

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BUREAU STAIRS MILITARY 1913-21

No. W.S. 211

ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. .... 211 .....

**Witness**

Mr. Timothy O'Leary,  
5 Rock Road,  
Killarney,  
Co. Kerry.

**Identity**

Captain, Ballyhar Coy. (Co. Kerry)  
Irish Vols. 1914.

**Subject**

- (i) Irish Volunteer activities, Ballyhar Co.  
1914-1916.
- (ii) Trained the Ballyhar Coy.

**Conditions, if any, stipulated by Witness**

Nil.

File No. ...S.788.....

Form BSM 2

W.S 211

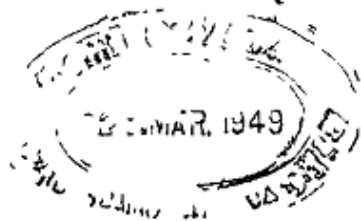
5 Rock Road,

Killarney,

Co Kerry.

**CRIGINAL**

Mar 19<sup>th</sup> 49.



Dear Sirs,

As regards enclosed form,  
I would like to make a slight  
alteration in the first paragraph.  
The four volunteers mentioned,  
joined up on the first day  
that the Killarney men came out.  
I have given in the form the  
names of 18 of the 19 men  
who had mobilized for the  
march to Tralee on Easter  
Saturday night, but, I feel

to remember the name of the  
19<sup>th</sup>. I have enquired from  
all the other men whom I  
could contact, but, while  
all agreed that there were  
19 men mobilized, they did  
not succeed in remembering  
the 19<sup>th</sup> name.

Hence the delay in sending  
off forms.

Yours faithfully,  
Timothy O'Leary

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BURO STAIRA MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. _____

WS 211  
**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRS MLE TA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 211

STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY O'LEARY, 5 ROCK ROAD,  
KILLARNEY, CO. KERRY.

PERIOD: EARLY 1914 TO EASTER, 1916.

UNIT: BALLYHAR COMPANY, I.V.

The Ballyhar Company was started in the Spring of 1914. A few Volunteers came out from Killarney Company and tried to get a number of local men to form a Company, but the first effort was not successful. Then Michael Spillane and Michael J. O'Sullivan came out and addressed a meeting on a Sunday after Mass and a start was made with four Volunteers, viz.:-

Timothy O'Leary  
David Curtin  
Denis Donovan  
Jack Cronin

Strength increased slowly at first. There was no hostility but the lads were shy about coming out in public. When they heard of Companies forming in other areas they joined in larger numbers and by August, 1914, there were seventy men in the Company. That was its maximum strength at any time before Easter, 1916.

An election of Officers had been held early in the Summer of 1914, which resulted as follows:-

Timothy O'Leary:	Captain.
Daniel T. Allman:	1st Lieutenant.
Dan O'Connor:	2nd Lieutenant.

There was no change in these Officers up to Easter, 1916.

When the Split took place in the organisation generally the Ballyhar Company divided, about half on each side. All the Officers remained on the side of the Irish Volunteers. No bitterness or ill-feeling resulted from the Split, the Redmondite supporters did not form a Company of National Volunteers, and most of them gradually returned to their original allegiance later on.

Training instruction in the early days was given by an ex-soldier named Feeney. Dan Hogan, a reserve man, trained us also for a few months. Instruction was mainly in close order drill, marching and skirmishing. When the ex-serviceman left I took over the training with the aid of handbooks. In 1915 we won a drill competition at Castlemaine. Ned Lean, the instructor of the Tralee Volunteers, was the judge at the competition.

The Company took part in all the public parades held in Killarney from its establishment up to Easter, 1916. We were at the Oireachtas there in 1914, the presentation of Colours at Whit, 1915, the St. Patrick's Day and Manchester Martyrs' parades in 1915, and the St. Patrick's Day parade in 1916. During 1915 and early 1916 the Killarney Company occasionally came to our area on a Sunday exercise, and on these occasions we took part

Name of Reserve man:- Dan Hogan, not Horgan

with them in whatever training was going on. We had a fife and drum band which accompanied us on the public parades.

The strength of the Company at the end of 1915 was about forty; at Easter, 1916, it was between thirty and thirty-two. Of these nineteen mobilised for active service.

Early in 1916 Dan Allman bought a single barrel shot gun, with bayonet attached, to the Company and said it was possible to buy similar weapons from Austin Stack. Michael Allman and I went to Tralee and I paid Stack for six of the shot guns with my own money. About a week before Easter I had a note from Stack to say they were ready. I replied to that, asking how I would get them out to Ballyhar. I had got no answer before Easter and we did not get the shot guns.

The arms which we had at Easter, 1916, were :

12 shot guns, the property of local farmers,  
with about 12 rounds for each.

1 Smith and Weston .45 revolver, with 6 rounds.

A few days before Easter Sunday, 1916, I got the order from Michael Spillane, Killarney, for the Sunday parade. It was to the effect that the Company was to march to Tralee on Saturday night. Nothing was said about arms, but we were ordered to bring 24 hours rations. We were making the final arrangements on Good Friday night when Jerry Crowley arrived from Killarney with two despatches, one for me and one for Tralee, the latter to go through Firies Company. The message for me was to the effect that the order to go to Tralee was cancelled. As a result of this, I called off the parade for the following night, and, as no subsequent order came, the Company did not again mobilise, though the nineteen men were available at call at any time. The following are their names:

Daniel O'Leary  
Humphrey O'Leary  
John Cronin  
Timothy McBarthy  
Daniel Falvey  
David Martin  
Daniel O'Sullivan  
John Courtney  
John Lyne  
Timothy Broderick

Thomas Groves  
Denis Donovan  
Daniel Tuohy  
James Lyne  
Michael Foley  
.....  
Timothy O'Leary Capt.  
Daniel Allman 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut.  
Daniel O'Connor 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut.

I took the despatch for Tralee that night to Jim Riordan, Firies. Jim asked me to wait for him, saying that he would be as far as Firies Cross with me. I did so and we parted there. Next day he fired on the two policemen at Firies and I never saw him afterwards.

I came into Killarney on Easter Saturday and saw Michael Spillane. He had no information and no fresh orders to give. He told me Ballyhar was the only Company in the Battalion which was to go to Tralee, the intention being that as we were so badly armed we would get arms off the arms ship due to arrive at Fenit.

I returned to Ballyhar that night and kept contact with the men. They were available for duty and would have turned out at short notice if an instruction to do so arrived, but no further order came to the Company.

No arms were surrendered in the Company area after Easter Week and there were no arrests.

There were no Fianna, Cumann-na-mBhan or I.R.B. organisations in the district prior to Easter, 1916.

SIGNED: Timothy Leary

DATE: 19th March 1949

WITNESS: Michael Fleming

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