

**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRA MILENTA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1.641

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. **W.S.** 1641.

**Witness**

Timothy Buckley,  
Clondrohid P.O.,  
Macroom,  
Co. Cork.

**Identity.**

O/C, Clondrohid Coy., Macroom Battn., Cork 1 Bde.,  
I.R.A.; Member of Battalion Flying Column.

**Subject.**

Clondrohid Coy., Macroom Battn., Cork 1 Bde.,  
I.R.A., 1915-'23.

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

Nil.

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# ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRS MILITARY 1913-21

No. W.S. 1,641

STATEMENT BY TIMOTHY BUCKLEY,

Clondrohid P.O., Macroom, Co. Cork.

I was born at Gortnalicka, Clondrohid, sixty-four years ago. I was the eldest of a family of eight - three boys and five girls. I went to Clondrohid National School until I was 13 years of age. When I left school I went to work on my father's farm, where I had to work hard.

My interest in the story of Ireland was aroused at an early stage as my father was always telling us stories of the battles fought for freedom since the early ages. He had read all about them and we were anxious to hear them told over and over again. He also told us stories of the Moonlighters, and of Seán The Bard who was from this parish of Clondrohid. He was a supporter of Parnell and a member of the Land League. He also knew a good number from the parish who were imprisoned after the Fenian Rising in 1867.

After the Parnell split he became an active supporter of William O'Brien and the All-for-Ireland League. He was Chairman of the local branch of the league. I was also a member of the All-for-Ireland League. The majority of the people in the Clondrohid district at this time were supporters of the Redmondite Party and were known as "Molly Maguires". The All-for-Ireland party of which my family were supporters had, however, a fairly good number of supporters and feeling ran high in the area at election times.

When the Volunteers were started in the area in the summer of 1914, they were controlled by the "Mollies" who, as I said before, were in the majority between Clondrohid and Carriganinna. They had no love for the followers of Wm. O'Brien (All-for-Ireland party), so none of us joined them. They fell away after a short time. These were the National Volunteers.

A few of us were for a long time talking about forming a section of Irish Volunteers. We made a start in March, 1915, when we organised a collection to help in defraying the legal expenses in the case of Seán O'Hegarty who had been arrested in February and charged with the possession of documents and explosives. The success of the collection, which was organised by Michael Kelleher, Jim Lehane and myself, showed us that we had a number of sympathisers in the district, so we arranged a meeting for Clondrohid after Mass one Sunday. The meeting was addressed by Terence MacSwiney, who was accompanied, I think, by Seán Murphy or Seumas Murphy from Cork City. As a result of this meeting, we started a unit of the Irish Volunteers with a membership of between twelve and twenty men.

For the first couple of months Barney O'Leary was O/C. After that, the following officers were elected and remained in charge until after Easter Week, 1916: -

O/C	-	James Murphy
Lieut.	-	Tim Buckley (witness)
Sec.	-	Michael Kelleher
Treas.	-	Michael Murphy.

We had no ex-servicemen in the company to help with the training, so we were dependant on the officers from Cork City who came frequently to our Sunday parades and drilled us. Amongst the Cork City men who helped in this way were: Tadhg Sullivan, Seán Nolan, Seán O'Sullivan, Pat Higgins, and Paddy Cotter. At the end of 1915 we had twenty-two men, and this remained our strength up to Easter, 1916. We drilled in the fields in the district as we had no hall.

In September, 1915, I was one of a party of twelve men from the company (Clondrohid) which attended a parade of Volunteers held in conjunction with a feis at Millstreet at which Pádraig Pearse spoke. A number of other companies

took part in this parade, but I cannot recollect the details. Our company next paraded in strength at Bealnablath some time in October, when all local units and several companies from Cork City took part. Our next outing took place to the Manchester Martyrs' anniversary parade in Cork in November, 1918. Our strength on this occasion was 18 men.

The Company O/C (James Murphy) attended a course of training for officers which was conducted by Captain J.J. O'Connell from H.Q. at Sheare's St. Hall, Cork, in January, 1916. I cannot now recollect what type of training was carried out on this occasion. Our training at this time consisted mainly of close order foot drill.

On the Sunday before St. Patrick's Day, 1916, the company (Clondrohid) paraded at Ballyvourney where a recruiting meeting for Volunteers was addressed by Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney. We only got two recruits there - Jerh. Lucey (Jer. Con Joe) and Con Kelleher (Con Seán Joe). We again took part in the St. Patrick's Day parade in Cork, having twenty-one men on parade.

All members of the Volunteers at this stage paid a weekly subscription of 2d or 3d per week into a company fund for the purchase of equipment. Out of this fund we purchased caps, belts, haversacks and puttees.

It was coming on to Easter, 1916, and parades were held twice weekly on week nights, with an additional parade on Sundays. The orders for Easter Sunday came to us from Dan Corkery in Macroom. We were to march to Carriganimma and be there at 10 a.m. on Easter Sunday morning. We were to bring along all available arms - mainly shotguns - ammunition and equipment, with rations for three days.

We had no definite knowledge of the purpose of the parade, but we knew from the preparations being made - special training and frequent visits of officers from Cork - that it was something more than a normal mobilisation. Somehow we did not expect to come back that night.

We mobilised at Clondrohid about 9 a.m. The Kilnamartyra Company joined us there, and the combined force marched to Carriganimma. We were the first to arrive there. Some short time later we were joined by the men from Macroom, Kilmurray, and Ballinagree Companies.

The names of the men from our company (Clondrohid) who were at Carriganimma on Easter Sunday, 1916, are:

Jim Murphy, O/C  
 Tim Buckley (witness - 1st Lieut.)  
 Mick Murphy (Adjt.)  
 John Buckley (Q/M)  
 Jack Murphy  
 Tom O'Connor  
 James Lehane  
 Tom Bradley  
 John Murphy (Dillon)  
 Paddy Burke  
 Mick Burke  
 Dan Lehane  
 Con Riordan  
 Wm. Creedon  
 Dan Meaney  
 John C. Riordan  
 Michael Kelleher  
 Tom Crowley.

This party were armed with one old type rifle and 10 rounds of .303, one miniature rifle and 100 rounds, 16 double barrel shotguns with 20 rounds for each. We also had some slugs, No. 4 cartridges and about 10 lbs of gelignite. None of the arms had been purchased. Some were the property of the members and some were on loan from local farmers.

On our way to Carriganimma, Peadar O'Hourihan passed us on a motor-cycle. He was going west. When we had been in Carriganimma for some time, Seán Nolan, who was in uniform,

came along. He told our O/C (Jim Murphy) that the exercises were off. I do not know whether his message was official or whether he was only speaking for himself.

However, when all the companies had assembled we carried out manoeuvres on a hill nearby, and it was later in the evening when Micheál Lynch - a brigade officer from Cork City - came on a motor-cycle with the official message that the parade was cancelled and that we were to return to our home areas. Our company now marched back to Clondrohid, where we dispersed.

On Easter Monday, an order came from Dan Corkery in Macroom to turn out, stand to and await orders. We were assembled during Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights, and were standing to during the whole of Easter Week. No further order of any kind reached us.

On the Sunday following Easter Week, Dan Corkery, Jack Lynch, and Jim Murphy went into Cork to seek instructions. They travelled by cycle to Dooniskey railway station, where they entrained for Cork where they met Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney at the hall in Sheares's St. Having discussed the situation with them, they returned to Dooniskey by train and cycled back to their home areas. No definite instructions were issued to them, and no order was given regarding the disposal of arms. However, all arms were now dumped in safe places and none was captured in the subsequent raids, nor were any surrendered. No member of Clondrohid Company was arrested after Easter Week.

There were no Fianna or I.R.B. organisations in the area at this time.

In the period immediately following Easter Week, 1916, there was very little activity. The majority of the members

of the company met occasionally - usually on Sundays - and discussed the situation which had developed out of the fight in Dublin. As a result it was easy enough to arouse enthusiasm when Dan Corkery (Macroom) visited the area about September, 1916, on an organising visit. On this occasion about twelve men attended the meeting. Amongst those who attended were: James Murphy, Mick Murphy, John Murphy, Tom O'Connor, Tom Bradley, Wm. Creedon, James Lehane, Michael Kelleher, Paddy Burke, Tim Buckley - witness - John Riordan, Mick Burke. The same officers as held office prior to Easter Week were appointed, viz.

O/C - Jim Murphy  
 1st Lt. - Tim Buckley  
 Adjt. - Michael Kelleher  
 Q/M - Michael Murphy.

The only type of training carried out was close order foot drill, under our own officers. The training was carried out in the fields in the area.

As the year 1917 advanced, the Volunteer organisation was beginning to spread and companies were being organised in most of the adjoining parishes. We assisted in the work by going on route marches into these areas and thereby arousing the interest of anyone whose spirit of patriotism had been awakened by the sacrifices of Easter Week. In addition, the strength of our own company was growing slowly. We could get plenty of recruits, but only those whose background and records had been "vetted" were invited to join. The work of organising Sinn Féin in their areas fell mainly on the shoulders of the Volunteers at this period, and the majority of the Volunteers were members of this organisation.

I think that it was during the late summer of 1917 that a branch of Cumann na mBan was formed in Clondrohid. This organisation worked in close co-operation with the

Volunteers - cooking, nursing wounded, carrying despatches in emergencies and often transporting arms. Miss Mary A. Quinlan - now my wife - was O/C of Clondrohid unit of Cumanna mBan, in which there were about twenty members, including three of my sisters.

There was no branch of Fianna Éireann in the area.

Beyond normal training there was nothing much doing about February, 1918, when the British threatened to enforce conscription. At this time the strength of our company (Clondrohid) was about 24. The conscription scare led to a large increase in membership. Our strength now reached 65. Some of us had a full-time job training these new recruits and trying to knock them into shape. In addition, the old reliables in the company were busy collecting shotguns from friendly people and raiding a few houses whose occupants were opposed to us. One of these was a big Protestant landholder who surrendered his shotgun after a visit from an armed party. In all, we collected between 25 and 30 shotguns and, in addition, we had one long Lee Enfield service rifle which all men were trained to use. When it was not possible to arm our men with shotguns, we had croppy pikes made in the local forge by Patrick Healy, Carrigaphooka, so that every man was armed with a shotgun or a croppy pike. In addition to these arms, we made hand grenades by filling one pound tins with scrap and concrete - charging them with gelignite suitably detonated - and pushing the fuse for lighting through a hole in the cover of the tin. The cover was held in position by bolts set in the concrete which filled the tin. We were also making buckshot slugs to replace the ordinary shot in shotgun cartridges. As 1st Lieutenant of the company, I was held responsible for the organisation of all these activities.



It was at this period that the area was organised on a battalion basis. Our company (Clondrohid) became a unit in Macroom Battalion, Cork Brigade. The other companies in the battalion at this time were: - Macroom, Ballinagree, Canavee, Crookstown, Kilmurray, Toames, Coolderrihy, Rusheen, Kilnamartyra, Ballyvourney. Later in the year the Ballyvourney area was organised into a separate battalion. The first officers of the battalion were: -

O/C - Dan Corkery  
 Vice O/C - John Lynch  
 Adj. - Charley Browne  
 Q/M - Christy Hartnett.

The Ballyvourney Battalion was organised in the early summer of 1918. It had not been long established when a party drawn from it attacked a patrol of R.I.C. As a result of this attack, martial law was proclaimed in Macroom area. (which included Ballyvourney) by the British on July 9th 1918. The enemy forces in the area now became more active and raiding parties of R.I.C. and military were operating regularly - calling on all known Volunteers at all hours. As a result of these activities I had to go 'on the run' and was unable to sleep at home. The imposition of martial law only made the Volunteers more anxious to carry on. Normal activities continued but training, which at this time was being carried out in public, now went underground.

There was no activity in our area in connection with the general election in December, 1918, as the Sinn Féin candidate was returned unopposed.

Early in 1919 Cork Brigade was divided into three brigades. Our battalion now became a unit of Cork No. 1 Brigade which controlled the area of Cork City and mid Cork. The other battalions in the new brigade were: Cork City (two battalions), Cobh, Donoughmore, Ovens, Whitechurch, Ballyvourney

The officers of the brigade were, I think: -

O/C - Tomás MacCurtain  
 Vice O/C - Terence MacSwiney  
 Adjt. - Pat Higgins  
 Q/M - Seán Murphy.

About this time a section of men from Macroom Company attacked a military patrol in the town and seized three rifles. The men who did this job were armed with hurleys and sticks. This attack helped to prolong the imposition of martial law in the area.

Normal training continued and picked men were now being trained as engineers, signallers, scouts, and despatch riders. Arms were also becoming more plentiful. As a result, it was possible to put all members of the company through a course in the care and use of the service rifle. At the same time, most men fired a musketry course with the miniature rifle.

At this stage some members were inclined to fall away. A general order was now issued from H.Q. that any man who wished could leave the Volunteers. I think that only for this order a good many would have deserted.

Towards the end of 1919, I was appointed O/C Clondrohid Company, as the former O/C, Jim Murphy, had been appointed to organise a Republican police force in the battalion area. At this time Carriganinma Company were not going too well, so I was asked by the Battalion O/C (Dan Corkery) to take them in with Clondrohid, as they were in the one parish, and to form them into a half company. This reorganisation meant additional work. We now had five sections in the company, each under a section commander. The men were trained in their own sections under the supervision of the other company officers who took it in turn to visit the

various sections and with the co-operation of a British ex-soldier who was a great help to us. In addition to the normal training, we had sections engaged in signalling, transport, intelligence, first-aid, scouting and dispatch riding. The officers of the company now were: -

O/C - Tim Buckley (witness)  
 1st Lt. - Denis O'Shea  
 2nd Lt. - James Twohig  
 Adj. - Michael Casey.

As the enemy forces in the area were now liable to carry out raids at short notice, we were ordered to construct dumps for the safe keeping of arms in the area. We made four dumps in the company area by building wooden boxes lined with felt into double fences. These dumps and their contents were the responsibility of the Company Q/M.

The first enemy post attacked in the battalion (Macroom) area was the R.I.C. barracks at Kilmurray. This operation was undertaken on the night of January 2nd/3rd 1920. I got orders on the evening of January 2nd to have a rifle and ammunition at Drumree Cross at 9 p.m. I did not know the attack was coming off until I reached the appointed spot after walking about seven miles across country. I was then told that I was too far away - Kilmurray being at the other end of the battalion area - and I was disappointed that I was not required for the engagement. I then returned to my own area (Clondrohid).

During the spring of 1920 I called, with a few other members of the company, on two members of the R.I.C. who were home on leave in the area, and compelled them to resign.

I now joined the I.R.B. at the invitation of the Battalion O/C (Dan Corkery). Others who joined were: Paddy Burke, John C. Riordan, Tom O'Connor, Jim Twohig. Dan Corkery was Centre.

At this time we selected a number of ambush positions which we occupied on several occasions, but the enemy did not put in an appearance. We also established a prison camp where any suspicious characters would be detained while investigations were being carried out. This camp was at Carrigathane, near Carriganimma.

When Carrigadroichid R.I.C. barracks was attacked on the night of June 9th 1920, about twenty-five men from Clondrohid Company were engaged on outpost duty to delay any enemy forces that would venture out from Macroom. We were in position at Caum, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Macroom on Coachford road. We were under cover of roadside fence. All were armed with shotguns and grenades. I was in charge of this party, some of whom were:- Tom O'Connell, Tom Bradley, Jerh. Twohig, John C. Riordan, Paddy Herlihy, Jerh. Lucey, Paddy Creed, John Leary, Paddy Leary, Murt Kelleher, Michael Casey, Bob Clifford, Stephen Roche, Jerome Cotter, Ml. O'Leary, John Sullivan, Jim Twohig, Richard Looney, Justin White, Dan Connell, Jerh. Connell.

Towards the end of July, 1920, we selected an ambush position at Ceamcarriga on the Macroom-Millstreet road about 8 miles from Macroom. One or two military lorries passed through this position about once a week. As the position was outside the company area and, in fact, outside Macroom Battalion area, I notified the O/C Millstreet Battn., Cork 11 Brigade, that we were occupying the position. The position was in the latter battalion area. In a few days I received a dispatch from the O/C, Cork 11 Brigade, - Liam Lynch - for Dan Corkery who was my Battalion O/C. This dispatch intimated that Liam Lynch was not prepared to allow us to carry out any attack in his area for the time being, so this job had to be called off.

Early in August we selected a position at the Pike - about half a mile west of Carriganimma on the Millstreet road. We selected men for an attack on two lorries, but we wanted five or six rifles. We arranged to get them from the 3rd Battalion (Ovens). On the night before the date fixed for the attack we selected the men who were to take part and gave them their orders. However, the expected supply of rifles did not arrive next day, so we had to cancel the operation. We were lucky that we did, as next morning about 11 a.m. four lorry loads of military arrived from Macroom at the rear of our selected position to the west of Carriganimma village. They extended to the right and left of the area and then rushed the positions. In the circumstances it would appear that there was a leakage of information, or there must have been some enemy intelligence officer in the area who observed us when we were examining the position in the first instance. Following this incident it was observed that when the enemy convoys were passing through the area, they were always on the alert.

The Dáil Éireann courts were established in the area during the summer of 1920. Courts were held once a month in some remote house. While the courts were being held, scouts had to be posted at several points to ensure that the courts were not surprised by the enemy. I was a member of Clondrohid Parish Court. Other members were Tim O'Shea, Liscarrigane, Con O'Shea, Carrigane, Jerh. Kelleher, Jerh. Buckley, Dan Corcoran.

When a lorry of British military was ambushed by men of the Ballyvourney Battalion during the third week in July, 1920, the Macroom-Ballyvourney area was declared a special military area and curfew was enforced between the

hours of 9 p.m. and 3 a.m. At this period we got instructions to cut two trenches in the Clondrohid-Ballyvourney road, as it was customary for two lorries of the military garrison of about 200 in Ballyvourney to pass by the Clondrohid road and return by the main Macroom-Ballyvourney road to their base. The trenches were cut but they were closed by a forced labour party collected at gun point by the enemy when next they travelled the road. However, they only continued to use this road for a short time up to, I think, about mid August, when a military cycle patrol was ambushed by the men from Ballyvourney in their own area. The enemy casualties were: - one killed and, I think, three wounded. After this attack large enemy forces spent two or three days searching in Clondrohid area, but they failed to find any booty, or collect any prisoners.

On September 1st 1920, I was one of a party selected to disarm three R.I.C. men who were on patrol duty in Millstreet - it being fair day there. The operation did not come off as the patrol returned to barracks. Amongst the other members of this party were: - Michael O'Riordan (Sonny), Wm. Riordan, Con Meany.

With a number of men from the company (Clondrohid) I selected another ambush position at Carriganea on the Macroom-Millstreet road, but owing to enemy activity arising out of the capture of Mallow barracks we had to abandon the job. The enemy forces were at this time searching for a car which had been used in the raid on Mallow barracks and was dumped in our area at Musherah.

The enemy forces were now seldom travelling the roads in small bodies. The Black and Tans arrived in Macroom about this time and were very active - raiding, searching and holding up members of the public. It was a regular thing

~~for~~ for the members of this force to concentrate on holding up the members of the congregation as they came out from Mass, question them as to their knowledge of I.R.A. activities and then send them off - firing a few shots over their heads to speed them on their way.

On February 7th 1921, the bridge at Clondrohid was demolished. We claim that it was the first bridge in Ireland to be broken by the I.R.A. A party of Black and Tans raided the village about 3 p.m. on February 11th. When they came to the broken bridge they fired shots indiscriminately - shooting a boy of 14 years - Dan O'Mahoney - dead. They then seized a few old people and took them to Macroom Castle, where they were interrogated about the identity of the men who knocked the bridge. Nobody gave any information, not even children who were later questioned on the same subject.

On February 13th 1921, five members of Clondrohid Company took up an ambush position on the outskirts of Macroom, but the enemy did not turn up. The men who took part were: David Burke, Mick Murphy, Murt Kelleher, Denis O'Shea, and myself.

The maintenance of lines of communication was of the utmost importance at this stage. In our company we had two lines of communication - one at the northern end and another at the southern end of the area. On each line we had two call houses, with a man in charge of communications in each area. This man had always men at hand to act as runners or dispatch riders. The call houses were: James Twohig's, Lackaduv, Carriganimma, and Tim O'Shea's, Liscarragane, Clondrohid - on the north side; my father's house, John Buckley's, Gortnalicka, Clondrohid, and Mary A. Quinlan's, Clondrohid village - on the south side.

All members of Clondrohid Company were engaged at this time on the trenching and blocking of roads and the cutting of enemy lines of communication. This work had to be carried out under the protection of armed guards in order to prevent surprise by enemy raiders. Ten bridges were demolished and ten roads trenched in the area. Two roads were also blocked with large boulders of stone - some of them about one ton in weight. All this work was done by crowbar and pick-axe. No explosives were used. The greater number of the roads were trenched on the same night, and in order to do the job it was necessary to round up all available young men who were not already in the I.R.A. and get them to do the digging etc. while the members of the company acted as guards and scouts. Most of the trenches took some hours to dig. They extended right across the roadway from fence to fence and were about 10 feet wide by 4 feet deep. These trenches were being filled by forced labour collected by the enemy as occasion demanded, but as sure as they were filled one day we opened another one that night.

During the early part of January, 1921, the column from the 7th Battalion (Macroom) had a training camp in Clondrohid Company area at Derryleigh in Michael Herlihy's place. The column were billeted in farmhouses at Liscaragane, Derryleigh and Curraleigh. The following members of the company (Clondrohid) were members of the column and in attendance at this camp:- Tim Buckley (O/C - witness), Denis O'Shea (1st Lieut.), Tom O'Connor (Q/M), Murt Kelleher (Section Commander), John Riordan (Section Commander), Jim Twohig (Section Commander), Dan Quill (ex British soldier), David Burke, of Emly, Co. Tipperary, Jim Twohig was placed in charge of communications and had to leave the column. All the others took part in Poul nabro ambush on February 26th 1921.



On this occasion about twenty members of the Brigade Column, in co-operation with the columns from Macroom and Ballyvourney Battalions, took up positions on the Macroom-Ballyvourney road about seven miles from Macroom. The Brigade O/C (Seán Hegarty) was in charge of the combined force. Dan O'Donovan ("Sando"), who was O/C the Brigade Column, was second in command. The combined columns first took up positions at this spot about the second week in February, 1921, when we remained there for three days. We then withdrew from the area and returned the following week, when we occupied the same position on two successive days. The expected enemy convoy did not put in an appearance on either of these occasions, so the column was again withdrawn from the area until the following week when we again returned to the position. We remained in position throughout the day, but the enemy did not turn up, so we withdrew to billets for the night. Next morning at daybreak the column was again moved into position. Our section (Macroom) was first to arrive, and we moved into the positions which we had occupied on the previous day. Five members of the Macroom column (Tim O'Leary, Matt Kelleher, Dan O'Leary, David Burke, Tim Buckley - witness) were in position north of the road. The remainder of this column (Macroom), under Dan Corkery (Battalion O/C), were south of the road. All were armed with rifles. The members of the brigade and Ballyvourney columns were also north of the road, where they were extended over a distance of about 400 yards.

With David Burke (Emly) I was in position at the western end of the ambush position. We were under cover of rocks and a small wall of stones and sods which we built up ourselves as protection. The other members of the Macroom Column (Tim O'Leary, Matt Kelleher and Dan

O'Leary), who were on the same side of the road, were under similar type of cover some yards to the east of my position. Just about sunrise, a number of men from another section passed by my position on their way to positions further east. They had only just passed when I heard a shot. General firing broke out at this stage and I fired at the enemy lorries which made their appearance at the eastern end of the position. After about two to three minutes of concentrated fire, the shooting became intermittent. I next saw<sup>w</sup> a lorry stationary just inside the eastern flank. This lorry was now unoccupied - the occupants having taken cover. At this stage there was a burst of Lewis gun fire from our forces - this was from the Brigade Column which occupied a position to the east of that occupied by me. There was now further sporadic shooting and when the engagement had continued for about 15/20 minutes, some members of a party which had been in position to the east passed by my position. As they went by they stated that they were withdrawing, as we were surrounded. When they had gone, I followed them. I was accompanied by David Burke and we were soon joined by the three men (Tim O'Leary, Matt Kelleher, Dan O'Leary) from our battalion (Macroom) who were on the north side of the road with us. As we withdrew we made contact with some men from the Ballyvourney and Brigade Columns. The combined force then withdrew in a south westerly direction towards Gortnascarthy, where we remained until evening. We moved that night to Ballingeary area, where we all billeted until next night when the men from Macroom Battalion returned to their home districts. The strength of the columns which took part in this engagement were, I think: - Macroom (30), Ballyvourney (30), Brigade Column (20).

The Battalion Column (Macroon) was billeted in my area during the greater part of 1921 up to the Truce. This necessitated the provision of scouts and outposts night and day by the men of the unit. At this time there were about 120 men in Clondrohid Company. In addition to supplying scouts and outposts for the column, we were responsible for the provision of two outpost positions at night and one during the day while the H.Q. of the 1st Southern Division, as well as that of Cork 1 Brigade, were in Ballyvourney at various times in the period from May to July 11th 1921. It was very hard on the men to spend the nights on duty and then to try to work next day. At one stage the duty was so heavy that we had to call on some men from Macroon Company - about 4 or 5 - to man a post on top of Carrigaphooka rock round the clock.

When arrangements were made for a general attack on the enemy forces in Macroon on May 14th 1921, I was in charge of a section of men from my company who took up a position at Firwell on Coolehane road to await the arrival of enemy forces who might travel out in this area. Some members of my section were; - Tom O'Connor, Denis O'Shea, Dick Looney, Murt Kelleher. Several other sections were in position on other roads leading from Macroon, but when all units were in position the operation was called off by the Brigade O/C (Seán O'Hegarty). All sections returned to their home areas.

About mid June I was one of a section of five or six who spent five or six days in ambush positions about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Macroon waiting to attack an officer of the Auxiliaries stationed in Macroon Castle. While I was engaged on this job, I got a report from Macroon that a Black and Tan - a member of Millstreet garrison - was to travel by horse and side-car back to his base next morning.

As I could not withdraw from the position we held near the town, I got four or five members of the company (Clondrohid) to hold him up. They were armed with shotguns and when the Tan came along they held him up and took him prisoner. As he had a bad record, he was shot that night. Amongst the men who captured this Tan were: - Jim Twohig, Lackaduv, who was in charge; John Riordan, Jerh. Dineen; Tim Murphy and Paddy Carroll acted as scouts. When this prisoner was searched, a list of names of the members of the Millstreet Battalion Column, who were to be shot at sight, was found on him. He is buried in Clashmaguire Bog.

Towards the end of June - about the 26th I think - a large force of enemy troops carried out a big round-up in the Ballyvourney-Macroom area. They were operating in the district for several days, but beyond shooting a civilian - Con Riordan - in Carrigaphooka area, they had no further success. The men from Clondrohid area who were 'on the run' escaped the round-up by moving in close to Macroom, where they would not be expected to stay, and lying low. Four or five days after the end of the round-up, three members of the column - Dick Browne, Con O'Leary, Denis O'Connell, were arrested by a small party of Tans in a house in Carrigaphooka. The men of the column were resting at the time and were unarmed.

When the 1st Southern Division H.Q. was established towards the end of April, 1921, the maintenance of lines of communication became of extreme importance. A regular line of dispatches ran through my company (Clondrohid) area night and day up to the cessation of hostilities at the Truce. In addition, guides were available at all "call-houses", with suitable transport to convey brigade and divisional officers to the next call house on their route.

These activities necessitated a good deal of organisation and strict adherence to instructions by the men allocated to the jobs. It can be said in all justice that the men engaged needed a rest when the Truce arrived, as very many of them had the minimum amount of rest during the spring and summer of 1921.

It was difficult at this period to engage the enemy as they usually travelled in convoys of ten to twelve lorries with armoured cars. We waited for them on a number of occasions on the Millstreet road, but on the odd occasion on which they did pass they were in too great strength. These convoys never returned by the same road. However, it was planned to attack one of these convoys early in July, 1921, and six empty land mine cases were sent to me to be filled and charged. An additional six which I should have received earlier, did not arrive until a few days before the Truce, and when this lot were ready the Truce was announced. This operation was to have been carried out by the Brigade Column in conjunction with the Macroom and Ballyvourney Columns.

The story of the period would not be complete unless I placed on record the fact that the people were with us in the fight. Without their co-operation, we would find it hard to exist. They were always anxious to help the men on the columns - giving food and shelter at all hours of day and night. Many of the people who were opposed to us in 1916 sent us word to call, and welcomed us wholeheartedly. This was undoubtedly a change, as after 1916 we often slept under a rock or in a 'brake'.

During 1921 to the Truce, the H.Q. of Macroom Battalion was in my area at Dan O'Shea's, Derryleigh, Clondrohid.

My rank at the Truce was - O/C, Clondrohid Company, Macroon Battalion, Cork 1 Brigade. The strength of the company was about 120.

I propose to submit a statement on the Civil War period at a later stage.

Signed: Timothy Buckley

Date: 21 - 6 - 57

Witness: P. Donnell  
(Investigator).

ADDENDUM TO STATEMENT BY TIMOTHY BUCKLEY,  
Clondrohid P.O., Macroom, County Cork.

On Easter Saturday night, 1917, the members of Clondrohid Company put tricolour flags on the local school and on Carrigaphooka Castle. They were removed by the R.I.C. from Macroom on Easter Monday.

On Easter Saturday night, 1918, we put a flag (tricolour) on the A.O.H. (Ancient Order of Hibernians) Hall. It was taken down by two members of the A.O.H. after first Mass next morning. As a reprisal, we tarred the golden letters - A.O.H. Board of Erin on the front of the hall and the front wall of the building for the following Sunday.

I was held up and searched by British military on three occasions during 1920. On one occasion I had very important I.R.A. documents hidden in my boot. I was lucky that they did not find them.

About this time we often put up notices near the chapel so that people on their way to and from Mass would see them. The notices were worded: "Spies and informers beware; give no information to enemy forces". Our intelligence system in the area was perfect. The officer in charge of this work was Denis Carroll. He was assisted in this work by two postmen working the district.

On Sunday, February 13th, I had a very narrow escape from enemy raiding parties. On the night before, three of us from the column - David Burke, Mick Murphy, and myself - were instructed the night before to shoot some Black and Tans in Macroom town. We slept at Healy's, Curraleigh.

Someone proposed that we would go to first Mass at Carriganima, as we had not been to Mass for a long time. I was the only objector, so it was two against one and we went to Mass. I suggested that we should leave before the sermon, so we did. We had not gone far across country towards our billet (Healy's) when we sighted two lorries of Tans coming on to Carriganima from Macroom. They stopped at the church and surrounded the building. They held up everyone coming out from Mass and fired several shots in the air. They then left the district and went on towards Millstreet. After breakfast at Healy's we left there on three bikes. We were armed with revolvers. We were to meet a Volunteer from Macroom in Clondrohid village after last Mass.

We were travelling along at a nice pace until we got within about 400 yards of the broken bridge at Clondrohid. We had travelled about 5 miles at this time. We were stopped here by an old man of about 70 years. He told us that there were two lorries of Tans at the bridge and that they were scattered here and there in the vicinity - some of them having gone into the village on foot. Only for meeting the old man we would have cycled right into the enemy, as there was a fall of ground from where we were halted to the bridge. There were, in addition, three bends on the road which would prevent us getting a view of the bridge, so we would have run right into a trap. In view of the fresh information, we moved to a position from which we could observe the enemy party. We saw them surround the church in the village (Clondrohid). They searched everyone coming out from Mass and questioned several about the activities of the column in the area. They then moved off after doing some indiscriminate shooting. When they had



moved away we contacted our man from Macroom and made final arrangements for the proposed attack on the Tans in the town (Macroom).

When an enemy force was attacked at Ballinagree in May, 1921, three men from Clondrohid Company took part, viz. Tom O'Connor, Dick Looney and Tom Bradley. I should have mentioned in my original statement that, while I was with the column, Michael Casey (Coy. Adjnt.) was acting as O/C of the company (Clondrohid). He was also clerk of the Parish Court.

Omission from Poul nabro ambush:

While the columns were awaiting and carrying out this operation, six men from Clondrohid Company were engaged on outpost duty about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile north and north-east of the position at Poul nabro. They carried field glasses and were armed with shotguns. They had a good view of the Clondrohid road from Macroom and also the Macroom-Millstreet road for a distance of from six to eight miles. This outpost was stationed in my company (Clondrohid) area between Ardeen and Gortnapasty.

When the officers of the south met at Kippagh near Millstreet in connection with the formation of the 1st Southern Division, John Twomey - a member of my company (Clondrohid) acted as a guide for Seán Hegarty (O/C Cork 1 Brigade), Liam Deasy (O/C Cork 111 Bde.), and Tom Barry (O/C Training, Cork 111 Bde.) on their way to the meeting place. John knew his way over the mountain ranges of Gurrane, Caherdowney, Curragh and the western end of Kilmeedy.

Following the burning of Macroom Workhouse on May 28th 1921, all records removed from the building were dumped in my company area.

One other matter I had to deal with at Company Council meetings was spite between neighbours. Some Section Commanders were always reporting about petty spleens which had been in existence for years and were insisting on taking action on these matters. As I knew all about the people living in my company area, I always told the men who raised these questions that the matters would have to be investigated before any action could be taken. The company area extended over 20 square miles from Coolnadane to Ballyvourney boundary, and from Musherá to Half-House (Harris).

Signed: Timothy Buckley

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> June 1954

Witness: P. Donnell  
(Investigator)

BUREAU OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE
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