

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1074

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,074

Witness

John Jones,
Main St.,
Miltown-Malbay,
Co. Clare.

Identity.

Battalion Police Officer
and Battalion I.O. 4th Batt'n. Mid-Clare Bgde.

Subject.

Attack on two members of the Black and Tans
by I.R.A. in Miltown Malbay, 31/3/1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.2389

Form B.S.M. 2

W.S. 1,074

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BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 1074

STATEMENT BY JOHN JONES

Main St., Miltown-Malbay, Co. Clare.

(Formerly Battalion Police Officer, 4th
Battalion, Mid-Clare Brigade).

In March 1921, I was Battalion Police Officer and Acting Battalion Intelligence Officer of the 4th Battalion, Mid Clare Brigade. Towards the end of that month orders came from the Brigade Headquarters to our battalion and, I believe, to each battalion in the brigade in which R.I.C. men or Black and Tans were stationed, to attack any patrol or any of the enemy forces who might be out of barracks on the night of 31st March 1921.

The reason for selecting that particular night was because it was assumed it would be 'Pay night' for the R.I.C. and Black and Tans and that they would be out drinking in the local pubs in big numbers. However, the assumption turned out to be wrong. On that night in the town of Miltown-Malbay, where there were ~~over twenty~~ ^{about thirty} pubs, only two Black and Tans left the barracks and they spent a couple of hours drinking in Wilson's in the Main Street.

The arrangements for scouting the town were left in my hands and, in order to keep myself fully informed of all enemy movements, I had about half a dozen Volunteers posted at different points around the town. The attacking party, which was under Ignatius O'Neill, also included the following:- Brian O'Loughlin, Thomas Burke, Patrick Connors, Stephen and John Gallagher, Michael O'Keefe, Jack Hurley and the O/C.'s brother, Lexie O'Neill. The party was armed with revolvers and shotguns.

I met the attacking party on the Ballard road just outside the town about 9 o'clock and led them into the town through Hill's Lane into the ruins of the O'Neill's old home

which had been burned about six months earlier as a reprisal for the Rineen ambush. In these ruins the party took up positions waiting for the Tans to leave Wilson's pub, and I had arranged with party to withhold their fire until the Tans had left Wilson's and were passing a demolished house formerly owned by people named Roche.

At half-past nine the Tans came to the door accompanied by Mr. Wilson, where they remained in conversation for a few minutes and then moved off. No sooner had they done so than someone in our party fired. This started a fusillade from the guns of the others. Both Tans fell and were presumed dead, but it later transpired that only one - Constable Moore - was killed, and that the other - Constable Hersey - was wounded. The attacking party moved off to Islandbawn.

A few days after this attack, military, R.I.C. and Black and Tans swooped around the town of Miltown-Malbay and rounded up almost the entire adult population. The people were made assemble in the vicinity of the houses of John Sullivan, Draper, Main Street, and Morgan Hayes, Ennis Road, and witness the destruction by explosives of these two buildings as a reprisal for the shootings carried out on the night of 31st March.

Perhaps I should add that my father's home and place of business - grocery and bar - had already been destroyed by fire by enemy forces on the night of ^{22nd} ~~18th~~ September 1920, also as a reprisal for the Rineen ambush.

Signed: John Jones

Date: 29.9.20

Witness: D. Griffin

(D. Griffin)
(Investigator)

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