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ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY IRELAND
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No. W.S. 1408

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1408

Witness

Thomas Mannion,
Brackloon,
Dunmore,
Co. Galway.

Identity.

1st Lieutenant.

Company Captain.

Subject.

Irish Volunteers and Sinn Féin Activities,
Dunmore, Co. Galway, 1917-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File No S. 2734.

Form B.S.M. 2

ORIGINAL

STATEMENT BY THOMAS MANNION
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
Brackloon, Dunmore, Co. Galway. BUREAU STAIRS MILITARY 1913-21
NO. W.S. 1,408

I was born at Killavoher in the parish of Dunmore on 1st May 1895, and was educated at Carrowkeel National School until I reached the age of about 14 years.

I joined the Dunmore Company of the Irish Volunteers very shortly after the general release of the Volunteers who had been arrested following the Rising of Easter Week 1916. The company was reorganised by three of the released prisoners - Thomas Kilgarriff, William McGill and Michael Ronan. Thomas Kilgarriff afterwards became Brigade I.O., Tuam Brigade, and Michael Ronan became first captain of the company. All three are now deceased. These three men also organised the Dunmore (John McBride) Sinn Fein Club, and Kilgarriff was also I.R.B. Centre for the Dunmore Circle of that organisation.

The strength of the company was roughly 25. It varied from time to time but, generally, the membership kept increasing until it reached about 65 at the Truce of July 1921. The company officers were:- Captain - Michael Ronan; 1st Lieutenant - Thomas Mannion (myself); 2nd Lieutenant - Thomas Togher (as far as I can now remember).

Parades were held once a week in the evening time after work. They were very well attended. At first, the company paraded at Grange about one mile from Dunmore. From 1920 onwards the four sections of the company met once a week in addition to the general parade of the company. Drill was of the very simple kind in 1917, 1918 and 1919. It included marching in step and foot drill.

We had a good deal of miniature rifle practice from some

time in 1918 onwards. We had .22 rifles with plenty of ammunition for practice, which was carried out section by section under the supervision of the captain and myself. The captain also took the parades of the company and, in his absence, I did. The rifle practice was often carried out on a Sunday when the members of the sections had plenty of leisure. The place selected was a field or wood far removed from public roads. It is hard to say how many rounds each member of the company was allowed to fire. Some got as few as three rounds, while others got as many as thirty, depending on the regularity of attendance by the men and the degree of keenness shown. In the case of men who attended regularly, were keen on the practice, and who promised to make good dependable soldiers, we gave them plenty of practice.

One Sunday in the year 1919, as far as I can remember, the whole of the Glenamaddy Battalion was mobilised for target practice at Carrantryla in the Dunmore Company area. Owing to the large number, each man was allowed only one shot. The practice was in the nature of a competition. It was very slow work as one of our rifles had got broken in the course of being taken from section to section. Great interest was taken in the competition which I won myself. I had forgotten about it until I won a similar L.D.F. competition during the recent Emergency.

The Dunmore Sinn Fein Club was very strong in numbers and was very active. The first chairman was Thomas Kilgarriff, whom I have mentioned. He resigned because he was working in Claremorris and could not attend meetings regularly. He was succeeded as chairman of the Club by Michael Finnegan of Dunmore, now deceased. Membership of the Club was over 120 and the majority were elderly men whom we considered too old to be in the Volunteers. Practically every member of the

Dunmore Company of the Volunteers was also a member of the Dunmore Sinn Fein Club. The general body of the Club met once a week - on Sunday after last Mass - in the Town Hall, Dunmore. Later, these weekly meetings were abandoned and meetings took place once a month. The committee, of which I was a member, met often. I was often a delegate to Comhairle Ceanntar meetings which were usually held in Tuam and, occasionally, in Glenamaddy. I attended the Ard-Fheis in Dublin in 1918. That meeting of the Ard-Fheis was held in the Mansion House and lasted two days. I remember that it was decided at the meeting to march from the Mansion House to College Green where an open air meeting was addressed by the late Father O'Flanagan to protest against the treatment of the political prisoners in Belfast Jail.. That was late in October or early November 1918.

There was great activity in the North Galway electoral area before the General Election of 1918. A big number of public meetings was held. The late Con Kennedy of Dunmore was Election Agent for the Sinn Fein candidate, Dr. Brian Cusack. I remember that George Maguire of Claremorris, a brother of Conor Maguire, spoke at many of the Sinn Fein election meetings. He was a very fine speaker. North Galway was supposed to be a great Redmondite stronghold at the time. The Volunteers and Sinn Fein Clubs worked very hard. Canvassing in the Dunmore area was done mostly by Volunteers in pairs - a man from the rural area usually being accompanied by a townsman. Each pair had a copy of the register and a notebook. The name of each voter canvassed was written into the notebook and for or against placed opposite the name. The notebooks were examined carefully with the result that all the canvassers were very thorough. The result of the election in the North Galway constituency was a substantial majority

for the Sinn Fein candidate. Dr. Cusack was a prisoner at the time and I think he was recommended to us by Sinn Fein Headquarters in Dublin.

I remember that after the first meeting of Dáil Éireann, a discussion arose in the Dunmore Sinn Fein Club as to how the Dáil was to carry on its business without funds. We decided to have a collection amongst the members and to make a present of the amount collected to Dáil Éireann. We collected about £120. Before this could be handed over to the Dáil, the Dáil Éireann Loan was floated and we invested the amount in the Loan. We intended at the time of the collection to bring our scheme to the notice of other Sinn Fein Clubs so that they would follow our example, but the Dáil Loan was announced before our ideas had reached out very far. The sum invested in the Loan by the Club was repaid later and was then handed over to a priest for repairs to the parish church in Dunmore.

Earlier in the year 1918, I remember another collection for the purpose of fighting conscription. In the parish of Dunmore a sum of £480 was collected for the Defence Fund - as the fund to fight conscription was called. The money was collected from house to house - roughly £1 per house was collected. It was all handed back to the subscribers immediately the threat of conscription had passed. I remember that one Sunday it was announced from the pulpit in Dunmore that the money would be repaid after Mass. There was great commotion in the old Courthouse in Dunmore when it was being repaid.

In the year 1919 we set about collecting all the arms and ammunition we could. We got at least twenty shotguns but no other type of gun. We got a good share of mixed cartridges. Most owners of guns handed them over to us

without the slightest protest. We arranged to go first to people who were considering handing over their guns to the R.I.C. In spite of our watchfulness, some guns were handed in to the R.I.C. barracks in Dunmore, the only R.I.C. barracks in the company area.

The R.I.C. Barracks in Dunmore was a strong one. In the years 1918, 1919 and early 1920, the garrison was one District Inspector, one Head Constable, two sergeants and 10 to 12 constables. In the spring of 1920, smaller R.I.C. barracks at Clonbern, Kilkerrin, Glenamaddy and Creggs were evacuated and the garrisons brought to Dunmore. From then to the Truce the strength of the R.I.C. in Dunmore was little short of sixty men, that is taking into account the Black and Tans. The small barracks mentioned above were all destroyed by the I.R.A. immediately after their evacuation except that at Clonbern which was part of a private house. I might mention here the enemy strength in the Glenamaddy Battalion area of which the Dunmore company was part. Dunmore Barrack was a big one having formerly been a military barrack. It stood on its own grounds of about three acres surrounded by a high wall. About 1st April 1921, a half-company of (I think) Scottish Borderers was added to the R.I.C. garrison. They remained to the Truce. From about April 1920, the only other enemy post in the battalion area was at Ballymoe, where about 15 R.I.C. were stationed. These had no transport and seldom left the village of Ballymoe. I think that the other half-company of Scottish Borderers was stationed in Tuam.

Late in 1919, or early in 1920, Arbitration Courts under Dáil Éireann were set up. The Parish Court sat in Dunmore. The Justices of this Court were:- Michael A. Lyons, Chairman; Thomas Kilgarriff - afterwards Brigade I.O., and myself. The Court continued to function right up to the Truce, but they

had to meet in secret. We heard a great variety of cases - trespass, assault, disputes about rights of way and various disputes connected with land. They were mostly trivial cases. Any big case involving title of any kind was sent to the District Court in Tuam. Some disputes between neighbours never went into the Courts but were settled by the Volunteers. Some such cases still hold good. The people then had a very great regard for the sincerity of the Volunteers and sank their small differences out of respect for them.

There were no Republican Police in the Dunmore Company area up to the Truce. Volunteers acted as policemen and implemented the decisions of the Republican Courts when necessary. The Dáil Éireann Loan was well subscribed in the Dunmore Company area. It was collected by Volunteers and members of the Sinn Féin Club.

Company parades were held regularly up to the Harvest of 1920. Raids by the R.I.C. on the homes of Volunteers who were known to be active then commenced. I remember that my house was raided for the first time on 11th October 1920. I was not at home, as I had been warned of the impending raid. I received word of it through a Miss Agnes McHugh, who is now a nun in the Presentation Convent, Castlebar.

Raids then began on the houses of other Volunteer officers and men. Parades were not held so often from that time on as there was a danger of the whole company being made prisoners. The parades were then held usually only when some action was being planned. The R.I.C. became very active about this time.

As a counter measure there were ambushes planned for small parties of R.I.C. patrolling the roads in the neighbourhood of the village of Dunmore. Before Christmas 1920, I remember

that ten or twelve members of the company waited in ambush on the Dunmore/Clonbern road for two or three nights to ambush small patrols of Black and Tans who were in the habit of visiting certain families in the neighbourhood. The patrols did not turn up on any of the nights we waited for them.

At the commencement of the year 1921 there was a number of officers and men 'on the run' in the Tuam Brigade area and it was decided that they should come together and form themselves into an active service unit. Their names are:

James Maloney, Battalion Commandant, Glenamaddy Battalion.
 Thomas Dunleavy, do. Tuam do.
 Thomas Tarmay, Brigade adjutant.
 Paddy Conway, Brigade Q.M.
 Martin Ryan, Vice-Commandant, Glenamaddy Battalion.
 Jack Knight, Q.M. Glenamaddy Battalion
 Thomas Ryan, Q.M. Tuam do.
 Thomas Nohilly, Adjutant, Tuam do.
 Martin Mannion, Captain of Dunmore Coy. Glenamaddy Battn.
 (and afterwards Battalion Adjutant of
 Glenamaddy Battalion).
 Tim Dunleavy, Captain of Barnaderg Coy. Tuam Battalion.
 Patrick Treacy, Captain of Glenamaddy Coy. Glenamaddy Bn.
 Brian Cunniffe, Captain, Kilkerrin Coy. do.
 Thomas Feerick, Captain, Milltown Coy. Tuam Battalion
 Thomas Mannion, 1st Lieut. Dunmore Coy. Glenamaddy Battn.
 (afterwards Captain of Dunmore Company -
 myself).

Occasionally this column was strengthened by local Volunteers, some of whom were also 'on the run'. Amongst those, I would like to mention the names of Volunteers John Patrick McCormack and Patrick Walsh, both from Milltown Company Tuam Battalion. This column kept together as much as possible in one unit. It separated occasionally, only because of lack of accommodation or because of the danger of being encircled owing to the flat nature of the area. Early in 1921, Patrick Dunleavy, who had just been appointed brigade commandant, joined the column and took command of it.

I remember that about February 1921, an ambush was prepared for a lorry of R.I.C. who were expected to travel from Dunmore to Ballymoe to pay the members of the R.I.C.

garrison stationed there. The information that the party was to come that way came to the column through Martin Ryan, Vice-Commandant of the Glenamaddy Battalion. It came to Martin Ryan in this way: A Black and Tan stationed in Ballymoe got drinks on credit in a publichouse there when his pay became exhausted. When asking for drinks on 'tick', he sometimes said: "I'll pay you for these on pay-day" and he usually mentioned the day. When the pay-day became known in this way, the column took up positions on the Dunmore/Williamstown road about 200 yards from Gortaleam Cross in the direction of Williamstown. There were 35 to 40 men in position on both sides of the road. The majority were concealed in an old gravel pit which afforded good cover and the remainder were behind a stone wall. The country to our rear on one side was flat and on the other side there was a steep rise of ground over which we would have to travel in the event of retreat. The lorry did not travel. It was ready in Dunmore, but the R.I.C. were advised not to travel that day. I heard this on very good authority, but I am not at liberty to mention the name of the person who told me. Brigade Commandant Patrick Dunleavy was in charge and the men were armed with about twelve rifles and shotguns.

On 10th March 1921, there was a big round-up of the Glenamaddy battalion area. District Inspector Healy, who was in charge of the R.I.C. at Dunmore, got reinforcements of British military for the round-up. These came from Galway Claremorris and Athlone - 100 lorries in all. One aeroplane also took part in the round-up. No Volunteer got caught in the net. All the men and boys caught were brought - without being given time to dress themselves in some cases - to Ballyhard in Glenamaddy Company area for identification by R.I.C. That was the only round-up of the battalion area, as it

seems that the British military were reluctant to give reinforcements to D.I. Healy after the first attempt at a round-up had been a failure from their viewpoint.

District Inspector Healy of the R.I.C. had been a sergeant stationed at Oranmore, Co. Galway. We were informed that he had been responsible for the death in Dublin of Joseph Howley, a Volunteer officer from Oranmore. It seems that Joseph Howley went to Dublin on I.R.A. business and that Healy followed him to Dublin and pointed him out to the G/men at Broadstone railway station, where he was killed.

Sergeant Healy was then promoted District Inspector and transferred to Dunmore. Several attempts were made to shoot him there. I took charge of six Volunteers armed with revolvers on four different nights to try and get him. We went into a publichouse in Dunmore where Healy was in the habit of going for a drink at night. It was a regular custom of his to go to this publichouse for drink late at night, but on the four occasions we were there he did not turn up. I cannot explain it. The six men who accompanied me on those occasions were Volunteers Martin Kenny, Martin Gannon, Martin Concannon, John Gannon, Daniel Flaherty and Walter Cullinan. This was a dangerous job, but I am glad to relate that every Volunteer in the Dunmore Company at that time would gladly have done the same thing if they had the opportunity.

About the end of March 1921, there was an ambush prepared on the Tuam/Dunmore road, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Dunmore, for a lorry of R.I.C. that was in the habit of passing almost every day. Positions were occupied by the flying column under Brigade Commandant Patrick Dunleavy from daybreak to dark, but the R.I.C. did not come the way. We stayed in position only

one day. The column was strengthened that day by local Volunteers including the six men who entered the town of Dunmore with me in the attempts to shoot D.I. Healy.

In April 1921, martial law and curfew were imposed by the British in the Dunmore company area. They lasted up to the Truce in July 1921. It was at that time the half-company of British military came to the town, no doubt to enforce martial law in the area. In the last week of April 1921, as well as I can remember, about 20 men took up positions on the Dunmore/Moylough road near the Parish Church at Clonbern, with the intention of attacking a party of R.I.C. expected to pass that way in a lorry in connection with agrarian trouble in the Clonbern company area. Ambush positions were entered at daybreak and occupied until darkness fell. The expected lorry of R.I.C. did not turn up. Brigade Commandant Patrick Dunleavy was in charge. There were about twelve rifles in the party of I.R.A., the remainder being armed with shotguns. Our positions were right inside the wall of the road and in a two-storey house on the roadside. That house was burned a few nights after by the R.I.C. from Dunmore. During the day, many people who passed by and saw us had to be detained. They were kept under guard in the house of Charles O'Rourke, a local landlord who had another place at Birmingham, about three miles from Tuam. A man named Thomas Hannon was found in O'Rourke's house. He was an employee of O'Rourke's and usually worked in the place in Birmingham, but just happened to be in Clonbern on that particular day. He had already been sentenced to death by the I.R.A., having been found guilty of giving information to the enemy. Before leaving Clonbern, Hannon was taken to one of the local priests, who ministered to him before his execution. He was executed by shooting. His body was labelled "Spy" and left in a field near the village of Kigalla.

About this time there were several prepared ambushes, but the enemy seemed to have an uncanny instinct for not falling into our traps. At Carrarea, Brownsgrove on the Tuam/Dunmore road, we got in a few shots at a lorry of R.I.C. travelling from Tuam in the direction of Dunmore. We had waited all day from daybreak at Carrarea, Brownsgrove, and were on the point of moving away when the lorry appeared. We had, in fact, left our positions as we were about 300 yards from the road when we sighted the lorry. Every rifleman fired at the lorry which did not stop. We heard afterwards that some of the R.I.C. were wounded. Fire from about twelve rifles was brought to bear on the lorry. Thomas Dunleavy, battalion commandant, Tuam Battalion, was in charge.

In the month of June 1921, the brigade flying column again took up positions on the road between Dunmore and Ballymoe to ambush the pay car going to pay the R.I.C. stationed in Ballymoe. The information about the date of the pay car's journey was obtained in the same way as it was obtained in the previous February. The girl serving in the bar where the Tans drank passed the tip on to Martin Ryan, vice-commandant of the battalion, as was done on the previous occasion. We remained there four days from daybreak on Monday to Thursday night, but again the car did not turn up. We went into houses nearby during the short hours of darkness and rested. We did not change our clothes and got scarcely any sleep at all. Patrick Dunleavy, brigade commandant, was in charge of the column, which was strengthened by Volunteers armed with shotguns from the Williamstown and Polredmond companies. The ambush position was in the Polredmond company area. The pay car passed a few days after we had evacuated the position.

When we left our positions on the Dunmore/Ballymoe road

on the Thursday night we proceeded to the Clonbern company area, where we arrived at daybreak on the following (Friday) morning. We took up positions on the Clonbern/Kilkerrin road at Park West, about half way between Clonbern and Kilkerrin. Our reason for doing this was that we figured the enemy might surround the positions we occupied the four previous days and that, in the encircling movement, a lorry or two might come that way. We were mistaken, as no enemy force of any kind appeared during the whole of Friday, and we left the position on Friday night. We went to Fiddane near Kilkerrin and stayed there all day Saturday.

On the next morning (Sunday) we went to Moylough with the intention of attacking a party of R.I.C. between Mountbellew and Moylough. The non-Catholic members of the garrison at Mountbellew had to go to Moylough for Divine Service as there was no place of worship for them at Mountbellew. There were no R.I.C. or British military stationed at Moylough at that time. The R.I.C. party usually went to Divine Service at 11 a.m. They travelled on bicycles. We saw the party going to Church on the Sunday morning. There were ten of them. Knowing their strength, we decided to attack them on their way back from Mountbellew. While they were at Church we took up positions about 100 yards from the road and waited. We waited in vain, as the R.I.C. party went home by another route and we were unable to contact them.

We stayed in our position in the hope that there might be some enemy movement on the road and also because of the danger of leaving in broad daylight. We always left ambush positions under cover of darkness, if at all possible, to avoid the danger of our destination being communicated to the enemy. Some time in the afternoon, an R.I.C. man passed on a push bicycle from Mountbellew in the Moylough direction.

I heard he went to visit his family in Moylough. Captain Patrick Treacy of the Glenamaddy Company was sent after him to Moylough. The idea was that when the R.I.C. in Mountbellew heard that this man was disarmed or killed they would come to his assistance. Captain Treacy returned and said he had wounded the R.I.C. man in his home. After some time, a lorry of R.I.C. and a motor car containing some more R.I.C. passed our position. We took them to be going to Moylough to bring back their wounded colleague to Mountbellew. We attacked them on their return journey.

The car came first, followed by the lorry at a distance of about 120 to 200 yards. We occupied only about 100 yards of a front, as the fence we manned was only that length. It was the fence of a field that had been reclaimed and the ground on each side to right and left was cutaway bog. The car pulled up to the right of our position when fire was opened on the lorry as it came in the dead centre of our position. There would have been at least sixteen R.I.C. in the party. I know for certain that there were four in the car and I would say that there were at least twelve in the lorry. There were twelve in the I.R.A. party under the command of Brigade Commandant Patrick Dunleavy. All twelve were armed with rifles. We got in a good volley on the lorry and the occupants jumped for cover. The road was a bog road and was well raised above the bog level. The R.I.C. got good cover behind the grassy banking of the road on the far side. Firing lasted from half an hour to an hour. The fire from the R.I.C. was very accurate. It was heavy and well sustained. They used rifle grenades, although at the time we did not know what they were. They made a peculiar noise and seemed to be bursting above our heads and behind us. I heard later that the R.I.C. boasted that it was the rifle grenades that caused us to withdraw. I think

it was realised that we could not outflank the R.I.C. and the column commander - Brigade Commandant Patrick Dunleavy - gave the whistle signals, which had been previously arranged, for withdrawal. We succeeded in withdrawing without sustaining any casualty. When getting away from the fence we had to cross a passage that was very exposed. I remember I was the last man out of our positions by the fence. I had to crawl and my jacket got caught in an old branch or root of a tree on the passage. While I was trying to release myself, a bullet went through the jacket. This incident may give an idea of the accuracy of the R.I.C. fire on this occasion. We heard that three or four of the R.I.C. were killed and that a number of coffins were ordered in Mountbellew that night.

One day in June 1921, before the ambush on the Moylough/Mountbellew road, as far as I remember, about 15 or 16 men of the flying column under the command of Brigade Commandant Patrick Dunleavy took up ambush positions along the drive leading to Carrantryla House near Munmore. A small party of R.I.C. from Dunmore was expected to come to the house for gooseberries. They had been there some days before on the same mission, but they were told that the fruit was not ripe. Mrs. Denny, wife of the owner of Carrantryla House, told Volunteer Martin Kenny of the Dunmore Company about the first visit of the R.I.C. and the date on which they were to come again. Volunteer Kenny told me, and I informed the flying column. Four R.I.C. came to the gate of the house, about half a mile from the house itself. They remained at the gate for a few minutes and then went away. We could not understand this as we were certain that they had not seen us.

During the last three months of 1920, and the full period

of 1921 up to the 11th July, the R.I.C. were very active in my company area. They raided my house regularly every week at least once, and sometimes three times weekly. In January 1921, they burned a rick of hay and five or six stacks of oats. Several nights they threatened my father and fired shots over his head to try and get him to reveal my whereabouts and that of my brother Martin, then a djutant of the battalion (Glenamaddy). One night, they had a big scissors with them. A Black and Tan grabbed my sister Nora by the hands. She said: "what are you going to do?" One of them, a Black and Tan also, said: "We're going to cut your locks, lass". They cut her hair right to the scalp.

In March 1921, the R.I.C. stationed in Dunmore raided the Clonbern Company area for the company captain, John Mahon, and for Volunteer Michael Mullen. Neither of the two was at home. They were going away from Mullen's house when they saw a man leaving another house. He was a brother of Volunteer Michael Mullen. He was not a member of the I.R.A. He was home on a holiday from England and was to return there the following day. They took him prisoner and brought him with them to Killavoher where they beat him almost to death, shot him and left him on the side of the road. They went into a house nearby and told the woman of the house to attend to him. The woman went out and said an Act of Contrition in his ear. He gave signs that he understood the prayer and died almost immediately after. There was no inquest, but I heard that the bullet wounds were not sufficient of themselves to cause death. This man was brutally beaten to death. His name was Thomas Mullen.

There was a chemist in the village of Dunmore about this time. His name was McKeever and he was a native of Cork. He was not long in Dunmore and was not in the Volunteers.

He was taken from his lodgings one night about the same time as Thomas Mullen was murdered, and brutally done to death in the same way. He had bayonet wounds in the neck and his body was labelled "Spy". I heard that members of his family were prominent in the Volunteers.

As soon as we learned of the murder of McKeever by the R.I.C., my brother Martin called on the late Dean Macken, Parish Priest of Dunmore, and asked him to say Mass for McKeever. My brother paid the usual offering for the Mass and told the Dean that McKeever was not a spy. The Dean volunteered to make an announcement from the pulpit on the matter. He did so, and actually accused the Crown Forces of the murder of McKeever. Dean Macken was a courageous priest and a fine Irishman.

I remember that in February 1921, when we lay in ambush at Gortaleam Cross on the Dunmore/Williamstown road, we cut notches at the top of the fences for our rifles and shotguns. We cut about forty of those notches for our weapons. These marks were counted by the R.I.C. after he had left. They probably decided that our strength was forty riflemen, as I heard they said we were well able to deal with two lorries. The man whom they told related this to me afterwards. This appears to be the reason why District Inspector Healy, without reinforcements, considered our flying column too strong for encirclement with his force of 60 R.I.C. and half company of British military.

The local people supported us in every way possible. They always gave us food and shelter and always responded extremely well in the matter of collections. They subscribed generously to the Defence Fund and Dáil Éireann Loan. In addition, a sum of £400 was collected in 1920 in the

battalion (Glenamaddy) area for the purchase of arms. The money was handed over to brigade officers.

Dispatch riders did excellent work. They never seemed to fail in their work. I could quote many examples of their ingenuity and fidelity. I remember Volunteer Martin Concannon one day in 1921 taking a dispatch from Clonbern to Dunmore Company area. The written message was in connection with the transfer of arms from one place to another. He travelled by bicycle and on the way from Clonbern to Dunmore he got a hunch that he would meet the enemy. He dismounted and pinned the dispatch to the tail of his shirt. A little further on he was met by a lorry of R.I.C. They stopped him, accused him of carrying dispatches, made him take off his boots and socks, searched him thoroughly, but did not find the dispatch. They beat him badly and broke his bicycle. There was a good deal of dispatch work to be done in my company as it was situated in the middle of the brigade area and my brother Martin was battalion adjutant. I had four or five dispatch riders, but the work was usually done by two of them.

Battalion Council meetings were held regularly once a month up to 11th July 1921. They were usually held in Ballinastack and were well attended by the company captains who sent deputies on the infrequent occasions they were unable to be present.

There were two battalions in the North Galway or Tuam Brigade, as it was sometimes called, viz: Tuam and Glenamaddy Battalions. The names of the Brigade and Glenamaddy battalion staffs and those of the Glenamaddy company captains, as far as I can remember, are:-

Brigade Commandant - Michael (Con) Fogarty - to Feb. 1921.
do. Patk. Dunleavy - from Feb. 1921 to
Truce.

Vice-Commandant - None.
 Adjutant - Thomas Tarmey from April 1921 to Truce.
 Q.M. - Pattick Conway was the only one I knew.
 I.O. - Thos. Kilgarriff .

Glenamaddy Battalion:

Commandant - Seamus Moloney all the time.
 V/Commandant - Martin Ryan do.
 Adjutant - Thomas Tarmey to April 1921, and
 Martin Mannion from April 1921 to Truce
 Q.M. - John Knight all the time.

Dunmore Company - Michael Ronan to August 1920, when
 he left the company.
 Martin Mannion from August 1920 to
 April 1921.
 Thomas Mannion (myself) from April 1921
 to the Truce.

Kiltevena - Roger Rabbitte all the time.
 Polredmond - John Glennon do.
 Williamstown - Patk. Noonan (decd) do.
 Glenamaddy - Patrick Treacy do.
 Ballymoe (or
 Kilcroan) - John Hanly do.
 Glynsk - Thomas Burke do.
 Kilbegnet - John McDonagh do.
 Kilkerrin - Brian Cunniffe do.
 Clonbern - John Mahon do.

I was a member of the I.R.B. The circle was Dunmore and the 'centre' was Thomas Kilgarriff who organised the Irish Volunteers and Sinn Fein Club in 1917, and afterwards became Brigade I.O. I became 'Centre' after Kilgarriff. I cannot remember many meetings or very much about the organisation except that the general policy was to have members of the I.R.B. as officers in the I.R.A. as far as was practicable.

Signed: Thomas Mannion

Date: 26 April 1956

Witness: Don Moylan

