

ORIGINAL

N. A. 1,015

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 1015

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,015

Witness

Jeremiah Daly,
Ballydaheen,
Mallow,
Co. Cork.

Identity.

Member of Blackpool Coy. Irish Vol's.
Cork, 1918 - ;
Vice O/C. Mallow Battalion I.R.A.

Subject.

Irish Volunteers, Cork-Mallow,
1918-1923.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

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STATEMENT BY JEREMIAH DALY,
Ballydaheen, Mallow, County Cork.

I was born in Ballydaheen, Mallow, on 30th April, 1902.

In the summer of 1918 I was sent to do a course of study at Skerry's College, Cork. Shortly after going to Cork I joined the Blackpool Company of the Irish Volunteers. The O.C. was Chris. O'Gorman and I think the Company was attached to the 2nd Battalion, Cork Brigade. I continued as a member of this Company, taking part in the various drills, parades and other activities until I returned to Mallow early in 1920. I then joined the Mallow Company whose O.C., at the time, was Jack Cunningham. The strength of the Unit was about 80.

During the summer of 1920 we were engaged in carrying out a number of raids for arms in the area. About 20 to 25 shotguns and some 200 rounds of ammunition, as well as one webley revolver, were obtained in this way. These raids were carried out by Jack Cunningham, Tadg Byrne, Leo O'Callaghan, Bryan Kelly, Ned Waters, Jeremiah Daly (witness) and a number of others.

About this time also information was received by the Company O.C. from Jack Barrett (later Divisional O.C., Communications), who was employed on the Great Southern and Western Railway at Mallow, that a consignment of military stores was at Mallow Station. These stores were in two wagons (sealed) awaiting transfer to Tralee. It was ascertained that the wagons contained petrol in two gallon tins. Arrangements were made by the O.C., Jack Cunningham, to seize these stores and about 40 members of the Company were mobilised in the vicinity of the Station about 9 p.m. on the night fixed for the raid. Amongst those present were the O/C., Jack Cunningham, Tadg Byrne, Jackie Bolster, Dick Willis, Joe Morgan, Pat Sullivan, "Congo" Moloney, Jack Barrett and Jeremiah Daly (witness). The petrol was removed to a disused pumphouse belonging to Mallow Creamery where it was dumped.

The Company officers at this time were :-

Captain Jack Cunningham,
1st. Lieut. Tadg Byrne,
2nd Lieut. Leo O'Callaghan.

Beyond the normal routine parades and drills there was nothing of note in the area until late August or early September, 1920. One night about this time the engine of the night mail train from Cork to Dublin was boarded by Tadg Byrne and Jack Cunningham as it moved out from Mallow Station. It was halted less than a mile from the Station where I was waiting with a number of other members of the Mallow Company to board the mail van. Having taken over the mail van the train moved on slowly to Two-pot-House where a large quantity of mail was removed to a car, which was driven by Leo O'Callaghan to Dromahane area. These mails, after being censored, were returned through other Post Offices in the district. During this month also a Brigade Flying Column had been assembled at Mourne Abbey. It was under the Brigade O.C., Liam Lynch, and Ernie O'Malley from G.H.Q. was in charge of training. The Brigade O.C. decided to make an attempt to capture Mallow Military Barracks and for this purpose the vast majority of the members of the Companies adjacent to Mallow were alerted. As a member of the Mallow Company this was my first major engagement.

This raid took place on Tuesday, 28th September, 1920. On the previous Sunday I was taken by Jack Cunningham to the Royal Hotel, Mallow, where I was given an opportunity of handling a Service Rifle for the first time. Owen Fahy, who was a Volunteer and a member of the Intelligence Staff, had the rifle. With me on that day were Leo O'Callaghan, Dick Willis, Jackie Bolster, Jack "Congo" Moloney as well as the Company O.C.

On the evening previous to the raid on the barracks the house of Tadg Byrne (1st Lieut. of Company) was raided while he was at a meeting

in Mourne Abbey. This meeting was, I think, in connection with the final arrangements for the operation. Liam Lynch, Ernie O'Malley together with Dick Willis and Jackie Bolster were also at the meeting.

About midnight on the night of 27th September, 1920, I was instructed- together with Jack Barrett (Spratts) - to take up duty in Ballydaheen and to await the arrival of the Column which we were then to lead to the Town Hall. The first party to arrive about 1 a.m. included Jack Cunningham, Jackie Bolster, Dick Willis and Tadg Byrne. I came to the Town Hall with this party. One of the party climbed up to a window in the Sinn Féin room which was partly open. He got into the room through this window and then opened the door to allow the others in. We then opened the door of the fire-escape at the side of the Hall and awaited the arrival of the Column which arrived about 2.30 a.m.

I remained in the Town Hall until about 6 a.m. when I was instructed by Jack Cunningham (Company O.C.) to mobilise some other members of the unit. When this duty was finished I returned to the Town Hall about 7 a.m. where I remained until about 9 a.m. when I went with the Column to the Military Barracks. Before leaving the Hall I was instructed to take Denis Murphy (Kanturk) and another Volunteer whose name I do not recollect to a position from which we could cover the entrance to Barrack Street from the Main Street. We were armed with rifles.

When the post had actually been captured I went into the barracks to help to load the material on to the cars and I later withdrew with the Column as far as the end of Ballydaheen. I then returned home.

On the Sunday following the raid there was a parade of the Mallow Company at Barristers Wood when a Company of the Manchesters, who replaced the 17th Lancers here following the capture of the barracks,

nearly surrounded us. There were about 60 on parade and it was only with the greatest difficulty that we succeeded in escaping. The parade was in charge of Jack Cunningham.

I remained around Mallow for about six weeks after the raid. At this time I was appointed by the Brigade O.C. to reorganise the Company as all the Company Officers were now 'on the run'. I continued to keep the organisation moving in the town until one day I overheard some soldiers talking in a public house about the raid on the barracks. They made reference to an early round up of suspects. I left Mallow that night. Incidentally, I had not been sleeping at home since the end of September, 1920.

When I moved out I went into Mourne Abbey district where I made contact with the Brigade Column. This was about the middle of November. I remained in the Mourne Abbey district until after Christmas, 1920, when I joined a Training Camp at Nadd. This Camp was under the control of Paddy O'Brien (Brigade Quartermaster) and the Training Officer was William "Dorney" Regan of the Castletownroche Battalion.

Mallow Battalion was represented at this Camp by Jack Cunningham, Ned Murphy, Joe Morgan and witness Jeremiah Daly. The Kanturk, Newmarket, Millstreet and Charleville Battalions were also represented but I cannot now recollect the names of those who were there.

There was very little drilling as such carried out at this camp. We were mainly engaged on instruction in the use and care of arms, the use of cover, tactical exercises and the duties of scouts and outposts.

When we returned from this camp towards the end of January, 1921, the Battalion Column was formed. The first members of the Column were Joe Morgan, "Congo" Moloney, Tadg McCarthy, Ned Waters, Batt Walsh, Leo O'Callaghan, Tadg Mullane, Denis Mulcahy, Tom Callaghan, William Roche, Con Buckley, Dan McCarthy, Jeremiah Daly (witness) and

Jack Cunningham, O/C. The Column was armed with rifles, about 50 rounds of ammunition for each. Some members had revolvers. Those members of the Column who were not in their home^{area} were billeted in the Lombardstown district particularly at Paddy Murphy's, Dan Healy's and Riordan's.

About the end of January the Column moved into the Mournay Abbey area where they lay in ambush a few times but the expected enemy did not turn up. In the meantime a report was received by the Column O/C. that a party of three or four Black & Tans were in the habit of visiting Mallow Railway Station about the time the night mail train was due to leave Mallow each night at 9.30 p.m. They were, apparently, taking some letters to the railway for dispatch by the "Mail". The O.C. decided to ambush this party so on 31st January, 1921 he took five other members of the Column to Mallow Railway Station where they were placed as follows :-

- (a) Four - Jack Moloney ("Congo"), Denis Mulcahy, Jeremiah Daly (witness) and the Column O/C. (Jack Cunningham) took up a position behind a wall facing the road to the station entrance. They were armed with revolvers.
- (b) Two - Leo O'Callaghan and Ned Murphy - were on duty on the road at the opposite side of the railway in order to cover off any approach from the rere. They also carried revolvers.

When a party of three was seen to approach, the ambush party as at (a) opened fire. There was no reply from the Tans. The R.I.C. and Black & Tans who were in the barracks less than 250 yards away immediately rushed to the railway station. They began to fire shots indiscriminately. Three railway employees were shot dead while a number were also wounded. The ambush party at (a) then withdrew across the railway and retired with the Column O.C. I moved to Murphy's, Laharn Cross, where we billeted.

Early in February we moved into Glándine area where we remained a few days. We next moved to Gleannavigne in Mourne Abbey area where we received word that a convoy of Black & Tans had passed by the Glen road via Beanaskéha to Cork. This would be, I'd say, about 10th February, 1921. We took up a position at Beanaskeha about three miles from Killavullen on the Cork-Kilavullen road, but although we remained in position until dusk the enemy party did not return. We then returned to our billets where we remained until the evening of the 14th February, 1921 when we moved during the night into a position in the Mourne Abbey district.

We took up a position on the opposite side (Western) of the road to Leary's Rock, which is situated about six miles from Mallow, on the Cork-Mallow road. It was about 5 a.m. at this time. We were behind a stonefaced fence on rising ground and about 150 yards from the actual site on the road where it was proposed to ambush the enemy party.

BURN FORT

The Volunteers from the ~~Barnsfort~~ Company under Tadg Looney were in position at the eastern side of the road on a high projection of rock more or less directly over the position selected to hold up the convoy. Some members of this party were responsible for blocking the road with a cart when the enemy party approached. The expected convoy was supposed to be escorting General Cummings, O.C. Buttevant Military Post, to a conference of the officers commanding the British Forces in the Southern Command area.

When the Column was moving into position that morning, lights were noticed in the farmhouse of Joe Corry at Mooneparson, Mourne Abbey. When the Column O.C. went to investigate he found that Corry was getting ready to go to a fair at Donoughmore. Corry was ordered not to go to the fair or to leave the farmyard until he got instructions from the O.C.. As far as I know Corry did not leave

his house until after we had withdrawn from our position sometime before noon that day.

The Column remained in position until some^{time} about 11 a.m. when I heard shots being fired in the fields across the road at the rere of the old Dispensary. When I looked in the direction of the shooting I saw about 40 or 50 soldiers walking in extended order across the fields at the rere of the party from Burnfort Company at Leary's Rock. The Column O.C. (Jack Cunningham) then ordered us to retire.

When the members of the Column, with the exception of Jack Cunningham, Leo O'Callaghan, Ned Murphy and Jeremiah Daly (witness), had withdrawn Leo O'Callaghan noticed Danny McDonnell (I.O., Mallow Company) making his way towards our position along the glen below us. We waited 'till he arrived and then we moved across a boreen leading to some fields at the rere of Corry's farmhouse. Ned Murphy was first to cross and as he did so a shot rang out. I followed after a short interval and there was ^{A VALLEY OF} another shots. I found that I had been struck on the back of the right hand by a splinter knocked off a stone in the gap through which I had come. Jack Cunningham and Leo O'Callaghan followed.

We continued to withdraw under cover of the fences in a westerly direction. In a short time we came under fire from a machine gun placed somewhere near Mooneparson Cross. However, we managed to get to the Mooneparson Cross - Mourne Abbey Creamery road, which we crossed in safety and then headed for Nursetown. When we reached Denis Horgan's house in that district we found the remainder of the Column enjoying a welcome meal. After a short time we moved to Gleannmurnane and some of the Column went on to Derrygowna near Nadd.

The Volunteers under Tadg Looney on the Leary's Rock side of the road were practically surrounded by enemy forces. They endeavoured to withdraw in the direction of their home districts but met with

considerable opposition. It was only their intimate knowledge of the area which saved them from complete annihilation. As it was this party lost three killed, one wounded and a number were taken prisoner. Two of those taken prisoner were tried by drumhead courtmartial in the Detention Barracks, Cork, and were executed. Their names were Patrick Ronayne and Thomas Mulcahy. The names of those killed were Patrick Dorgan, Patrick Flynn, Edward Creedon, while Michael Looney died of wounds.

Shortly after this engagement the Brigade O.C. held an investigation into the whole affair. It was generally accepted, at the time, that there had been a leakage of information but it was not found possible to trace the source of the leakage. There was a certain amount of suspicion amongst the locals but I think it is now generally accepted by all concerned that the information reached the enemy through an ex British soldier - Shiels - who was a member of the Kanturk Column. This man disappeared after a somewhat similar incident at Nadd on 10th March, 1921 when the Brigade Staff, as well as Mallow and Kanturk Columns, were nearly surrounded.

Towards the end of February, 1921, the Mallow Column proceeded on the instructions of the Brigade O.C. (Liam Lynch) into the Kanturk Battalion area where the joint Columns underwent a course of training under the Column O/Cs., Jack Cunningham and Denis Murphy. The training followed the lines of that already undergone at the previous Camp in the same district in early January. It was generally accepted, at the time, that the amalgamation of the Columns was due to an idea held by the Brigade O.C. - particularly following Mourne Abbey - that the Battalion Column, as a unit, was not strong enough, but I'm of the opinion that our Column (Mallow) was sent into Kanturk to liven things up in the area.

The Brigade Headquarters was at this time at Paddy McCarthy's, Nadd. Liam Lynch, George Power and Mossie Walsh were, I think, billeted

there. The presence of Brigade Headquarters meant that the Columns had to take turns at guard duty with the local Volunteers.

On the 7th March, 1921, some members of the joint Columns to the number of about twelve proceeded to Father Murphy's Bridge on the Banteer-Duincha road where they lay in ambush for a patrol of R.I.C. which travelled this road at regular intervals. Amongst the members of the Kanturk Column who were to parade for this job was Shiels (referred to previously in connection with investigation into Mourne Abbey), but he did not parade. The patrol did not arrive on this date. We, however, billeted in the area that night and again took up positions inside the roadside fence on the following morning about 8 a.m. The patrol arrived after mid-day and were ambushed. One "Tan" was killed and the party were disarmed. Four rifles and four revolvers were captured. Jack Cunningham, Joe Morgan, Jeremiah Daly (witness) of the Mallow Column took part in this engagement.

Denis Murphy, Ned Donoghue, - Lehane and "Rocky" Leary were some of the members of the Kanturk Column who were present on this occasion.

On the evening of the 8th March, 1921 the ambush party returned to the "Barracks" - this was Herlihy's house at Nadd where a large number of the Column usually billeted. On the following evening, with Jack Cunningham, Ned Donoghue, Denis Lyons and Denis Murphy and members of the Kanturk Column, I proceeded to Dromagh Castle where we were to meet some men from the Newmarket area with petrol and other materials to enable us to burn the Castle. The Newmarket party did not turn up so we billeted in the area that night and did the job the following night (10th March, 1921). While we were away on this job the enemy surrounded the Nadd area, including Brigade Headquarters, but nearly all our men got away. We lost, however, three killed (Ned Waters, - Kiely and - Herlihy) while two were wounded - Joe Morgan and Jack ("Congo") Moloney. We joined the rest of the Column at Kiely's, Kilcorney, on the morning of 11th March, 1921.

About this time I was appointed a Section Leader in the Column and Battalion Vice O.C., while Joe Morgan was Column Quartermaster. I was also engaged in visiting the various Companies in the Battalion to instruct the members in the use and care of arms as well as to assist in their general military training.

Early in April, 1921 the enemy forces in the area attempted a big round up in the Mallow-Donoughmore area. They were, as far as I can recollect, searching for Mrs. Lindsay who was arrested by the I.R.A. following an ambush at Dripsey as a result of which a number of I.R.A. men, from the Donoughmore Battalion - lost their lives. Mrs. Lindsay was alleged to have passed on information to the enemy at Ballincollig regarding the position of our forces who were thus surprised by the enemy.

In order to prevent the encirclement of the Mallow and Donoughmore battalion Columns, which were in the area, the bridges over the Clydagh River on the Glantane-Mallow and Beving-Mallow roads were demolished by members of the Lombardstown-Kilshannig and Ahadillane Companies of the Mallow Battalion. These jobs were carried out under the supervision of Jack Cunningham, Jeremiah Hanlon, Ned Murphy and witness (Jeremiah Daly). On the morning following the demolition of the bridges large parties of the enemy were held up on the Mallow side of Upper Clydagh Bridge while a large party with several lorries and two armoured cars were on the other side of Lower Clydagh bridge. The enemy were thus prevented from closing the ring inside where they had hoped to trap the Columns as well as to find Mrs. Lindsay.

The training of Company personnel was continued by me at this time and, until I was instructed by Battalion O.C. (Tadg Byrne) to report to Laharn Cross on 15th June, 1921, I was operating in the Mourne Abbey area.

On the evening of 15th June, 1921, I received a note from Battalion O.C. (Tadg Byrne) to report with Tadg Mullane (a member of the Column) to Laharn Cross about 9 p.m. We arrived at the meeting place at about 8 p.m. and had some refreshments. We found the other members of the Column assembled and we were informed that we were moving into Millstreet Battalion area. Amongst the members of the Column present were Leo O'Callaghan, Batt. Walshe, Ned Murphy, Joe Morgan, Con Buckley, Paddy Buckley, Tadg McCarthy, Tadg Mullane, Jeremiah Daly (witness) and Jack Cunningham, O/C. When transport was obtained we moved off for the Millstreet area. We billeted that night in a haybarn quite close to Rathcoole wood.

At daybreak on 16th June we moved into Rathcoole wood where we met the members of the battalion Columns from Newmarket, Millstreet, Charleville, Kanturk and the Brigade Vice O.C., Paddy O'Brien. The strength of the combined Columns must have been close on 130 while there were also a number of Volunteers from the local Companies present. About 80 members of the party were armed with rifles while the remainder carried shotguns. In addition, Leo O'Callaghan had a ^{MACHINE GUN} ~~shotgun~~ which he was handed when we got to Rathcoole.

The whole party were divided into sections - riflemen and shot-gun men being interspersed. Six mines were laid in the road between Rathcoole and Drishanebeg in the early morning. They were laid at intervals in an area extending over about 1,000 yards and so spaced as to coincide with the estimated positions of the enemy lorries travelling in convoy. A section of the combined Columns was allocated to cover off each mine, while there were also parties on the flanks to cover off the main body. All the parties were at the south side of the road except a party of about six on the opposite side.

When all these arrangements had been completed in the early morning we all withdrew into the wood to await the report of our

scouts. Sometime round 10 or 11 a.m. a convoy of four lorries was reported travelling from Millstreet to Banteer through the ambush. They were allowed through and similarly on their return journey, as it was known that they usually made a double journey each day.

About 2.30 p.m. the scouts again reported a convoy of four lorries travelling through the position east to Banteer. When the convoy had passed, all sections moved into their pre-arranged positions about 3 p.m. With Tadg McCarthy (Mallow Column) and Denis Murphy (Kanturk Column), I was placed with about three others (local Volunteers) in a position on the right flank. In or about an hour later the enemy party (all Auxiliaries) approached the ambush position from Banteer side. I should have mentioned that our position on the flank would be about 500 yards from the centre of the ambush site. There were four lorries in the convoy.

When the first lorry was about a half mile from us it halted. The "Auxies" in it jumped on to the road and over the fence. We thought that our position had been discovered but the party returned to the lorry in a minute or two and again all four lorries moved towards the ambush site. In less than five minutes the whole convoy had passed from our view and within a minute or two we heard an explosion. There was then heavy rifle fire from the sections on our left, while there was no scarcity of rifle and machine-gun fire from the enemy positions. When the fight had been in progress for about an hour the volume of fire from the position on our left grew less and we noticed that they were withdrawing. We immediately did likewise. It later transpired that we did not hear the signal to withdraw. This engagement was broken off because the I.R.A. were unable to silence the machine guns of the enemy party who had been in the second and third lorries which had not moved into positions in which our mines could be utilised to blow them up.

With the exception of the party on the north side of the road, all parties withdrew in a southerly direction by a pre-arranged route to the rear. On re-assembly it was found that we had no casualties and all Columns withdrew to their home districts. After refreshments at HOLL Carthy's bridge, we proceeded to Mallow battalion area on foot. We billeted next day in the Laharn Cross district. The enemy losses are not known but it was rumoured at the time that there were between 10 and 15 killed and wounded.

About the end of June and early in July the Battalion Column sniped military and Black & Tan posts in Mallow, on a number of occasions. I think it was about the last week in June, when a Battalion Council meeting was held at Hegarty's, Kilcoleman, while the enemy forces were carrying out a large-scale round-up in the area. We felt so secure in our scouting and protection plans that the meeting continued until the business had been completed. All present then returned to their own Company areas.

Cork II. Brigade, which up to now consisted of Mallow, Fermoy, Castletownroche, Kanturk, Newmarket, Millstreet and Charleville battalions, was at this time considered too unwieldy. As far as I can recollect the area had been divided unofficially for some time between the Brigade O.C. (George Power) and Vice O.C. (Paddy O'Brien) - the latter being responsible for the western section comprising Mallow, Kanturk, Newmarket, Millstreet and Charleville Battalions, while George Power looked after the remainder. This arrangement was regularised as at Brigade Council meeting held at Dromahane on 10th July, 1921. The meeting was attended by Liam Lynch, Divisional O.C., 1st Southern Division. Paddy O'Brien's area was designated Cork IV. Brigade with the following officers:-

O/C. Paddy O'Brien, Liscarrol,
 Vice O/C. Ned Murphy, Lombardstown,
 Adjutant Eugene McCarthy, Charleville,
 Quartermaster Mick O'Connell, Lombardstown.

The new Cork III. Brigade was composed of Castletownroche, Glanworth and Fermoy Battalions, together with Lismore Battalion of Waterford Brigade. The officers were :-

O/C. George Power, Fermoy,

Vice O.C. William Regan, Doneraile ("Dorney"),

Adjutant Dan Shinnick, Castletownroche,

Quartermaster Tom Hunter, Castletownroche.

The strength of the Mallow Battalion at the Truce was about 500.

My rank at date of Truce was Vice O.C., Mallow Battalion.

Following the Truce, we set up Battalion Headquarters in an unoccupied house at Laharn, Lombardstown. For some weeks I was engaged in touring the area on the work of training and organisation. Towards the end of the summer I attended a Brigade Training Camp at Liscarrol. Paddy O'Brien was in charge of the Camp while Seán Breen was Training Officer. At this camp there was a regular schedule of drilling, guard duty and military routine. Sometime later about October, I attended a training camp at Rathcoole where instructions in the use and care of small arms were given. I was accompanied to the latter Camp by Jack Cunningham and Joe Morgan.

During the remainder of 1921 I was engaged in organisation work throughout the Battalion as well as assisting and controlling the training which was carried out at a number of training camps in the battalion area. At these camps Company officers and members of the various Companies underwent a course of training on the same lines as that carried on at the Brigade Camps.

When the Mallow Barracks was taken over in January, 1922, I moved in with other members of the Battalion Staff and was mainly engaged on administrative duties until August, 1922 when we evacuated the Barracks and again took the field.

Early in 1922, Mallow Mills were taken over by the employees on behalf of the Labour Party. The Red Flag was flown over the premises. At the same time the proprietor of the Mills was kidnapped. In order to maintain law and order in the area, the Battalion O.C. ordered a guard to be placed on the Mills to keep a check on the activities of the party who had seized the premises. A thorough search of the area was carried out by the I.R.A. in an endeavour to establish the whereabouts of Major T.D. Hallinan (the owner of the Mills) and to secure his return. He was eventually found by members of the local I.R.A. in Bulgaden, County Limerick, where he was being held a prisoner. On his return to Mallow a guard was supplied for his home while the guard arrangements already in operation at the Mill continued.

From August, 1922 to the "Cease Fire" in May, 1923, I was operating with the Columns against Free State Forces throughout the Brigade area.

On 1st July, 1922 I was ~~was~~ O.C. Mallow Battalion, I.R.A.

Signed:

Jeremiah Daly

Date:

28th September 1954

(Jeremiah Daly)

28th September 1954.

Witness:

Phil O'Donnell

(Phil O'Donnell)

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