

W. S. 1,347  
**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BUREAU STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21  
NO. W.S. 1,347

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,347

**Witness**

Daniel Guiney,  
Knockanagh,  
Kiskeam,  
Co. Cork.

**Identity.**

O/C. Kiskeam Company I.R.A.;  
Vice O/C. Newmarket Battalion  
I.R.A., Co. Cork.

**Subject.**

Kiskeam Company Irish Volunteers,  
Co. Cork, 1917-1923.

**Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.**

Nil

File No. S. 2612

Form B.S.M. 2

# ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

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STATEMENT BY DAN GUINEY,

Knockanagh, Kiskeam, County Cork.

I was born at my present address on May 4th, 1896. My parents were farmers. I was educated at Cronrea national school until I reached the age of 14 years. I then went to work on the land with my father.

I joined the Irish Volunteers when they were formed in Kiskeam in March, 1917. The strength of the unit at that time was about 20. It increased within a short time to about 40. The pioneers in the Volunteers were: Tim Cronin, Jim Cashman, Jim Riordan, Dan Flynn, Dan Guiney, Jerh. Mulcahy, Jack D. Connors, Patrick J. Dennehy, Con T. Murphy, Tom Collins, Jerry Scannel, Michael Riordan and Nicholas Fitzgerald. The first O/C was Jerry Scannell, who was elected. I cannot say now who the other officers were at this time. I should have mentioned that we were all members of the Gaelic League. The teacher was Humphrey Lynch. Classes were held two nights each week.

The Kiskeam Company was a unit of the Newmarket Battalion of Cork Brigade. The number of the battalion was 19. The other companies in the battalion were: Newmarket, Taur, Umeraboy, Knocknagree, Tullylease, Rockchapel, Freemount, Meelin and Kingwilliamstown. The officers of the battalion were, I think:

O/C - Seán Moylan  
Vice O/C - Paddy Murphy  
Adjt. - Wm. Barrett  
Q/M - Paddy McCarthy.

In the early stages the only type of drill carried out was ordinary foot drill. Parades were usually held on Sunday after Mass and also on one night each week. All parades were held in the fields in the neighbourhood of the village of Kiskeam.

All members of the company were members of Sinn Féin and during 1917 and early 1918 they were engaged in organising for the political side. Sinn Féin was at this time mainly made up of Volunteers and the members of their families.

When conscription was threatened by the British there was a large increase in the strength of the company. The membership increased to close on 150 or maybe more. There was no change in officers as a result of this increase. Nearly all those who joined up during this period continued to serve until the Truce in July, 1921. In the late spring of 1918, when the conscription bill was passed in the British House of Commons, the Company O/C mobilised the unit and marched them towards Newmarket. They were armed with shotguns, pikes, slashers and every conceivable kind of weapon - some even carried only broom handles. It was intended to attack the R.I.C. garrison stationed in Newmarket. In connection with this parade, I remember that at the drill parade on the Sunday prior to that on which the march to Newmarket took place there were only 11 on parade. The muster on the date of Newmarket parade must have been in the region of 200.

However, we marched towards Newmarket but were met outside the town by Seán Moylan. He addressed the parade and told us to return home, as if we went into Newmarket

it was more than likely that few of us would be able to return home. He then dismissed the parade. Some members went into Newmarket in small groups. All returned home later in the day. Arising out of this incident, Seán Moylan held an investigation during the following week and, as a result, he dismissed Jerry Scannel. He then appointed Con T. Murphy as O/C. Some members of the company wanted Scannel back and they sent a deputation to discuss the matter with Seán Moylan. I think that Seán Sullivan (Cork City), who was visiting the area at the time as an organiser and training officer, was also present at this interview. Seán Moylan agreed to hold a meeting of the company. The meeting was under the chairmanship of Seán Sullivan. Jerry Scannel and Con T. Murphy were proposed for O/C of the unit. Scannel was elected, receiving 75 votes, while Con T. Murphy only got 15. The new O/C carried on for some time but towards the end of 1919 he vacated the post and returned to the ranks, where he served as a Volunteer. He was replaced by Con T. Murphy. Early in 1919 the officers of the company were:

O/C - Jerry Scannel  
 1st Lt.- Jerh. Mulcahy  
 2nd Lt.- Dan Guiney (witness).

The 1st Lt. was replaced early in 1920 by Jim Cashman.

During the conscription period in 1918 all arms - mainly shotguns - in the area were collected. They were all surrendered voluntarily. We must have collected about 40 guns in this way and, in addition, many of the Volunteers or their parents were the owners of shotguns. In all we must have had 70 to 80 shotguns.

There was no real activity in the area in connection with the general election in December, 1918, as the Sinn Féin candidate - Páudeen O'Keeffe - was returned unopposed.

In January, 1919, Cork Brigade, of which our company was a unit in the 19th (Newmarket) Battalion, was divided into three brigades. We became a unit in the 6th Battalion of Cork 11 Brigade, which covered the area of North Cork. There was no change in the officers of the battalion at this time. The officers of the new brigade were:

O/C - Liam Lynch, Fermoy.  
 Vice O/C - Dan Hegarty, Mallow.  
 Adjt.- Tom Barry, Glanworth.  
 Q/M - George Power, Fermoy.

During 1919 there was nothing much doing. Our Volunteer work was mainly confined to training, which about this time was becoming more interesting as we were getting instruction in scouting, field exercises, and having target practice with service rifles fitted with Morris tube. About the middle of 1919 we were all actively engaged in organising the collection of the first Dáil Éireann loan.

Towards the end of <sup>1920</sup>~~1919~~ a training camp for picked men from some of the companies in the battalion was held at Tureen near Knocknagree. I was not present at this camp as at the time I was laid up with an attack of boils. The camp lasted for about 10 days and, as far as I can remember, the number in attendance was about 15. I think that Seán Moylan was in charge of this camp. The training officer was, I think, Seán Sullivan, but I'm not sure.

At Easter, 1920, several members of the Kiskeam Company were engaged on the destruction of Glashakinleen vacated R.I.C. barracks. During this operation two

members of the party received accidental burns but after treatment in hospital recovered. The injured men were: Charley Reilly and Con T. Murphy. Shortly after this members of the company co-operated with representatives of other companies in the battalion in the demolition of Newmarket Courthouse. Amongst the Kiskeam men engaged were: Jack Riordan, Con T. Murphy, Dan Guiney (witness) and another.

During the summer of 1920 the local mails were raided on a number of occasions throughout the battalion area. In addition, a large-scale raid was carried out on the mail train at Banteer railway station. This job was carried out by representatives of several companies under the control of Seán Moylan. They were assisted by some men from Kanturk Battalion. I cannot recollect the names of any of those engaged on this job.

About this time the British were enforcing curfew in many areas and it was being strictly enforced in towns. Some members of the company (John D. O'Connor, Jack Murphy, Ml. O'Callaghan and another) went to Newmarket one Sunday evening to co-operate with Newmarket Company in an attack on a curfew patrol usually operating within the boundaries of Newmarket, but they failed to make contact with the enemy. I think there was another attempt at a later stage which also proved abortive.

On the evening of October 10th, 1920, I was contacted by Jim Riordan and told to be in Kiskeam village about 9 p.m. I reported at the appointed time. I was armed with a shotgun and about 20 rounds of ammunition. Others at the meeting place were: Jim Riordan and Dan

Flynn (Kiskeam), Jerh. Leary, Tom Herlihy, Dan Lucey, Con Finucane (Kingwilliamstown). All were armed with shotguns. After some time we moved off to Corney Lenihan's, Drouminarrigle. We travelled by horse and car. We reached Lenihan's about 4 a.m. Here we met Liam Lynch, Ernie O'Malley and the Brigade Column. There were also representatives from other companies present. The whole party marched off to Ballydrochane on the Newmarket-Kanturk road. We reached our destination about daybreak. All members of the party, except the Brigade Column, were armed with shotguns. The Brigade Column were armed with rifles and they also had one of the Hotchkiss guns which had been captured at Mallow barracks. Nearly all the shotgunmen took up positions behind the roadside fence on the left of the road as you travel from Newmarket to Kanturk. They were interspersed amongst the riflemen. The whole party were extended over a distance of about 80 yards. The Hotchkiss gun with its crew were placed at the Kanturk end of the position on a bend of the road. From the position occupied by them they were looking along the straight on the road where the others of our party were in ambush.

I was placed with four men from Kingwilliamstown Company (Tom Herlihy, in charge, Dan Lucey, Con Finucane, Jerh. O'Leary) at an unoccupied farmhouse beside the road at the Newmarket end of the ambush position but on the opposite side of the road to the ambush party. We were to block the road by pushing two farm carts into the roadway. Our instructions from Ernie O'Malley were not to move the carts until we got the signal - a long whistle blast - as it was not proposed to ambush the expected

enemy convoy if there were more than 3 lorries. From our position we saw a single enemy lorry approaching from Kanturk about 10 a.m. We were thus on the alert to push out the carts. Immediately the signal was given we pushed the carts into the road and towards the approaching lorry, while firing broke out at the same time. We immediately crossed the roadside fence into the positions held by the ambush party. The driver was apparently killed by the opening volley. The lorry collided with the carts and then ran into the fence. A horse and cart with milk churns was also inside the ambush position and this cart also collided with our obstruction. Firing continued for some ten minutes and then the enemy were called on to surrender. They continued to fire for a short time, but when called on a second time all who were not seriously wounded surrendered. The whole ambush party then went on to the road and collected all enemy arms and ammunition. I think we got 8 rifles, 2 revolvers and a few hundred rounds of ammunition. The lorry was put out of commission. It was not burned as the driver was still inside the cab. Enemy casualties were, I think, one killed and six or seven wounded. There were no I.R.A. casualties.

Our whole party then withdrew to Lenihan's, Drouminarrigle, where we remained for the day. In the evening we were sent home to Kiskeam with instructions to have a fresh party sent back that night to act as guards on the local creamery in case of reprisals by the enemy. I cannot remember the names of the men who formed the relief party.



There was very little doing in our area between mid October and Christmas, 1920. The officers of the Kiskeam Company at this stage were:

O/C - Dan Guiney (witness)  
 1st Lt. - Jim Cashman.  
 2nd Lt. - Eugene Cronin.

Early in January, 1921, the Battalion Column, on which Kiskeam Company was represented by Jim Riordan, Jim Cashman, Dan Flynn and Con T. Murphy, had an engagement with a military convoy at Meelin, but the engagement had to be broken off due to the arrival of enemy reinforcements. There were a number of other ambushes planned at this time which did not take place due to one reason or another, e.g., enemy convoy carrying hostages, travelling in too great strength for I.R.A. units, or taking alternative routes to those on which the column were lying in ambush. I was not engaged on any of these activities.

On the night of January 27th or early morning of 28th, 1921, I travelled by car to Kingwilliamstown with John D. O'Connor, John Murphy, John O'Leary. Other members of the company who travelled were: Tim Cronin, Jerh. O'Mahoney and Owen Daly. Here we met the Battalion Column under Seán Moylan. The whole party then marched to Tureengarrive on the Kingwilliamstown-Castleisland road. We reached Tureengarrive about 9 a.m. on January 28th. Some members of the column who were present were: Dan Galvin, Bill Moylan, Dave McAuliffe, Dan Browne, Dan Vaughan, Mick D. Sullivan, Con Morley and Seán Healy. In addition to the Kiskeam men, there were also a number of men from Kingwilliamstown, including Tom Herlihy, Dan Fitzgerald, Con Finucane, Martin Murphy and John Jones.

The members of the column were armed with rifles and also had a machine-gun manned by Bill Moylan and Seán Healy. The members of Kiskeam and Kingwilliamstown Companies had rifles. Except for a few scouts who were posted to east and west of the selected position, the party was divided into three main groups:

- (1) On high ground to the north of the road was a party of about ten shotgunmen under Dan Vaughan. They were extended over a distance of about 30 yards under cover of a fence and were parallel with the road which was about 30 yards away. I was in this group, which also included Tim Cronin, John D. O'Connor, John Murphy, John O'Leary, Owen Daly, Con Finucane, Dan Fitzgerald, Tom Herlihy and John Jones.
- (2) South of the road the men of the column were in position behind rocks and stones. There were about ten in this party, who were extended over a distance of about 40 yards.
- (3) The machine-gun and crew (Seán Healy and Bill Moylan) were also south of the road but some short distance to the east and on a bend of the road from which they could cover the straight section between the parties at 1 and 2. Seán Moylan, who was in charge, was with this group.

I should have mentioned that the road had been trenched at the eastern end of the position. All positions were taken up about 9.30 a.m.

About midday or a little later the scouts to the west reported the approach of two enemy cars. The convoy, which was allowed to drive into the position, was greeted by a burst of machine-gun fire over their heads and they were called upon to surrender. The leading car put on speed but when it got round the bend the driver saw the trench and pulled up. The second car halted also. All men in the cars left their cars in a flash and took cover behind the roadside fences. Fire was immediately opened from all positions and was replied to by

the enemy. Fighting continued for about 25 minutes, during which time the enemy party had been called on to surrender on a number of occasions. Eventually someone in the enemy group shouted - during a lull in the firing - that they were prepared to surrender. Firing ceased and they left their positions, threw away their guns and put up their hands. All sections of our group then came on to the road, where we found that one member of the enemy party had been killed and all the others wounded. The party consisted of Divisional Commissioner Holmes, R.I.C., and six others. The Divisional Commissioner was seriously wounded and died later.

While the prisoners were being searched on the road the scouts to the north west signalled the approach of another car. The prisoners were taken across the fence and up a glen, where they were placed under guard while the column and other members of the ambush party re-occupied their positions. When the car reached the ambush position it was held up. It was discovered that the driver was a school inspector. The wounded men were attended to, had their wounds dressed and were made as comfortable as possible in the circumstances. Divisional Commissioner Holmes and two or three of the most seriously wounded were placed in the inspector's car and he was ordered to take them to the nearest hospital. The others were left on the roadside, where they were picked up later by another party of military.

One of the two Crossley cars which made up the convoy was burned, while the other was driven away by Seán Healy and Bill Moylan with the machine-gun. Nearly all members of the I.R.A. party travelled in this car as far as

Kingwilliamstown. The captured car was then driven out the Newmarket road and branched off shortly afterwards for Brosna. It was later dumped in Glounthanefenane.

Immediately following this engagement all roads in Kingwilliamstown area were blocked by fallen trees except the road taken by the captured car. This was done to confuse the enemy, who would naturally assume that the car was unlikely to have been taken along a road which was left open. As a result, the search parties sent out later by the British tried every area except that in which the car was actually dumped.

Seven rifles, a repeating shotgun, some revolvers and a lot of ammunition were captured by our party in this engagement.

The I.R.A. party travelled the route taken by the Crossley car for about 2 miles until we reached Lighthouse. While on the road at this point we heard the sound of enemy lorries coming from the direction of the ambush position, also outbursts of firing. We immediately took up fresh positions in the Lighthouse area but the enemy did not come our way. They compelled the civilian population in the Kingwilliamstown area to remove the obstructions on the roads and they moved on towards Knocknagree. Our party was then withdrawn from the new position. Arrangements were made to get some food, and when we had partaken of a meal the party was disbanded. The column moved to new billets and the representatives of the local companies returned to their home areas.

On January 29th, 1921, strong parties of military arrived in Kingwilliamstown from Tralee. They destroyed

two houses as a reprisal, viz. the drapery shop of Tim Vaughan, the grocery shop of Wm. McAuliffe. About a week later they returned and destroyed the post office owned by Tim O'Sullivan.

Early in February, 1921, the Battalion Column, with members of the Kiskeam and Kingwilliamstown Companies, lay in ambush at Glounalougha on the Newmarket-Kingwilliamstown road, but the expected enemy convoy did not turn up. During the early days of March, 1921, the same party took up positions on the Newmarket-Rockchapel road at Meenagorman to wait for a military patrol, but before it arrived at our position word was received that the enemy party had collected a number of hostages in Newmarket and were taking them along. As a result, the I.R.A. were forced to allow the enemy convoy of three lorries to pass through without firing a shot.

When the 1st Southern Division was established about the end of April, 1921, Liam Lynch became O/C. Seán Moylan then became Brigade O/C. About this time it was decided to divide Cork 11 Brigade into two brigades:- the five western battalions (Mallow, Millstreet, Newmarket, Kanturk, Charleville) to form a new brigade (Cork 1V); the eastern battalions of Fermoy and Castletownroche with the Lismore Battalion of West Waterford Brigade were to form the new Cork 11 Brigade. As far as I can recollect, the new brigades were established some time prior to the Truce, with the following officers:

Cork 11.  
 O/C - George Power  
 Vice O/C - Wm. (Dorney) Regan  
 Adj. - Dan Shinnick  
 Q/M - Tom Hunter.

Cork 1V.  
 O/C - Paddy O'Brien  
 Vice O/C - Ned Murphy  
 Adj. - Eugene McCarthy  
 Q/M - Mick O'Connell.

On the night of May 15th, 1921, I was one of a party which lay in ambush at Coolagh Bridge on the Newmarket-Kiskeam road. We were awaiting <sup>a</sup> patrol which, according to reports, paraded regularly to the bridge. We took up our positions about 10 p.m. and although we waited until 2 a.m. the patrol did not put in an appearance. The column members then returned to their billets and the locals returned to their home areas.

Between May and the Truce I was engaged wholetime in organising and training the local company, also in ensuring that guards, scouts and dispatch riders were available at all times for battalion and brigade headquarters, which were in the area for the greater portion of the period.

My rank at the Truce was O/C Kiskeam Company, Newmarket Battalion, Cork IV Brigade. The strength of the company was about 140.

During the Truce I attended a battalion camp which was held at Freemount. This would be about early August, 1921. Officers from all companies in the battalion attended this camp. We underwent a course of training in the care and use of arms, especially the Thompson gun. In addition, all aspects of military activities were covered. The camp continued for two weeks and was in charge of Seán Nunan. The training officer was Tom Roche. On return from this camp I arranged for the holding of three company camps. Each camp lasted two weeks and those in attendance went through a course of training on the lines of the battalion camp.

Towards the end of summer all units were engaged in collecting material for use in the battalion foundry which had been established at Kiskeam Upper. The house in which the foundry (and workshop) was set up had not been occupied for some years. The walls had to be reinforced in order to carry the shafting which was installed to drive the machinery. I do not know how this factory operated, as beyond supplying material and assisting in its establishment I had no further contact with it. The staff of the factory were, I think, amongst others: Bill Moylan, Con Moylan, Seán Healy and Barney Columbia.

When Ballyvonare Camp was taken over from the British in February, 1922, (I think) I spent about a week there as a member of the maintenance party. I later moved to Buttevant military barracks when this post was occupied by I.R.A. forces. After some time I was ordered by Seán Nunan (then O/C Cork IV Brigade) to return to Kiskeam to do some organising and I was appointed Vice O/C Newmarket Battalion, being attached to Battalion H.Q. at Newmarket barracks.

My rank at July 1st, 1922, was Vice O/C Newmarket Battalion, Cork IV Brigade. The strength of the battalion was about 900.

I served on the Battalion Staff at Newmarket until August, 1922, when the post was evacuated by I.R.A. forces. I took part in various engagements against Free State forces until I was arrested in January, 1923. I was interned in Cork Gaol and Tintown Camp until November, 1923, when I was released.

Signed: Daniel GuineyDate: 7<sup>th</sup> February 1956Witness: P. O'Donnell

(Investigator)

(P. O'Donnell)

(Daniel Guiney)

7th February 1956