 Tim Riordan, Mick Crean, Jeremiah Cronin, John Buckley and Sean McCarthy.

On the occasion of the trial the Volunteers held a parade in Mallow. The R.I.C. endeavoured to break up the parade by baton charges. Several Volunteers and R.I.C. men were injured. This was sometime about mid-summer 1917, and the strength of the Volunteers appeared to impress the public. It was noticed that, following these incidents there was an increase in the strength of the local company - the membership about this time reached about 80.

During the spring and summer of 1917 all Volunteers were assisting in the organisation of Sinn Féin. This organisation was, at this time, mainly composed of Volunteers and the members of their families. In addition, they were taking an active part in the work of the Gaelic League and Gaelic Athletic Association.

The usual drilling and other activities continued throughout the remainder of 1917 and into the spring of 1918. Conscription was then threatened by the British and there was a big increase in the strength of our company. The membership now reached the neighbourhood of 130. The company was now in the 6th Battalion of Cork Brigade (Blarney).

The company officers elected now were:-

O/C.	Liam Jones
1st Lt.	Mick O'Hanlon
2nd Lt.	

The battalion officers of the 6th (Blarney) Battalion were

O/C.	"Pa" Twomey, Kilmona
V.O/C.	T.J. Golden, Gurrans
Adjt.	Paddy McCarthy, Mourneabbey
Q.M.	Dick Mahoney, Berrings

When the conscription scare passed there was a reduction in the strength of the Mourneabbey Company, as many of the

new recruits dropped out. There was no activity of note in the area during the remainder of 1918. There was no political activity as there was no contest in the area - the Sinn Fein candidate being returned unopposed. However, about 40 members of the company went to Waterford city to carry out protection duty during the course of the General Election in December 1918

Cork II Brigade was formed on January 6th, 1919, and Mourneabbey Company now became a unit of Mallow Battalion of the new brigade. The other companies in this battalion were:- Mallow, Mourneabbey, Ahadillane, Lombardstown, Ballyclough, Two-pot-house.

The officers of the Mallow Battalion were:-

O/C.	Liam Jones	Mourneabbey
V.O/C.	Jerh. Buckley	do.
Adjt.	Paddy McCarthy	do.
Q.M.	Tadhg Looney	do.

The officers of Cprk II Brigade were:-

O/C.	Liam Lynch	Fermoy
V.O/C.	Dan Hegarty	Mallow
Adjt.	Tom Barry	Glanworth
Q.M.	George Power	Fermoy

There were seven battalions in the new brigade as follows:- Fermoy, Mallow, Castletownroche, Charleville, Kanturk, Newmarket and Millstreet.

During the summer of 1919 the strength of the Mourneabbey Company and the area covered by it was considered too big by the battalion staff. It was now divided into two - Burnfort (eastern end) and Analeentha (western end). I was now a member of the latter company and the new company elected the following officers:

O/C.	Jerome Buckley	(witness)
1st Lt.	Jack Looney	
2nd Lt.	Phil O'Shea	

The officers of Burnfort Company were, as far as I can recollect:-

O/C.	Jack Sullivan
1st Lt.	Mick Nagle

About this time all companies were being trained in scouting, the use of arms, target practice (with .22 rifles mainly), and the use of cover. This type of training continued throughout 1919 and 1920.

At Easter 1920 an instruction was received from G.H.Q. to destroy any evacuated R.I.C. posts in the area. This was a general order to all units. There was only one such post in the battalion area - Blackrock R.I.C. barracks. All available members of Analeentha Company took part in the destruction of this post. The operation was under the control of the Battalion O/C. (Liam Jones).

Several members of the Analeentha Company took part, with representatives of the other companies in the battalion, in efforts to round up some men who had robbed a bank at Millstreet. I did not take part in this operation, but when the men were later held as prisoners in the area I acted, on a number of occasions, as a member of the guard.

When the brigade flying column was formed in September 1920, they were assembled in Mallow Battalion area for training. The column was in charge of Brigade O/C. (Liam Lynch), while the Training Officer was Ernie O'Malley. The column carried out most of their training in the Island district of Burnfort Company area, where they were billeted at Looney's, O'Connell's and Jones's. The members of the column were (I think) :-

Paddy McCarthy (Mallow)	Dan Shinnick (Castletownroche)
Owen Harold do.	Tom Coughlan (Charleville)
Dan Brown (Meelin)	Paddy Healy (Millstreet)
George Power (Fermoy)	Sean Healy do.
Paddy O'Brien (Liscarrol)	Mick Sullivan (Meelin)
Paddy McCarthy (Meelin).	

There were, I think, one or two others, but I cannot remember their names.

On the night of 27th/28th September 1920, I received instructions from Owen Harold - at this time Battalion Vice O/C. replacing Jerh. Buckley, who had been appointed Brigade Q.M. - to assemble all available members of the Analeentha Company. I received this order about 10 p.m. and I immediately arranged to send out my runners with instructions to assemble the members of the company at Analeentha Bridge at 5 a.m. on 28th September 1920. Some members of the company were taken by the Battalion O/C. (Paddy McCarthy) to the house of Captain Horne - a retired British army officer - with a view to seizing his motor car, while I was instructed to take another section to Quartertown, Mallow. At this stage, I should state that we had been informed that the brigade column were going to attempt to capture Mallow Military Barracks. The duties allocated to my section ^{AT QUARTERTOWN} as ~~quartermaster~~ were:

- (1) to select a suitable heavy tree at the Pike on the main Cork-Mallow road;
- (2) to have this tree nearly sawn through by approximately 8.50 a.m. so that very little time would be required to complete the job when final instructions were received to block the road;
- (3) to cut the telegraph wires at Killarney junction.

The orders to complete the work at (2) would be conveyed to me by a 'runner' who would take up his position near the military barracks in Mallow where he would be advised by the Battalion O/C. (Paddy McCarthy) when the raid was on.

I left Analeentha Bridge with my party about 5.30 a.m. carrying two saws. We moved across country to the site selected at the Pike for blocking the road. We reached our destination about 7.30 a.m. and, having selected a suitable tree, we immediately set about sawing it about three-quarter way through. We then awaited the arrival of our 'runner' (Jerh. Cronin). He arrived about 9.10 a.m. and we completed the work of felling the tree in a couple of minutes. I then sent Jerh. Cronin to cut the telegraph/wires which were only about

100 yards away. Having blocked the main road we found that there was an open by-road in the area and we felled another tree on this road. Having blocked both roads and cut the telegraph wires, we withdrew across the country to our home area. The members of my party were: Dan Looney, William Cronin, Ned Walsh, Jerh. Cronin, Sean McCarthy and one or two others whose names I cannot recollect.

On the night of September 30th, 1920, all members of the Analeentha Company were mobilised as the Brigade O/C. (Liam Lynch) anticipated reprisals by the British in the Mourneabbey area. In addition to the members of this company, there were also representatives from the other companies in the area, especially Burnfort and Mallow. I took up a position with Liam Lynch and about five members of the column quite close to the railway station at Mourneabbey. Ernie O'Malley had another party in the vicinity of Mourneabbey Creamery. There was a party of locals under Paddy McCarthy (Battalion O/C.) in the vicinity of his home at Lahakineen. All parties were in position from about 8 p.m. to daybreak on October 1st, 1920, but no enemy forces appeared in the district. During the night 'runners' drawn from the local company operated between all sections.

The usual training activities went on about this time and, in addition, more attention was paid to intelligence work. Men were engaged in all districts in reporting enemy movements. The Battalion O/C. (Paddy McCarthy) was arrested in October 1920. He was replaced by Tadhg Byrne.

When the Mallow Battalion Column was formed in January 1921, the following members of the Analeentha Company underwent a course of training with the column:- Tadhg Mullane, Paddy Donoghue and Paddy Buckley. The column O/C. was Jack Cunningham, Mallow. Other members of the column were:-

Jerh. Daly, Leo O'Callaghan, Jack ('Congo') Moloney, Joe Morgan (Mallow), Tadhg McCarthy, Batt Walshe, Ned Murphy, Ned Waters.

There were no large dumps in the area. Each Volunteer made his own arrangements for the safety of his arms.

About this time enemy forces were carrying out many raids at night and Brigade H.Q. ordered that each company should put out a few armed scouts at night in areas in which raids were likely to occur. These scouts were to fire a few shots at any raiding party encountered and then withdraw, using their local knowledge of the country to evade capture. Two members of the Analeentha company - Con Regan and Eddie Donoghue - who were on this duty fired on a party of raiders one night early in January 1921 (I think). They evidently wounded some of the party, because bloodstains were found on some papers in the yard at Ned Waters's house at Clashabuide where the raiders went after being fired on. These few shots finished 'night raiding' by the enemy in this area.

On February 14th 1921, about 6 p.m., I got a dispatch from the Battalion O/C. (Tadhg Byrne) instructing me to mobilise the Analeentha Company and to parade them at Jordan's Bridge, about one mile from Mourneabbey on the main Mallow-Cork road, at 5 a.m. on the morning of 15th February 1921. I was then to take my orders from the Column O/C. (Jack Cunningham). I immediately sent runners to visit as many as possible of the members and to instruct them to report at Jordan's Bridge at 5 a.m. next day. When I arrived at the assembly point about 4.30 a.m. on 15th, I met Jack Cunningham and the members of the column. He instructed me to arrange to hold up all traffic on - (a) the road from Analeentha to Jordan's Bridge; (b) the road from Mourneabbey to Mourneabbey Creamery. He also instructed me to report to him at the position taken up by the column when I had made the necessary

arrangements about holding up the traffic on the roads specified. During the course of our discussion I suggested that he should place two of my men, who were expert signallers, on Mourneabbey Castle from which they could observe a large stretch of country. He agreed, and I delegated William Cronin and Dan Looney to this duty. The duty of holding up the traffic in my area was delegated to, amongst others, Maurice Curtin, Jack Looney, Jerh. Cronin, John Cronin, Tim Harold. There were a number of others whose names I cannot now remember.

When I had issued the necessary instructions to my party I joined the column O/C. and his men behind a fence on some high ground overlooking the Cork-Mallow road at the site selected for the ambush. We were about 150 yards from the road. All members of this party were armed with rifles. I was armed with a Colt revolver. It was now about 6 a.m. My duty was to watch for signals from the scouts on Mourneabbey Castle. In order to ensure that I could keep the scouts under observation I took up a position behind a fence in the next field on the northern flank of the column. The scouts in Mourneabbey Castle had a view of the road to Mallow for approximately two miles.

There was no activity until close on 11 a.m. when I got a 'call up' from the party at the Castle. They signalled "2 L's." to indicate that there were two lorries on the way. I should mention that we had agreed on a cipher system of signalling in this case as follows:-

"A" to indicate armoured car
 "P" to indicate private car
 "L" to indicate lorry.

The message was to be sent so as to indicate the order in which the convoy was travelling, e.g., 'A.P.2 L.A.' to indicate armoured car, private car, two lorries with another armoured car bringing up the rear. I reported the message re the two lorries to the Column O/C. After a short time (about

five or six minutes) I saw two lorries travelling slowly towards the main Cork-Mallow road on the road between Mourne-Abbey Creamery and that road. These lorries had not travelled the main road from Mallow but had come along a by-road through Dromore. I relayed particulars of the new position to the column O/C. and awaited developments.

When the two lorries reached the main Mallow-Cork road they did not go back towards Mallow nor did they come towards Cork, which would have brought them into the ambush position. After about 20 minutes I heard rifles shots from the direction of Jordan's Bridge. The column then moved along the fence which they were already 'lining' towards Jordan's Bridge and some of them went over the fence into the next field. The latter immediately came under enemy fire and they returned to their old position. The column then moved along under cover of the fence at right angles to that behind which they had been lying in ambush, I got no orders to move and was still in my original position.

When I saw that the column were withdrawing from their position I decided that it was time for me to retire, so I moved on after them. At this time there was heavy firing all the time above the old abbey ruins to the east of Jordan's Bridge. The members of the Burnfort Company were on duty on that side of the road and were armed only with shotguns.

I overtook the column when they had retreated about 300 yards and as they were carrying heavy equipment I moved on ahead to scout the position. We moved in a southerly direction and I crossed the road from Analeentha Bridge to Mooneparson Cross in advance of the column. I was about 100 yards in front of the column at this time. When I had crossed this road I heard a lorry which appeared to be travelling fast from the Analeentha direction. The party in this lorry apparently saw me crossing the fence and they immediately opened fire with

machine guns and rifles. I managed to get sufficient cover and to escape in a southerly direction while the column were alerted by the outburst of fire and, utilising the cover on their side of the road, were not observed. They then changed the direction of their withdrawal to the north west. Had the military party not opened fire on me, it is probable that the column would have advanced to cross the road unaware of the enemy's presence in that particular spot. I continued to retreat on my own and eventually evaded the enemy and reached home.

There was no further major activity in this area up to the truce, but the members of the company were occupied practically full time on the blocking of roads and cutting of communications during this period.

My rank at the truce:- O/C. Analeentha Coy. I.R.A.

The strength of the company was about 70.

Signed:

Jerome Buckley
(Jerome Buckley)

Date: 11th January 1955.

11th January 1955.

Witness:

P. J. Donnell

(P. J. Donnell)
Investigator.

