

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRÉ MILÉATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 1,598

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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1598

Witness

Sean Murphy, Thomas Barry, Patrick Canton,
James Wickham,

9 Ophelia Terrace, The Lough,
Cork

Identity.

Officers of the Irish Volunteers,
1916 Association (Cork)

Subject.

Record of Cork City and County Battalion
Easter 1916.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

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RECORD OF CORK CITY AND COUNTY BATTALION -

EASTER 1916.

The Irish Volunteer organisation was established in Cork at a public meeting held in the City Hall on 23rd December, 1913. This organisation had been founded in Dublin shortly before. Amongst the speakers at the Cork meeting were Roger Casement, Eoin MacNeill and J.J. Walsh. The two large political parties - the United Irish League made up of followers of John Redmond, and the 'All-for-Ireland League with William O'Brien as leader - ignored the new organisation for some time. The Irish-Irelanders were its mainstay. But as the new movement developed and gained strength throughout the country, it excited the jealousy of the political parties and more especially of the Redmondites. Then the leaders of the latter encouraged their followers to join the new organisation. This they did in great numbers everywhere.

Shortly after the outbreak of the Great War of 1914-1918, the question of control of the Volunteers became one of paramount importance, the Redmondites insisting on their nominees being put on the governing body. This was done in Dublin but, before long, it was seen the policies of the original body and the newly co-opted members were completely at variance. Eventually they broke with one another, and two different bodies of Volunteers emerged from the separation. The Redmondites established a new organisation called 'The Irish National Volunteers', whilst the original members adhered to the old name of 'The Irish Volunteers'. At a general parade of all the Cork Volunteers held in the Cornmarket Exchange the question of control was put before them. The great majority decided to follow the leadership of the Redmondites and joined the Irish National Volunteers. The minority remained true to their former allegiance in the Irish Volunteers.

Before long the Irish political parties gave every encouragement to their followers in the National Volunteers to join the British Army, and this great numbers of them did. The ~~majority~~^{minority} of them remained true in their allegiance to the cause of Ireland alone. They were frequently taunted as being pro-German. Every effort was made both in their public employment and in their private life to induce them to forsake the Irish Volunteers.

The Irish Volunteers slowly but surely gained strength. In Cork especially this was the case and, at the beginning of 1916, Cork was reckoned to be the best organised county in Ireland. This result was due to the work of a band of voluntary organisers who, at the end of each week, left the city on Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings, travelling mainly on bicycles and at their own expense, often journeying forty or fifty miles to organise the various outlying areas, returning tired but pleased with their efforts on Sunday nights. It was often alleged by their enemies that they were plentifully supplied with German gold.

The old hard core of the Irish-Ireland movement formed its officers, having a civilian committee who dealt with financial matters, recruiting, and other non-military matters, so that the organisation was strongly knit, having both a military and civilian character. The military side was based on British Infantry training and was fortunate in procuring ex-British Sergeant-Majors as instructors, but lacked an Officers' Training Corps, and had no ideas in the early stages regarding guerilla warfare. Ammunition was so scarce that not a man fired a round of live ammunition in Cork before Easter 1916. Arms consisted of three different patterns of rifles, with some shotguns. The ammunition varied

from ten rounds for some patterns of rifles to thirty rounds for others. About 75% of the latter ammunition was obtained locally through seizures from British Army personnel and such. As the Volunteer Headquarters in Dublin were unaware of this latter source of supply, their estimate of ammunition supplies available in Cork for Easter Sunday 1916, was ten rounds per rifle with varying amounts for shotguns.

The Cork Volunteers' main objective on Easter Monday, 1916, was the obstruction and delaying of British forces at Millstreet and Rathmore by cutting the railway line until German supplies of arms, ammunition, and officers were landed in Kerry from the "AUD" which had been planned for that time, and thus to enable the local Volunteer forces to be fully equipped.

Dublin officers from Volunteer Headquarters had frequently informed the Cork Battalion Council meetings that Roger Casement had recruited an Irish Brigade in Germany from Irishmen who were British prisoners-of-war there, that the Irish Volunteers would be officered by these men on their arrival in Ireland, and that ample supplies of arms, ammunition, and light artillery would be made available from Germany. The Dublin Brigade, as they showed, had sufficient arms and ammunition to maintain a fight for a week, whereas the Cork Volunteers had scarcely enough to last five minutes.

No alternative plan of campaign had been considered for the Cork Volunteers, and when the "AUD" was captured, and Casement who had landed with two followers on the Kerry coast and had been there arrested, all hopes of overseas' assistance in the planned rebellion vanished.

Miss Foley of the Dublin Cumann na mBan arrived in Cork a week prior to the date fixed for the rebellion. She brought a dispatch

from Seán MacDiarmuda, which caused so much concern to Tomás MacCurtain and Traolach MacSuibhne that Traolach's sister, Eithne, was sent specially to Dublin on the following day to ask that a Headquarter's meeting be held immediately and to promise that one of the two would attend. This suggested meeting was not held. But Tomás Clarke ordered Miss MacSwiney to return to Cork and to tell the Cork officers that under no circumstances whatever were either of them to leave Cork but were to carry out the orders which had previously been issued to them. Miss Foley, in the meantime, had returned to Dublin, but she was back again in Cork on the Wednesday before Good Friday bearing a further despatch from Seán MacDiarmuda.

On Good Friday evening Captain J. J. O'Connell arrived in Cork from Dublin with an order from Eoin MacNeill cancelling all previous orders received in Cork and giving Captain O'Connell full command of the Volunteers south of a line from Wexford to Kerry inclusive. By a later train the same night (Good Friday), there came Jim Ryan with another despatch from Seán MacDiarmuda in which it was stated that all differences at headquarters with Eoin MacNeill had been resolved and that the original plans for Easter Sunday were to be carried out in accordance with the previous instructions. At a later meeting held on Good Friday night between Captain O'Connell, Jim Ryan, Tomás MacCurtain and Traolach MacSuibhne, great satisfaction was expressed that agreement had at last been reached between all parties at the Dublin headquarters. The position now appeared to be so satisfactory that the Cork Command sent back a cheerful message to Seán MacDiarmuda through Jim Ryan to the effect that whilst a round of ammunition lasted Cork would be in the fight.

Before that meeting on Good Friday night had concluded, 1st Lieutenant Fred Murray of "A" Company, Cork City Battalion, arrived from Kerry with the information that the German arms ship, the "AUD", had been captured and that Casement had been taken prisoner.

Both Captain O'Connell and Jim Ryan left Cork by the morning train at 7 o'clock on Easter Saturday - the former intending to travel to Tralee and the latter to Dublin. It transpired later that O'Connell, before reaching Mallow, changed his mind and decided to go direct to Dublin with Ryan, having been obviously influenced by the report of the capture of the "AUD". Captain O'Connell was not seen again in Cork during the Rising.

On Easter Sunday morning the Cork Battalion paraded at the Volunteer Hall in Sheares' Street. From there they marched to the Capwell Station of the Cork and Macroom railway and entrained for Crookstown. They left the train there and marched to Beal na mBlath where they linked up with the West Cork Battalion. The two battalions, with the Cork City Commandant, Seán O'Sullivan, in command, marched on to Macroom where they arrived in the afternoon. It was originally intended that the entire contingent would move to Carriganima that evening, remain there overnight, and finally occupy the positions planned for them at Millstreet and Rathmore on Easter Monday, 1916.

When the main body of the Cork Battalion had left Sheares' Street to entrain at Capwell Station, another despatch arrived at the Hall from Eoin MacNeill in which all orders lately issued were cancelled, and directing all commands to carry out the field manoeuvres as originally planned for the day. At the end of the

manoeuvres on that day, all units were instructed to disband and to return to their homes in the evening. As the Cork senior officers had remained in the Volunteer Hall for some time after the main body had left for Capwell they received MacNeill's despatch while there. They then left the Hall and travelled by road to Crookstown where they met Communications Officer, Pat Higgins. They gave Higgins an order for Seán O'Sullivan, the Commandant, instructing him to proceed to Macroom with all his men, and to return and disband all units that evening. The "Sunday Independent" newspaper had reached most country districts early that day. It carried Eoin MacNeill's despatch prominently in its front pages. The country Volunteers on reading this were puzzled and confused.

Between 1,100 and 1,200 men had been mobilised in Cork County for Easter Sunday and these were concentrated at the following centres on the Cork-Kerry borders :- Eyeries, Castletownbere, Kealkil, Inchigeela, Macroom, Carriganime, Beeing, Millstreet and Newmarket. After receiving MacNeill's despatch, the two Brigade officers, MacCurtain and MacSuibhne, set out to visit the places named above, to put MacNeill's latest order into effect, but the car in which they were travelling broke down at Carrigadrohid (four miles east of Macroom) late on Sunday night.

As it was not possible to carry out repairs at such a late hour, they were obliged to stay in Carrigadrohid until the following day. Then the repairs were effected; after which they proceeded to Ballingeary via Inchigeela, having completed the tour.

Between 12.15 p.m. and 12.45 p.m. on Easter Monday, a Miss Peroze^l, of the Dublin Cumann na mBan, arrived in Cork with a message from Pádraig Mac Piarais. It was written on the fly-leaf

of a small pocket diary, and read as follows:-

"WE GO INTO ACTION AT NOON TO-DAY P.H.P."

The Cork Brigade officers were in Ballingeary at this time. As motor cars at that period could only be used by special permit from the R.I.C., a cyclist was sent by the 1 p.m. train to Macroom to get in touch with the Brigade officers and to give them Pearse's message. The cyclist failed to contact the officers, as they had set out for Cork before he reached Ballingeary. The officers arrived in Cork city about 8 o'clock that evening.

As the message from Pearse was not a military order, it only increased the confusion in Cork, all the more so by reason of the fact that it was only initialled, whereas all previous despatches were fully signed.

The existence of two differing parties at G.H.Q. in Dublin, as well as differences with the Irish Citizen Army Command, was well known in Cork. In view of the fact that nine separate despatches arrived in Cork during those fateful days, some contradicting or countermanding, others affirming previous orders, it can be well understood how bewildering the confusion was, and how unenviable the position of the Cork Command.

On Easter Monday, the Cork Volunteer Hall was put into a rough state of defence. Scouts were posted on all the bridges and outside the Military barracks to report on any noticeable activities of the enemy forces.

On that night of Easter Monday, the late Bishop of Cork, Most Rev. Dr. Cohalan, with the then Lord Mayor, Councillor Butterfield, apprehending trouble, visited the Volunteer Hall in an effort to prevent any outbreak between the Volunteers and the

British Military. Tomás MacCurtain kept a private record of the events of those days but that was confiscated when he was a prisoner in Richmond prison, Dublin. (See his recollections of Easter Week, 1916, in Cork, which he wrote in Reading Gaol). The Bishop of Cork, in the Cork Free Press of May 20, 1916, wrote an account of the whole negotiations between the Cork Volunteers represented by MacCurtain and MacSuibhne and the British Military Authorities represented by Captain Dickie. The Bishop and the Lord Mayor of Cork (T. C. Butterfield) were the negotiators.

Copy letter from Daniel Cohalan, Assistant Bishop of Cork, in Cork Free Press 20 May, 1916 :-

"THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS OF CORK

(To the Editor, "Cork Free Press")

Sir,

In a recent issue of a London daily newspaper there appeared an account of the giving up of their arms by the Irish Volunteers of Cork. This account is not quite exact, and I ask of you the favour of being allowed to relate exactly what occurred at the giving up of the arms, and to add a few incidents of the state of martial law in which we live, in the hope that a full and uncoloured narrative may lead to the termination of the excesses which are pressing heavily on us, and which are exciting and disturbing not merely the Irish Volunteers (called also Sinn Féin Volunteers), but the general body of the people. I am perfectly familiar with the negotiations for the giving up of the arms.

"The most Rev. Dr. O'Callaghan, Bishop of Cork, was too ill to take part in these negotiations, and I, as his Assistant Bishop, took his place. I will state what occurred in the form of a diary:

Monday, April 24. - This was the day of the "rising" in Dublin. In the course of the evening a rumour got abroad in Cork that there was going to be a rising in the city during the night. The Lord Mayor called to me and suggested that we should visit the Volunteers and counsel peace. We were assured that there would be no offensive on the part of the Volunteers, and that such a thing was not contemplated.

Thursday, April 27.- A meeting was held by appointment in my house, there being present the Lord Mayor, a military gentleman, and myself. The question of giving up the arms was discussed. The military position was that if the arms were given up to the Lord Mayor or to myself it would be sufficient; that the military authorities would not demand the arms or ask to know where they were kept, but would be satisfied with the word of the Lord Mayor or mine, that he or I was in possession of the arms. The meeting was adjourned to Friday night, the Lord Mayor and I meanwhile to see the heads of the Volunteers and to submit the military proposal to them.

Friday, April 28. - The Lord Mayor and I submitted the military proposal to the Volunteer leaders. The Volunteer leaders considered the proposal and asked for information on these points :-

(1) Whether if the guns were given up in the manner proposed by the military authority they would be confiscated or would remain the property of the Volunteers, to be returned when the crisis is over.

(2) Whether the Volunteers would get an assurance that the subject would be kept out of the papers; that the papers would not be allowed to talk of the disarmament of the Irish Volunteers while other voluntary bodies were allowed to retain their arms.

(3) Whether the police would be instructed not to be annoying and irritating individual Volunteers.

(4) Whether the Volunteer leaders would get a permit to visit certain Volunteer centres in Munster with a view to explaining and suggesting the acceptance of the proposal made by the military authority in Cork.

At our adjourned meeting on the same Friday night, there being present the Lord Mayor, the military representatives, and myself, the military representative replied to these questions as follows:-

(1) The military have no idea of confiscation, and as far as the military are concerned the arms will be returned when the crisis is over; but the military cannot give a pledge for Parliament or the civil authority, nor can they give an assurance that a law will not be passed to disarm the Irish Volunteers and all similar associations.

(2) Care would be taken that the papers should not mention the handing in of the rifles.

(3) The County Inspector of Police would be spoken to in order to check the indiscreet zeal of individual policemen.

(4) A permit would be given to the Volunteer leaders to visit Limerick, Tralee, and other districts, to submit to the Volunteers of these centres the Cork agreement, and to counsel the acceptance of it.

(5) If these terms were accepted, there should be a general amnesty, unless in the case of persons found in treasonable correspondence with the enemy.

Monday night, May 1st, was fixed as the time limit for handing in the arms. These terms were accepted, and it was a great relief to us all to be assured that we should have no trouble in the city.

Saturday, April 29. - The Volunteer leaders visited the centres referred to. It was unfortunate that they left the city, because in their absence the military proposal could not be submitted to the general body of Volunteers, and unauthorised reports of the terms of peace were creating trouble in the city.

Monday, May 1st. - At midday the Lord Mayor and I met the Volunteer leaders. They were angry that faith had not been kept with them, and there was danger that the agreement arrived at would not be put to the Volunteers generally. I undertook to attend, with the Lord Mayor, a general meeting of the Volunteers at 8 p.m. in the Volunteer Hall, and on this understanding, the leaders agreed to call a meeting, and to submit the agreement to the general body of their followers. Meanwhile in the early afternoon the Lord Mayor and I held a meeting with the military representative. He complained that the terms of agreement were not kept, that the arms should have been handed in already. I pointed out that according to the agreement 12 o'clock on Monday night was the time limit. I also added that I was going to address the Volunteers in the evening the time for handing in the arms should be extended to Tuesday night. This was conceded by the military representative, who was most reasonable throughout. In the interval between this afternoon meeting and the night meeting in the Volunteers' Hall the military representative telephoned me that all guarantees were withdrawn. This would make it impossible for me to appear before the men and address them. But the military representative assured me that though formal guarantees were withdrawn the arrangement agreed on would go through. On the strength of this assurance the Lord Mayor and I attended the meeting of the Volunteers at 8 p.m. The meeting was perfectly calm and orderly. By a very large majority a resolution

was passed accepting the arrangement agreed on with the military representative. On the same night a considerable proportion of the arms were handed in, and on being informed through telephone by the Lord Mayor our military friend telephoned his congratulations and said that it was splendid.

Tuesday, May 2. - Notwithstanding the guarantee of amnesty at the earlier stages of the negotiations and the assurance given before the final meeting of the Volunteers eleven of the Volunteers were arrested on Tuesday. More were to have been arrested, but at the remonstrance of the Lord Mayor the arrests ceased. This breach of faith created a bad feeling and a very dangerous excitement in the city. The Lord Mayor and I visited the County Inspector of Police, and represented to him that we were very anxious about the peace of the city. We asked him had he any objection to the immediate release of the Volunteers who were arrested. He said he had no objection, that he had no charge against the men. Fortified with this assurance we telephoned to the military authority at Queenstown representing how dangerous to the peace of the city it would be to keep the men in prison. We got an answer back that the men would be immediately liberated. We went to the County Gaol to meet the men on their release and to counsel calmness and forbearance. After a long delay they were released. But it has been commonly rumoured in the city since that after the prisoners had left gaol a counter order was sent to the gaol directing that they should not be released. But once out they were left out.

Wednesday, May 3rd. - Notwithstanding the guarantee and assurance that the military authority would leave the arms to me or the Lord Mayor, that they would accept our word that the arms were given up, the arms were taken from the Lord Mayor by order of the military

authority on the night of Wednesday May 3rd.

Thursday, May 4th, and following days. - The military authorities turned their attention to the country districts. Many Volunteers were arrested and lodged, some in the County Gaol and some in the military prison. The ecclesiastical arrangements in Cork in relation to the barracks and prisons are :- There is no whole time military chaplain, but one of the priests of the parish attends to the military barracks; while there is a special chaplain for the military prison and a special chaplain for the County Gaol. The prisoners were lodged, some in the county gaol and some in the military prison. But the chaplains were refused access to the prisoners and on Sunday the prisoners were not allowed to Mass, though Mass was said in the prisons. Knowing that one of the prisoners in the military prison was in danger of the extreme sentence I wrote to the officer in command of the barracks and pointed out that the chaplain should be allowed to see the man; that the affairs of the conscience should not be left over to the excited moments following the announcement of the death sentence; that the chaplain should be allowed to see all the prisoners. It was of no avail. Later on the chaplain would be allowed to see the prisoners on making the following declaration:-

"I hereby declare, upon my honour that I will convey no information, message or document of any kind, and that I will treat as absolutely secret any information I may receive from any rebel or prisoner with whom I may be permitted to communicate in the Detention Barracks at Cork." The declaration was to be signed by the priest and attested by a witness. I have kept the declaration, but I directed the chaplain to refuse to sign it. Later on the chaplain to the barracks, who has nothing to do with the military prison, was sent for to attend the doomed prisoner. And the unfortunate man,

who must have been suffering torture during his suspense, and who was refused the consolations of religion during the trying period, was at last allowed the ministrations of a priest shortly before midnight preceding the morning of his execution. The questions at once suggest themselves - Are there such restrictions put on the priests who minister to the interned Germans in England? Do the Germans in Germany put such restrictions on the priests who are ministering to Catholic prisoners?

Monday, May 8th. - The police are searching the city for the remainder of the arms, which would have been given to the Lord Mayor if the military party had kept faith with me and the Lord Mayor. A few arrests have been made. I am gathering information relative to the city and county arrests. Some of these arrests and deportations are scandalous, and they all should be inquired into without delay.

The one bright feature of the events of the past fortnight was our experience of the military gentleman who took part in our peace conferences. He was insistent on securing that there should be no military danger in the city, but he wanted no irritating or humiliating conditions. He is a North of Ireland Protestant. I have no doubt but that in other matters, if North and South of Ireland representatives met together they would settle their differences in a reasonable and satisfactory manner.

A despatch from Seán MacDiarmuda through Miss Foley - now Mrs. Martin - reached Cork on Easter Monday morning, with strict instructions that it was to be delivered to Tomás MacCurtain personally. Tomás not being in Cork, Miss Foley called on his wife but she had no idea of his whereabouts, and as the despatch could not be delivered to Tomás personally, it was returned to Dublin.

Cork got no authentic news from Dublin during the fighting there in Easter Week, but various rumours were flying about, the chief of which was that it was the Citizen Army alone that were fighting. Efforts were made to get a despatch through the British lines to the Irish Volunteer G.H.Q. on the Tuesday and Wednesday but these failed. Contact was made with Volunteer officers in Tralee and Limerick but they had no reliable information. Contact was maintained with these two places, and later, when an agreement had been reached with the British Military Authorities in Cork as to the holding of the Volunteer arms, the terms were communicated to Tralee and Limerick by MacSuibhne and MacCurtain in person, respectively.

It was clear during Easter Week that the Corkmen would not be allowed to march out of the city under arms, the local military being very vigilant during that time. Nevertheless they managed to keep in close touch with the local Volunteer Companies throughout the county.

Nearing the end of that week when the negotiations initiated by the Bishop and the Lord Mayor with the British military authorities had been concluded and definite terms had been agreed upon, an order was issued by the local Brigade Council to the Cork Volunteers that no magazine rifles or ammunition were to be handed over to the Lord Mayor. This order was strictly observed.

The majority of the prisoners arrested throughout the country in connection with the Easter Week rebellion were released in December 1916. Almost immediately there was a re-organisation of the Volunteer movement throughout Ireland. Then was expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the inactivity of the Volunteers in Cork, Limerick and Tralee during the Rising. To clarify the

position, the senior officers of those areas demanded that an enquiry should be held by Dublin G.H.Q. in each of the districts concerned. A separate enquiry into the matter was also held by the I.R.B. organisation. The findings of the enquiries were "that no blame could be attributed to the commands in question, as it was impossible for them to do anything in the circumstances."

The enquiry in Cork was held by Cathal Brugha, Diarmuid Lynch, and Con Collins, representing the Dublin G.H.Q. The enquiry was attended by the Cork city and county officers of the Volunteer organisation.

Following the enquiry, all the Cork officers resigned in a body, but were again unanimously elected to their former offices. Some years later when Miss Mary MacSwiney was writing an account of that period, she wrote to Cathal Brugha asking him for the result of the Cork enquiry. Fortunately his reply, in his own handwriting, is in existence. The following is a photostat copy of his reply :-

"8. 4. 22.

A Chara Dhill,

Your letter dated 6th reached me today. I hope this reply will be in time for your purpose.

In 1917 the Volunteer Executive appointed Con Collins, Diarmuid Lynch and myself to inquire into the action of Cork, Kerry and Limerick during Easter 1916. Our decision was that owing to the sinking of the arms ship, and subsequent conflicting orders, Cork could not have acted other than they did. Their original instructions were to meet the men from Kerry at a certain point to get their quota of the arms. An Order calling off all manoeuvres was sent out by McNeill on Good Friday morning. J.J. O'Connell was the man he sent with it. I am not certain whether O'Connell ever

reached Cork or not; but an order to the same effect did get to Cork some time on Sunday (I think). Then a further order signed by Pearse reached the Cork men on Monday or Tuesday. This Order said "Carry out your original instructions". As the arms ship had already gone down these instructions could not be carried out. Consequently there was nothing but confusion as to what Dublin wanted them to do. The Volunteer Executive agreed with the opinion expressed in our report.

Go neirighidh leat go geal

Cathal Brugha."

A letter written by Miss Mary MacSwiney to her brother Peter in New York in June 1916 stated the position of the Volunteer forces in Cork City during Easter Week 1916. That statement was published in John Devoy's Post Bag (Vol. 11, 1953, page 491). Many inaccuracies appeared in that statement. For instance, it was incorrect to state: "By Tuesday morning the City was surrounded on all sides, and the men could not get out even if they had ammunition in tons and guns in hundreds, which they had not." The British at the time had only one field-gun sited on the hill of Gurrabrathar. This being trained on the Volunteer Hall in Sheares Street, completely dominated the position. In addition, the British had two or three machine-gun posts in the Malt House opposite the Volunteer Hall and controlling the entrance to it. All other entrances to, and exits from, the City were open as usual.

By special arrangement with the Cork Volunteer leaders - Bill Herlihy, Berrings, Iniscarra, arrived in Cork on the Thursday of Easter Week, and removed safely in his horse and cart a large quantity of rifles, revolvers, and ammunition in the middle of the day.

Another writer, Desmond Ryan, in his History of the Rising, published in 1949, writes of the action taken by the Cork City Volunteers at the same period. His statement on page 230 is based on the same letter mentioned above (and published in John Devoy's post-Bag) as written by Miss MacSwiney to her brother Peter in New York in June 1916. Desmond Ryan says: "Seán O'Sullivan marched one Volunteer contingent out of the city. MacCurtain was about to follow with a second when a special messenger arrived from Dublin with MacNeill's countermanding order. As the previous Dublin message had assured the Cork men that there was a united leadership in Dublin, the City Volunteers (Cork city) were at once recalled, and the county units ordered to disperse." This statement is not correct. As a matter of fact, the two Cork Battalions - Cork City and West Cork - were jointly in occupation of the position previously allotted to them in the town of Macroom, 24 miles from Cork City. They remained in Macroom until 6 p.m. on Sunday when they entrained for home.

When the Rising was over in Dublin, many Volunteers were on the run all over Ireland. Amongst those who got to America via Cork and Liverpool, were Captain Monteith, Liam Mellows, O'Riordan of Firies, Co. Kerry, and others from Dublin. A committee was formed in Liverpool to deal with them and to supply seamens' books, without which it would be impossible to travel. The late Captain Collins (an old sea-Captain himself), rendered invaluable assistance in that matter, and was indefatigable in his labours. He saved neither time, trouble nor expense in helping to get "wanted" men away to safety. He brought both Captain Monteith and Liam Mellows by road to Cork, and kept them in his own house at a time when the British forces were very active and when severe penalties were incurred by anyone assisting the "Rebels".

An amusing incident occurred in Cork in 1917. On a day when a horse-race meeting was being held over the old Cork Park course, the late Alderman "Paddy" Meade had a large Republican flag hoisted from the flag staff over the old City Hall when a British Army Band was passing on its way to the race-course. When the officers saw the flag, they halted their men in front of the City Hall and, getting the help of some R.I.C. men, they endeavoured to remove the flag. But the City Hall was closed down for a half-holiday, and all approaches to the offices and roof had been securely barred. After a considerable delay, and with the help of the City Fire Brigade, the offending Republican emblem was eventually removed - to the plaudits and jeers of the large concourse of Sinn Féin sympathisers who had gathered in the vicinity.

In a short time the above incident had multitudes of imitators. Republican flags were soon to be seen on all sides, on old castles, trees, towers, ruins and on every prominent place throughout the country. These displays and the efforts of the R.I.C. and military to remove them did much to propagate the Sinn Féin policy.

In the early part of Easter Week 1916 when all hope of a fight in Cork City vanished, Micheal Ó Cuill, "B" Company, left Cork of his own volition to join the fight in Dublin and actually reached the outskirts of the City where he was arrested. It is worthy of note too that, although the Cork Companies included a few hotheads who were apparently spoiling for a fight at the time, nevertheless when Ó Cuill invited them to join him on his epic march they were conspicuous by their absence.

Glancing through the pages of Irish History we find that no matter how gallant and unselfish were the efforts and sacrifices made

by the men who led the struggle for Freedom against the British Invaders in bygone days, indecent attempts were made to besmirch their character and belittle their efforts.

Unfortunately, the men who led the Irish Volunteer movement in Cork City during the fateful days of the 1916 Rising were subjected to the same type of unfounded accusation. In a whispering campaign, it was alleged that they made an abject surrender to the British Military Authorities, and that they handed up all the guns and ammunition in their possession to the enemy, without a struggle. Nothing could be further from the truth than gossip of this kind, which was so obviously unfair to the men concerned that his Lordship - the late Bishop of Cork - Most Reverend Dr. Cohalan - considered it his duty to publicly deny the innuendos in question, which he did in a letter published in the "Cork Free Press" (see above). To all fair minded people publication of the Bishop's letter would normally be accepted as a true recital of the facts, a refutation of the alleged surrender, and a complete vindication of the men in question, taking into consideration the grave difficulties that prevailed at the time. Strange as it may seem, the whispering campaign, which appeared to be in the nature of a vendetta against the Volunteers Leaders, was not silenced.

The following will serve as an example :-

"I could tell ye things about Tomás and Terry. I was approached by an engine driver named Dan Duggan, a member of my Company, in the Hall in Sheares Street, during Easter Week 1916. He told me he had been detailed to drive an armoured train to Dublin on the following day, and that he was prepared to derail it at the risk of his own life, if he had the authority of Tomás and Terry to do so. This they refused to give. He drove the

"armoured train to Dublin on the following day, and the troops off same were used to shoot down our fellow Volunteers in Dublin and defeat the Rebellion."

This statement was very closely investigated by a Committee of the 1916 Men's Association who found it to be without any foundation whatsoever, either in substance or in fact. Not only was no particle of evidence produced to support the alleged charges, but the man, Dan Duggan, in a written signed and witnessed statement denied having ever made such a statement. Official information received from the Railway Company stated that there was no armoured train in Cork during Easter 1916, and that Dan Duggan was only a labourer employed in their Loco Department.

The findings of the investigating Committee were duly conveyed to the author of the statement by the Hon. Secretary, 1916 Men's Association in a letter dated 19th October, 1955. With a view, however, to effect an amicable settlement of the issue involved, the Committee endeavoured to have the statement of the individual concerned withdrawn, but although he verbally promised to do so in writing, he subsequently refused, and reiterated the same charge.

Hence it was with a sense of deep and profound regret that the Committee felt obliged to put the true facts on record, not only in justice to the memory of the honoured dead, but to refute the foul slanders which were evidently intended to besmirch their heroic sacrifices.

The 1916 Men's Association came into existence at Easter 1946 for the purpose of placing on record an authentic account of the true facts concerning Easter Week (1916) in Cork.

The first task was to compile a record of all those who paraded under arms on Easter Sunday 1916, and this is now embodied in a

specially designed commemorative certificate duly signed by the sole surviving Senior Officer, Cork Battalion - Seán Murphy - which took two years to complete.

Later it was decided that the activities of the Association be continued and that a History of the Volunteer Movement in Cork be written. This involved a great deal of research work during the past five or six years, and after a most careful investigation of numerous statements, reports and interviews, the Committee feel glad to be able to present this report as a tribute to their comrades in arms and hope that it will help future historians to assess more accurately the part played by the men of Cork on that historic occasion.

SIGNED: *Seán Murphy* CHAIRMAN.

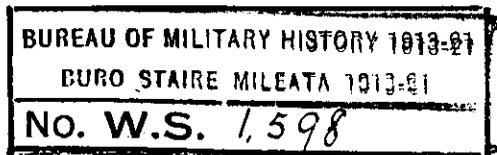
Thomas Barry VICE-CHAIRMAN.

Patrick Barton HON. SECRETARY.

James Washburn HON. TREASURER.

DATE: *27th March 1957*

WITNESS: *A. Gorman*



CUMANN OGLAIGH NA h-EIREANN 1916 (CHORCHAIGHE)

IRISH VOLUNTEERS 1916 ASSOCIATION (CORK)

Clashdew House,
Cork.

13/2/1957.

The attached statement was made by Mrs. Martin to
us while compiling Record of 1916 Events during years 1952 -
1955 and was borne out by satisfactory rebutting statements
made locally that fully satisfied us as to their authenticity.

(Signed) SEÁN MURPHY.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURÓ STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 1,598

CUMANN OGLAIGH NA h-ÉIREANN 1916 (CHORCHAIGHE)

IRISH VOLUNTEERS 1916 ASSOCIATION (CORK)

COPY OF STATEMENT MADE BY BREID S. MARTIN
(Breid Ní Foghludhe).

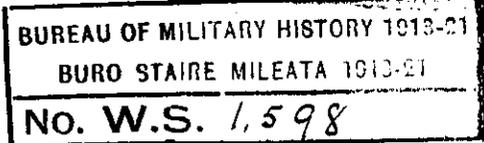
I was a member of Ard Croabh Cumann na mBan, Dublin, and carried despatches to, amongst other places, Cork, for Seán McDermott during and prior to Easter Week, 1916.

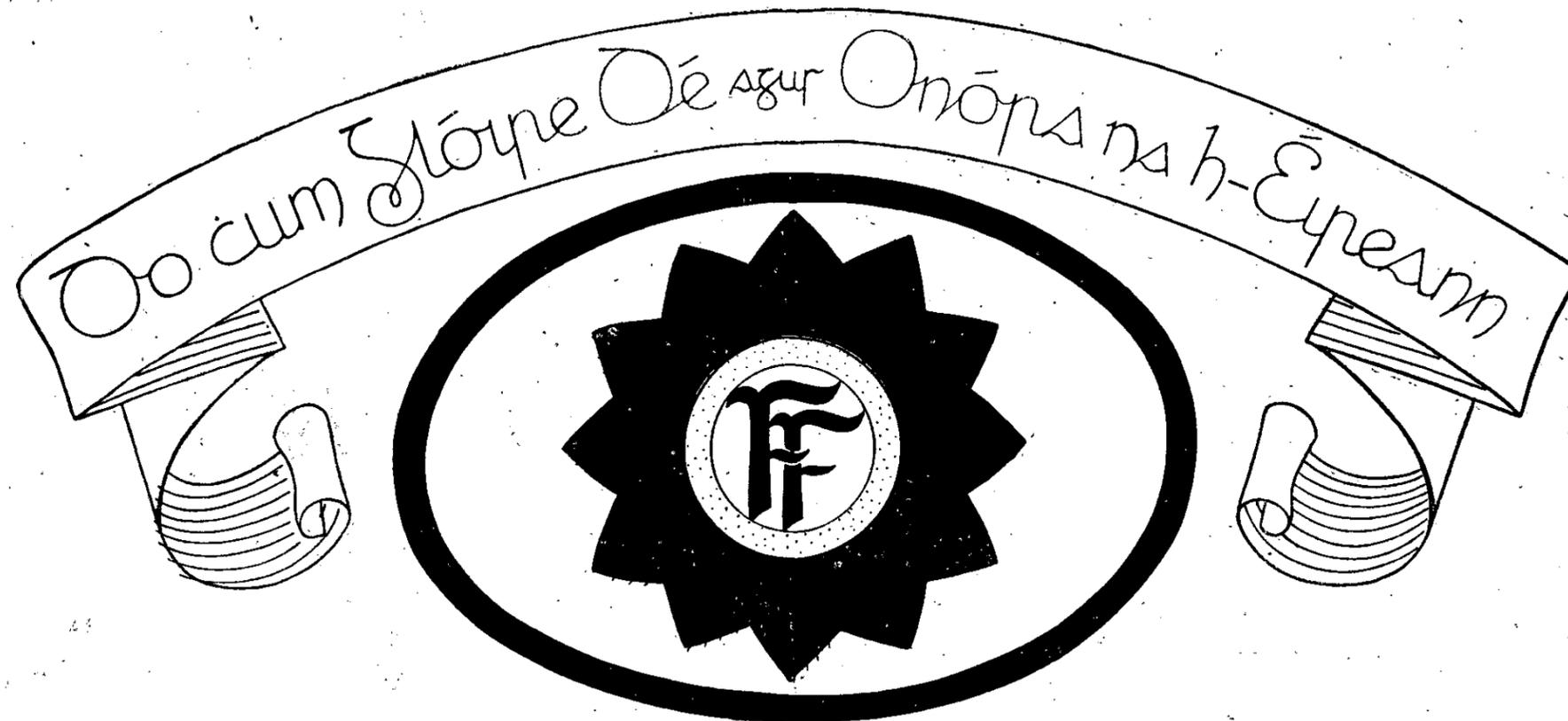
One despatch on the Monday prior to Easter Week, one on the following Wednesday and one on Good Friday, all delivered to Thomas McCurtain at Brother Sheares Street.

I was also sent with a further despatch on Easter Monday and travelled by motor-car. I was intercepted at Dunkettle where I was searched by R.I.C. I remained that night at the Windsor Hotel under R.I.C. guard, but managed to get, next morning about noon, to McCurtain's house in Blackpool. There they had no idea where I could get in touch with Thomas McCurtain, Terry McSweeney or anyone in authority. They did, however, tell me that the Volunteers in West Cork had been dismissed on the Sunday.

I went back to Dublin that afternoon (Easter Tuesday) and reported the matter to Seán McDermott in the G.H.Q.

(Signed) Breid S. Martin
(Breid Ní Foghludhe).





EASTER WEEK, 1916

BRIGADE AND BATTALION OFFICERS
 TOMAS MacCURTAIN, Brigade O/c. TERENCE MacSWEENEY, Brigade Vice O/c.
 SEAN O'SULLIVAN, City Batt. O/c. SEAN MURPHY, Vice Batt. O/c. and Q/M. DAITHI de BARRA, Batt. Adjt.

T HIS is to Certify that

[Handwritten signature]

was a Member of the Irish Volunteers, ~~the~~ Company, Cork City Battalion, and was on Active Service, under Arms, on Easter Sunday, April 23rd, 1916, to achieve the Freedom of Ireland as an Independent Irish Republic.

C Coy.

PATRICK COTTER, Capt.
 WILLIAM BARRY, 1st Lieut.
 RICHARD LANGFORD, 2nd Lieut.
 MARK WICKHAM, Adjutant
 PADDY HEALY, Quarter-Master.

EDMOND BARRY
 JAMES BARRY
 TOM BARRY
 P. J. CRONIN
 SEAN CROSS
 MICHAEL CROWLEY
 DAN CROWLEY
 SEAN CROWLEY
 TOM CROFTS
 SEAN CROSS
 SEAN CURRAN
 DAN DONOVAN
 DAN DUGGAN
 THOMAS GAGGIN
 SEAN IVERS
 JOHN MCGARTHY
 JACK McGRATH
 MICK MANNING
 HARRY MOONEY
 JAMES O'MAHONY
 DENIS O'NEILL
 JAMES O'NEILL
 SEAN PRENDERGAST
 LIAM O'REILLY
 EDWARD RYAN
 GUS O'SHEA
 JOE SULLIVAN
 EDMOND TWOMEY
 MATT WAKEFIELD
 TOM WALSH
 ARTHUR WHITE
 MICHAEL WICKHAM

D Coy.

CHRISTOPHER O'GORMAN, Capt.
 CORNELIUS COLLINS, 1st Lieut.
 FRED MURRAY, 2nd Lieut.
 LIAM RABBETT, Adjutant

TOM BALDWIN
 TADG BARRY
 RICHARD CARROLL
 DAITHI COTTER
 TOM COUGHLAN
 MICHAEL CRONIN
 LIAM DE ROISTE
 MARTIN DONOVAN
 DANIEL FOLEY
 WALTER FURLONG
 JEREMIAH HARTNETT
 DAN HEALY
 TADG HEGARTY

JERRY CREED
DONAL CRONIN
MICHAEL CROWLEY
PADDY CROWLEY
PETER DEADY
DI'ARMUID DONOVAN
LEO DORGAN
JERRY DRISCOLL
SEAN ELLARD
GEORGE GALL
JAMES GUESS
DANIEL HANLON
JOHN HINCHION
WILLIAM HORAN
JEROME HURLEY
WILLIAM IRWIN
JACK LONG
CON MURPHY
NEILUS MURPHY
DICK MURPHY
TOM MCGILLICUDDY
FRANK McMAHON
PATRICK McSWEENEY
SEAN NOLAN
THOMAS O'RIORDAN
JOE RICHARDSON
LIAM RUSSELL
D. SHEEHY
DAVE SULLIVAN
TADG SULLIVAN
PATRICK VARIAN

B Coy.

DONAL BARRETT, Captain
PATRICK TRAHEY, 1st Lieut.
DONAL O'CALLAGHAN, 2nd Lt.
PATRICK HARRIS, Adjutant
CONN. MURPHY, Q.-Master

JAMES AHERN
JOHN BROWN
CORNELIUS CANTY
LEO CANNY
D. COVENEY
THOMAS CREAGH
JEREMIAH DONOVAN
WILLIAM FITZGIBBON
JAMES FLAHERTY
THOMAS HARRIS
JAMES HASTINGS
RICHARD KEYES
DENIS LYONS
CHRISTOPHER MURPHY
DENIS MURPHY
MICHAEL MURPHY
SEAN BAN MURPHY
SEAMUS MURPHY
TADG MURPHY
FRANCIS MCCARTHY
DANIEL McSWEENEY
DENIS NEVILLE
MICHAEL NOONAN
MICEAL O'CUILL
EDWARD O'DONOGHUE
PATRICK O'DONOGHUE
TODDY O'SULLIVAN
WILLIAM PHILLIPS
WILLIAM POWER
JOSEPH REYNOLDS
JOHN SWANTON
JAMES WALSH

EASTER WEEK, 1916

BRIGADE AND BATTALION OFFICERS

TOMAS MacCURTAIN, Brigade O/c. TERENCE MacSWEENEY, Brigade Vice O/c.
SEAN O'SULLIVAN, City Batt. O/c. SEAN MURPHY, Vice Batt. O/c. and Q/M. DAITHI de BARRA, Batt. Adjt.

THIS is to Certify that

[Handwritten Signature]

was a Member of the Irish Volunteers, ~~10~~ Company,
Cork City Battalion, and was on Active Service, under
Arms, on Easter Sunday, April 23rd, 1916, to achieve the
Freedom of Ireland as an Independent Irish Republic.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE CORK CITY BATTALION BY ITS SOLE SURVIVING BATT. OFFICER

540 L& merceam, 1948

[Handwritten Signature]

Vice-Commdt. and Quarter-Master.

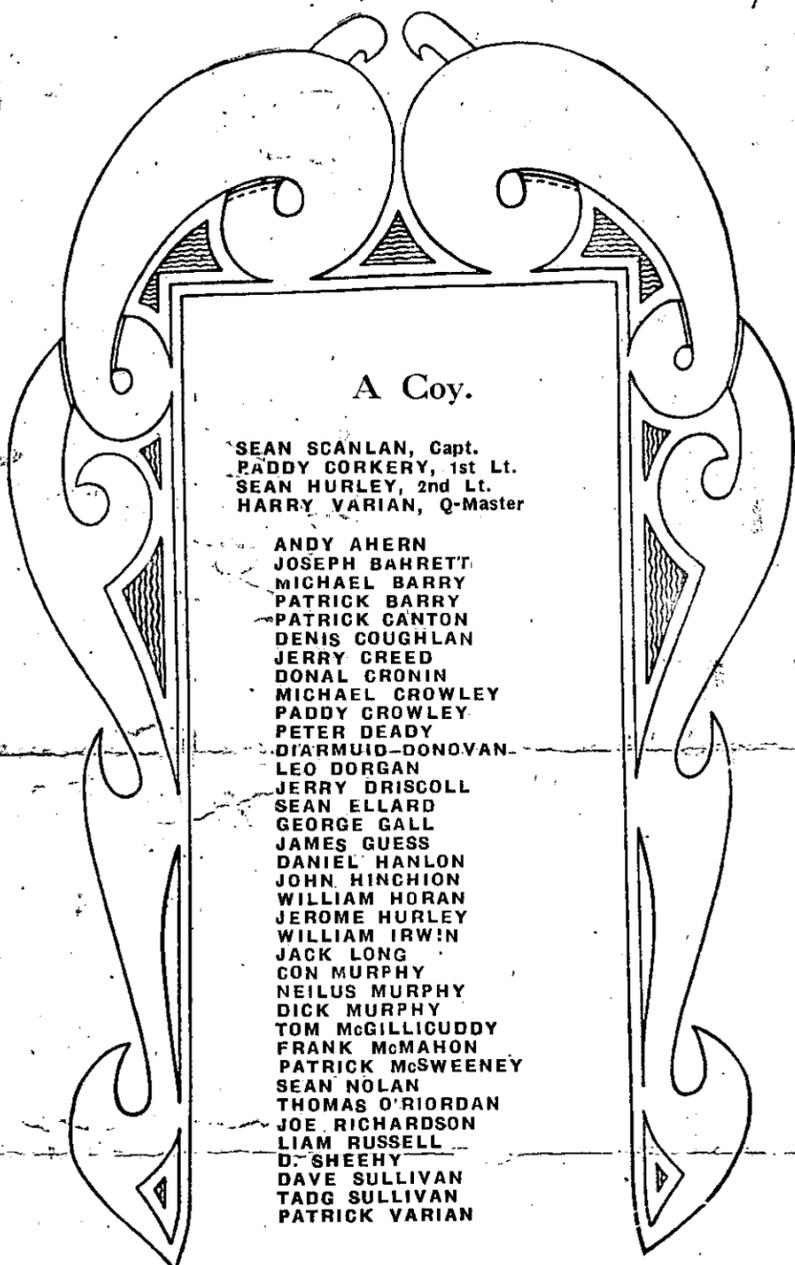
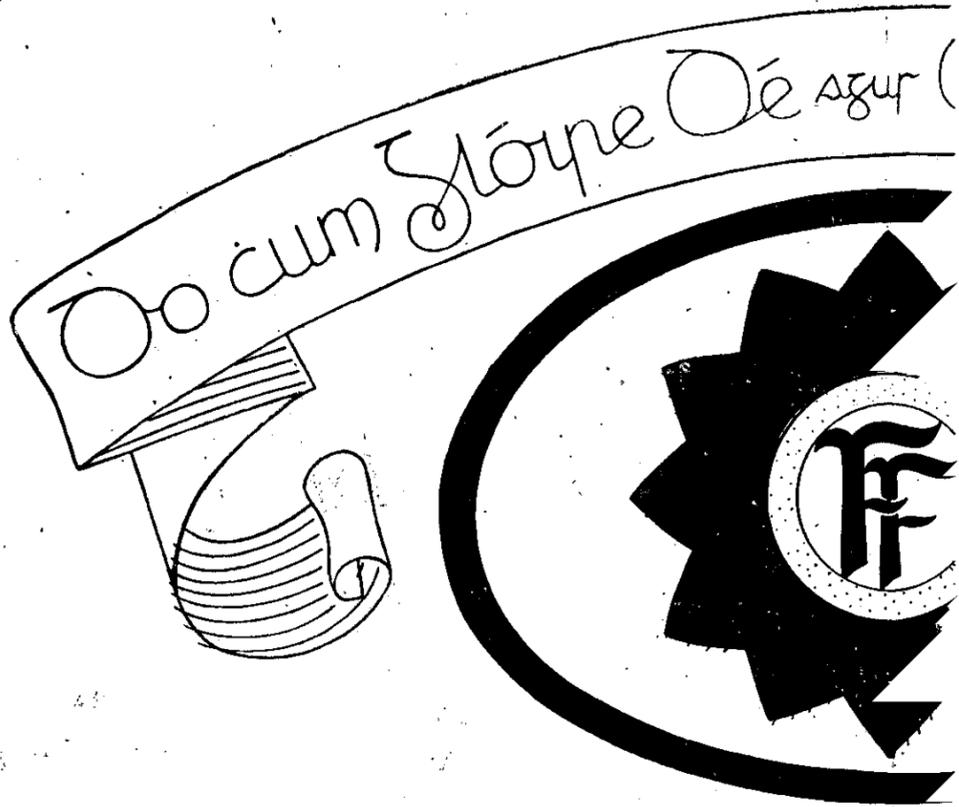
na fíanna Éireann

ALLEN BUSBY
JEROME BUSBY
PATRICK COTTER
SEAMUS COURTNEY
MICHAEL DELEA
PATRICK GAGGIN

DANIEL GALVIN
EDWARD GALVIN
SEAN HEALY
PATRICK HERLIHY
LIAM HENNESSY
PATRICK HORAN

DANIEL MULROY
WILLIAM MURRAY
DANIEL REARDON
CHRISTOPHER WALSH
DANIEL McSWEENEY
SIDNEY MOYNIHAN

PATRICK MURPHY
JERRY O'CALLAGHAN
LIAM O'CALLAGHAN
EUGENE VAUGHAN
AUGUSTINE WALSH
JAMES WICKHAM



A Coy.

SEAN SCANLAN, Capt.
 PADDY CORKERY, 1st Lt.
 SEAN HURLEY, 2nd Lt.
 HARRY VARIAN, Q-Master

ANDY AHERN
 JOSEPH BARRETT
 MICHAEL BARRY
 PATRICK BARRY
 PATRICK CANTON
 DENIS COUGHLAN
 JERRY CREED
 DONAL CRONIN
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 DAVE SULLIVAN
 TADG SULLIVAN
 PATRICK VARIAN

EASTER WE-

BRIGADE AND BATTALION
 TOMAS MacCURTAIN, Brigade O/c. TERP
 SEAN O'SULLIVAN, City Batt. O/c. SEAN MURPHY, Vice B

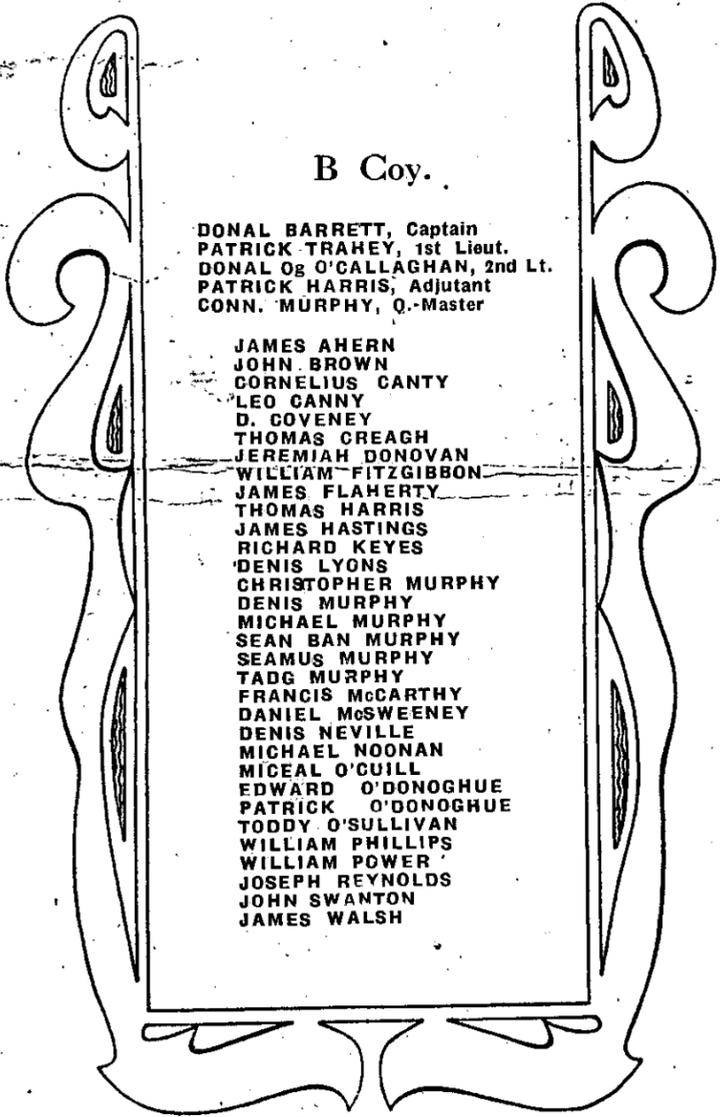
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 Arms, on Easter Sunday, April
 Freedom of Ireland as an Indepe

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE CORK CITY BATTALION

540 LÁ MEICHEAM, 1948

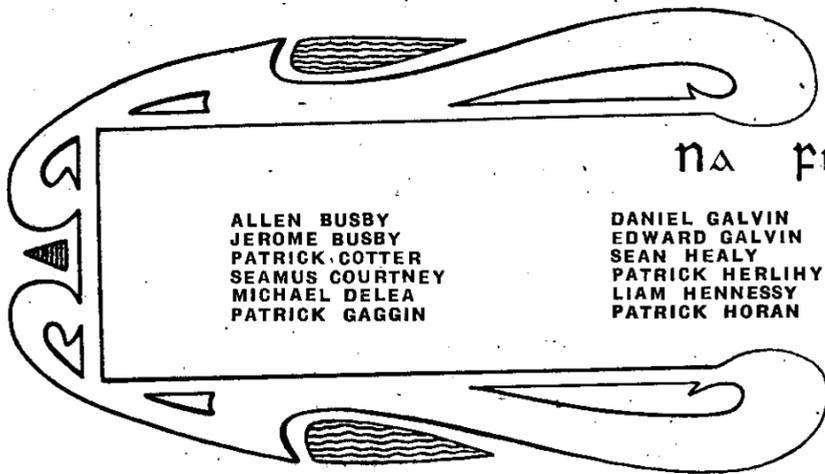


B Coy.

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 WILLIAM PHILLIPS
 WILLIAM POWER
 JOSEPH REYNOLDS
 JOHN SWANTON
 JAMES WALSH

na fianna



ALLEN BUSBY
 JEROME BUSBY
 PATRICK COTTER
 SEAMUS COURTNEY
 MICHAEL DELEA
 PATRICK GAGGIN

DANIEL GALVIN
 EDWARD GALVIN
 SEAN HEALY
 PATRICK HERLIHY
 LIAM HENNESSY
 PATRICK HORAN

Agur Onórús na h-Éireann



WEEK, 1916

BATTALION OFFICERS
 TERENCE MacSWEENEY, Brigade Vice O/c.
 PHY, Vice Batt. O/c. and Q/M. DAITHI de BARRA, Batt. Adjt.

Irish Volunteers, Company,
 was on Active Service, under
 April 23rd, 1916, to achieve the
 Independent Irish Republic.

BATTALION BY ITS SOLE SURVIVING BATT. OFFICER

Patrick Murphy

Vice-Commdt. and Quarter-Master.

na Éireann

DANIEL MULROY
 WILLIAM MURRAY
 DANIEL REARDON
 CHRISTOPHER WALSH
 DANIEL McSWEENEY
 SIDNEY MOYNIHAN

PATRICK MURPHY
 JERRY O'CALLAGHAN
 LIAM O'CALLAGHAN
 EUGENE VAUGHAN
 AUGUSTINE WALSH
 JAMES WICKHAM

C Coy.

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 DAN HEALY
 TADG HEGARTY
 PAT HIGGINS
 PETER HOGAN
 SEAN KENNY
 JACK KEYES
 HARRY LORTON
 DONNACHA McNEILUS
 CHRISTOPHER McSWEENEY
 STEPHEN McSWEENEY
 DANIEL MULCAHY
 JEROME MULLANE
 ANDY MURPHY
 JACK MURPHY
 THOMAS MURPHY
 PA MURRAY
 CON O'CALLAGHAN
 EUGENE O'CALLAGHAN
 CON O'CONNELL
 THOMAS O'DONOGHUE
 TADG O'LEARY
 SEAN O'RIORDAN
 JACK O'SHEA
 JOSEPH O'SHEA
 DAITHI O'SULLIVAN
 DOMINICK O'SULLIVAN
 PADDY O'SULLIVAN
 JOHN SHEEHAN
 DANIEL SULLIVAN
 TOM TWOHIG
 CON TWOMEY