

W. S. 1,204  
**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRÉ MILITÁ 1913-21  
No. W.S. 1204

ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.  
STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,204

Witness

Daniel Liston,  
Kilmeedy,  
Newcastlewest,  
Co. Limerick.

Identity.

Captain 'G' Company  
Drumcollogher Battalion, Co. Limerick, 1918-'21.

Subject.

'G' Company Drumcollogher Battalion  
Irish Volunteers, Co. Limerick, 1918-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.2516

Form B.S.M. 2

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 1204

STATEMENT OF DANIEL LISTON,  
Kilmeedy, Newcastlewest, Co. Limerick.

I was born in Newcastlewest in the year 1897.  
I attended the local National School until I was fifteen  
years of age.

Some time early in 1917, John Geary, Michael  
Quilty and my father started a Sinn Féin Club in  
Kilmeedy. Some time later, they called a public  
meeting which was addressed by Ernest Blythe who was  
organising Volunteer Companies in the South of Ireland  
at the time. I was then about nineteen years of age  
and was much inspired by Mr. Blythe's speech. I  
consulted John Power, Maurice Geary and Tim Regan with  
the object of forming a Company of Volunteers in the  
parish.

Early in 1918, a Company was formed with a  
membership of about fifty men. I was appointed Company  
Captain. There were no Lieutenants appointed. The  
threat of conscription was the principal reason for the  
formation of the Company around this time. About the  
same time, Companies were reorganised or formed in the  
adjoining parishes of Drumcollogher, Broadford,  
Feohanagh, Castlemahon, Feenagh, BallygAan, Cloncagh  
and Killeedy. These Companies were subsequently formed  
into a Battalion with Michael Keane of Feohanagh as  
Battalion Commandant, Ben O'Sullivan of Drumcollogher,  
Vice Commandant, and Michael Sheehy of Feohanagh as  
Quartermaster. I don't remember who became Adjutant.  
Very little happened during the time, but our principal  
activities consisted of drilling, training and

organising. An R.I.C. barracks was situated in the Company area, about a mile outside the village. The R.I.C. were aware of our activities. In December of this year, with other Volunteers of the Company, I took part in canvassing for the Sinn Féin candidate, Dr. Richard Hayes, prior to the general election. On the day of the election, I was on duty at a polling booth in Hospital, East Limerick.

Early in 1920, the R.I.C. raided my home to arrest me, but I was not at home at the time and so escaped. About a month later, they evacuated the barracks which gave us more freedom in our area. Around the month of June, I received an order from the Battalion O/C to burn down the barracks which had been evacuated. The barracks was occupied by the Sergeant's wife and family. I mobilised the Company and was assisted by some of the Battalion officers in the destruction of the barracks by fire. We first removed the furniture and brought the Sergeant's wife and family into a farmer's house and made them quite comfortable. About a week later, I was again ordered by the Battalion O/C to assist the Ballygahan Company in the destruction of an evacuated R.I.C. barracks in Castletown.

Con Foley was then in charge of the Battalion, as Michael Keane had left the area to take up a position in Fermoy. Ben Sullivan remained Vice Commandant, Michael Sheehy remained Quartermaster, and Owen Sullivan became Battalion Adjutant. About this time, we were formed into brigades. This Company became G. Company in the Drumcollogher Battalion, West Limerick Brigade. I held the rank of Captain all through until the Truce in 1921.

Around this time the Battalion Staff planned an ambush on an R.I.C. patrol at a point between Drumcollogher and Broadford. Con Foley took charge of the ambush party which comprised two or three men from each Company in the Battalion. John Power, Michael Flynn and I were there from this Company. We were mobilised in an unoccupied house between Drumcollogher and Broadford. We were thirty strong, all armed with shotguns. After standing-to all night, we were dismissed by Con Foley in the morning. I don't know what happened, but no ambush took place.

During the year, the Company was very active trenching and blocking roads continuously, cutting telephone wires and dismantling the local telephone. One day as I was walking out the road carrying despatches, I almost walked into a patrol of R.I.C. Fortunately, a hay-cart was about to pass me at the time. I jumped on to it and hid the despatches under the horse's collar. I was held up by the police but they did not know me and let me go about my business.

I have not the date but some time in 1920, a part-time Active Service Unit was formed in the Battalion area. It was made up of about twenty-four men, two or three from each Company. James Doody became O/C of the Column. Their arms consisted of three rifles and several shotguns. Except for a few men who were on the run, the most of the men on the Column carried on with their daily civil work and assembled whenever called upon by the O/C.

A short time after its formation, the Column was mobilised in Feenagh with the object of attacking

Drumcollogher R.I.C. barracks. Brigadier Hannigan of East Limerick arrived the same night in Feenagh with his Column to take part in the attack. Shortly after his arrival, the I.O. of Drumcollogher Company reported that there was to be a round-up by enemy forces in the area on the following day. The officer in charge thought it better to abandon the proposed attack for the time being. Brigadier Hannigan and his Column left at once for their own area.

About this time, the R.I.C. and Black and Tans were very active. They arrested John Power and his brother, Joe, of this Company, and were continually raiding my house, which is situated in the village, in search of me. One Sunday, I happened to be at home when they arrived in the village and surrounded it. After several attempts, I succeeded in escaping through a number of back-yards into a corn-field adjoining the village. They opened fire with rifles and a machine gun in my direction. I kept under cover and crept on my hands and knees and succeeded in escaping into the open country.

In May, 1921, the Active Service Unit was mobilised for an attack on a patrol of R.I.C. and Tans in Drumcollogher. Con Foley and the Battalion Staff had planned the attack for the evening of the 14th May, 1921. On the night of the 13th May, we entered the town and took up positions in a house on each side of the Main Street to await the attack on the following evening. The section to which I was attached occupied a restaurant, known as Lil Connors'. The other section occupied a house owned by people by the name of Ahern. A bull sale was being held in the town on the following

day, and early next morning several farmers and cattle buyers had assembled. At about 10 a.m., five or six lorry loads of Tans arrived and surrounded the town, and allowed no one to leave for some hours. They entered several public and private houses and even came into the restaurant where we were and had a meal. Fortunately, we were upstairs; they did not come up. They remained in town all day and did not withdraw until five o'clock in the evening.

After their departure, we were ordered to take up our positions. Our party consisted of eighteen men. I was ordered to take over the Post Office which was situated about one hundred yards from Lil Connors'. The other men were divided into three houses on each side of the street. They were armed with about three or four rifles and a number of shotguns. I was armed with a revolver.

As I was about to enter the Post Office, I met a Black and Tan coming out. He saluted me in a rather friendly way and passed on. When I entered, I held up the entire staff and ordered them upstairs, after which I locked the entrance door.

A short time afterwards, the attack began. While it was in progress, the telephone rang. I answered the 'phone and discovered that the call was from the R.I.C. barracks which was situated about two hundred yards from the far end of the town. The R.I.C. were enquiring as to what was wrong. I told them that the best thing to do was to call down and that I would give them full details of what was taking place. When I had hung up the receiver, I went to inspect the back of the premises. I opened my revolver to see if it was fully

loaded. It was not my own and had only been given to me by Commandant Foley as I left to take over the Post Office. As I opened it, one of the bullets got stuck in the ejector. In the back kitchen, there was a small window overlooking a pathway which led up to the back door. The pathway had a hedge on each side. There was a lock on the back door but no key, so I could not lock it. To my surprise, I saw three Tans coming up the pathway to the back door. I found myself in an awkward position with the door unlocked and my gun out of action. I struck the window with the gun, breaking the glass, and shouted at the Tans to put their hands up.

The man in front halted and put his hands up while the two, who were following behind, jumped over the hedge, took cover and opened fire. Hearing nothing further from me, the man who had put his hands up also jumped the hedge and joined his comrades. After a while, I got my gun working and went upstairs to get a better view of the position, from which the three Tans were firing. I opened fire and, after a short time, they withdrew.

The result of the attack on the patrol up-town was that one Tan was killed and four were wounded. After a short time, I got a signal to withdraw. After I rejoined my comrades, we retreated to our respective areas. We had no casualties.

Apart from ordinary routine after this, there were no events of any importance up to the Truce.

During the Truce, I attended a training camp  
at Cappinhane, Ballygoan.

SIGNED: Daniel Liston  
(Daniel Liston)

DATE: 8 July 1955  
8th July 1955.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 1204

WITNESS John J. Daly  
(John J. Daly)