

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1430.

Witness

Mr. Andrew Bailey,
Fethard-on-Sea,
Co. Wexford.

Identity.

Adjutant, 1st Battalion, South Wexford Brigade.
Hon. Secretary, South Wexford Brigade Committee
Old I.R.A., 1956.

Subject.

Record of Personnel, South Wexford Brigade,

March, 1921 - Truce.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File No .. S. 2733.

Form B S M 2

ORIGINAL

STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREW BAILEY,
Fethard-on-Sea, Co. Wexford.

SOUTH WEXFORD BRIGADE.
OLD T. R. A.

I have been asked to write a history of the organisation, officer personnel, etc., of above brigade from before 1916 to July 11th, 1921, and as far as the contacts I have made and from my own memory, I will try to do same, but as I was not a member during the 1916 period and held no battalion rank until 1921, I am at a disadvantage inasmuch as I have to rely on what other officers tell me.

As far as I know, there were only two companies of the Irish Volunteers in South Wexford during the 1916 Rising. There was one in Wexford town, and another in New Ross town. Attached to the Wexford town company was a section from the rural areas of Bridgetown and Rathangan, and the New Ross company had a section, or sections, in the rural areas of Ballywilliam, Templeudigan and Rathgarogue.

Both companies - there are some officers who hold that Wexford town area was a battalion - mobilised for the Rising, and stood to for portion of the week when, I am informed, Captain O'Connell (Ginger) of G.H.Q. arrived with a countermanding order, and the men finally dispersed. Seán Sinnott appears to have been senior officer in Wexford area. Others mentioned as being officers were Laurence Radford, Myles Redmond and Robert Brennan. The latter was one of the leaders of the Rising in Enniscorthy, and held some high rank

which I have been unable to discover, but he was one of the five leaders of the Rising in Enniscorthy who were afterwards sentenced to death (commuted to penal servitude for life), and he must have held some very high rank. Philip Lennon, who was known as Captain Lennon, was in charge of New Ross area, and other officers in the area at that time were Joseph McCarthy, Patrick Hayden and John O'Neill. All the officers and most of the Volunteers were deported to British jails after the Rising.

On the general reorganisation in 1917, the county of Wexford was one brigade area, divided into four battalions. Two of these battalions were in what was afterwards the South Wexford brigade area. Wexford battalion covered the area from Crossabeg to Kilmore Quay, and from Ballymitty to Rosslare, while the New Ross battalion covered the area from Templeudigan to Hook Head, and from the the river Barrow to Adamstown and Clongeen. I do not know the number of companies in each battalion at that time, but later on I will give a complete list of the companies in the South Wexford brigade when it was formed in October, 1920.

The first staff of the 1st battalion was:-

Commandant	-	Philip Lennon.
Vice Commandant	-	Joseph McCarthy.
Adjutant	-	Patrick Hayden.
Quartermaster	-	John O'Neill.

Keymen in each area, some of whom were not attached officially but whose addresses were used as covering addresses and who acted as staff intelligence officers, included Thomas Redmond, Joseph Lynch, John Cummins,

Robert Moran, Ned Foley, and possibly some others.

In October 1920, County Wexford was split into two brigades, north and south. The New Ross battalion was split in two, the 1st and 2nd, and the Wexford battalion into the 3rd and 4th. The south brigade staff appointed then was:-

Commandant	-	Dr. Jim Ryan.
Vice Commandant	-	Michael Parker.
Adjutant	-	Thomas Trainor(Surveyor).
Quartermaster	-	Thomas Trainor.
Staff officer	-	Philip Lennon, who before this had been last O/C, County Wexford brigade.

The two Tom Trainors were different men, although holding the same name. Richard Sinnott was brigade police officer. James Colfer was brigade transport officer. Philip McGrath later became brigade training officer. Other brigade ranks were:-

Intelligence officer	-	Martin Howlett.
Medical officer	-	Dr. Walton.
Munitions	-	Denis McGrath.
O/C, Active Service Unit	-	Tom O'Hanlon.
Engineer	-	Michael O'Keefe.
Chemistry	.	Peter Jordan.

When Dr. Ryan was arrested, Thomas O'Hanlon was appointed Brigade O/C. Later, he took over the A.S.U., and Dr. O'Sullivan was then appointed Brigade O/C, and held that rank up to the Truce. The Brigade Adjutant, Thomas Trainor, was arrested, and he was succeeded by James Gill. The Brigade Quartermaster was also arrested and he was succeeded by Peter Jordan who was afterwards appointed Brigade O/C, Chemistry, and Peter Donnell was Brigade Quartermaster from that to the Truce.

1st battalion staff changes - when the New Ross battalion was reorganised in 1917, it covered the area which was, in 1920, divided into 1st and 2nd battalions, South Wexford. The first staff appointed was:-

Commandant	-	Phil. Lennon.
Vice Commandant	-	Joe McCarthy.
Adjutant	-	Patrick Hayden.
Quartermaster	-	John O'Neill.

Later Phil. Lennon became Brigadier of County Wexford. He was succeeded as 1st battalion O/C by Joseph McCarthy, and William Murphy became Vice O/C. Later, Joseph McCarthy resigned as O/C and he was succeeded by Patrick Hayden. Later, P. Hayden resigned his rank, and Michael Walshe was appointed Commandant. Philip McGrath was Adjutant before becoming Brigade Director of Training. John O'Neill also resigned his rank and was succeeded by Patrick Ryan, and John Corcoran was appointed Battalion Intelligence officer. Michael Walshe, who was a native of Leix or Offaly, returned to his own area and became commandant of a Leix or Offaly brigade, and Pat Cleary became commandant up to the Truce; William Murphy, Vice Commandant up to the Truce. John Corcoran became Battalion Adjutant as well as Intelligence officer for a period when, to devote his entire time to intelligence which at the time was considered the most important staff job, he left the Battalion Adjutant, and A. Bailey was appointed Battalion Adjutant. All this lot of appointments held good at July 11th, 1921. Other staff members were:-

Battalion Despatch Officer	-	Paddy MacDonald (now Commandant in Army in Dublin.)
"	Training	" - Tim McMahon.

Battalion Armourer - John Joyce.
" Police Officer - Dan Hanley.
" Supplies - Liam Walshe.

The 1st battalion area covered the town of New Ross, the whole parishes of Cushinstown and Adamstown and the half parish of Templeudigan, and had six companies as follows (and the following officers at the Truce) -

<u>Company.</u>	<u>Captain.</u>	<u>1st Lieut.</u>	<u>2nd Lieut.</u>
A. New Ross	- Paddy Mackey	- Lce. Ryan	- P. Doyle
B. Rathgarogue	- Owen Murphy	- Ptk. Murphy	- Jn. Forrestal
C. Cushinstown	- Ml. O'Neill	- Wm. Kehoe	- Ml. Kelly
D. Adamstown	- Jas. Furlong (Sen.)	- Jas. Furlong (Jun.)	- Wm. Doyle
E. Templeudigan	- Jas. O'Neill	- Jas. Joyce	- Jas. O'Connor
F. Ballywilliam	- Jas. Furlong	- Jas. Browne	- Mark McGrath

Rank changes after 1917:

Frank O'Kennedy was the first captain of A. Company. He was replaced by Thomas O'Neill who was arrested, and he was replaced by Lieutenant P. Mackey. P. Cleary was first captain of B. Company; James Redmond, senior, 1st Lieuteant. P. Cleary was promoted battalion commandant and was replaced by Owen Murphy. James Redmond, senior, resigned his rank of 1st Lieutenant and was replaced by F. Murphy. E. & F. Companies were as one from 1917 until early 1921, when the new F. Company was formed. The first officers of E. Company were Captain James O'Neill, and 1st Lieutenant, Nicholas Devereaux. Who the 2nd Lieutenant was at that time, I am unable to trace, or find out, although I was a member of that company myself. Thomas Furlong was 1st

Lieutenant, D. Company, at the time of his arrest before the Truce.

2nd Battalion Staff and organisation:

The 2nd battalion was not formed until late in 1920. Previous to that, it was part of the New Ross battalion, but the number of companies was about the same. It comprised the parishes of Horeswood, Ballycullanne, Templetown and the half parishes of Adamstown and Clongeen. The first commandant was Tom O'Hanlon and, on his appointment as Brigade O/C, he was succeeded by Patrick Carty, with Thomas Howlett as Vice O/C, Martin Walshe as Adjutant, John Kent as Quartermaster, Peter Cummins as Engineering officer, Thomas Cummins as Intelligence officer, and a M. Duffin as Police officer.

<u>Company</u>	<u>Captain</u>	<u>1st.Lieut.</u>	<u>2nd Lieut.</u>
A. Gusseranne	- Hy.Donavon	- Matt O'Sullivan	- (None.)
B. Campile	- Jas.Sinnott	- Martin Hanlon	- Martin Nolan
C. Ramsgrange	- Jas.Howlett	-	-
D. Fethard	- Rchd. Rowe	- Joseph Chapman	- Peter Fitzpatrick
E. Newbawn	- M. Casey	- Pk.Murphy	- Peter Doyle.
F. Clongeen	- J. Reville	- Wm.Bennett.	-
G. St.Leonards	- H.Caulfield	(Acting Captain, John Whelan).	

The only changes in ranks, of which I am aware, are that Joe McGrath was Captain of C. Company and left here for Co. Waterford for a job and was, I understand, made a captain of a company there as well; John Timmons, who was the first captain of G. Company was arrested after the Saltmills explosion, and the company was afterwards commanded by Hugh Caulfield and John Whelan.

3rd Battalion Staff and organisation:

This new battalion was formed in 1920. Previously, it had been attached to Wexford battalion. This was a hostile area, and it did happen that new officers were appointed to-day and arrested tomorrow. The first commandant was William Doyle. He was arrested and succeeded by Tom Cousins. He too was and was succeeded by James Byrne. He too was arrested arrested, and was succeeded by Mick Radford who held the rank on July 11th. Walter Doyle was first quartermaster. He was transferred to Dublin for special service duty and replaced by Patrick O'Keefe. The staff at the Truce was:-

Commandant	- Michael Radford
Vice Commandant	- Michael McCarthy.
Adjutant	- Patrick O'Neill.
Quartermaster	- Patrick O'Keefe.

James Quirke was Adjutant at the time of his arrest. Michael Radford succeeded him.

The companies on July 11th, 1921, were:-

<u>Company.</u>	<u>Captain</u>	1st Lieut.	2nd Lieut.
A. Murrinstown	- Berny Radford	- Martin O'Brien	- G. Breslin
B. Bridgetown	- Wm. Maddock	- John O'Neill	- Frank Cullen
C. Broadway	- John Devereaux	- Patk. Wall	- Jas. Pettit.
D. Ballymitty	- Wm. Byrne	- Thos. Murphy	- Terence Evoy
E. Tagoat	- Pat Mythen	- Wm. Barry.	

4th Battalion:

Nicholas Newport was the first commandant of this battalion and may have been commandant of the Wexford battalion before that battalion was split into 3rd and 4th. He was arrested and replaced by Dr. Jim Ryan who,

in turn, was made brigade commandant. He was succeeded as battalion O/C by David Sears. Later Sears resigned and was succeeded by Laur. Harford who was arrested and replaced by Francis Carthy who held the rank at the Truce. Sean Sinnott was the first battalion adjutant and, on his arrest, was succeeded by Jeremiah O'Brien. An officer, about whom I have heard, is a Michael O'Hehir; he appears to have had some rank, but I am unable to trace it. Similarly, Myles Redmond, Pierre Byrne and Michael Fluske appear to have had ranks which I am unable to trace. I believe that Mick Parker was vice O/C of this battalion until he was promoted brigade vice O/C. The first captain of A. Company was William Cullimore and, on his arrest, he was succeeded by James Noye.

The staff at the Truce were:-

Commandant	- Francis Carthy.
Vice Commandant	- Denis MacDonald.
Adjutant	- Jer. O'Brien.
Quartermaster	- Thomas Cullen.
Assistant Quartermaster	- James Murphy.
Intelligence Officer	- Joe Traynor.

An officer named Tom Joyce, who afterwards joined the Free State Army, did, it strikes me, hold some battalion special service rank at that time. Richard Donnelly was Quartermaster, 4th battalion, was arrested and replaced by Tom Cullen.

<u>Company.</u>	<u>Captain.</u>	<u>1st Lieut.</u>	<u>2nd Lieut.</u>
A. Wexford town	- James Noye	- Jas. Donnelly	- Aidan T
B. Wexford town	- Mark Roche	- John Goodison	- Ed. Clancy
C. Wexford town	- Pat O'Connor	- Jas. Murphy	- Joe Byrne
D. Crossabeg	- R. Lambert	- Joe Kirwan	- Myles Harpur.

<u>Company</u>	<u>Captain</u>	<u>1st Lieut.</u>	<u>2nd Lieut.</u>
E. Ballymurrin	- Stephen Sinnott	- Wal. Cummins	- Thos. Cosgrave
F. Taghmon	- Thos. Boggan	- Wm. O'Brien	- Jas. Parle.
G. Castlebridge	- Jas. Shortle	- David Murphy	- Jas. Devereux.
H. Glynn	- John Roche	- Jas. Kiely	- Lce. Roche.

A Mr. N. or M. Cadigan is also believed to have had a rank in staff, but I cannot trace it.

SIGNED:

Andrew Barry

DATE :

June 4th 1950.

WITNESS

Dean Brennan. Lieut. Col.

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