

U.S. 1437.

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1918-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1437

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1437.

Witness

Thomas Nohilly,
Allenswood,
Lucan,
Co. Dublin.

Identity.

Company Captain.

Battalion Adjutant.

Subject.

Activities of Tuam Company, Tuam Battalion,
Irish Volunteers, Co. Galway, 1914-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File No 2773

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ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1,437

STATEMENT BY THOMAS NOHILLY,
Allenswood, Lucan, County Dublin.

I was born in the month of November 1896, and was educated at the Franciscan Monastery, Cummer, Co. Galway.

My first association with the national movement was in the year 1914 when I joined Fianna Eireann in Tuam. Liam Mellowes was the first organiser of the Fianna in Tuam, and when he had completed the organising work, Liam Langley, afterwards head of the Fianna in Dublin, took charge. Our strength was about thirty-five, and the majority were apprentices serving their time as shop assistants in various business houses in the town.

We did our training about a mile outside the town, near the village of Cluainthoo, in a field owned by William Concannon who charged us no rent. Our training was under the supervision of Liam Langley, and consisted of some foot drill and arms drill with .22 rifles. We also had target practice once a week with the .22 rifles. We organised football matches and sports meetings. At one of our sports meetings in Tuam, I remember that special trains were run from Galway City, Gort and Claremorris. I remember that, on this occasion, Larry Lardner from Athenry - afterwards one of the leaders of the County Galway Volunteers during Easter Week 1916 - was handicapper. We had a revolver as one of the prizes. We met with great success at football, our Fianna team winning the junior championship of Galway from a Ballinasloe team. The match was played in Athenry.

We travelled about a good deal to football matches and concerts, and on those journeys we were always followed by two members of the R.I.C. on bicycles. On one occasion, after a football match in Dunmore, we were returning to Tuam by brake, accompanied as usual by two R.I.C. on bicycles. One of the two hung on to the brake as he cycled along, to hear what was being talked about, but one of our number carrying the tricolour hit him with the flagstaff until he was forced to let go his hold.

I remember that, shortly before Easter 1916, I was taken for a walk one evening by Volunteers Sean Forde and Joseph Cummins. They sounded me as to what I would do in the event of a fight for freedom. I must have answered satisfactorily, as I was sworn into the Irish Republican Brotherhood about a week or so afterwards, by the same men. Patrick Dunleavy, afterwards O/C North Galway brigade, was also working in Tuam at the time and was sworn into the I.R.B. the same time as me. Meetings of the I.R.B. were held in Connolly's forge in High Street. I cannot remember anything of the meetings except that Liam Langley presided at them. As far as I know, he was head centre for the whole North Galway area. Other members of the I.R.B. I remember from that time were Thomas Kilgarriff, afterwards Brigade I.O., North Galway brigade, Con Kennedy of Dunmore and John Costello of Killoower, near Tuam, both of whom were also very prominently associated with Sinn Féin, and two brothers named Connolly who owned the forge where the meetings were held.

Before Easter Week 1916, I had been transferred from the Fianna to the Volunteers. On Easter Tuesday 1916, I was summoned to a meeting of the I.R.B. at Connolly's forge. I received the summons from Liam Langley, with instructions to go to Confession before the meeting. I went to Confession to Fr. Henaghan at the Cathedral, and arrived at the meeting place about 9.30 p.m. There were nine or ten men present when I got there. I remember that three or four side-cars, full of R.I.C., passed by Connolly's. They were from Castlehackett, Cummer and Headford barracks. The general mobilisation centre for the North Galway Volunteers was at the fair green, Tuam, where they were to be assembled by midnight on Easter Tuesday. The nine or ten men who attended the meeting at Connolly's forge all went to the mobilisation place. Liam Langley was in charge. I did not at that time know of the rising, or of any plans in connection with it.

We were armed with three or four out-of-date rifles, a few shotguns and revolvers. If all the Volunteers from the surrounding districts of Dunmore, Sylane and Kilbannon had turned up at the mobilisation centre, there would have been about thirty men, all members of the I.R.B. I remember that Patrick Dunleavy and Joseph Cummins were sent by Liam Langley to meet the men who were expected to come from the Dunmore area. We waited at the fair green until daylight, but neither the Dunmore men nor the two men we had sent to meet them had come by that time. We then dispersed, and there was no further mobilisation in Tuam, as far as I know. I learned afterwards that the men coming to the mobilisation centre from Dunmore were arrested by R.I.C. just outside the town of Tuam. The two men who had been sent to contact them were also

arrested. Three of the Dunmore men arrested were Michael Ronan, William McGill and Thomas Killgarriff, afterwards brigade I.O., North Galway brigade. Liam Langley was the only one from Tuam who was arrested in Easter Week 1916. The plans for the North Galway Volunteers, as far as I know, were that they would proceed to Athenry on Easter Tuesday night, or the following day. They were to be taken there on a train driven by Volunteer Sam Browne who was a loco engineer attached to the Great Southern and Western Railway Company.

The reorganisation of the Tuam company of the Irish Volunteers took place late in 1917. I became company captain and the two lieutenants were Joseph Cooney and, I think, Frank Farrell. The strength was about thirty-five, and drilling was done openly at Parkmore, close to the town. The drill, of which I took charge, was very simple, and consisted of foot drill and marching in step.

There was a strong Sinn Féin Club in Tuam about this time. The principal organiser was Professor J.B. Whelehan of St. Jarlath's College. The other prominent members were Gabriel Guy, a solicitor, who afterwards became District Justice in Ballina, Co. Mayo, Michael Dwyer, M.C.C., Michael Hoey, a native of Bray, Co. Wicklow, who was both a Volunteer and a very active member of the Sinn Féin Club, Martin Joseph Nohilly who afterwards emigrated to Australia and died there, and John Burke, manager of the "Tuam Herald", a good, national, local newspaper. I remember that Michael Hoey was sentenced to six months imprisonment for a seditious speech which he delivered in Tuam, either in connection with the general election of 1918 or with the reading of the Republican proclamation. He served part of the

sentence in Galway jail from where he was transferred to either Dundalk or Belfast jail, to finish his sentence. He received a wonderful reception in Tuam after his release, but he did not remain there. He was an employee of the Irish Land Commission.

Public meetings were called in Tuam to protest against conscription. The principal speaker at those meetings was Rev. Fr. Owen Hannon, Adm., Tuam.

In December 1918, the Tuam company of the Volunteers canvassed on behalf of the Sinn Fein candidate, Dr. Brian Cusack, a dispensary doctor in Turloughmore. He was in jail at the time of the elections. I remember that, when he was released in June 1919, he was wearing a beard. Volunteers did duty at the polling booths on polling day. I remember I was at the booth at Caherlistrane with battalion commandant Michael Moran. Caherlistrane was a Redmondite stronghold, and word was received early on the morning of the polling that voters were being intimidated by the anti-Sinn Fein element there. I remember that, when we heard this, Commandant Moran and I, accompanied by nine or ten Volunteers, travelled by side-car to Caherlistrane and remained there all day. There was a landslide in favour of Dr. Cusack.

Prior to the general election of 1918, nine or ten officers and men of the Tuam and Corofin companies of the Volunteers were arrested by the R.I.C. and charged with illegal drilling under D.O.R.A. They recognised the foreign court, gave bail and were released. To revive the faith and spirit of the Volunteers, I was chosen to drill them publicly, with a view to being arrested and getting an opportunity of not recognising the court. I

took them from Tuam to Gardenfield for a route march and back again to Tuam where I dismissed them in the Square. I remember that was on a Sunday, about a month or six weeks before the general election. I was arrested in January 1919, charged under D.O.R.A. and sentenced in Galway to two months imprisonment, with a further two months in default of bail. I was released in the first week of June 1919, having served my full sentence in Galway jail.

Seamus Moloney, afterwards battalion O/C, Glenamaddy battalion, Volunteer Thomas Staunton and Volunteer Michael O'Sullivan were arrested at the same time, and each received a similar sentence to mine, for a similar offence. The four of us were released at the same time. We went to jail purposely to restore the morale of the people and the Volunteers, and were glad to learn, on our release, that our object had been achieved. On our return home by car from Galway jail, we were met outside the town of Tuam by a huge procession of the general public, headed by a large force of Volunteers. There was a very large meeting in the Square which was addressed by Professor Whelehan and Michael Dwyer, M.C.C. Dwyer made a fiery, fighting speech, for which he was sentenced to four months imprisonment. He was not a Volunteer but was one of the local leaders of Sinn Féin. Michael O'Sullivan, one of the four released prisoners, was at the time cashier in the Tuam branch of the National Bank. An agitation had been started in Tuam while we were in prison, in connection with his position in the bank. The Tuam Town Commissioners took up the question with the bank. All customers threatened to withdraw their accounts if he were not reinstated on his release.

He did not lose his employment but was transferred to Belfast. I do not know how he fared afterwards. He was a native of Miltownmalbay, Co. Clare.

I was just released from jail about the time that raids for arms were begun by the I.R.A. The moment we heard that the R.I.C. were taking up their guns from the farmers, we commenced to forestall them. These raids were only a matter of form, so that the farmers could say that the guns were forcibly taken from them by men whom they did not know. The owners of shotguns were sympathetic to the Volunteers, and handed over their guns willingly. Parades and drilling went on in secret. The parades were well attended, and the Volunteers were enthusiastic. I cannot remember anything of importance for the remainder of 1919 and the first three months of 1920.

In April 1920, Castlegrove R.I.C. barrack was attacked by the I.R.A. It was a large substantial building situated on the side of the Tuam-Ballinrobe road, about six miles from Tuam. It had steel shutters in the lower row of windows, at least. Michael Moran, commandant of the Tuam battalion, organised the attack and took charge of it. The garrison was about fifteen men. I am sure there were at least a hundred men engaged in the attack which lasted from about 2.30 a.m. to daybreak. They were armed with rifles and shotguns in the proportion of one rifle to nine shotguns. I had a Lee Enfield rifle, and Volunteer Michael Mervin of Tuam company had another. Half the men engaged in the attack were from the Tuam and Barnaderg companies. The remainder were from Sylane, Kilconly and Gardenfield companies, with perhaps a few from Cortoon company. I remember that the men from Tuam and Barnaderg companies travelled together, on foot, to the attack, along the railway line.

It was expected that a mine, exploded at one of the gables, would blow a hole in it, by which the building could be entered. As far as I can remember, the men in charge of the mining were Thomas O'Grady, company engineer, Tuam company, and Michael Joseph Ryan of Barnaderg company who afterwards became brigade engineer, North Galway brigade. The mine was exploded, but it was not a success as it only cracked the gable wall. The majority of the I.R.A. had positions along the wall of the road, facing the front of the barrack. The range was only about thirty to thirty-five yards. I was in position at the rear of the building at about one hundred yards range. I covered the back entrance to the building. Firing went on continuously from about 2.30 a.m. to daybreak. The R.I.C. were called on to surrender several times, and they always replied with a volley. They threw up a good many Verey lights. The whole attacking force was withdrawn shortly before daybreak. Tuam and Barnaderg companies returned across country, together, to their own area. No casualties were suffered by the I.R.A., and none by the R.I.C., as far as I know. The barrack was evacuated the day following the attack.

The next incident I remember is the burning of Castlegrove barrack. It was not burned on Easter Saturday night when the evacuated barracks at Castlehackett, Barnaderg and Cummer were destroyed. Seamus Moloney, afterwards O/C, Glenamaddy battalion, and I burned it about a fortnight after Easter. We had one scout doing duty for us. We entered by the door at the rear, and saw a wire running from a box in the hall to the front door. We did not touch the box or the wire. We brought in dry hay and put it under the staircase. We sprinkled it

with paraffin, and then sprinkled the stairs and all
woodwork. We first set fire to the woodwork upstairs and
then to the staircase and hay underneath it. About
twenty R.I.C. were stationed at the time at Colonel Luane's,
within about three hundred yards of the barrack. They
were protecting the colonel because of land trouble. As
soon as the fire became visible to the R.I.C., they
started firing at the burning building before we had left
it. We left immediately as the fire had taken a good
hold. After a while, we heard a very loud explosion
which we learned afterwards blew the roof clean off the
porch. We came to the conclusion that the box we had
seen in the hall was a trap mine left by the R.I.C.

Shortly after this, I got pleurisy, and was sick
in Tuam and in my own home in Corofin for about six weeks.
I was back at work in Tuam in July. I remember the night
following the attack on R.I.C. at Gallagher, about three
miles from Tuam, where two R.I.C. men were killed and four
disarmed. About 4 a.m. the next morning, I was awakened
by rifle fire. I was in lodgings at the time in Bishop
Street, and company engineer Thomas O'Grady was staying in
the same house. We both got up and dressed when we heard
the shooting, as we expected to be arrested. We were not
afraid of being shot, as shootings of people in their
homes had not then been commenced by the R.I.C. in our
area, at any rate. When the shooting was over at about
5 a.m., we walked around the town. The town hall was
burning, and Canney Brothers' drapery store which adjoined
the R.I.C. barracks. Fahy's drapery store, where I
worked, was damaged. The houses of John Burke and James
Nohilly, both in Dublin road, were also damaged. Windows
had been broken in a good many houses. All the damage

was a reprisal by the R.I.C. following the Gallagher ambush. Nobody was killed or injured. I heard that Volunteer Jack Neville was taken from his lodgings by the R.I.C. who fired shots over his head. The conduct of the R.I.C. was strongly condemned by the Tuam Town Commissioners and by all the clergy, including the Most Rev. Dr. Gilmartin, then Archbishop of Tuam.

In the first week of November 1920, the Auxiliaries came to the Tuam area. They put up at Annagh, about six miles from Tuam, in a house of a landlord named Blake. I think that they numbered about fifty. I was arrested in Guy's hotel in Tuam the first night the Auxiliaries arrived in the Tuam area. I had been out for a walk with four or five Volunteers. On our return, we met Mr. Gabriel Guy, solicitor, afterwards district justice in Ballina. He was very prominent in the Sinn Féin movement, especially as far as the Sinn Féin courts were concerned. He invited us in for a drink to his place (Guy's hotel). Before we left the hotel, the Auxiliaries arrived there, and arrested Volunteers Michael Mervin, John Neville, John Coakley, William Stapleton and myself. They brought us to Annagh where we were interrogated, but not ill-treated. From Annagh we were brought to Remmore military barracks where we were again interrogated. We were then taken to Eglinton Street R.I.C. barracks where we were further interrogated.

The interrogation was, on all occasions, in connection with the attack on a party of R.I.C. at Gallagher, three miles from Tuam, on the Tuam-Dunmore road where two R.I.C. were killed and four disarmed. I understood from their questioning that they knew that Michael Moran was the I.R.A. leader at Gallagher. He was O/C, Tuam

battalion. We were held prisoners for three weeks in Galway jail after which we were released. While I was a prisoner at Renmore military barracks, I saw two young girls from Tuam. They came to the barracks to enquire about their brothers who had been arrested the same night as us. I got permission from the sentry to speak to them, and I told them to warn Michael Moran to stay away from his own home. Although I did not know it at the time, Michael Moran was then a prisoner, having been arrested shortly after our arrest. He was murdered in Earls Island R.I.C. barrack, which was occupied by the Auxiliaries, a short while after our release. His remains were brought to Tuam where he had a very big public funeral. I was then on the run as I had been arrested twice and was a marked man by the R.I.C. I stayed most of the time at Corofin until I joined the brigade flying column which was organised early in 1921.

About Christmas 1920, brigade O/C Con Fogarty was arrested and held prisoner until after the Truce. He had not been long in Tuam before the Gallagh ambush took place in July 1920, and I think he organised the North Galway or Tuam brigade shortly after his arrival. It was known usually as Tuam brigade.

Shortly after Christmas 1920, Patrick Dunleavy was appointed brigade O/C. His brother, Thomas Dunleavy, was appointed O/C, Tuam battalion, following the death of Michael Moran. Up to then, he had been battalion quartermaster. Thomas Ryan replaced Thomas Dunleavy as battalion quartermaster. The brigade flying column was organised shortly after Patrick Dunleavy's appointment as brigade O/C.

I remember that the first attempt made to attack the R.I.C. after the column was formed was at a place called Gortaleam, between Dunmore and Williamstown. There were about thirty or forty men, with Patrick Dunleavy in charge. The R.I.C. were expected to travel that way with the monthly pay for their colleagues in Ballymoe. They usually travelled in a lorry. As far as I remember, they travelled on the second day of each month. It could have been the 2nd March that we were at Gortaleam. I do not think it was as early as 2nd February 1921. We had a very good position, and the range was short, the furthest distance being less than a hundred yards, as well as I can remember. We remained there the whole day from dawn till dark, but the R.I.C. did not turn up. The column was mostly armed with rifles and numbered about twenty. The remaining twenty men were armed with shotguns, and were from local companies.

The Tuam members of the flying column returned to the Tuam battalion that night. They were Thomas Dunleavy, O/C, Tuam battalion, Thomas Ryan, quartermaster, Tuam battalion, Timothy Dunleavy, captain, Barnaderg company, Patrick McHugh, captain, Sylane company, Thomas Feerick, captain, Milltown company, Volunteer Peter Brennan, Milltown company, and myself - captain, Tuam company. The brigade O/C and the members of the column from Glanamaddy battalion remained in that area.

I remember that, a few days after an attack on the R.I.C. near Headford, in the Mid Galway brigade, I was at home in Corofin when R.I.C. raided my home. I heard a shot, and then saw them approaching the house in a semi circle, coming towards the back entrance. I reached a

loft in an outhouse, and remained there until the raid was over and they had withdrawn. I heard them threatening to shoot my brother unless he told them where I was. He said he had not seen me since my last release from jail, and that he had heard that I had gone to America. I heard that evening that the party of R.I.C., which raided for me, shot dead John Kirwan of Ballinastack, three miles from my home, Michael Hoade of Caherlistrane, about four miles in the opposite direction, and William Walsh from Headford. Walsh and Hoade were Volunteers, but Kirwan was not. I heard that the party of R.I.C. called at Kirwan's house and inquired where he was. They were told that he was working on the farm. They left the house and saw Kirwan working with a horse and cart in a field beside the road. They shot Kirwan dead, and then shot the horse. It was rumoured that the reason why Kirwan was shot was that he had a row with a landlord named Blake some time previously. The Auxiliaries occupied Blake's house at Annagh, but Blake was not living there at the time. Kirwan was from the same parish as I - Corofin - and Hoade was from the adjoining parish of Caherlistrane.

About the beginning of June 1921, the brigade flying column again took up ambush positions on the main Dunmore-Williamstown road, quite close to Williamstown. I remember there was a national school beside the position, but I now forget the name of it. It was in the Polredmond company area. We went into position there at daybreak, and remained there two days and one night, as far as I remember. When darkness came at the end of the first day, we went to a village about half a mile away for food. We had no sleep that night as we went back into position again before daybreak. The nights were very short.

During the two days we were in position, we got tea and eggs sent to us from the village of Kilnalagg. There was a big cluster of houses there. The flying column was strengthened by Volunteers from the local companies, Williamstown and Polredmond, the total strength being about thirty to forty men, all armed with shotguns except for the flying column who were all armed with rifles. The number in the flying column would be roughly between sixteen and twenty. The R.I.C., whom we expected to come the way in one or two lorries, did not come.

From Polredmond we marched to Moylough, and arrived there on a Sunday morning. We occupied ambush positions on the right-hand side of the Moylough-Mountbellew road, as you go from Moylough to Mountbellew. The position was about half-way between the two places, and ran parallel to the road at a distance of about one hundred and fifty yards. I remember that the fence we manned was freshly made in places, and the whole area was part of a bog and very dry at that time. I remember also that a gap was cut in a fence, about a hundred yards behind our position, early in the morning. The fence was high and on rising ground, and the gap proved to be of great value to us on our withdrawal that evening under heavy fire from R.I.C. The flying column waited there from early morning to well into the afternoon when two lorries of R.I.C. passed in the direction of Moylough. We did not attack them as we expected them to return later on. Very likely, no lorry would have passed, only for the fact that we drew them out from Mountbellew by sending three or four of the column into Moylough to attack R.I.C. who had gone there on bicycles from Mountbellew. This was a very quiet area, and the R.I.C. moved around it quite freely. It was not part of our brigade area. The R.I.C. had been withdrawn

from Moylough at the time all small outposts were withdrawn, but individual R.I.C. came there occasionally from Mountbellew to see their families which they had left behind when they themselves were withdrawn.

The members of the column who had been sent to Moylough returned, and reported that one R.I.C. man had been contacted and wounded. It seemed to be a long time before the R.I.C. in the lorries returned from Moylough. It was easily an hour or more. I cannot be too sure, but I think there were three vehicles when they returned, a big lorry, a Crossley and a private car. The big lorry was in the centre, as far as I can remember. There was about fifty yards between the vehicles. The signal for opening fire was to be one blast of a whistle by the brigade O/C, Patrick Dunleavy, who was in charge. The big lorry was about right in the centre of our position when we got the signal to open fire. We all opened fire - fifteen to eighteen men, all armed with rifles. Our front facing the R.I.C. was about a hundred yards. Our first volley did not seem to be a good one, and after that, there were times when only very odd shots could be heard from our men.

Immediately fire was opened by us, the R.I.C. took cover on the far side of the road, and returned our fire without delay. Their fire was accurate, and our fire seemed to be much weaker than theirs. More than every second round of my ammunition was bad. In some cases, four out of five in a clip were bad. I was armed with a carbine and fifty rounds. I was at the Moylough side of the position. Commandant Seamus Moloney and Volunteer Peter Brennan from Milltown company are the only two I can remember who were beside me. I learned later that there was a good deal of defective ammunition. I

remember Patrick Dunleavy, brigade O/C and O/C of the column, coming along the line asking what was wrong with the stuff. He had a rifle himself.

The R.I.C. facing my position remained on the other side of the road, and made no attempt to flank us, or to cross the road. I would say that there were twenty-five R.I.C. The fight lasted less than an hour when we were withdrawn. The section on the Moylough side withdrew first to a position about a hundred yards behind the original position, and from there covered the retreat of the second section. The I.R.A. suffered no casualties. I cannot state what casualties were suffered by the R.I.C. I heard that three were killed, and three or four wounded. Later, I heard that six were killed, and three or four wounded.

I heard afterwards that there was an inquiry regarding the defective ammunition, and that an officer was court martialled for not having taken proper care of it. As far as I remember, the Truce came on, and the officer, who had been arrested, escaped from his escort and left the brigade area. I have forgotten the details now, and I cannot remember the officer's name.

Those who took part in the Moylough ambush, as well as I can remember, were:-

Patrick Dunleavy, O/C, North Galway Brigade -
in charge.

Patrick Conway, Brigade Quartermaster - now in
U.S.A.

Thomas Tarmey, Brigade Adjutant - now in U.S.A.

Seamus Moloney, O/C, Glenamaddy Battalion.

Martin Ryan, Vice Commandant, Glenamaddy Battalion.

Thomas Mannion, Captain, Dunmore Company.

Patrick Treacy, Captain, Glenamaddy Company.

Patrick Noonan, Captain, Williamstown Company.

Thomas Dunleavy, Commandant, Tuam Battalion -
deceased.

Thomas Nohilly, Adjutant, Tuam Battalion -
myself.

Thomas Ryan, Quartermaster, Tuam Battalion -
deceased.

Timothy Dunleavy, Captain, Barnaderg Company -
now in U.S.A.

Thomas Feerick, Captain, Milltown Company -
deceased.

Patrick MacHugh, Captain, Sylane Company -
deceased.

Brian Cunniffe, Captain, Kilkerrin Company -
now in U.S.A.

Peter Brennan, Volunteer, Milltown Company.

John Knight, Quartermaster, Glenamaddy Battalion -
deceased.

There may have been one or two others whom I have forgotten. I remember that a Volunteer named Higgins from Mountbellew battalion scouted for us during the day.

After the ambush at Moylough, I remember that part of the flying column was at Blackstick in the Barnaderg company area when word was brought by Lieutenant Frank Dolan of the Corofin company that a consignment of potatoes from Belfast had arrived at Ballyglunin railway station. We went to the railway station, and the station-master, who was sympathetic, pointed out the wagon containing the potatoes. We rolled the two wagons to a bridge near the station and dumped the potatoes into the river underneath. We then took up positions at Kilmoylan churchyard, to attack the R.I.C. whom we expected from Turloughmore to investigate the robbery of the Belfast (boycotted) potatoes. As far as I remember, some kind of message was sent to the R.I.C. at Turloughmore to get them to Ballyglunin.

They arrived at Ballyglunin without passing our position, having come by another road. At Ballyglunin, they were met by another force of R.I.C. from Tuam. We did not expect any R.I.C. from Tuam, and were unaware of their arrival. We saw the Turloughmore R.I.C. returning to their barrack by a short-cut through the fields, about *2/4 - four* hundred yards from our position. They were seven or eight of them. Captain Timothy Dunleavy, Captain Thomas Feerick and I were about to open fire on them when we got word from Commandant Thomas Dunleavy not to do so, as he had just learned from scouts of the presence of the R.I.C. from Tuam at Ballyglunin railway station. As there were two big lorry loads of the Tuam R.I.C. holding positions at our rear, it was decided not to attack either party of R.I.C. There were about eighteen I.R.A. under the command of Commandant Thomas Dunleavy. About eight of the party had rifles, and the remainder were armed with shotguns.

A week or two after this, we took up positions at daybreak on the Tuam-Kilconly road, very close to the village of Kilconly. We expected some of the R.I.C. acting as a protection party for Colonel Luane to go from Luane's to the village of Kilconly. They were in the habit of going to Blake's public house in Kilconly for a drink. We stayed in position all day. It was almost dark when one R.I.C. man, armed with a rifle, walked past our position. We let him pass, in the hope that others would follow him. This did not happen, and we withdrew. We concluded that the R.I.C. man who passed our position learned of our presence, and returned through the fields to warn his companions. The full brigade flying column was in ambush position at Kilconly. I have given their names and ranks in connection with the ambush at Moylough.

From Kilconly, the members of the column who belonged to Glenamaddy battalion returned to their own area, along with the brigade staff officers. The remainder, under the command of Commandant Thomas Dunleavy, proceeded to the village of Carrareagh, near Milltown, where there was a big garrison of R.I.C. and Black and Tans. We stayed in Carrareagh all day - a Sunday - until it was nearly dark. We then got word that a patrol of R.I.C. had left Milltown and was returning by the Liskeavy road. It was a regular thing for the patrol to leave Milltown every Sunday evening, and we had waited at Carrareagh, about a mile from the village, to be near at hand when word came from the local scouts as to the route taken by the patrol.

Immediately, we got word that the patrol was returning to the village of Milltown by the Liskeavy road, we took up positions right inside the fence of the Tuam-Milltown road, on the right hand side leading from Tuam to Milltown, and on the Milltown side of the junction made by the Tuam-Milltown and Liskeavy-Milltown roads. The patrol consisted of six R.I.C. walking in pairs, with about ten yards between each pair. I was on the end of the line nearest to Milltown, and I remember that I opened fire when the leading pair of R.I.C. came opposite my position. I cannot remember any signal or order to fire. Captain Timothy Dunleavy was beside me. When we fired, the two leading R.I.C. dropped. I am sure that one of them was killed by our first shots. I cannot say if the other was killed, but he was wounded and put out of action.

One or two of the R.I.C. who escaped the first volley, took up positions on the opposite side of the road.

I fired at the flashes made by them when they fired. After about a quarter of an hour, we withdrew as fire was being brought to bear on our positions by machine guns from the R.I.C. barrack in the village, about three hundred yards away. We did not succeed, on account of this fire, in capturing any of the arms of the fallen R.I.C. We suffered no casualties. We did not know the R.I.C. casualties that night, but we heard next morning that two of the patrol were killed and two wounded.

We withdrew in the direction of Carrareagh and, on our arrival there, we were met by a young priest, Fr. Concannon, now a Bishop in the foreign missions, who gave us his blessing and wished us every success. Those who took part in the attack on the patrol, as far as I can remember, were:-

Thomas Dunleavy, O/C, Tuam Battalion - in charge.
Thomas Nohilly, Adjutant, Tuam Battalion - myself.
Thomas Ryan, Quartermaster, Tuam Battalion - deceased.
Timothy Dunleavy, Captain, Barnaderg Company -
now in U.S.A.
Thomas Feerick, Captain, Milltown Company - deceased.
Patrick MacHugh, Captain, Sylane Company - deceased.
Peter Brennan, Volunteer, Milltown Company;

and seven or eight members of the Milltown company, armed with shotguns. The attack at Milltown took place a week or ten days before the Truce.

The following is a list of the Tuam Battalion staff officers and company captains:

Battalion Commandant - Michael Moran to November, 1920,
when he was killed.
Succeeded by Thomas Dunleavy.

Battalion Vice Commandant - Peter MacHugh (deceased).
Adjutant - Sean O'Neill to March 1921. Thomas Nohilly
(myself) from March 1921 to the Truce.
Quartermaster - Thomas Dunleavy to November 1920.
Thomas Ryan from November 1920 to Truce.
Battalion I.O. - William Quinn (deceased).
Medical Officer - Dr. John Nohilly was Battalion, as
well as Brigade M.O. He lived in
Tuam. He was assisted by Dr. Mangan
of Dunmore who also was M.O.,
Glenamaddy Battalion.
Tuam Company Captain - Thomas Nohilly (myself).
Cortoon Company Captain - Thomas Wilson.
Belmont Company Captain - Thomas Hannon.
Gardenfield Company Captain - Martin Higgins.
Kilconly Company Captain - Frank Cunningham.
Sylane Company Captain - Patrick McHugh.
Corofin Company Captain - William Feeney.
Abbeyknockmoy Company Captain - John Fleming.
Milltown Company Captain - Thomas Feerick.
Barnaderg Company Captain - Thomas Dunleavy, and
later, Timothy Dunleavy.

The local people in the Tuam battalion area were loyal to the I.R.A. and supported us in every possible manner. I cannot remember any local member of the R.I.C. who was in sympathy with the I.R.A.

SIGNED:

Thomas Nohilly

DATE:

18 June 1956

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WITNESS

C. Moyrchan