

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. **W.S. 1,660**

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. **W.S.** 1660.

Witness

Patrick McGurl,
Mountpoplar,
Kildalkey,
Co. Meath.

Identity.

Adjnt., 2nd Battn., 4th (Meath) Brigade.

Subject.

Kildalkey Coy., Irish Volunteers, Co. Meath,
1917 - 1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File No **S. 2979.**

Form B.S.M. 2

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STATEMENT OF PATRICK MCGURLMountpoplar, Kildalkey, Navan, Co.Meath.

I was born in Addinstown, Co. Westmeath, in October 1883. I attended the local National School until I was 10 years of age. In 1893, my father moved to Fraile, Athboy, Co. Meath. In Fraile I went to school for a further four years. When I left school I went to work on my father's farm.

A company of Irish National Volunteers was formed in Athboy in the year 1913. They were organised by Joe Martin, Tom Devine and a brother of mine, John McGurl. We numbered about 100 men and were drilled by ex-British soldiers named James Geraghty and Patrick Holland. Soon after the start of the first World War the company ceased to exist.

In the Spring of 1917, a company of Irish Volunteers was organised in Athboy by James Finn, Joe Martin and Sean O'Grady. Our strength from the start was about 40 men. James Finn became captain, Joe Martin 1st Lieutenant and Sean O'Grady 2nd Lieutenant. We met at least once a week throughout the year for foot drill and field exercises.

At the latter end of the year I transferred to Kildalkey Company which had been formed a short time earlier. Kildalkey was three miles from Athboy and I lived nearer the village of Kildalkey. To the best of my knowledge, the officers of Kildalkey Company then were Pat Potterton, Captain; John Corrigan 1st Lieutenant, and Joe Ledwith 2nd Lieutenant. The strength of the company was 30 men. During the conscription crisis our strength increased to about 60. When the scare was over, all our new Volunteers left. At the end of the year, during the general election campaign, all members of the company took an active part in supporting the Sinn Fein candidate, Eamon Duggan, who was elected.

During the year 1919, all companies in the vicinity of Athboy were formed into a battalion which became known as Delvin, or 3rd, Battalion of Meath Brigade. The officers elected were: Seamus Finn O/C., Patrick Corrigan, vice O/C., James Cahill, adjutant, and Dan Monaghan, Q.M. We were one of six battalions forming the Meath Brigade. The companies comprising the battalion were: Ballivor, Athboy, Kildalkey, Fordstown, Boards Mill, Delvin, Clonmellon and Archerstown. Except for routine drilling, there was little activity in our company area during the year. In the month of November, Seamus Finn and other battalion officers with members of various companies in the battalion attacked and captured Ballivor R.I.C. barracks. They captured some arms and ammunition. As I did not take part in the attack, I cannot give details.

In the year 1920, a Sinn Fein Parish Court was established in our area. Pat Potterton and Pat Corrigan became Court Justices. The local Volunteers took over all police duties of the area. Around the autumn of this year we collected about 30 shotguns in the Kildalkey Company area. Previous to the I.R.A. attack and capture of Trim R.I.C. barracks in September 1920, roads in the company area were extensively blocked by our men.

In April 1921, Harry Brien of Kildalkey Company opened fire with a rifle on a motor patrol of three lorries of military as they passed through the village. They returned the fire and continued on their way, without stopping, towards Trim.

At the latter end of June 1921, our battalion was divided following a reorganisation of the Meath Brigade and other Brigades into a Division. We became one of three battalions

forming the 4th Brigade and were known as the Athboy, or 2nd, Battalion, the companies comprising our battalion being: Athboy, Fordstown and Kildalkey. John Corrigan, captain of Kildalkey Company, became Battalion O/C., Luke Bradley, Vice O/C. I became adjutant, Matt Ledwith Q.M., James Halligan Engineer, and Peter Gilleran, I.O.

The officers of the 4th Brigade were: Michael Hiney, O/C., Patrick Corrigan, Vice O/C., Joe Monaghan, Adjutant, John Tyrrell, Q.M., Joseph Martin, Engineer, Edward Thornton, I.O., and Philip Farrell, Chemist. There was little activity from then to the Truce.

Signed: Patrick McLywd

Date: 27/8/57

Witness: John J. Daly

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