

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1,457



BUF

, 1913-21.

S.

DOCUMENT NO. 11.000.....7.

Witness

Daniel McCarthy,
Rylane,
Co. Cork.

Identity.

~~CM~~
Section Commander, Rylane Company, Donoughmore
Battalion, Cork No. 1 Brigade.

~~CM~~
C, Rylane Company, Donoughmore Battalion,
Cork No. 1 Brigade.
Subject.

~~IS~~
Activities of Rylane Company, Donoughmore Battalion,
Cork No. 1 Brigade, Irish Volunteers, 1917-1921,
and Battalion Flying Column, 1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File NoS.2616.....

ORIGINAL

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

No. W.S. 1457



I was
My father
National
work with
cottages

on 28th March 1900.
er. I went to Rylane
age of 14, when I went to
on a contract repairing

The Irish Volunteers were first formed in Rylane in the summer of 1917, following a public meeting which was addressed by Thomas McCurtain and Sean Nolan from Cork City. The former was at the time O/C. Cork Brigade, Irish Volunteers. Amongst those who joined the Volunteers after this meeting were: Dan Farrell, James Farrell, Michael Farrell, David Buckley, Con Horgan, [redacted] Horgan, Jerh. Horgan, Joseph Buckley, James Moynihan, Michael Moynihan, John O'Riordan, Patk. D. O'Callaghan, [redacted] Connell, John J. O'Leary and Dan McCarthy (witness). The strength of the unit was about 15. After joining, we were issued with membership cards and agreed to pay a weekly subscription of 3d each. The first officers of the company who were appointed by the Brigade O/C. (Tomas MacCurtain) were: O/C. [redacted] J. O'Leary; 1st Lieut. Dan Farrell; 2nd Lieut. Denis Kelliher; Q.M. Dave Buckley.

The only type of training carried out at this time was close order foot drill. Parades were held twice each week in the fields in the district. Training was carried out under our own officers..

All members of the Volunteers were members of Sinn Fein - the political wing of the republican movement - and took a very active part in organising same. The chairman of the local Sinn Fein Club was, as far as I can remember, John Hinchion. The Sinn Fein Club which catered for the district

was Aghab

As I
towards t
company w
companies
the paris
area and
whole con
arms held
made in the local forge.



of the unit grew and,
about 60 members. The
stations and two half-
and southern halves of
was in the centre of the
place for parades of the
in officers. The only
popy pikes which were

When the British threatened to enforce conscription in the spring of 1918, there was a big increase in membership. Practically all men of military age, and many well over that age joined up. The strength of the company must now have reached over 100. At this time, the pioneer members who are named in the second paragraph on page 1 were engaged in making buckshot, reloading cartridges and making general preparations to have all available men and arms ready to resist the British. All available arms in the area - mainly shotguns - were collected at this time. However, when the threat of conscription had passed, nearly all the new recruits dropped out of the ranks by degrees, so that by the end of the summer of 1918, the strength of the company was again about sixty.

About this time, Cork Brigade was re-organised and a battalion was formed in Donoughmore area to which our company (Rylandé) was attached. Other companies in the Donoughmore Battalion were:- Blarney, Donoughmore, Coachford, Courtbrack, Grenagh, Inniscarra or Berrings. The first O/C. of this battalion was John Golden, Donoughmore. I cannot recollect the names of the other officers. Our O/C., John J. O'Leary (Rylandé Coy.), went to Belfast about this time, and this led

to a change
O/C. Dan I
Crowley.

During
carried out
Donoughmore
at weekends
the battalion
skirmishes



retreating under cover. Amongst the places at which these operations took place were: Firmount, Donoughmore and Aghabullogue.

Two men, who had been arrested by the Volunteers in Blarney for robbery, were moved into Rylane Company area about this time. They were detained under armed guard for about 14 days and were later removed to another district. All members of the local section of the Volunteers took turns at guard duty while the prisoners were in the area.

The chairman of Aghabullogue Sinn Fein Club - John Hinchin was arrested towards the end of the summer of 1918. He was charged with making a seditious speech and was sentenced to one month's imprisonment in Cork Jail. His release from prison was made the occasion of a demonstration in the area. The members of the Rylane Company marched six miles to Peake railway station to welcome him home. They were accompanied by the vast majority of the people of the district.

There was no activity in the area in connection with the General Election in December 1918 as the Sinn Fein candidate was returned unopposed.

Normal training continued throughout 1919. The officers of the Rylane Company managed to obtain a number of revolvers

company who now were:

Llither; 2nd Lieut. Denis

ation manoeuvres were

l companies in the

held at selected points

and were carried out under

manoeuvres consisted of

for, advancing and

and shotguns from non-members who were sympathetic towards the Volun members o



It w to Kilmur endeavour hold thei Farrell.

sed to instruct the e care and use of arms.

mn of 1919 that I went uskerry Railway to rry Foxhounds were to y David Buckley and James is time hunting was

banned in the area as a protest against the treatment of I.R.A. prisoners. As a result of the ban, particulars of 'Hunt Meets' were not published as usual in the newspapers. We boarded the train at Kilmurray and mixed with some of the hunting people. Before the train had reached Peake railway station, we had discovered that the 'meet' was to be held at Major Woodley's, Leades, near Macroom. We then left the train at Peake and made contact with the members of Rylane Company who were awaiting our arrival. Arms were then distributed to the members and the unit - to the number of about 30 - moved across country towards Leades where the hunt was to meet. However, when we reached Leades, the hounds were hunting and we were forced to fire on the dogs before the huntsmen decided to call off the hunt.

Beyond normal training, there was little activity until Easter 1920 when the evacuated R.I.C. barracks at Coachford was burned. This operation was carried out by Rylane Company under Dan Farrell (O/C.). Nearly all members of the company were engaged in this operation, either on the actual work of destruction or on guard or outpost duty. I was engaged on outpost duty on the main Rylane-Coachford road.

When a strong party of men from Rylane Company were mobilised for the attack on Blarney R.I.C. Barracks on 1st June 1920, I did not receive secure instructions to report until the

company had
of their

I then
engaged with
the making
I worked
area. The
area on the



galvanised iron. The roof was then covered by the sods which had been carefully removed before excavation work started. The entrance to the dugouts was through a hole in the hillside some yards away, which was concealed by scrub and bushes. The dugouts were about 12-ft. square and 4-ft. high. A factory in which bombs were made, was also constructed on the same lines in the same area. This factory was, as far as I can recollect, operated by Denis McNeilus, who had earlier been rescued from Cork Jail.

Warder Griffin, Cork Jail, who had been kidnapped by the I.R.A. in Cork City because of his attitude to I.R.A. prisoners on hunger strike, was detained in the area for some time about this period. With Joseph Byrne and John O'Callaghan, I acted as guard on him several occasions.

After Christmas 1920, there was a change in the officers of Rylane Company as Dan Farrell (O/C) resigned. He was replaced as O/C. by John Hinchion. The other officers were Denis Kelliher (1st Lt.) and Denis Crowley (2nd Lt.) The resignation of the O/C. (Dan Farrell) was due to the strict disciplinary action taken by him against a number of members of the company who had committed an unauthorised act by endeavouring to prevent a local farmer from dealing with his milk supply as he desired. The disciplinary action taken by

. As I was not aware
make contact.

summer of 1920 that I was
the Rylane company on
. About the same time
ng of two dugouts in the
de by digging out an
t with timber and

the O/C.
for a cha
front, th

Towa
Kilcolema
the main
Rylane co
the use o

engaged either on outpost, guard duty, or on the actual work of destruction.



erned - led to a demand
er to present a unified
d.

dges in the area - at
d at Glashagarrive on
lished by the members of
e carried out without
of the company were

Early in 1921, steps were taken to form a battalion flying column. Selected men from the various companies were assembled at Kilcullen, Rylane, where they were billeted in "The Jail" which was a vacant County Council cottage. The column numbered about 30. [redacted] cannot recollect the names of the men from the other companies, but amongst the men from Rylane Company on the [redacted] column were: Dan Goggin, Patrick Callaghan, Jerh. Murphy, Denis Crowley, Jerh. Cronin, Denis Kelliher, John Hinchion. This [redacted] column was in charge of John J. O'Leary, who was now Battalion O/C. While the column was in training in the area I took part in their activities as did a number of other men from the company [redacted] (Rylane).

When the column was about to move to Dripsey area to take up an ambush position towards the end of January 1921, the Column O/C. (John J. O'Leary) sent two members of the column (Dan Goggin and Patrick Callaghan) into Rylane Company area to select some scouts. The men selected were: Stephen Twomey, Jerh. Callaghan, Tim O'Shea, Jack O'Shea, Tim Murphy and Con O'Connor. The column moved into position near Dripsey early on the morning of 28th January 1921. While awaiting the arrival of the enemy convoy, Mrs. Lindsay, Coachford, drove

to the am
about hal
She told
ambush on
drove to
military
(Fr. Shin
in charge



returned to Coachford -
led on the Catholic Curate
flock who were lying in
mind her own. She then
e and informed the
. The Catholic Curate
position and informed those
He appealed to them to
withdraw, but they refused. Some time later, a force of
military - 70 strong - arrived in lorries at Dripsey Cross.
The officer in charge drilled his men at the Cross for about
20 minutes and then deployed through the country where they
moved into the rear of the position where the column lay in
ambush. The enemy party then opened fire on the column which
retreated as best it could replying as circumstances permitted
to the enemy. Six members of the column were taken
prisoner and one was wounded. Five of the prisoners (Tadhg
Mc[redacted], Patk. Mahoney, John Lyons, Dan O'Callaghan and
Thomas O'Brien) were tried by courtmartial, sentenced to death
and executed. One of the prisoners (Seamus Barrett) died of
wounds. [redacted] was not present at Dripsey, but this description
of what actually happened was given to me by participants
on the day after the engagement.

The survivors of the column eventually reached Rylane
Company area during the night following the engagement. They
moved back to their billet at "The Jail", Kilcullen. Next day
I was engaged on scouting and outpost duty with Tim Horgan.
We were in position on high ground about two miles from the
billets where we had a perfect view of all roads in the area.
We had instructions to signal with a flag to the guard at the
billets in the event of any enemy forces entering the area.
At night, I was on guard duty on the road leading to "The Jail".
I was armed with a revolver.

prisoners by the T.R.A. about the middle of February 1921. They were held prisoner. Officer [redacted] offer was the exchange executed chauffeur



area where they were to exchange their captured at Dripsey. The [redacted] ces at Cork, to whom the Lindsay, but he refused men taken at Dripsey were 21, Mrs. Lindsay and her company area as a reprisal.

As far as I know, the Battalion O/C. (John J. O'Leary) and the O/C. Rylane Company (John Hinchion) were called to G.H.Q. prior to the Truce in connection with this case. Whatever transpired, I can only say that the Company O/C. (John Hinchion) did not subsequently resume duty.

During the period between Dripsey and the Truce on 11th July 1921, [redacted] members of the company were mainly engaged in blocking roads, cutting enemy lines of communication and generally impeding enemy activities. This work required practically continuous service as trenches and road-blocks made [redacted] night were very often removed next day by civilians acting under duress when threatened by enemy raiding parties. This entailed making further obstructions that night. While my section was [redacted] operating on this work - I was now a section commander - I was usually engaged on armed guard duty to prevent a surprise.

Rank at the Truce - Section Commander, Rylane Company
Donoughmore Battalion (6th),
Cork I Brigade.

Strength of Rylane Company at the Truce - about 67.

Following the Truce, steps were taken to organise a training camp for the battalion. This camp was established in a vacant house at Derry, Berrings. Representatives from all

the compar
 assembled
 at the fir
 Murphy.
 fortnight
 were repla
 respective
 were: Der



Callaghan. At this stage, I received instructions to forward a supply of rations to the camp - this was a duty that rotated amongst the companies. I collected rations of bread, meat, butter, potatoes and vegetables in the Rylane Company area and was about to take them to the camp when I met Denis Crowley and the other representatives from the company at the camp. They had broken camp and had come home. They were court-martialled and dismissed. I was then appointed O/C. Rylane Company by the Battalion Vice O/C. (Frank Busted).

[REDACTED] was present at a Battalion Council meeting in August 1921, at which I was instructed to send 13 representatives (10 men, 3 cooks) to the next battalion camp. In addition, I had to make six men available for each of the special services - signalling, engineering, First Aid, as well as ensuring that men were available and on duty each night guarding road blocks and other obstructions. These activities continued right through 1921. Early in 1922 I was instructed to take a section of men to Coachford to intercept and hold up some British officers who were expected to pass through. Although we spent two days in the area there was no appearance by the British officers. I was the last O/C. of D/Company (Rylane) 6th Battalion, Cork I Brigade, before the split between the I.R.A. and Provisional Government forces. The surviving members of the company roll at 11th July 1921, are

officers and men - were
 atives from Rylane Company
 an, Dan Slattery, Jerh.
 ed out for about a
 e then sent home. They
 her men from their
 ylane at the second camp
 rice Hinchion and Denis

No. 1 Section

Dan McCa
 Dan Farr
 James Fa
 Con Horg
 Tom Horg
 Jerh. Ho
 John McN
 James Mo
 Michael
 Jerh. Bo
 Con Sull
 Con Leha
 Dick Nau
 Pat Sava
 Steve Twomey

No. 2 Section

gin
 allaghan
 Callaghan
 ch
 y
 ynch
 onnell
 nell
 alsh
 liher
 lihy

No. 3 Section

Jerry Murphy
 Tim Murphy
 Con Connor
 Mick Noonan
 Paul Sweet
 Tim Sweet
 John Healy
 Ned Riordan
 Tim Kelliker
 John Cronin
 Tim Savage
 John P. Cronin
 Patk. Callaghan
 J. Callaghan
 T. Rowley
 Andy Cotter
 Mick Twomey
 Dave Buckley
 Joe Buckley

No. 4 Section

Denis Kelleher
 Maurice Hinchion
 Paddy Twomey
 Denis Twomey
 Jack O'Shea
 Nick Sullivan
 Jack Lynch
 Con Donovan
 John Sullivan

Signed: Daniel McBarthlyDate: 6th July 1956Witness: P. J. Donnell

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
 BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
 No. W.S. 1457