

W.S. 796

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 795

ROINN  COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 795

Witness

William Myles,
Friar Street,
Thurles,
Co. Tipperary.

Identity.

Member of I.R.B. Clonmel, Co. Tipperary,
1913 - ;
Member Irish Vol's. do. 1914 - ;
Vice/Comd't. Clonmel Battalion, later.

Subject.

- (a) National activities, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, 1913-1921;
- (b) Importation of arms from England, 1914-15.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.410

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM MYLES,

FRIAR STREET, THURLES, CO. TIPPERARY.

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ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 795

STATEMENT OF MR. WILLIAM MYLES,
Friar Street, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

I was born in the year 1894 at Irishtown, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. My father was James Myles and my mother Catherine Power. My people had a bakery, flour and meal store in Irishtown, Clonmel. I went to school to the Christian Brothers, St. Mary's, Irishtown, Clonmel. At fourteen years of age I left school and went to work as a cub reporter at the office of the 'Nationalist', one of the two local newspapers in Clonmel.

My first introduction to the national movement was through the reading of 'Irish Freedom' and the nationalist papers of that time. Some time about 1913 I joined the Ancient Order of Hibernians. In that organisation I met Frank Drohan and I became friendly with him. In the course of walks and chats we discussed Irish nationalism and, in due course, he asked me if I would join the Irish Republican Brotherhood. I agreed to do so and was sworn into the organisation by him. At about this time - it was 1913 - there was one Circle of the I.R.B. in Clonmel of which Drohan was head or centre, but later this was expanded and became two Circles.

The first job I remember was the posting of anti-recruiting literature in the town. These were small handbills which were supplied to us from Dublin and the wording of them was something to the effect that this was a warning to Irishmen who thought of joining the British armed forces or the police, that such an act was one of treachery to their country, the intention being to discourage the recruiting of Irishmen into the British

forces. On a Saturday night in November, 1913, all the members of the I.R.B. were detailed to paste these up. The town was divided up into districts and we were to start at a certain time. Unfortunately somebody started too early. We should actually have started when the R.I.C. patrol at that time went in sometime about three o'clock in the morning but, owing to the fact that some of the fellows started too early, the patrol saw some of the posters, with the result that almost every member of the R.I.C. in Clonmel at the time - some 70 or 80 - was pulled out of bed to tear down all the little handbills that had been stuck up.

While I was working at the time in the 'Nationalist' office, a frequent visitor was a Major Reardon of the British army. He was an officer of the R.A.M.C. He came into the office on the following Monday and he was quite perturbed about this bill-posting. He blamed Carson and his Ulster Volunteers for the posting of the bills. He said they had plenty of money and that they were out to cause trouble in the country. He was actually a Home Ruler himself but he little knew who were really at the back of it.

Following the meeting in the Rotunda, Dublin, in November, 1913, at which the Volunteer force was started, this matter was discussed at an I.R.B. Circle meeting in Clonmel and it was agreed that we should do all we possibly could to start a Volunteer force in Clonmel. The idea was that, if we could drill and arm openly, it would be all the better and that anyway the I.R.B. would be behind the scenes to do what they could at any time.

Early in 1914, the first public meeting was held in Clonmel for the formation of a Volunteer force. The man who presided at the meeting, as well as I remember, was

David O'Connor who was a flour and meal merchant. His father had been a Fenian. David was a member of the Clonmel Corporation. The meeting actually was organised by the local I.R.B. though not openly. So while the I.R.B. actually took the initiative in this matter and made all the arrangements to organise the meeting, this, of course, was not known. The members merely worked as individuals as far as the public were concerned.

At that meeting a Volunteer corps was formed and we began drilling in the yard off the Main Street in Clonmel, presently occupied by Woolworth's stores. We had two ex British Army instructors - ex N.C.O's - and great progress was made in a very short time in licking the fellows into shape. The first night we came out and marched through the town was a great sensation. Parades were held twice a week as far as I remember.

The Volunteers were organised in sections and companies. Drohan was the Company Commander and, in fact, the man whom we all looked to as the leader of the national movement in Clonmel at the time.

The Volunteers continued to grow in strength and, when the Irish Party decided to get into the move, appointing some of their nominees on the Executive Council in Dublin, the ranks swelled considerably and at the time of the outbreak of the war in August, 1914, there were some 1,400 or 1,500 in the ranks, all told, in Clonmel town. At that time I was correspondence secretary. Michael Hanrahan, Glenconnor, Clonmel, was financial secretary.

A public collection was held to raise funds for the purchase of arms for the Volunteers and a sum of several hundred pounds was realised in this collection. Following

this, an arrangement was entered into with Messrs. Hearne of Waterford for the purchase of rifles. At that time there was no special embargo on the purchase of arms and it was still possible for firms such as Hearne's, who had commercial relations with firms in England, to purchase arms quietly in England and import them in the ordinary course of their trade as general merchandise. While, therefore, very large quantities might be difficult to secure, smaller quantities might readily be purchased in this way so long as money to pay for them was available and so long as the transaction could be carried out quietly and with a certain amount of secrecy. Hearne's of Waterford had agreed to notify us when the rifles arrived in Waterford. At the time they had not any in stock. Before word came through from Hearne's, the split in the Volunteers occurred.

Originally Drohan had been given the money to go to Dublin to buy some arms that were supposed to be available there. These were Italian rifles that were imported by the Redmond people and for which there was no ammunition. When Drohan went to Dublin, he was advised not to have anything to do with these rifles. It was following this that he got in touch with Hearne's of Waterford and placed an order with them for a number of modern type rifles for which he paid in advance, and we were still awaiting delivery of these rifles when the Redmond split in the Volunteers occurred.

Following John Redmond's recruiting speech at Woodenbridge after the outbreak of the war, when he appealed to Irishmen to join the British army, we held a meeting of the Volunteer Committee in Clonmel. Most of those on the Committee sided with Redmond; a minority sided with Pearse and McNeill. A letter was read at the meeting from Pearse and McNeill appealing to the Volunteers to stand fast by

their loyalty to their country and not to be swayed by the Irish Party arguments. I can't remember the contents of that letter in detail but it was published in the press at the time and should be available that way. The upshot was that the Committee, as it was then, of the Volunteers was split. Those supporting the Irish Party a short time later formed the Irish National Volunteers.

On the original Committee in Clonmel there was a man, named O'Donnell, whose people had a flour and meal store and, because he had a telephone, Hearne's of Waterford had stated they would telephone him when the rifles arrived. O'Donnell was one of the trustees of the Volunteer funds but it was principally because he had a telephone that Hearne's arranged to ring him up to inform him when the rifles had arrived. A peculiar thing was that O'Donnell sided with the Redmond faction at the split and when, a little later, they held an election to elect officers, he stood for election as an officer but was defeated, with the result that he left the Redmondite faction and returned to us. Most of us were rather resentful of him and did not want to accept him in our ranks but Drohan argued that we would not turn down anyone who wished to adhere to his original allegiance, and so he carried on with us. When following this, O'Donnell got a 'phone message from Hearne's of Waterford that the rifles were ready for delivery, he notified us and not the Redmondite crowd and we made arrangements to get the rifles to Clonmel.

The arrangement to get the rifles from Hearne's of Waterford to Clonmel was that two men should go down and make the best arrangements they could in Waterford and notify us. Seán Morrissey and Frank Drohan went by train to Waterford on a Saturday. They informed us before they

left that they hoped to bring the rifles by the mail train to Clonmel which reached Clonmel at about 10.30 that night. We were to meet the train and get the rifles off at any cost. We did not know how many rifles were involved. We did not know how they were to be packed but we presumed in boxes of some kind. We intended to open the boxes and hand out the rifles to the men on parade.

On Saturday night we went to the station when the train was due but only to find that there was no sign of Morrissey or Drohan or the rifles on it. We then assumed that they were coming by road and a number of us with bicycles cycled out about 3 or 4 miles on the road to meet them. About half-past eleven or midnight a car passed heading in the direction of Clonmel, the occupants of which helloed at us as they passed but did not stop. We then knew who were in the car but wondered why they did not stop, and we followed the car as fast as we could into Clonmel and found that the rifles had arrived in Drohan's yard.

In all there were 32 rifles and 3,000 rounds of ammunition. The rifles were the long Lee Enfield type, using the standard British .303 ammunition. That night and the following night the rifles were distributed amongst the Volunteers, each individual who received a rifle being responsible for its safe keeping.

When the Redmondite Volunteers discovered that we had got the rifles, they made strong attempts to get possession of them. They claimed that we had defrauded their organisation of the money with which the rifles were purchased and that the rifles rightfully belonged to them, as they were the greater number for which this money had been collected by public subscription. We were denounced at meetings of the A.O.H., so much so that any of us who

were still members of the A.O.H. left that organisation for good. We were determined not to give up the rifles and we held on to them from then onwards - and they were put to good use by the Tipperary Flying Columns when these latter began their activities in 1920. A few of these rifles - some 3 or 4 or so - were lost during the raids following the Rising of 1916, but all the remainder survived to see service in 1920 and 1921.

Following the Redmondite split, the number of Volunteers in Clonmel who adhered to the original organisation of Pearse and McNeill was about 40 or 50 whereas the Redmondite faction numbered somewhere about 1,200 or 1,300. We continued to drill openly in a field on the Cashel road and we usually had the attention of an R.I.C. man or two who kept us under continual surveillance at every parade.

Things continued this way during 1914 but gradually the numbers started to increase, very slowly it is true, but still we were on the upward curve. At times we had to endure a good deal of abuse because at this time there were many men from Clonmel area in the British army and their friends and relatives were anything but friendly to us.

During 1915 we carried on with training and we attempted to secure all the arms we could. Things were more or less of a routine nature.

Coming to 1916, we sensed that something was due to happen soon. Like everywhere else in the country, we felt strongly that advantage should be taken of Britain's engagement in the European war and we were beginning to feel uneasy that the war might finish without any move having been made to secure our freedom. This was a general feeling amongst the Volunteers at the time, encouraged no

doubt by the various articles in the national journals at the time. With the coming of the year 1916, however, there was a sort of an anticipation that something would be done soon. Drilling and parading were alright in their own way but at this stage had begun to become monotonous and we wanted to do something more positive. We had no definite information as to what was intended by the Volunteer Executive but I suppose the reading of papers like 'Irish Freedom', 'Nationality' and these national journals steered our thoughts towards the urgent desirability of a rising in arms. This was the feeling amongst us up to Easter 1916.

It was on the Thursday of Holy Week that we first heard that something was afoot. We had a Volunteer meeting in the Temperance Hall, Irishtown, Clonmel. This, as far as I remember, was a meeting of officers and N.C.O's, most of whom were I.R.B. men. It was there that we got the first inkling that things were shaping towards a rising. I think there was some communication from Dublin but I can't remember what that was, or whether it was from that we got the idea, or from something Drohan told us. All I can remember is that we definitely left that meeting with the feeling that the rising was imminent.

On the following night, Friday, we had another meeting and there we were told that, if a call to arms came, we would be given a password. The password was that "the goods would be delivered" by a certain time.

Next day, Saturday, at about three o'clock I met one of the Section Commanders on the street in Clonmel and he told me that "the goods would be delivered" the next night, that is, Sunday night, from which I understood that the Rising would begin on Sunday evening or Sunday night.

That night, Saturday, a few of us met together in Drohan's house and Drohan told us that Seamus O'Neill (later Garda Superintendent O'Neill) had gone to meet Pierce McCann who was travelling back on the night mail train from Dublin. Pierce McCann was the Commander of the Volunteers in South Tipperary at this time and had gone to Dublin to get detailed instructions as to how we were to act. We, therefore, could do nothing until we had seen him or had instructions from him as to what we were to do. Pierce McCann was Chairman of the Volunteer Committee in South Tipperary and he was County Centre of the I.R.B. At any rate we looked to Pierce McCann as the leader in County Tipperary and would do nothing until we heard from him.

Seamus O'Neill, who lived in Clonmel at the time and was a member of the Volunteers there, arrived in Clonmel about 3 o'clock on Easter Sunday morning. I was not there when he arrived but his message from McCann was that the Germans were landing on the west coast, that Eoin McNeill had obtained the papal blessing on the enterprise and that the Rising would begin on that Sunday night. Also to meet McCann at Gooldscross that Saturday night was Seán Treacy, later Vice Commandant of the Tipperary Brigade and subsequently killed in Talbot Street, Dublin, in October, 1920, in a fight against British forces.

In anticipation of the beginning of the Rising, almost all the Volunteers had been to confession on Saturday night and to Holy Communion on Easter Sunday morning.

At about half-past-ten or eleven o'clock on Easter Sunday myself and some others were in Drohan's yard cleaning rifles when a messenger from Fethard arrived. He had been sent by Pierce McCann and his message was that the mobilisation order had been cancelled. This news came as

a complete surprise to us. As there was nothing we could do but obey the instruction, Drohan left immediately for Carrick-on-Suir to cancel the mobilisation there and I think he intended also to go to Waterford. We also had seen a notice in the 'Sunday Independent' from McNeill stating that the military exercises arranged for that day had been postponed in Dublin. For the rest of that day we had no further information and on Monday up to two o'clock in the evening we still had not any information of what was happening.

On the Monday evening I had to go to Mount Melleray on behalf of 'The Nationalist' to report an event there on the following day and I left Clonmel by car. Next day, Tuesday, I was informed by a reporter who was in Melleray from the 'Cork Examiner' that a ship, supposed to have been carrying arms, had been reported sunk outside Cobh Harbour and that there was a rumour to the effect that the Sinn Féiners had risen in Dublin. The news of the fighting in Dublin appeared to have generally leaked out around the country at this time, but no details were available.

On the Wednesday I came back to Clonmel and found that our fellows in Clonmel had already heard about the fighting in Dublin but they had no more information about it than I had. There was also a report current in Clonmel at that time that the railway line around Port Laoighise had been torn up.

We were still in the dark as to what was happening until on Thursday we got word from McCann that we were to get out, meaning that the Volunteers in Clonmel were to leave the town, bringing with them their arms and equipment, and await further instructions from him. This was a rather difficult job at that time as most of the leaders were being

very closely watched by the R.I.C. On that day Drohan left Clonmel to get in touch with Pierce McCann, leaving the rest of us to get the men out of Clonmel with their arms and having arranged where he would meet us later. It was difficult to get armed men out of the town without the attention of the police, so we arranged that most of the rifles would be taken out in a breadvan, the driver of which was Thomas Barrett of Heywood Road, Clonmel. He was a reliable man and he was to bring the arms to Lisronagh where we would meet the van. This is about three miles north of Clonmel. Other Volunteers also turned up at Lisronagh where they waited for word from McCann but, having received none, they returned home. Drohan came back that night and said he had got in touch with some of McCann's men and found that they were not out either.

In view of McCann's previous message to us, we could not understand the situation and wondered why McCann's own men, that is, the men in his local area, had made no move. It was only afterwards we heard the explanation put forward for this. It seems that members of McCann's men had gone to Confession just as our men had done in Clonmel but that Dean Ryan, who was in Cashel at the time, had refused to hear their confessions and, having learned the purpose of their mass confessions, he spoke against the intended rising and advised them to return to their homes. This story was current after the Rising but I am unable to say whether it was true or not. If it was, however, it would account for the failure of McCann's men to turn out as they would likely be impressed by the Dean's advice.

On the Friday, Saturday and Sunday the houses of all the leaders of the Volunteers in Clonmel were being continually watched by the R.I.C. On the Saturday we knew

that the fighting had ceased in Dublin and that the Volunteers there had surrendered.

On the following Monday night Frank Drohan, Sean Morrissey, Thomas Halpin, Seamus Ryan and some others were arrested and brought to Tipperary Barracks. They were then brought to Richmond Barracks, Dublin, and were eventually interned in Frongoch.

In the following week another batch was arrested including myself. We were brought to the military barracks in Clonmel, kept there for two days and brought before a court martial. We were brought before a Board of British Army Officers and questioned regarding our associations with the Volunteer movement and our movements during Easter Week. We admitted our membership of the Volunteers. We were asked what arms we possessed but we gave no information on this. We were asked where we were on such-and-such a day and we gave vague answers. The parish priest of St. Peter and Paul's Church in Clonmel was a Canon Flavin. He wrote a letter at the time to the local papers condemning the action of the authorities in arresting a number of citizens. Apparently his letter had some effect because we, that is, those arrested in the second batch, were with one exception released on the following day. The man from our batch who was still held in custody had been a clerical worker up to Easter Week in the military barracks in Clonmel, Jeremiah Purcell. Purcell was a Volunteer, of course, and he was also interned in Frongoch.

At the time of the Rising the extreme nationalist element was in a very small minority and the general public neither knew nor cared very much about what went on in national affairs until the Rising brought this forcibly to their consciousness. The belief amongst the general public

then was that the Rising had been organised and instigated by the Labour people in Dublin. Labour Party journals had spoken very forcibly for some time before this, and the general public who were not aware of the ins-and-outs of the situation looked upon the Rising as being purely the work of the Citizen Army, but very soon after the Rising the people's natural curiosity made them inquire somewhat more deeply and the names of the executed leaders showed them their misunderstanding of the situation. Naturally feelings were shocked by the executions and there was a rapid change in public opinion which now became entirely sympathetic to the Volunteers and the ideals of national independence. Despite this change of public opinion, there were some who thought that, while they sympathised with the men who had fought, irreparable harm had been done by the Rising and, now that the British had been provided with an excuse to renew the state of national bondage, we would now never have any chance of getting Home Rule. This was the feeling of the Irish Party adherents at that time, or numbers of them, but in the ensuing months the wave of national sentiment kept growing and a new viewpoint was taken by numbers of those who voiced the Irish Party's sentiments after the Rising. From day to day there was a growing sentiment and sympathy for the men who had so bravely fought and sacrificed their lives for the national ideal, so that by the time the first of the prisoners were released from Frongoch about the beginning of September, there had been almost a complete swing-over of national sentiment in our favour.

The arrival home of the prisoners was signalled in Clonmel, as elsewhere, with public welcomes, bands and processions being there to greet the released prisoners. Those of us who had not been imprisoned did our best to organise these things in such a way as to make the most

of the occasion in working up popular enthusiasm.

All the prisoners who had been arrested in Clonmel were released about that time, with the exception of Jerry Purcell. Purcell was a humorous kind of a fellow who could never resist a wisecrack or smart answer when the occasion arose. I believe the reason why he was not released with the others from Frongoch was because, when we were brought before this Board of Officers that I mentioned in Clonmel after our arrest, he gave some smart answers to his questioners which irritated them. The Colonel who presided on the Board and who knew Purcell well from his employment in the barracks, becoming annoyed at Purcell's answers to questions, suddenly asked him, "Do you know who I am?", to which Purcell smilingly replied, "Yes, sir. You are a soldier". So apparently it was for his "impudence" that his retention in Frongoch from August until the following Christmas was recommended by the local military authorities.

After the homecoming of the prisoners, efforts were made to keep the Volunteer organisation going and to keep in touch with Volunteer units in neighbouring towns. A scheme of reorganisation was undertaken to re-establish the old units on a firm footing and to provide for the establishment of new ones. Several of us from Clonmel travelled backwards and forwards to these neighbouring towns and villages to organise and help in the training of these new units. This work went on from the latter part of 1916 and during 1917. Recruits were coming in slowly and we were endeavouring to get any arms we could. Drilling went on all the time and generally we tried to keep the organisation as strong as we possibly could.

In March, 1918, came the conscription crisis, the threat of which immediately swelled the ranks of the

Volunteers by reason of the fact that numbers of young men, who up till then were only mildly, if at all, interested in the activities of the Volunteers, now flocked into the ranks as their only refuge against conscription into the British armed forces. Recruits of this kind came in by hundreds, so that our re-organisation campaign had to extend itself to cope with the numbers we then had to deal with. Drilling and field training were then carried on openly and on a big scale. The campaign generally against conscription was led by the Volunteers and it was they who principally arranged for the signing of the anti-conscription pledge outside the church gates in each district.

After the threat of conscription was removed, about the autumn of 1918, the numbers fell rather drastically, but still we had a fairly good number of men who were all reliable and loyal. A good few of those who had come in under the conscription threat remained on as enthusiastic Volunteers from then onwards, though others had faded away.

Coming towards the end of 1918, the impending general elections took precedence in the national effort and the attention of Volunteers was, therefore, directed to assistance in the election work. The arranging of meetings in support of the Sinn Féin candidates, the policing of these meetings, protection of the polling stations and the ballot boxes and all such work became around that time the principal function of the Volunteers who nevertheless carried on their military training apart from this.

To show how anxious the Volunteers were to assist in the election work, I remember that it was quite a usual thing for Volunteers to come along to the election headquarters after their day's work to inquire whether there was anything they could do to help and they thought nothing

of mounting their bicycles and cycling ten or twelve miles - starting off at one or two in the morning - with a parcel of election literature or suchlike, in the belief that they were in this way making a contribution to the national cause.

Drohan was arrested in 1918, the time of the alleged German plot. Seán Morrissey was appointed Commandant of the Clonmel Battalion and I was appointed Vice Commandant. With Morrissey I attended meetings of the Brigade Council, as the South Tipperary Brigade had also been formed early in 1918. These meetings were held in different places in South Tipperary but usually in Rosegreen area and sometimes Boherlehan or Ahermayle. The Brigade Commander was Seumas Robinson and the Vice Commandant, Seán Treacy. Dan Breen was Quartermaster and the Adjutant was, I believe, Maurice Crowe, although I never met Crowe at that time as I think he was in jail at the time I attended meetings. The procedure at the meetings was mostly of the informal kind. There was no very definite agenda and attention was concentrated chiefly on what was most important at the time. The meetings were attended by the members of the Brigade Staff, or those of them who were not in jail at the time, together with representatives of each of the Battalions comprising the Brigade. Correspondence was read from G.H.Q.

At these meetings, although he did not speak very much, we all felt that Seán Treacy was a man of exceptional ability and courage. Though he was a great idealist, he was also a very practical realist. Studious by nature, he went through military manuals and picked out from a great mass of material anything that would be of value to Volunteer training. As a leader, he commanded the respect and admiration of the men under him. Without detracting at all from the ability of Seumas Robinson as the Brigade

Commander, we all felt that Seán Treacy was an exceptional character. Even at that time which was long before his fame had grown, I say we all felt that he was an exceptional leader and a great soldier and a man who, if he had not come to such an untimely end, would have risen to very great heights in military life.

The first time I saw Seamus Robinson and Seán Treacy following the ambush of police at Soloheadbeg, which was on January 21st, 1919, was at a meeting of the Brigade Council in Boherlahan. As well as I remember, the ambush was not discussed at the meeting but, of course, the matter was discussed informally between the officers present before and after the meeting.

During 1919 and 1920 our activities consisted of the usual Volunteer activities at the time. There were raids for arms and sporadic attacks on barracks at Kilsheelan and Kilmanahan.

In the case of a large-scale attack on the barracks at Clerihan, our Companies in Clonmel were detailed to block the roads between Clerihan and Clonmel. They were to hold back any military that might come from Clonmel to the rescue. This attack was planned and arranged by the Brigade Staff. Robinson, Breen and some others of the Brigade Staff were present. Actually the attack never came off, although everything went ahead as planned up to the last hour. The Clonmel Companies turned out as arranged and proceeded to block the roads, taking up position to cover the road blocks by fire in case of relief parties coming from Clonmel. There we waited expecting the attack on the barracks to begin, but for some reason or other this did not take place. We returned to Clonmel in the morning and it was only then we learned that the attack had not

been carried out.

Following this episode, there was, of course, a lot of argument and inquiry as to why the planned attack had not been carried out, but nothing very definite emerged from all this except some story, of which I do not know whether it was true or not, that someone had discovered that there was a bad maternity case in the house adjoining the barracks that night and that this was the reason for calling off the attack at the last minute.

I might mention that at this period a man who gave great service to the Volunteers and who was himself a Volunteer was a postal official called P.J. O'Connell, afterwards Postmaster in Cobh and now Postmaster in Mallow. He used to copy R.I.C. telegrams which were in code and bring out the copies to us at night. As we were in possession of the R.I.C. code which we received from General Headquarters in Dublin, we were able to de-code the telegrams and pass them on to our Brigade Headquarters. O'Connell was a very loyal Volunteer and took a great risk in doing what he did.

On the morning after Bloody Sunday (November 21st, 1920) I was warned that the military were raiding in the town. Frank Drohan, who lived near me, also came along and we both succeeded in getting away just in time. From then to July, 1921, we were both on the run. Other members of the Volunteers in Clonmel on the run with us were Denis Skehan and James Ryan. We moved around in our Battalion area, sleeping in different places and helping to keep things moving as much as we could. Several officers of the Clonmel Battalion were arrested in the round-up of November 21st and their loss was a big blow to the Battalion.

About the end of the year, 1920, when the Flying Columns were being formed, Skehan and myself tried to join a Column but we were not allowed as the number composing the columns was limited and we were informed by Brigade that Battalion officers were not to join.

We continued on as Battalion officers for a couple of months longer until about March or April, 1921, when we both were allowed to join Seán Hogan's Column which had been formed subsequent to the formation of the other 3rd Tipperary Brigade Column. Denis Lacey's Column was the other Column that operated in South Tipperary area. We were in Seán Hogan's Column up to the time Active Service Units were formed shortly before the Truce. This latter development came into being with the formation of the 2nd Southern Division, the idea being to have a fighting unit similar to the columns in each Battalion area.

During our time with Hogan's Column there was very little active engagement with the enemy. At various times plans were made to carry out attacks or ambushes but always something turned up to upset the arrangements. In some cases we were in position awaiting an enemy patrol but they failed to turn up and, in other cases, our plans were upset by enemy activity in the neighbourhood or something of the kind. By far the most active Column in South Tipperary was that of Denis Lacey who was afterwards killed in the Civil War.

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____

W. Myles
(W. Myles)
Jan. 28th 1853.

-WITNESS: _____

J. V. Lawless Col.
(J V. Lawless) Col.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
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