

18/11/191
N S. 1, 191
ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1,191

ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21
STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,191

Witness

Daniel P. O'Sullivan,
Morley's Bridge,
Kilgarvan,
Co. Kerry.

Identity.

Captain Morley's-Bridge Company,
Third Battalion Kerry II Brigade;
Member of Brigade Flying Column.

Subject.

Morley's Bridge Company, Irish Volunteers,
(Kilgarvan) 3rd Battalion, Kerry II Brigade,
1916-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No .S.2481

Form B S M 2

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1,191

W S 1,191

STATEMENT BY DANIEL P. O'SULLIVAN (DAN PATSY),

Morley's Bridge, Kilgarvan, Co. Kerry.

The Volunteers were started in my area in 1913. My brother Pat joined. He had a gun but I cannot say where he got it or what became of it after. At the time of the Redmondite split a company of Irish Volunteers was formed but I knew nothing about it. It was after 1916, when the Volunteers were being reformed, I heard that there was a company started in Kilgarvan. I went to Denis Hegarty (who subsequently became O/C of the battalion) and asked him if I could join. He told me he had only about six Volunteers at the time but I joined up just the same. There was nothing doing in the line of military work at that time. We just met and talked.

At that time there was a man who worked on the railway line. I cannot remember his name but I often saw him talking to the R.I.C. men. One evening I met an old man named Michael Lynch. He told me he had seen the mason, as he called this man who worked on the railway, showing a revolver to two R.I.C. men, who, after examining the gun, gave it back to him. He appeared to have a permit to hold the gun.

I could not get in touch with any of the Volunteers in my company but I was determined to get the gun. I met a young fellow who was not a Volunteer and asked him whether he would be afraid to go on a bit of a stunt with me. I explained what I wanted to do and he agreed. I got material and cut two masks, and taking

the young lad with me I lay in wait for the mason at a bend in the road where I knew he would pass. I had planned to jump on his back while my companion gripped his hands to prevent him getting at his gun. We were not long waiting when the mason came along the road. As he passed where we were. I jumped on his back and brought him to the ground. My companion jumped on him also and it took only a few seconds for me to get the revolver. We made off immediately, leaving the mason on the road. I expected that the R.I.C. would start searching for the gun but there was no fuss. The mason cleared out of the district and was seen no more.

I did not know if I had done right in carrying out the job without the permission. On the following night there was a meeting of our Volunteer company and I brought the gun along. After the meeting I called the O/C, Denis Hegarty, aside and asked him what I should do if I got reliable information about a man having a gun and showing it to the R.I.C. He told me I should report it to him. I then confessed what had happened and offered him the gun, but he told me to keep it, saying a better man couldn't have it. Later the lad who was with me when I got the gun came into the Volunteers and became Adjutant of our company. His name was Patrick Lynch.

During 1917 we were organising and training and as things developed raids for arms started. It was in connection with a raid for arms I had my next activity and it just shows how things were shaping.

My company area adjoined the Cork No. 1 Brigade area and I was in touch with the adjoining company.

I am not sure of the date but I am sure it was before conscription, the Ballyvourney Company (Cork 1) carried out a raid for arms on the house of a farmer named Jeremiah Buckley. One of Buckley's maids recognised two of the raiders and the BUCKLEYS gave information to the R.I.C. When the news leaked out the maid had to leave the district and a boycott was put on Buckley. He was unable to buy goods in his own district and he started coming to Kilgarvan for supplies. I got a despatch from the O/C Ballyvourney Company, James Moynihan, asking me to enforce the boycott of Buckley in Kilgarvan. I warned all the shopkeepers in Kilgarvan. One day I happened to be working near the road when I saw Buckley passing on a bike. I left my work and followed him towards the village. When I got to the village I could not find him, so I put one of our company from the village to search for him. The Volunteer reported back to me that Buckley was in Charlie McCarthy's shop and his bike was outside. I turned my coat inside out and put a cloth across my face, and stealing along by the wall I got to the bike. I jumped on the bike and rode away, but as I went Buckley rushed out and saw me. He made straight for the barracks. I had gone about 10 yards when the chain came off and got caught between the freewheel and frame. I couldn't release it so I put the bike on my shoulder and ran. As I ran I looked back and saw the R.I.C. coming after me. I turned off the road at the next cross and got into a field where two men were working with a plough. They had their backs to me. I threw the bicycle into a

brake inside the field and jumped over a fence and made off. The R.I.C. had seen me entering the field and they questioned the two men about the man with the bike on his shoulders. When they could not find me they gave up. I went back to the field that night and removed the bicycle, which I held and gave it back to Buckley after the truce.

In 1919 a general order was issued for the boycott of the R.I.C. The boycott was regularly enforced in our area. The local R.I.C. garrison depended on turf as fuel and I got information that a certain man was bringing turf in to the R.I.C. at night. The man's bog was near mine so I set to watch him. One day I saw him drawing turf out of the bog. I called some of the Volunteers together and we lay in wait for him in Kilgarvan at about 1 a.m. When he entered the village with a load of turf we stopped him, and pitching the turf on to the road we sprinkled paraffin on it and set it alight. We warned him not to bring in turf again.

About the same time there was an old woman from a place named Lounihan out in the country, housekeeping for the R.I.C. in Kilgarvan. She lived in a house beside the barracks. She was ordered to leave her job and go home, but she refused. I was ordered to get two Volunteers with me and take her home by force if necessary. We went to the house at about 1 a.m. and woke her up nice and easy and took her home to her son. We warned the son that if he let his mother return to the R.I.C. he would be shot.

In 1919 we collected all shotguns in our area and in about five cases we were forced to raid for them. In one house we got five shotguns and a large box of cartridges. We dumped the shotguns but I brought the box of cartridges home with me. It was late when I got home so I just put the box of cartridges in a bag of hay in the back of my Uncle Matt's car. I didn't know he was going to Kenmare fair the next morning to sell pigs and ^{the} hay was feed for the horse. My Uncle Matt drove into Kenmare the next morning and stopped just at the door of the Lansdowne Arms Hotel. The hotel had been taken over by the British military and a sentry was on duty at the door. My father had gone to the fair with his own horse and was beside my Uncle Matt when he pulled up. My uncle turned out the bag of hay to the horse and out rolled the box of cartridges. My father just rolled some hay over the box and brought it back to me. I got it heavy from him for not telling him where I hid the box.

We attempted a raid on the castle at Aurthelly after receiving a report that an ex Captain of the British Army had left some stuff there. The raid failed because the occupier would not open the door at night unless he knew the caller.

One Sunday morning we held a meeting to discuss the prospect of another raid. The O/C, Denis Hegarty, proposed that one of us should go to the door of the house unmasked and knock. The remainder of the party would stay in cover until the door was opened and then rush it. I was asked to go to the door and knock, which I did. There was no sign of the door being opened

so I went back to the front of the house and commenced throwing stones in the river. This did not bring anyone out. I went back to the front of the house and commenced pulling flowers and throwing them in a heap. I had a lot pulled when the occupier came out. I went on pulling flowers until he was very near me. I then turned towards him and, pointing a revolver, ordered him to put up his hands. He put his hands on his hips and I thought he was going to pull a gun. I was just going to pull the trigger when some Volunteers rushed round the corner of the house and caught him by the arms. He had no gun. I discovered afterwards that he was deaf. I was the only one of the party who was not wearing a mask and I was left to hold up the whole staff while the other members of our party searched the house. We got one revolver and some equipment in the raid.

About a week later I was at a funeral in Kilgarvan village and a constable of the R.I.C. pointed me out to other members of the force. I went on the run and the police raided for me. Things got fairly hot and I went over to Co. Cork and went working for a farmer. I was transferred to Ballyvourney Company and while with the company I took part in an ambush on a British lorry convoy between Ballyvourney and Macroom. I was armed with a Lee Enfield rifle. There were about 40 or 50 on our side. The fight lasted a couple of hours. At the end we withdrew to Millstreet. I think the Cork No. 1 Brigade officers could give a good account of the engagement.

I was recalled to the Kilgarvan area. The Kilgarvan Company had increased in numbers and the O/C,

Denis Hegarty, split it into two companies. I was appointed O/C of one of the companies with Pat Lehane 1st Lieutenant and Pat Cronin 2nd Lieutenant.

Raids by Black and Tans and R.I.C. were getting numerous. One morning they raided Kilgarvan village. They entered the shop of Mr. J. Hegarty, father of Volunteer Officer Denis Hegarty. They took away some goods. One R.I.C. man named Murphy was very aggressive. He tormented Mr. Hegarty's daughter, Daisy, who was not feeling well and she fainted. When Denis Hegarty heard about the raid on his home and Murphy the R.I.C. man, he sent for me. We discussed the matter and decided that Murphy should be shot.

Murphy was stationed in Kenmare and he lived about 200 yards outside the town. We learned that he went to his dinner at about 3 o'clock each day. We got in near Kenmare early in the morning and while waiting to shoot Murphy we had second thoughts. If we shot Murphy, the O/C of the Kenmare Company would be arrested and probably all known sympathisers. We sent for the O/C (Ned Shea) to come out to us. He refused to sanction the shooting of Murphy in his company area. We got in touch with some of the Kenmare Volunteers. We learned from them that military officers used come out to the Golf Links at the same time as Murphy went to his dinner. We changed our plan to increase our party from Kilgarvan to six and with two from Kenmare to shoot Murphy and attack the military officers. Two of us were to shoot Murphy and the remainder to attack the officers. The job had to be called off. We were outside our own company area and the O/C Kenmare

would not allow us to operate in his area. There were plenty of targets in the town but no one to attack them.

At this period there was a general embargo on young men leaving the country without a permit from the I.R.A. I got information that there was a young man leaving for America. He was leaving by train and we decided to hold up the train at Morley's Bridge. There were five of us at the station: Denis Hegarty, P. Lehane, T. Randles, R. Sullivan and myself. When the train arrived we removed the young man and I walked along the platform looking into the carriages. In one of the carriages I saw a Black and Tan and an R.I.C. man. I warned the rest of our party. I then rushed into the carriage with a shotgun in my hands and ordered the occupants to put up their hands. We disarmed them of two revolvers and 30 rounds of .45 ammunition.

We made another attempt to get a crack at the enemy in Kenmare. This time we planned a night attack at the Courthouse. Denis Hegarty had then been appointed Battalion O/C. The attacking party consisted of Denis Hegarty, Ned Shea, T. Randles, D. Healy, C. Downing and myself. We opened fire on the R.I.C. and wounded one of them. We had to retreat out under the bridge as we came under fire from the military in the town. As we were going down under the bridge my foot got caught in the strap of a Lee Enfield rifle which was in the water. The night was dark. I took out the rifle, which was in perfect condition. I kept quiet about it. As far as I knew, it did not belong to any member of our party. How it came to be in the

water I never found out.

In the spring of 1921 a column was being formed in our brigade area (Kerry 11). Men were to be sent from each company. I was sent from Morley's Bridge Company. The column assembled at the Gap of Dunloe under Dan Allman, O/C, with Jack Flynn, an ex-British soldier as training officer. We spent about two weeks in the Gap training and then moved out towards Castleisland. We lay in ambush at Dysert near Castleisland. A sham attack had been made at Farranfore R.I.C. barracks in an effort to draw the British troops out of Castleisland past our position, but they did not come out and we returned to the Curragh area where we were billeted for a day or two.

While we were at Curragh I was selected to take part in the arrest of a man named Boyle who was suspected of giving information to the enemy. We went dressed as British soldiers. The party consisted of John Flynn, Bonane; John Cronin, Ballymacelligott; Tom Connor (Scarteen), Kenmare; Neilus McCarthy, Killarney, and myself. Jack Flynn, who had served in the British Army, acted as spokesman. Boyle was questioned and gave a lot of information. We arrested himself and his son and took them with us. When we got to a place called Darra there was a round-up, but we got through safely with our prisoners. The prisoners were later tried but I have no information about that as we moved back to the column.

The column travelled to Kilquane, Barraduff, and after resting there we moved back to the foot of the Paps Mountains to Gortarrig. We were in Gortarrig on

the night of the 20th, March, 1921. On the morning of the 21st we were training under John Flynn. A messenger arrived during the day with information about a party of British troops which had travelled by train from Killarney to Kenmare, passing through Headford Junction. The officers, Dan Allman, O/C, and Thos. McEllistrim, Vice O/C, had a conference and we then got orders to fall in to march to Headford. As far as I remember, there were 25 of us in all. I can give the names:

O/C - Dan Allman
 Vice O/C - Thos. McEllistrim
 Tr. Officer - Jack Flynn (Bonane)
 Jack Cronin
 J. Herlihy
 M. Carmody
 P. Burke
 J. Bailey
 M. Leary
 D. Prendeville
 E. McCarthy
 J. Coffey
 P. Sullivan
 J. Fleming
 J. Brosnihan
 T. Donoghue
 P. Lynch
 P. O'Shea
 D. Lenihan
 D.B. Cronin
 P. Brown
 J. Shanahan
 J. O'Connor
 D.P. O'Sullivan (witness)
 P. Cronin.

When we got to Headford Junction we were ordered into different positions. I remember the following posts being occupied: the embankments on both sides of the junction, the station house, the ramp at the end of the Kenmare siding and the signal cabin.

I was in position beside the store east of the station house. With me were Jack Shanahan and Tom O'Connor (Scarteen). We were hardly in position when

the train carrying the military party entered the station. The military were to be permitted to leave the Kenmare train and prepare to cross to the Killarney train which was expected later. Our job was to be finished before the Mallow - Killarney train arrived. When the Kenmare train came in there was the usual bustle on the platform. There were a number of civilians on the train. While we were waiting for the soldiers to leave a shot rang out, then everything was confusion; people screaming and shouting and firing on all sides. Dan Allman had been forced to shoot before all the military were on the platform and although most of the British party had been hit when we opened up, a few had got down under the train and were giving trouble. Dan Allman was anxious to finish the fight and get away, and he went down to the line at the end of the platform in an effort to root out a British Corporal who was holding out under the train. Dan Allman was killed in the attempt. The Mallow-Killarney train was then sighted and a party of British troops travelling on the train opened fire on us as we retired from the station.

We retired from Headford through Glenflesk to Mangerton Mountain where we rested. While at Mangerton another train ambush was planned, this time at Loo Bridge on the Kenmare-Headford line, but the British appeared to have got some information as they attempted a round-up in the area. We moved from Mangerton back to Blackvalley.

I was next ordered back to Kilgarvan to escort a British soldier, who was a prisoner, into Co. Cork.

It was thought that the prisoner could give information regarding some person who had conveyed information to the British about an I.R.A. officer named Denis Galvin. I handed over the prisoner to John McCarthy of Ballingeary.

When I returned from this mission the Brigade Column had been disbanded and orders had been issued to form Battalion Columns. We formed a small column but we got little chance of action as a big round-up was in progress round our area.

We had planned another attack which took place on the night before the truce. It was usual for the British military to parade outside the Lansdowne Hotel, Kenmare, at night, and it was planned to open fire on them when they were in line. The job was under the command of Denis Hegarty, Battalion O/C. I remember the following being with us:

John O'Sullivan (Jack the Tailor)
 John O'Sullivan
 Tom O'Connor (Scarteen)
 Danny Lynch
 Dan Healy (Soldier Dan)
 D.P. O'Sullivan (witness).

Our party assembled west of Cromwell's Bridge, but the military did not parade as usual. Instead they divided their forces, one party by the Courthouse Bridge and the second party by Rookery Lane. We opened fire on the party coming from Rookery Lane. At least two of the British were wounded, one may have died later.

The British party which had come out of the town by the Courthouse Bridge came at our flank and we had to run for it. I was just crossing the road into the fields when this second party opened fire on me. We retreated towards Sneem.

Signed: Daniel P. Sullivan
(Daniel P. O'Sullivan)

Date: 16th June 1955

Witness: James J. O'Connor (James J. O'Connor)
(Investigator)

