

ORIGINAL

W.S. 1,033

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1033

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,033.....

Witness

Patrick Glynn,  
Ballytura,  
Gort,  
Co. Galway.

Identity.

Member of Kilbecanty Coy. Irish Volunteers,  
Co. Galway, 1917 - ;

Vice-Comd't. Gort Batt'n. Galway South-West Brigade.

Subject.

National and military activities,  
South-West Galway, 1917-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.2351.....

Form B.S.M. 2

# ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1033

STATEMENT BY PATRICK GLYNN.

Ballyturn, Gort, County Galway.

I was born on the 17th February, 1891 at Lisbrien in the parish of Kilbecanty, Co. Galway. I attended the Reyraver National School until I was about fifteen years of age.

My father and his father before him were active members of the National Movements in their time. My grandfather was a Fenian and my father belonged to the Land League and later to the United Irish League. My father had studied for some years at Maynooth College in preparation for the priesthood, but ill-health compelled him to abandon his studies in that direction.

I learned a good deal from my father after leaving school including a fair knowledge of the Irish Language. He had a good speaking knowledge of the Language and knew his Catechism in Irish from cover to cover. He was a very good singer and very fond of singing Raftery's "Maire ní Eidin." He had a book of Irish songs entitled "An Ceol Sidhe" from which he sang "Cailín deas Cruidhte na mBó" and other songs. He was also fond of singing patriotic songs in English including "The Rising of the Moon", "Skibbereen", "Pat O'Donnell", "John Mitchell" and "Willie Reilly". The last named was a patriotic ballad, not the love-song of the same name. I heard those songs at home from my father, and similar songs and ballads at weddings and social gatherings in my neighbourhood. Through those songs I got my first lessons in Irish History and learned enough from them to realise something of the fight put up by my countrymen against the invader.

I joined the Irish Volunteers in early summer 1917 being recruited and sworn in by Volunteer Michael Ryan of Gortacornane, Gort, now Rev. Michael Ryan, Australia. The name of the Company I joined was Kilbecanty. The Company area and the parish area were identical and the Company took its name from the parish. The strength was about twenty-five to thirty men when I joined. The Company was comprised of four Sections, namely Cloone, Gortacornane, Lisbrien and Ballycahalane. Thomas Hynes was Section Commander of the Lisbrien Section to which I belonged. Company officers were :-

Captain John Coen,  
 1st. Lieutenant Daniel Ryan, later Brigade Quartermaster,  
 Galway South West Brigade.  
 2nd Lieutenant Martin McGrath, now chairman, South Galway Board  
 of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

The Company turned out for parade, drill etc two evenings every week after the ordinary day's work was finished. We met in a field away from public roads. Venue varied so that Volunteers did not have to make a long journey twice a week. After roll call on each parade there was foot drill but no arms drill for the simple reason that we had no arms. By the end of 1917 the Company strength had increased to about sixty men with the same officers in command. The strength did not vary very much from then to the Truce except perhaps at the time when the threat of Conscription drove a few extra into the ranks.

I worked for at least six weeks in November and December, 1918 on behalf of the Sinn Féin candidate in the General Election in South Galway area. The candidate was the late Mr. Frank Fahy so well known for many years afterwards as Ceann Comhairle. Those who worked with me were :- Volunteer Michael Ryan now Rev. Michael Ryan, Australia, Volunteer William Mahoney now Rev. William Mahony, P.P., Kilnadeema, Loughrea, Volunteer Seamus Keeley now District Justice in County Cork, Lieutenant Daniel Ryan afterwards Quartermaster, South West Galway Brigade.

We went to many villages including Derreen, Ballyturn, Derrykeel, Derrabee, Kean's Pound, Reyraver, Bunnaglass, Inchimore and Lisbrien. When we visited a village we collected the inhabitants into one group and spoke to the assembly in favour of the Sinn Féin candidate. I remember that Michael Ryan delighted but sometimes overawed the audience by his fiery eloquence. The electors of these villages responded one hundred per cent to our appeals. We prepared transport (mostly side-cars and traps) to take them to the polls. The night of the election we went into Gort to await the result. While in Gort we heard that there was a fierce battle going on in Loughrea between the big mob supporting the Parliamentary Party in that town and a small party of Irish Volunteers. The message came to Volunteer Patrick J. Piggot later Adjutant, Ardahan Battalion, with a request for assistance. A lorry-load of Volunteers were setting out from Gort when a further message arrived to say that the Loughrea Volunteers had succeeded in restoring order. The mob in Loughrea was composed of natives of the town who had served in the British Army in the 1914/18 war, their wives, families and friends.

I remember the Republican Courts functioning in 1919. The Parish Court sat about once a fortnight in a barn which belonged to a farmer named John Ward of Ballyturn. President of the Court was Michael Fahy, Ballycahalan; Clerk of the Court was Volunteer Thomas Ryan, Kilbecanty Company. I was a Justice and so was John Connolly of Russane. Michael Fahy presided at hearings with Connolly and I and perhaps one other whom I cannot remember on the bench. The cases that came before us were of no great gravity. They were generally cases of minor disputes between neighbouring farmers, trespassing etc. We always endeavoured to get the disputing parties to settle their differences between themselves,

telling them that if they failed to reach agreement to come back again. They usually reached agreement. We were not inclined to fine anybody. We tried to act sensibly and reasonably in those cases and to get the opposing parties to do likewise. As far as I remember, witnesses were not sworn as there was no case of such gravity as merited the taking of an oath. The parties simply related their grievances to the Court and we acted as I have already explained.

In the spring of 1919 our Company paraded and marched into the town of Gort with Company Captain John Coen in charge. I cannot remember why we marched into the town. We were unarmed and were not interfered with by the R.I.C. There was no force of British military in Gort then, ~~nor at any time afterwards except for a short visit of a day or two or when they came in large numbers to round up the area shortly before the Truce.~~ *A Company of Rangers came to the town about the end of 1920 and remained until the Truce* We marched home again without interference. A few days later, however, Company Captain John Coen was arrested in his home in Ballycahalan. He was released unconditionally, as far as I know, in less than a week.

I took part in raids for arms in 1919. The first of these was at Chibby Chase Cottage during late spring or early summer. The weather was fine. Daniel Ryan, 1st. Lieutenant of the Company, was in charge. The others who took part were :- Thomas Keeley, Company Engineer afterwards Battalion Engineer; Volunteer Michael Reilly afterwards Adjutant, Gort Battalion, and a few others whose names I cannot recall. We were armed with two or three shotguns. We took an old type rifle of big bore but got no ammunition to fit it, so it was useless. We also got a twenty bore double-barrelled shotgun and some cartridges for it. We met with no opposition from the occupants of Chibby Chase Cottage, a man named Diviney, gamekeeper for Perrses of Roxboro, and his two sons.

We wore masks but the Diviney family were never hostile to us. The masks were worn so that the Divineys would be in a position, if questioned, to state truthfully that they were unable to recognise us because of the masks.

Our next raid for arms was at Ballyturn House occupied by Mr. John C. Baggott, a landlord and Justice of the Peace. He held some position under the Congested Districts Board. He was an out-and-out Loyalist. He was at home when we arrived but put up no show of resistance. We got a few old swords and a few bayonets or daggers. They served no purpose, and we put them away in some old wall. Lieutenant Daniel Ryan was in charge of this raid also. We were armed with shotguns, about three altogether. The others taking part in the raid were:-

Thomas Keeley,	)	
Michael Reilly	)	Kilbecanty Company.
Myself	)	
John Scully, 2nd Lieutenant	)	
Patrick Walsh, 1st "	)	Derrybrien Company.

We took a double-barrelled shotgun and a few cartridges from Thomas Burke, a farmer from Lisbrien, in August. Burke was shooting grouse when we surrounded him and gave him orders to unload his gun and leave it on the ground. He complied and walked away without looking back. Those taking part were :- Lieutenant Daniel Ryan (in charge), Volunteer Thomas Keeley, Volunteer Michael Reilly and Section Commander Thomas Hynes. We were armed with three shotguns on this occasion and we wore masks.

The fourth and last raid for arms in which I took part was at Loughcutra at the home of a man called Houston, a Scotsman and gamekeeper for Lord Gough. It was the end of September. I remember it well as there was a Retreat in Kilbecanty Parish Church and it was

planned to go to Houstons after the close of the Retreat on the Sunday night. Houston was very hostile but a very brave man. He was a dangerous man as far as the raid was concerned. I remember Lieutenant Daniel Ryan saying that if any man went into Houston's house wearing a mask he would come out a corpse. Lieutenant Ryan asked if any two men would volunteer to go into the house without masks. Volunteer Michael Reilly and I volunteered, as Houston could not possibly know us. He would know Ryan. It was arranged that Volunteer Michael Reilly and I would go into the house and try to lure Houston out.

As Reilly and I approached the gamekeeper's house we met Thomas Houston, his brother. Thomas was bringing in fuel for the fire. We asked him if Mr. Houston was in. He said "Yes, do you want to see him". We answered that we did. He then said he would send him out to us. Houston came out of the house with pipe and matches in his hands. He struck a match and lowered it close to the ground to see if there were more than two of us. He appeared to be very suspicious. We saluted him very civilly and Reilly spun him a yarn about a sick horse. He asked Reilly where we came from and he said Killenena (Co. Clare). When he heard this he was no longer suspicious and he said that he would go to see the horse the following day. We manoeuvred until he was between the two of us. We seized him. He succeeded in pulling his automatic pistol from his jacket pocket. I grabbed the muzzle of the gun and turned the barrel towards his side. I then told him to shoot away if he wanted. I wrenched the Colt .32 automatic from him after the others had come to our assistance. There were six rounds in the Magazine and one in the breach. He said, "If you don't know anything about that be careful with it". Lieutenant Ryan asked me to take charge of Houston while he and the others searched the house. He and I paced up and down the avenue.

I said, "If you have any more ammunition you can give it to me as it is useless to you without this affair". He took thirteen rounds out of his vest pocket and handed them over to me. Ryan and the others got more automatic ammunition in the house and also some shotgun cartridges and a pair of old field-glasses. When they returned, Houston said, "This raid was contemplated on me before now", but when questioned he would not tell where he got the information. It is my belief that when he heard of other raids he took his rifles to the R.I.C. barracks for safe custody. I would like to point out that it was not our desire or intention to injure in any way the persons from whom we took guns.

Those taking part in the raid on Houston were :-

Lieutenant Daniel Ryan	) (in charge)
Volunteer Thomas Keeley	) Kilbecanty Company
Volunteer Michael Reilly	)
Captain John Coen	)

Volunteer Jeremiah Dwyer, Crusheen Company, Mid-Clare Brigade, and myself. Lieutenant Ryan was appointed by Captain John Coen to take charge of the raiding party.

In the spring of 1920 I took part in the destruction of two evacuated R.I.C. barracks, one in Kilbecanty Company area and the other in Crusheen, Co. Clare. In the case of Kilbecanty, Captain John Coen, Lieutenant Daniel Ryan, Company Engineer Thomas Keeley and Volunteers Michael Reilly and Jeremiah Dwyer also took part. It was a brick hut with the front and back doors locked. It had been occupied by one Sergeant and four R.I.C. Constables before evacuation. We broke in one door, poured petrol over the floor and all timber work and set it alight. We withdrew when the whole building, including brick walls, had been levelled almost to the ground. The evacuated R.I.C. barracks in Crusheen was a two-storey stone building. The local Volunteers in Crusheen could not do the job because the wife of one of the evacuated R.I.C. was still living in the building and there was the danger that she might identify

local Volunteers. Those who took part with me in the destruction of the building were :-

Patrick J. Piggot, Adjutant, Ardrahan Battalion,  
Lieutenant Daniel Ryan,  
Company Engineer Thomas Keeley,  
Volunteer John Keeley,  
Captain Joseph Stanford.

We removed the R.I.C.'man's wife, her children and furniture to the street, and burned the building with petrol as in the case of Kilbecanty. We travelled a long distance to do this job, Crusheen being about thirteen miles from my home in Lisbrien. Patrick J. Piggot was in charge of the destruction of Crusheen Barracks.

In June or July, 1920, I took part in an attack on an R.I.C. patrol at Blackwater on the main Gort/Ennis road three quarters of a mile from Gort. The R.I.C. patrol usually left Gort and went to Loughcutra Castle by the main road. On the Sunday that we lay in ambush for this patrol at Blackwater, where the Beagh river goes underground, the R.I.C. did not take the usual route. They left the town of Gort by Church Street and went by Cianahowen road and Punch Bowl. We were about to take up positions south of the Blackwater. The R.I.C. patrol of five men saw us before we saw them and opened fire on us from revolvers. They then hurriedly proceeded towards Gort. None of our party was wounded. I cannot say whether any of the R.I.C. was wounded. I cannot say who mobilised me for this ambush. Those who took part were:-

Joseph Stanford, Captain Gort Company, afterwards O.C.,  
South West Galway Brigade.

Lieutenant Daniel Ryan  
Company Engineer Thomas Keeley  
Captain John Coen  
Volunteer John Keeley  
Volunteer John Noone  
Volunteer Michael Reilly  
Volunteer John Hawkins

and two or three others whom I cannot remember. Stanford was in charge.

Captain *Joseph*  
*P. S.*

A little later in 1920, late summer or early autumn, two members of the Dublin Metropolitan Police and one member of the R.I.C. came home on holidays. I visited them at their homes and asked them to resign or leave our area and go directly back to their barracks. One of the D.M.P. men did resign. He joined Kilbecanty Company and was a good active Volunteer. He is in receipt of a Military Service Pension under the 1934 Act. His name is Martin Moran. The other two, Constable Callanan, R.I.C. of Cloondine, Kilbecanty and Constable John Diviney, D.M.P. of Ballycahalan, went back to their barracks. Those who accompanied me when interviewing those men were :-

Padraig Fahy, Brigade Intelligence Officer,  
Lieutenant Daniel Ryan,  
Company Engineer Thomas Keeley  
Captain John Coen  
Volunteer Michael Reilly  
Volunteer John Keeley.

Lieutenant Daniel Ryan was appointed to take charge of the party by Brigade Officer Padraig Fahy.

Late September or early October, 1920, I travelled over ten miles cross-country to Kilmacduagh to take part in an ambush of R.I.C. who were in the habit of patrolling the road between Boston, Co. Clare, and Gort, on bicycles. I remember being told that about eight or ten R.I.C. were expected to be in the patrol. There were about thirty Volunteers assembled at Kilmacduagh for the attack under the command of Thomas McInerney, O.C., Gort Battalion, and Peter Howley, Vice O.C., Gort Battalion. The majority were armed with shotguns. About four had Martinis and at least one had a Lee Enfield rifle. One or two had revolvers as well. Those I remember being at this ambush were :-

Captain Joseph Stanford, Gort Company  
Captain John Coen, Kilbecanty "  
Lieutenant Daniel Ryan " "  
Company Engineer Thomas Keeley, Kilbecanty Company  
Volunteer Martin Nestor, Kilmacduagh Company  
Captain John Fahy, Peterswell Company  
Volunteer John Healy " "

There were others whom I cannot call to mind now. I cannot remember whether Padraig Fahy, Brigade Intelligence Officer, was there. I arrived at the scene of the proposed ambush at night. We waited in a hayshed overnight and took up our positions early in the morning after having food in local houses - Finnegar's, Cummins', Kearn's and Nestor's. Our positions occupied about a hundred yards on one side of the road only. We remained in position from daybreak to about 1 p.m. There were scouts out watching the Boston road who were to notify us of the approach of the patrol. At 1 p.m. there was no sign of the patrol coming. We then withdrew as the patrol was in the habit of coming much earlier than that hour.

At the end of October, 1920, I got a dispatch from Lieutenant Daniel Ryan to go armed to Capard House and to have Section Commander Thomas Hynes and Volunteer Patrick Hynes with me. The three of us reported to Thomas McInerney, O.C., Gort Battalion, at Capard House. We were armed with shotguns. There was a big number of Volunteers there. (list attached). I learned that an R.I.C. patrol was to be attacked the next morning. We stayed in Capard House (then and still unoccupied) overnight. Early next morning we crossed by Scalp to a small wood beside Castledaly Cross. We remained in the wood for some time keeping under cover from view. When Scout Martin Dooley, Ardahan Company, brought word of the movement of the patrol of five R.I.C. men on bicycles from Kilchreest towards Peterswell, we took up positions to attack them on their return to Kilchreest. Our positions extended from Castledaly Cross to the gate lodge leading to Daly's of Castledaly on the side of the road opposite to Castledaly Catholic Church. Most of us were right opposite the Church grounds with some to the left and some to the right of the grounds.

I was about thirty yards from Castledaly Cross. Volunteer Patrick Loughnan and Captain Joseph Stanford were next to me on my right hand side. Volunteer Michael Fallon was the third man from

me on my left hand side. I cannot remember the two in between. The two officers in charge, Thomas McInerney and Peter Howley, were at Castledaly Cross. Fire was to be opened when the last R.I.C. man was within the ambush position, that is, when he had passed the gate lodge. Immediately I heard the first shots from my left I fired at the R.I.C. man nearest to me. He fell from his bicycle. I crossed the wall separating us from the patrol and took his carbine and bicycle. I threw the bicycle over the wall behind which we were in position and returned to my position with my desire to be the owner of a carbine fulfilled. There were five rounds in the magazine. I next saw three R.I.C. men going into the Church grounds, and firing continued by our party for a while. I did not fire from the captured carbine as I would have no option but to hit the Church which I would not do. Two of the R.I.C. patrol abandoned their bicycles with carbines attached. I do not know who took those two rifles. Two of the R.I.C. brought their rifles with them cross-country to the R.I.C. barracks in Kilchreest. We took three carbines. One R.I.C. man was killed. The remaining four got away, two of them leaving their rifles behind them. They all abandoned their bicycles. The R.I.C. burned four or five houses in the neighbourhood of Kilchreest by way of reprisal.

In November, 1920, Derrybrien Company officers John Burke, Patrick Walsh and Michael Slattery handed over a prisoner to our Company. Section Commander Thomas Hynes and I were put in charge of him and guarded him for a day and a night. We were not masked nor was the prisoner blind-folded. The Derrybrien Company Officers when handing over the prisoner told me he was an R.I.C. man named Dempsey who was home on holidays in his native village of Aughrim, a few miles from Ballinasloe. They also said that they did not know where he was stationed or what the charge against him was, as the Volunteers from East Galway who escorted him to Derrybrien did not give any information

about him. We handed him over to Lieutenant Daniel Ryan and Volunteer  
 P. C. Michael <sup>Railly</sup> Ryan. They conveyed him to Ashfield House, Shanaglish, in  
 Beagh Company area. Volunteers Patrick Loughnan and Lawrence Mannion  
 (both deceased) took charge of the prisoner there. I do not know  
 how long he was a prisoner under escort by Volunteers Loughnan and  
 P. C. <sup>Mannion</sup> ~~Bynes~~, but while under their charge orders came for his release.

After his release he went into the town of Cort. It is significant  
 that shortly after the prisoner's release, R.I.C. and Auxiliaries  
 surrounded the home of Volunteer Loughnan and arrested him and his  
 brother Henry. It seems to me that it is possible and maybe probable  
 that the released R.I.C. man, Dempsey, gave a description of  
 Lieutenant Patrick Loughnan that led to the arrest and later to the  
 brutal murder of the two brothers by the R.I.C.

It is common knowledge that the R.I.C. bought ropes in Coen's  
 hardware shop in Cort and tied the two brothers to the back of a  
 lorry and dragged them along the road to a place near Drimhasna Castle  
 where the Auxiliaries were stationed. There they threw the remains  
 P. C. over a wall at a place ~~called Kinvara~~ half a mile on the <sup>Kinvara</sup> Galway side of  
 Sheehan's Cross or Owenbristy Cross and set them on fire. They then  
 took them to a pond about half a mile away and threw the bodies into  
 it. They were found in the pond about a week after their arrest.  
 Patrick Loughnan was well over six feet tall and was a well-built,  
 handsome man that could easily have been identified by a description.  
 There is a Celtic Cross erected to the memory of the two brothers in  
 P. C. Shanaglish Churchyard where they are buried and another Cross on  
 Kinvara/Ardrahan road near which they were burned. Captain Joseph  
 Stanford, Captain John Coen, Lieutenant Daniel Ryan and I, dug their  
 grave and fired three volleys over it in spite of the presence of a  
 large enemy force four hundred yards away. That was in the first  
 week of December 1920.

I can recall nothing of note until the week before Easter 1921. In the meantime routine weekly parades etc. were carried on.

During Holy Week, 1921, I got a message from Lieutenant Daniel Ryan to go armed to Derrybrien to meet General Brennan's Flying Column. A little while before this I had heard from Lieutenant Ryan that he had met Míceál Brennan, O.C., East Clare Brigade, and that he was to bring his Flying Column into the Gort Battalion area to try and contact the enemy there. I went to Derrybrien armed with my carbine and about 15 rounds for it. The following accompanied me to Derrybrien :-

Captain John Coen  
 Lieutenant Daniel Ryan  
 Company Engineer Thomas Keeley  
 Volunteer Michael Reilly  
 " Jeremiah Deeley  
 " Patrick Hynes.

We arrived at Derrybrien before Brennan's Flying Column arrived there. They arrived Holy Thursday evening at dusk. Some Volunteers from Derrybrien Company were there also. In all about forty men marched to Ballinagar Cross within a mile of the village of Abbey. I remember that the Abbey Company had information that an R.I.C. patrol was in the habit of coming from Portumma to Woodford. I cannot remember any further details about the patrol, whether they came daily or weekly. Some members of the Abbey Company met us at Ballinagar Cross and said that the patrol was off for the time being. There was then a meeting between Brennan's officers, Lieutenant Ryan and Lawrence Kelly of Kilnadeema, O.C., East Galway Brigade. I believe that at Brigadier Kelly's suggestion it was decided to go on to Dalystown House and to raid the mails Good Friday morning in the hope that an enemy party would be drawn out as a result.

All the I.R.A. party put up in Farrell's of Dalystown House, on Holy Thursday night. In the morning (Good Friday) a few men held up the mail car which took the mails from Loughrea to Woodford. The captured mails were brought into Farrell's house where they got a rough examination. The official-looking envelopes only were examined as time could not then be afforded for a thorough examination.

At about 7 a.m. we took up positions by the entrance gate to Farrell's house covering over 100 yards of the Loughrea road. There were about sixty men altogether in that position and a few more in farmers' houses in the Loughrea direction about a quarter of a mile from the main position. Michael Brennan was in charge of the whole party. The others I remember there were :-

Thomas McGrath	)	
Patrick Houlihan	)	
Martin McGrath	)	
Joseph Twohey	)	Clare men.
Mikes (Michael) Lillis	)	
Michael Cleary	)	
Charles Turner	)	

Captain Joseph Stanford	)	
Lieutenant Daniel Ryan	)	
Company Engineer Thomas Keeley	)	
Volunteer Michael Reilly	)	
Captain Thomas Fahy	)	
Volunteer Patrick Hynes	)	Fort Battalion.
Captain Patrick Flynn	)	
Lieutenant Patrick Walsh	)	
Lieutenant John Scully	)	
Quartermaster John Burke	)	
Volunteer Jeremiah Deeley	)	
Volunteer Peter Shiel, Abbey Company, East Galway Brigade.	)	
Lawrence Kelly, O.C., East Galway Brigade.	)	
Volunteer Thomas Mahoney, Kilnadeema Company.	)	
Michael Grace, ) Leitrim Company	)	
Daniel Connolly ) East Galway Brigade.	)	

We stayed in position until well after mid-day when we were withdrawn. We marched along the road to Knockash Cross where we halted and went into houses for a meal. A certain number of men was allotted to each house.

We were just about to drink tea when we heard a shot. We had been told before falling out for the meal that a shot would be the signal if the enemy approached and to 'stand to' immediately if we heard it. When I got out of the house I saw one lorry-load of R.I.C. going in the direction of Dalystown House back entrance. If we had been still in position the enemy would have come in at our rear. The lorry I saw went on towards Loughrea. I was told that there were three lorry loads of R.I.C. in all.

We marched to Derrybrien where we stayed that night. Early Easter Saturday morning we all proceeded to our respective areas. At this time I was appointed Vice O.C. of Gort Battalion, in the newly organised South West Galway Brigade.

On the evening of the 14th May, 1921, I got a dispatch from Brigade Quartermaster Daniel Ryan to go by myself to the camp in Gortacornane wood and to bring with me my rifle and all the ammunition I could collect. When I arrived late that evening at the camp, Brigadier Joseph Stanford, Captain John Coen and Brigade Quartermaster Daniel Ryan were there. They told me that there was to be a party at Baggot's house at Ballyturn the next day, that District Inspector Blake of the R.I.C. was to be at the party and that we were to attack him and whatever others might be with him. We talked it over for a long time and selected the gate lodge at the entrance to Ballyturn House as the most suitable place for the attack. Patrick Houlihan of Clare arrived at the Camp later that night. On Sunday morning Thomas Craven, a Volunteer from Belclare, Tuam, who was staying in the locality, was sent for and he came along. Michael Kelly, Intelligence Officer, Gort Company, also turned up after receiving a dispatch. We also sent messages to Scouts John Keeley and Martin Coen to report to us on Sunday morning.

We told the two scouts of the proposed attack and instructed them to scout the road between Kilbecanty and Ballyturn and to let us know immediately a car went into Baggot's. We remained in the wood a few hundred yards from the gate lodge. Intelligence Officer Kelly went into Baggot's grounds and lay beside the avenue leading to Baggot's house concealed by a bed of flowers. He knew District Inspector Blake as he worked in the town of Gort as foreman in Coen's hardware shop. The scouts reported that the car had gone in. Kelly reported that Blake was in the car. We then moved into position to attack the car on its return journey. It was then about 1 p.m. Patrick Houlihan, Intelligence Officer Kelly, Captain Coen had positions at the windows of the gate lodge facing the gate through which the car had to come. Company Engineer Thomas Keeley was west of the lodge just a couple of yards from it. Brigadier Stanford, Brigade Quartermaster Ryan, Volunteer Craven and I, took up positions in the grounds at the angle made by the avenue and Ballyturn road. We could not be seen from the avenue as we had cover afforded by trees and rhododendrons. We remained in position from 1 p.m. to after 7 p.m. when the car came slowly in the direction of the gate.

The car pulled up as one side of the gate had been closed by us for that same purpose. A man left the car to open the gate. I didn't know him. When he got to the gate he got the order "Hands up" from Ryan and myself. Instead of complying he dodged for cover out of our sight. We concentrated fire on the car, doing our best to save the women in it. The men in the lodge killed the man who came to open the gate. Blake and the other man in the car were killed and one of the two women. Brigadier Stanford was on one knee. A bullet hit the stock of his gun, grazed the inside of his leg above the knee and lodged in the heel of his boot. It must

have been from the .32 Colt Automatic fired by the man who tried to open the gate. I heard afterwards that this man was Captain Cornwallis and that the other man killed was Lieutenant McReary. Lieutenant Ryan and I assisted the second woman to her feet. She was sitting at the back of the car. She asked if Mrs. Blake was alright. We said she was. We linked her along the avenue for about thirty or forty yards until we met Miss Molly Baggot to whom we handed over the lady. I learned that she was Lady Gregory, a daughter-in-law of the famous writer. We got two Colt Automatic .32 pistols and a short Webley revolver in its holster fully loaded. The two Automatics belonged to Blake and Cornwallis and the .45 to Lieutenant McReary. We left the scene of the ambush, went to Gortacornane and from there to Killeen about 10 p.m.

The R.I.C. came to the scene of the ambush, firing recklessly from rifles and machine-guns. They shot one of their own men - Constable Kearney. There was an inquiry into the shooting of Kearney after the Truce in Gort. Kearney's sister attended it. It was rumoured that he had handed in his resignation and that that was the reason he was shot. The R.I.C. burned Ruane's provision shop in Georges Street, Gort, and partly burned McNamara's dwelling house in Queen Street, Gort. The men of those families were in the I.R.A. They also burned Coen's, Callanan's and Fahy's farm houses at Ballycahalan about three miles from the scene of the ambush. Captain John Coen and Brigade I.O. Padraig Fahy and his brothers were well known to the R.I.C. as very active members of the I.R.A.

A few days after the Ballyturn ambush British Military Officers came to the gate lodge at Ballyturn and questioned the occupants, a family named Connolly. They questioned each member of the family separately. They brought them to the R.I.C. barracks in Gort and interrogated them to find out if they knew any of the attacking party.

The Connolly family could not be got, by inducements or threats, to say that they knew any of the party. Lady Gregory and Miss Molly Baggot were also closely questioned. They said they knew nobody in the party, that the I.R.A. were in uniform and spoke with Clare accents. Miss Baggot knew Ryan and me quite well. None of the I.R.A. party was in uniform. I would like to add that when Brigade Quartermaster Ryan and I entered the gate lodge, Frank Connolly, the lodge keeper was there with his son John, his daughter Kathleen and his grandson Michael Hennelly. Frank Connolly said, "Have you anything against me, boys?" We said "No, but we must occupy the house for a while". He then took his grandson with him into a room off the kitchen and both lay down on a bed. John and Kathleen remained talking to the I.R.A. party in the lodge during the day. A number of persons who were passing and saw us before the ambush had to be detained in the gate lodge until the ambush was over.

From the time of the Ballyturn ambush until the Truce we were evading the enemy. They were far too strong for us. There was a big round-up by British Forces in June. It started on a Sunday. I remember the Kilbecanty Company being mobilised that Sunday evening at Russane. All the Company turned out on parade except Cloone Section. We heard that they could not come owing to a force of British cavalry in their townland. We also heard from Patrick Connolly that big numbers of British Forces were in Gort and that they were commandeering houses for billets. Connolly was coachman to the Baggot family and he got his information while driving the family to Church in Gort. The Company was instructed to go home quietly. All went except those who were "wanted" men. They included Captain Coen, Thomas Keeley, Martin Coen, Jerome Deeley, Patrick Cooney, John Noone, John Hawkins.

The aforementioned with Battalion Adjutant Michael Reilly, Brigade Quartermaster Ryan and I remained up during the night. At about 1 a.m. we heard a shot from the direction of Cloone about two miles away, as the crow flies. Later we heard the tramp of cavalry at Kilbecanty going in the direction of Chibby Chase cottage. At about 3 a.m. we saw lorries of British Forces proceeding along the Gort/Kilbecanty road. We counted sixty-two lorries loaded with military. We were at Russane Hill and could see them plainly.

On Monday evening Brigadier Joseph Stanford arrived with information about the movements of the British Forces which he had obtained from a member of the Gort Company, Volunteer Henry O'Shaughnessy. O'Shaughnessy lived in the town of Gort and had learned full details of the round-up from a member of the British Forces. Brigadier Stanford informed all units in the Brigade and also sent dispatches to East Clare Brigade. With the information passed on to us by Brigadier Stanford we were able to keep outside the British encircling movements until the round-up ended the following Sunday. No Volunteer member of the Gort Battalion was taken prisoner in the course of the round-up. There was nothing noteworthy from this until the Truce.

I forgot to mention at the outset that I was sworn into the I.R.B. in 1918 by Thomas McInerney, O.C., Gort Battalion. I was never called on to attend an I.R.B. meeting after having been sworn into the Brotherhood.

I have already referred to the murder of the Loughnan brothers. This did not exhaust the brutalities of the R.I.C. Mrs. Quinn of Kiltartan was shot by the R.I.C. standing outside her own house with a baby in her arms. She was a young married woman holding her second baby in her arms when she was shot dead by R.I.C. passing in a lorry. Her murder was condemned by Rev. Father Considine who

received threatening letters as a result.

In Peterswell one Sunday morning at the end of 1920 they put a man of 60 years of age named Lawrence O'Donnell into a pool of liquid manure and jumped on his back while in the cess-pool. Volunteer Michael Connell of Kilmacduagh got such a severe beating that his mind was affected up to the day of his death.

In spite of those atrocities the local people never wavered in their support of the I.R.A. Day in day out, they supported us in every conceivable manner.

The following is a list of names of members of Cumann na mBan in my Battalion area, as far as I can remember them:-

Kilbecanty Company

Brigid Ryan now Mrs. Kearns, Kilmacduagh, Co. Galway  
 Julia Ryan now Mrs. Quinn, Ballycahalan, Co. Galway  
 Annie Ryan now Mrs. Kerrigan, New York  
 Margaret Keeley now Mrs. Morrissey, Craughwell, Co. Galway  
 Kate Keeley my wife (deceased)  
 Brigid Hennessy now Mrs. Burke, N.T., Gort  
 Nora Deeley now Mrs. Peter Burke, Roxboro  
 Annie Deeley now in Co. Cavan  
 Delia Reilly now in U.S.A.  
 Agnes Moran now in U.S.A.  
 Kate Moran, Cloone, Gort.

Gort Company

Elizabeth McNamara now Mrs. Fleming, New York  
 Rita Stanford now Mrs. Jordan, Ballinderreen, Co. Galway.

Derrybrien Company

Nora Scully now Mrs. Kelly, Derrybrien, Co. Galway  
 P. S. Mary Tully now Mrs. Mahoney, P.O., Derrybrien  
 Kate Tully now Mrs. Slattery, Derrybrien.

Peterswell Company

Kate Fahy, now Mrs. McGuane, Tubber  
 Kate Fahy now Mrs. Thomas Keeley, Kiltartan  
 Margaret Keeley now Mrs. Stone, Tullyra.

Beagh Company

Kate Mannion now Mrs. Moran, Flagmount, Co. Clare  
 Miss Kelly now widow of Patrick Ruane,  
 Brigade Police Officer,  
 Galway South West Brigade.

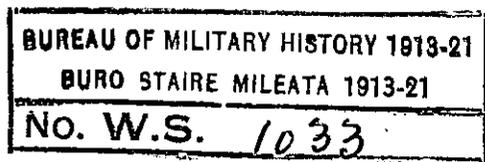
The activities of Cumann na mBan included the making of collections of money from home to home to provide various comforts for members of the I.R.A. who were on full time service. They carried dispatches and sometimes carried arms from place to place. A good deal of their time was spent in cooking for groups of the I.R.A. Sometimes these groups were large as, for example, when Brennan's Flying Column entered our Battalion area. In addition, they acted as Intelligence Officers. For example, it was Brigid Ryan who brought word to the I.R.A. of District Inspector Blake's visit to Ballyturn which led to the Ballyturn ambush.

In conclusion I would like to pay a tribute to the work of Cumann na mBan, to their loyalty, their perseverance and untiring effort on behalf of the men of the Gort Battalion who carried on the struggle against overwhelming odds.

Signed: Patrick Glynn  
(Patrick Glynn)

Date: November 7<sup>th</sup> 1954  
November 7th 1954

Witness: Con Moynihan  
(Con Moynihan)



APPENDIX.

List of names of Officers and Men whom I can remember as  
having taken part in the ambush at Castledaly.

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Thomas McInerney, O.C. Gort Battalion afterwards O.C. Ardrahan Battn.  
Peter Howley, Vice O.C. " " " Vice O.C. " "

Volunteer Martin Dooley, Ardrahan Company  
" Michael Silver " "  
" John Neilan " "  
" Martin Murphy " "  
" Patrick Purcell " "  
" John Joyce " "  
" Michael Callanan " "

Lieutenant Patrick Loughnan, Beagh Company  
Volunteer Lawrence Mannion " "

Volunteer Martin Holland, Kilchreest Company

Captain John Fahy, Peterswell Company  
Volunteer Thomas Fahy, " "  
afterwards Captain of Company.

Volunteer Thomas Slattery, Peterswell Company  
" John Healy " "  
" Patrick Carew " "  
" Michael Fallon " "  
" Martin Fahy " "  
afterwards Brigade Engineer,  
Galway South West Brigade.

" Joseph Madden, Peterswell Company.

Captain Joseph Stanford, Gort Company, afterwards O.C.  
Galway South West Brigade.

Volunteer Patrick Hynes, Kilbecanty Company  
" Thomas Hynes " "  
" Peter Burke " "  
" Thomas Keeley " "  
afterwards Battalion Engineer,  
Gort Battalion.

" Michael Reilly, Kilbecanty Company  
afterwards Battalion Adjutant, Gort Battalion,

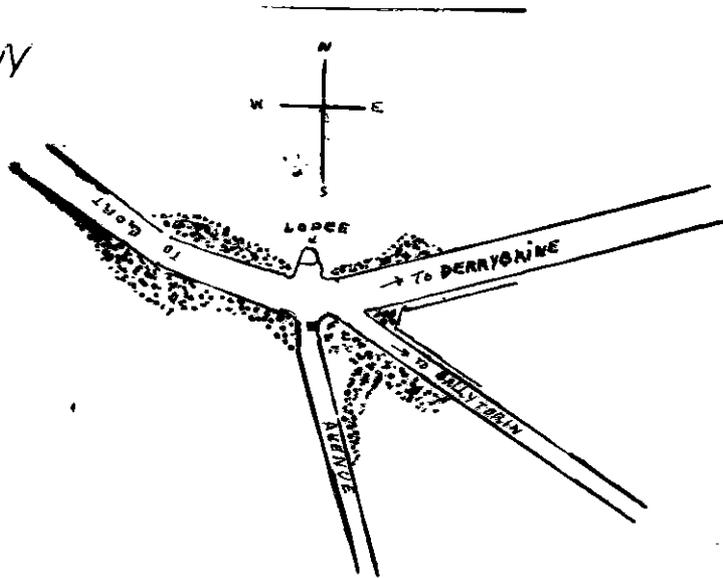
and myself -

Volunteer Patrick Glynn, Kilbecanty Company,  
afterwards Vice O.C., Gort Battalion.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1033

BALLYTURN  
AMBUSH



208.33 FEET TO ONE INCH

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 10162

BURD STABLE MILITARY 10162

NO. W.E. 1033