

W. S. 1045
ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1045

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,045

Witness

George Henry Roberts,
8 Riverview Terrace,
Ennistymon,
Co. Clare.

Identity.

Driver with British Forces of Occupation
in Ireland, 1919-1921.

Subject.

Attack by Mid-Clare Flying Column
on B.F. convoy at Monreal, Co. Clare,
18.12.20.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.2332

Form B.S.M. 2

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BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1045

STATEMENT OF GEORGE HENRY ROBERTS,
8, Riverview Terrace, Ennistymon, Co. Clare,
(formerly a Corporal Driver in the
Army Service Corps, British Army).

I was born in Newtownabbott, Devonshire, on 26th May, 1893, and at the present time I am self-employed as a taxi driver in Ennistymon.

I joined the British Army in September, 1914, and during the first Great War served in Egypt, the Dardanelles, Suez Canal, Salonika and in Palestine where I was ^{frequently} personal driver to General Allenby, General Officer Commanding, for nine months.

My unit was transferred to Ireland in 1919 and there I was stationed in Royal Wellington Barracks, Dublin, Victoria Barracks in Cork, Home Barracks in Ennis and in the Workhouse, Tulla, Co. Clare. I was in the last mentioned station about eight months when I was sent to Ennistymon to replace Driver Harrison who had been killed in the Rineen ambush on 22nd September, 1920. After a few months in Ennistymon, I married a local girl named Margaret O'Grady.

On the morning of 18th December, 1920, at about 6.30, a convoy of three tenders left Ennistymon for Ennis; I was driving the first tender which carried nine soldiers with myself; the second and third tenders carried all R.I.C. and Black and Tans. The officer in charge of the convoy, Captain Hay, D.S.O., Royal Scots Regiment, and son of the late Lord Hay of the Irish Guards, sat beside me, and in my lorry also was a

Sergeant Clarke. As I was rounding the bend coming into Monreal crossroads, a single shot was fired and a bomb was then thrown which landed under the vehicle but did not explode. Immediately a heavy, volley of firing was opened. Captain Hay threw himself off the tender and Sergeant Clarke shouted, "Accelerate and pull up at the crossroads", where there was cover from fire. I did so.

When we got to the cross-roads, Sergeant Clarke and Private Black, both also belonging to the Royal Scots, took a machine gun from the tender and opened up on the attackers. I removed the wounded, six private soldiers, and laid them on the grass margin on the side of the road and remained with them for about two hours, when reinforcements came from Ennistymon. Sergeant Clarke then ordered me to drive himself and six or seven men towards Cloonagh. They searched several houses but found nothing. Other reinforcements arrived later from Ennis. The wounded were transferred to the lorries which brought the troops from Ennis, and the wounded were taken there.

In addition to the six men in my tender who were wounded, one Black and Tan Sergeant Driver, Dan McInerney, an Irishman, and another Black and Tan in the second tender were also wounded. There was no casualty among the men on the third tender. Though I was present when the wounded men were being put on the lorries for Ennis, I did not see any dead man among the British troops and I do not believe that, in the subsequent fighting which followed after the

British forces had dismounted from the tenders, they sustained any casualties.

I might add that, during my period with the British Army in Ireland, my sympathies were with the Irish people and that I gave guns to the Irish Republican Army while I was stationed in Ennis.

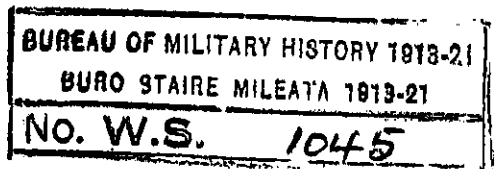
SIGNED:

Geo H Roberts

(Geo. H. Roberts)

DATE:

11.12.54



WITNESS:

D. Griffin

(D. Griffin)