

W.S. 1.225  
**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BUIO STAIRÉ MILETTA 1913-21  
NO. W.S. 1225

ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.  
STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,225

Witness

James M. Roche,  
Ardbohill,  
Ardagh,  
Co. Limerick.

Identity.

Lieut. Rathkeale Coy. Irish Volunteers  
Co. Limerick, 1917 - ;

Captain same Company later;  
Adjutant West Limerick Brigade.

Subject.

National activities,  
Rathkeale, Co. Limerick, 1913-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.2523

Form B.S.M. 2

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21	W.S. 1, 225
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21	
No. W.S.	1225

STATEMENT OF JAMES ROCHE

Ardbohill, Ardagh, Co. Limerick.

I was born in the parish of Rathkeale on the 4th March, 1898. I was sent to the local national school until I was 14 years of age. When I left school I was apprenticed to the drapery trade in Rathkeale.

A slough of the Fianna was formed in Rathkeale in the year 1913. I was among the first to join. Sean Finn became O/C. A man by the name of P. Hogan was organiser. Our strength was approximately 20. We did the usual drilling in uniform for 12 months or so.

A company of Volunteers was formed in the year 1914. With other members of the Fianna I wanted to join, but would not be accepted as I was too young. After Redmond's speech in which he called on the Volunteers to join the British army the Volunteers ceased to exist in Rathkeale.

In 1915, Ernest Blythe visited the area and reorganised the Volunteers from among the members of the Fianna. Sean Finn became captain; I became 1st Lieutenant, and Pat Roche became 2nd Lieutenant. Our strength at first was eleven men. Shortly after, we marched to Ardagh to a mobilisation which was addressed by Blythe. Volunteers from Newcastlewest and Ardagh attended. The total present from the three companies was 40. We drilled and paraded up to Easter Week 1916, but took no part in the events of that week. We had a few shotguns at that time.

Immediately after Easter Week, new members started to join until by the Spring of 1917 our strength had increased to 80 men. From then onwards our company captain became very active. He and I visited areas around and reorganised or formed companies in Ardagh, Ballingarry, Cappagh, Croagh and other places.

After the general release all of these companies were formed into a battalion. Thomas O'Shaughnessy became Battalion O/C.; Sean Finn, vice O/C.; Garrett McAuliffe, who fought in the G.P.O. Dublin in 1916, became adjutant. The strength of the various companies in the battalion was increasing all the time. Soon after his appointment as Battalion O/C., O'Shaughnessy left the area and went to Dublin for business reasons. After he had left, a brigade staff was appointed for the West Limerick area. Sean Finn became Brigade O/C. Garrett McAuliffe, Vice O/C. I became brigade adjutant; Patrick O'Shaughnessy, Q.M., and a man by the name of Con Boyle, brigade engineer. Rathkeale was brigade headquarters.

After this, the battalions were reorganised, after which we had five battalions making up the West Limerick Brigade. Newcastlewest was H.Q. of the 1st Battalion; Abbeyfeale H.Q. of the 2nd; Drumcollogher H.Q. of the 3rd; Rathkeale H.Q. of the 4th, and Ballyhahill H.Q. of the 5th. The names of the Rathkeale (or 4th) Battalion staff were James Halpin, O/C., William Fitzgerald, Vice O/C., Laurence Meade, adjutant and James Ward I.O. The strength of each battalion averaged 400 men approximately, or a total of approximately 2,000 men in the brigade area. At the time our arms consisted of 10 revolvers, 2 Howth rifles, three .22 rifles and a quantity of shotguns. Routine drilling continued in each battalion area to the end of the year.

During the conscription scare in 1918, the brigade strength increased to 2,500. When it was over nearly all of our new recruits left, which reduced our strength to around the 2,000 mark again. Drilling was intensified at the time and several shotguns were collected. From then to the general election near the end of the year, our activities were routine. At the general election the candidate for West Limerick - Con Collins - was returned unopposed. Members of the West Limerick Brigade

however, canvassed for the East Limerick candidate, who was Dr. Hayes, and on polling day were on duty at the booths in that area. I was in charge of 60 Volunteers who went to New Pallas where we did police duty at the polling booths there. We had mobilised at the Library in Rathkeale and marched to the railway station there. When I asked for 60 tickets to New Pallas the stationmaster said "why pay for tickets for each man; why not pay a bulk sum for a military body?".

I paid the bulk sum which turned out to be a lot less than if I paid the individual fares. The local District Inspector of the R.I.C. tried to remove us. I said: "If you want to move us, you will have to use force". He decided to leave us there. When the ballot boxes were closed, a Volunteer guard was placed on them after which they were conveyed under a Volunteer guard to the County Courthouse. At the same time, Sean Finn brought 150 of the West Limerick Volunteers to Waterford City for duty on the same day.

Drilling continued in 1919. In this year, Seamus Robinson, Dan Breen, Sean Hogan and Sean Treacy seized a quantity of explosives in Soloheadbeg, Co. Tipperary. In an encounter with the R.I.C. on the occasion, one of the R.I.C. was shot dead. After the incident, the four men arrived in the Rathkeale area where we found them accommodation in local farmers' houses with sympathisers of the movement. They remained in the area for some time. Near the end of the year a general order was received from G.H.Q. Dublin, to collect all outstanding arms in civilian hands. This order was carried out throughout the brigade area.

On 10th March 1920, I was still employed at the drapery business in Rathkeale with people by the name of O'Mahony, who were great supporters of the I.R.A. Knowing the rank I held they never questioned my absence on I.R.A. activities. During

the day of the 10th March, which was a fair day in the town, a farmer by the name of John Nolan of South Cappagh, Foynes, who later became a member of the Dáil, came into the shop to me and said: "There is a Sergeant Neazor and a constable of the R.I.C. in the fair, guarding a man who is buying cattle for a boycotted farm". The two R.I.C. men and the man buying the cattle had all come from Kerry. The R.I.C. were in civilian clothes. Half an hour later, a stranger came in to buy a cap; after trying on five or six, he went away.

Immediately he left the shop John Nolan returned and said: "That is the sergeant". I got in touch with Finn who put a few scouts on Neazor and the constable. It was discovered that Neazor was a native of Pallaskenry and that he had engaged a hackney motor car to take him to Pallaskenry that evening and was to leave at 6 p.m. Sean Finn and I got in contact with the driver of the hackney car who was asked by Finn to pretend that the car was out of order just as Neazor was about to leave. The driver agreed that he would first swing the car to start it, then lift up the bonnet and afterwards lie on the ground and pretend to be adjusting the mechanism. This was to give us a chance to challenge Neazor.

At 6 p.m. with Finn and other I.R.A. men I was waiting around for Neazor's appearance. When he got into the car the driver, instead of delaying the start as he had agreed, drove off to Pallaskenry. They returned to Rathkeale at 10 p.m. Neazor and the constable later put up at Ward's Hotel in the town. We all met again and after a while we approached the hotel door and knocked. It was opened by Liam Scully who was a Gaelic teacher and an I.R.A. man himself. He told us that Neazor was in the coffee room. Sean Finn, Sean Hogan (who was later to figure in the Knocklong train rescue), Patrick O'Shaughnessy, Sean Reidy, Paddy Roche and myself entered, some others remained outside.

We crept quietly to the door of the Coffee Room. When Finn tried to open it he found it was locked on the inside. He was a very strong young man. He just stood back and drove it in with his shoulder and fell into the room on top of it. The constable was standing inside on the left, Neazor was sitting at a table with a revolver on the table in front of him. Shooting started immediately. Neazor had just time to grab his gun to fire. His shot went through the ceiling. He was shot dead through the forehead. The constable received about five shots and fell to the floor. We thought he was dead, but we later found out that he survived.

About the middle of May 1920, Sean Finn and I were informed that Kilmallock R.I.C. Barracks was to be attacked by the East Limerick I.R.A. a week later and were asked to participate in the attack. On the last Thursday of May 1920, Michael Brennan and his brother, Austin of Clare, arrived in the town of Rathkeale with two rifles and a quantity of ammunition. Sean Finn, Garrett McAuliffe, my brother, Patrick, and myself had a rifle each. We procured three motor cars and, with Michael Brennan, Patrick O'Shaughnessy, Con Cregan, John Glenny, Laurence McNamee, Tom Wallace and Jim Ryan, proceeded to Kilmallock. With the exception of Michael Brennan, all of these men were of the West Limerick Brigade. Austin Brennan remained in Rathkeale; we took his rifle with us. Father Hayes had it arranged for us to have our confessions heard in Newcastlewest before we left.

When we arrived in Kilmallock, we mobilised at the back of the R.C. Church there, where we met members of the East Limerick I.R.A. and Liam Scully who was now teaching in the area. Three of our men, being strangers in the locality, were put in charge of a number of prisoners - local men who were regarded as being dangerous and had been arrested preparatory to the

attack. The number of men in the actual attack under arms which included rifles and shotguns was 40. Sean Wall, Brigade O/C., East Limerick, was in charge of the attack. Sean Wall was a brother of Fr. Wall, Drumcollogher, an active supporter of the I.R.A. He is now Canon Wall, Parish Priest of Ballin-garry.

A discussion took place as to the placing of the men in position for the attack. It was suggested that the West Limerick men be spread among the East Limerick men in the different points of attack. We did not agree to the suggestion and said we would prefer to occupy a house directly opposite the barracks in a body. This suggestion was agreed to. The house, which was a shop and private house combined, was owned by people by the name of Herlihy. A scout led me to the front. I knocked at the door and informed the Herlihys that we were about to attack the barracks and asked them to leave for the night. They left. I went to the back door and let in our men from West Limerick including Sean McCarthy, an officer of the East Limerick Brigade, who was in charge of our section. When we got in we collected mattresses, books and various items of furniture and barricaded the windows. In the meantime, the East Limerick men occupied about four other positions including Clery's Hotel, a bank, a shop owned by people by the name of Carroll, and a position at the back of the barracks. Carroll's shop stood out in front of the barracks and was joined to the barracks at the rear. It was a two-storey house, while the barracks was only a single-storey building. A man with a railway signal lamp, with the help of a ladder, got through the roof of Carroll's after breaking the slates. The signalling arrangement was that when a green light was shown by him, fire was to be opened on the barracks; a red light indicated that fire was to cease.

We were in our positions and ready for action at 11.30 p.m.

Kilmallock Barracks was regarded by the British as the strongest fortified barracks in Munster at the time. Years before, it had withstood a couple of attacks by the Fenians.

Some time after 2 p.m., the green light went up. Sean McCarthy ordered "Open fire". We immediately broke the windows and opened the attack. After a while we ceased fire, after which it was taken up by another section and so on until eventually the five sections were attacking from their different positions in turn. The attack had been in progress for about half an hour when the section in Carroll's house began to drop a number of half-cwts. and other heavy material on to the roof of the barracks. After a while, with the constant dropping of the weights and other material, the roof of the barracks was breached. As soon as the roof was breached a petrol wagon was pushed up to the barracks, the hose of which was adjusted and the petrol filled into all available buckets, bottles and containers of all sorts and handed up to our men on Carroll's roof, who in turn dropped it through the hole in the roof of the barracks. When this job was completed, lighted sods of turf were thrown in after it and the barracks went on fire.

The barracks had been on fire for about half an hour when one of the garrison within - which numbered 24 - thrust a rifle with bayonet attached through one of the windows. Attached to the bayonet was a white shirt indicating, as we thought, that the garrison was offering to surrender; but, instead of surrendering, they retreated to the back portion of the barracks which had not taken fire. When the white flag came through, Liam Scully took it for granted that it was the surrender. He shouted for Volunteers to "come down and take the surrender". He was not at the time in any of the five positions referred to earlier. I don't know what position he actually occupied at the start of the attack. As he was passing in front of the



barracks after the white flag had come through, he was shot through the neck. Other members of the attacking party pulled him away. He was later attended by the Parish Priest of the area, while the fight continued with greater intensity. It was now about 6.30 a.m. and fire from the barracks had died down. Sean McCarthy ordered us to retreat and take the wounded man with us.

The road to West Limerick had not been trenched, but had been left open for our return. A Nurse O'Sullivan accompanied us back with the wounded man. As we proceeded in the three motor cars towards our own area the road behind us was effectively blocked in several places by local I.R.A. men. At a place called Lisnaisky, Castlemahon, on the way back, Liam Scully died. We proceeded with the dead man to Tournafulla

After half an hour in Tournafulla I left on a bicycle and returned to Rathkeale and got a Miss Mary Hayes, sister of Dr. Richard Hayes, and Fr. Hayes to go to Kilmallock and find out the situation there. We discovered that eleven police with a Sergeant O'Sullivan, who was in charge, had come out of the barracks that morning and that one of them was shot dead. The East Limerick men had retreated only a short time previously. The time was 8 a.m.

We buried Liam Scully in a churchyard in Templeglantine at 11 o'clock the following night. A priest was present at the burial. We left Templeglantine for a place named Newbridge, Rathkeale, a march of about 20 miles across country. Owing to a shortage of ammunition, a contemplated attack by the West Limerick Brigade on Newcastlewest R.I.C. Barracks at the time had to be abandoned.

We rested for about three days, however, and then proceeded to a place called Ringmoylan, Pallaskenry, bringing with us some additional men of the West Limerick Brigade. We crossed the Shannon in row boats and proceeded to Corbett's of

Bunratty, Co. Clare, there to await orders for an attack on Sixmilebridge R.I.C. Barracks which did not take place. We were catered for at Corbett's. In Bunratty we met Michael and Austin Brennan and their brother Paddy, as well as a man whose name was, I think, Bert Hunt, in charge of a section of Galway I.R.A. who had also come for the attack on Sixmilebridge barracks. It appears that the reason that this particular attack did not take place was due to the gas poisoning of a number of the Claremen who were preparing a quantity of gelignite for the attack, with the result that it had to be called off. D. O'Hannigan, Brigade O/C., East Limerick, Paddy Clancy, who was later killed, Joe Crowley and Sean Ford accompanied the West Limerick men to Bunratty.

We all returned to West Limerick across the Shannon, the way we had gone to Clare. In Pallaskenry, we commandeered a motor car the property of a Major Waller, by which a number of our party went to Athea where we were joined later by the rest of the party who had walked.

Around this period two members of the West Limerick Brigade named Patrick O'Shaughnessy and Sean Reidy went to G.H.Q. Dublin, to try and procure some rifles and ammunition for the brigade. As they did not appear to be making any progress after being in Dublin for some while, they were called back. I was then sent up and took O'Shaughnessy to Dublin with me. We stayed in a house in Eccles St. I contacted two men named Fintan Murphy and Sean Harding and through them received six rifles from G.H.Q. They sent them in a horse cart, the driver dumping them in the hall for us to do as we liked with them.

We procured an egg case and straw and packed our rifles. We addressed the case (with Messrs, Brooks Thomas & Co., Ltd. labels) to Brennan's, Hardware Merchants, Rathkeale, who had been made aware of their dispatch. The case was taken from Whelan's

where we were staying in Eccles St., on a donkey cart to Kingsbridge Railway Station, followed by O'Shaughnessy and me armed with revolvers and handed to a porter at the station. I had paid for the rifles in the month of August and received them near the end of September.

When the case arrived at Brennan's, it was left outside the door of the shop. When members of the local company called to collect it they were told that two R.I.C. men were sitting on it outside the door. It was later taken to Clounragh where the active service unit, or the men who were in the Kilmallock attack and other incidents, were billeted at the time. On the way the men conveying the case ran into a patrol of police and military and were held up. Some shots were exchanged. Our men were armed with rifles. Two of them were wounded, one of whom was arrested. His name was James Noonan of Newcastlewest. The other wounded man, Patrick Naughton escaped with the case of arms.

A short time later I sent down a further six rifles in the same manner, which were collected and delivered without incident. I next succeeded in obtaining six Webley revolvers which I placed in a suitcase and brought home with me by train. When I arrived at Kingsbridge on this occasion I saw our local District Inspector of the R.I.C. at the station. He did not see me. He had got into his carriage while I was on the platform. He came out again and went to a bookstall to purchase some reading material. As soon as he did so, I went into his carriage and placed my case on a baggage rack there, came out and went into the next carriage. When the train reached Limerick Junction he got out. I went into the carriage and collected my case.

At that period there were no trains running to Limerick City due to the fact that drivers, firemen and guards refused to man trains carrying armed military or police, so I had to

hire a car to take me into Limerick, which I shared with three students making for the same destination. At Pallasgreen the military had erected a barrier. I told the students my errand; they gave me a scarf and college cap. We were just held up and told to carry on. I wore the scarf and cap into Limerick. When the driver dropped the students in Limerick, I hired him again to drive me to Cratloe in Co. Clare. I came across the river by boat on the following evening and reached Brigade H.Q. at Creegan's of Moneygay with my six revolvers in safety. I have in my possession to the present day the initialled receipts for the money I paid for the rifles and revolvers.

Shortly after my return, the Brigade O/C. received a communication from the North Cork Brigade after which we proceeded to that area. It was the same body of men who had taken part in the previous incidents. There we took over from the North Cork men a prisoner named General Lucas. He had been captured by them while he was on a fishing tour. Three men had been captured. They attempted to escape and were fired on. One of them was wounded. Lucas was held and the other man was left behind to look after the wounded man. We brought our prisoner to Michael Dore's of Ballyiston, Shanagolden, where he was kept for over a fortnight guarded night and day by members of the local company. During the period all his post was delivered to him through our communication lines. On one occasion a wire came for him informing him that his wife had given birth to a baby. This wire was also delivered to him. He was treated in accordance with his rank and during the day played tennis. After his stay with us we transferred him to Ringmoylan Pier, Pallaskenry, took him across the Shannon in a row boat and handed him over to Michael Brennan, Brigade O/C. East Clare and his men.

After this, we received a communication from the East

Limerick Brigade asking us to proceed to the Kilmallock area to pick up Sean Treacy, Dan Breen and Sean Hogan. Treacy ~~and~~ ~~with~~ Breen and others had earlier held up a train at Knocklong railway station and rescued Sean Hogan who was a prisoner. Sean Finn and I proceeded to Newcastlewest and instructed Garrett McAuliffe, Vice O/C. of the Brigade, to procure a car and driver and proceed to the Kilmallock area to collect the three men. We called on Fr. Hayes and told him our errand. In the event of our man being held up on the way, Fr. Hayes gave him a letter addressed to a brother of his, a teacher in Bruree. McAuliffe did his job and returned to Feohanagh with the three men. Hogan was in perfect health. Treacy was wounded across the throat and Breen through the shoulder. They were taken to Kennedy's of Danganbeg, Feohanagh, where the two patients were treated by Dr. Cremmins of Newcastlewest. A guard of the local company was placed on the house while they were there. They were later moved to other houses in the area and were guarded all the time until they were fit to travel again. They then went to Knocknagoshel in Co. Kerry, returning to West Limerick after about ten days. After a while, they went across the Shannon from Ringmoylan Pier and eventually to Dublin.

In or about the month of July 1920, a man who gave his name as Peadar Clancy of G.H.Q. Dublin arrived at my house one night. He was accompanied by members of the Mid Limerick I.R.A. I was not at home at the time, but I received word that he was there and came home to meet him. It was 2 a.m. when I met him. He produced identity papers from G.H.Q. which seemed to be in order. He explained to me that he wanted to get to Kerry that evening on a very important mission. I procured a pony and trap and took him to Kennedy's of Danganbeg where Breen, Treacy and Hogan had stayed for a time. At Kennedy's I handed him over to Michael Sheehy, Battalion Q.M. Drumcollogher Battalion, to continue his journey.

I went to bed that night at Kennedy's. I had been in bed a few minutes when Miss Bridie Kennedy knocked on my door and told me that the gentleman had left a parcel in the trap after him. She handed me the parcel which we opened. We found it was a British soldier's uniform. I immediately returned to Rathkeale and informed Commandant Sean Finn, who got in touch with Paddy Cahill, Brigade O/C. Kerry No. 1 Brigade, who had him kept under observation for about a week. While he was with me he spoke of his friendship with Breen, Treacy and Hogan. He was eventually arrested in Co. Kerry and taken back to West Limerick area again. Sean Hogan came down from Dublin to identify our prisoner. He turned out to be a man named Crowley a spy for the British Government who was on the trail of the three men, Breen, Hogan and Treacy.

At his courtmartial, which took place at Tournafula, he was identified by Hogan. After other witnesses had given evidence, he was sentenced to death by shooting. A priest named Fr. Toomey, C.C. of Knockaderry at the time, attended him and heard his confession. He was later shot dead and left where he fell with a label on his body which read: "Convicted as a spy and shot by the I.R.A.". Underneath this was written: "Spies beware".

~~Our~~ unit was then divided into two sections, one half being allocated to the east and the other to the west of the brigade area. I was billeted in Castletownconnors area at this time and attended a brigade meeting at Newbridge, where we decided to carry out small jobs such as attacking police patrols in a small way. After being in Newbridge for a couple of days I was being driven back to Castleconnors in a pony and trap by a Miss Catherine Sheehy. We called to Wall's in Clouncagh - cousins of her's. We were only a few minutes in Wall's when the house was surrounded by military and police. I was captured and taken to Newcastlewest R.I.C. barracks and

put into a cell there. I was taken out several times by the Black and Tans who beat me until I was unrecognisable. Next day I was transferred to Limerick County Jail where I was held until the Truce. After my release I was appointed Brigade O/C. of Police,

While I was in Limerick Jail, Sean Finn, our Brigade O/C., was shot dead in a skirmish with the enemy at Ballyhahill on 30th March 1921.

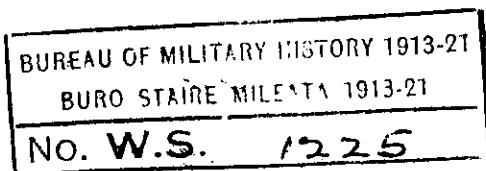
"An tOglach" dated 30th March 1921, under the heading "A Heroic Fight" gives a description of the skirmish, written by Donnchadh Ó hAnnagáin, Brigade O/C. East Limerick Brigade.

The attached copy of the Official Souvenir, prepared by the West Limerick Memorial Committee for the unveiling of a memorial on Easter Sunday, 10 April 1955, by President O'Kelly, gives a brief sketch of seventeen members of the Volunteers or I.R.A. attached to West Limerick Brigade, who died in the fight for freedom.

Signed: James M. Roche  
(James M. Roche)

Date: 12th August 1955  
12th August 1955.

Witness: John J. Daly  
(John J. Daly)



OFFICIAL SOUVENIR

1225

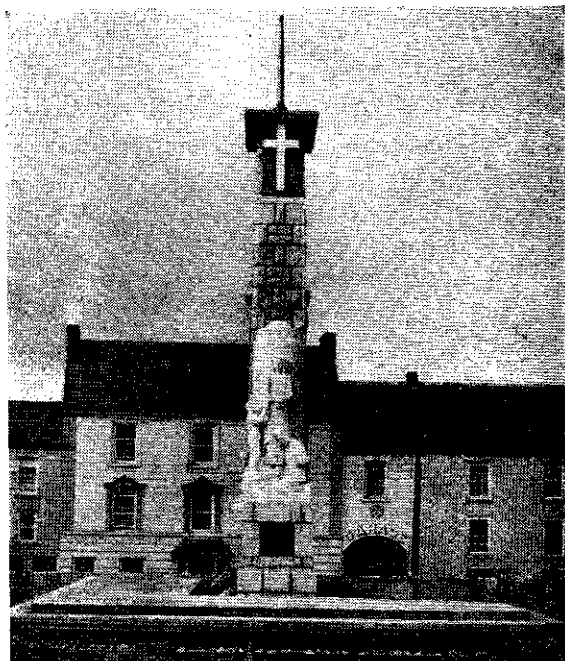
# *West Limerick*

OLD I.R.A.

# *Memorial*

AT NEWCASTLEWEST

In memory of 17 Officers and  
Men of West Limerick 1916-1922



Brig. Comdt. Sean Finn  
Capt. Con Colbert  
Capt. Donal Sheehan  
Capt. Donal McEniry  
Capt. Patrick Dalton  
Commdt. Eddie Cregan  
Lieut. David Brennan  
Sec. Comdt. Liam Danaher  
Vol. Richard Boyce  
Capt. Paddy Naughton  
Capt. Liam Scully  
Capt. Tim Madigan  
Lieut. Donal Neville  
Sec. Comm. Paddy Buckley  
Lieut. Ml. O'Shea  
Vol. P. O'Brien  
Vol. Mortimer Duggan, N.T.

UNVEILED BY

His Excellency Sean T. O Ceallaigh, Uachtaran na hEireann

EASTER SUNDAY, 10th APRIL, 1955

PRICE ONE SHILLING



## RÉAMRÁD

Le sum bliáonta amas, bíodas' á ceapao go mb'ceart leaet cumhneacáin a tógáil i geimhne na n-óglae ó iap'ar lummige a tuit i gcogao na Saoirse ó bliathain éirge amaé na Cásca 1916 i leit Do samtuigeao do sean-óglaig iap'ar lummige go maib ve duaisas o'ra péin san leigint dá geimhne uil i n-dearthaó i n-aighe na nglán 'tá le teae't. U'roc-co'mar'ta i seao é ar aon típ a d'éimeam paillige i gcás mar sin. Is beannuighe an iuró é típ-ghráó, agus t'péit i seao i ná pagann an uime go mbíonn sé ann, aon buntáiste saogalta as—go deimh. ní 'á loig's san ná as cumhneam' ar a bíonn an t-óig-íear a t'éir'eam amaé eun t'pota i gcoimib naíthao a típe agus a t'ú'cais. Tá an o'imeao san i uoái as cup isteaé ar aon ós na uime seo eun a n-aighe agus a smaointi a tógaint ó e'p'saí náisiúnta nár móp co'mar'ta éic'nt so-íeise a beit ós co'mar a súl eun a meabrugeo t'óib go maib uoime o'ga ó n-a gco'mar'sanae't péin a t'us a n-aman suas ar son saoirse gae'deal.

Cuige sin, do so'p'uigeao go gcuip'i leaet cumhneacáin ar bun. Do bailigeao pomnt maie aig'ro ó gae'dealaib i mbaité agus i gcóm. agus do puaraó láit'péan, íop-oi'p'eannae 'sa Caisleán Nuao 'na éoir, agus tá an obair tógála ep'io'nuighe anois. Iomáig íp'eas i seao í—í'p'ig'uir óglaig 'na seasam ar taob ve, agus a g'uma 'na lámh aige.

Ta Uae'tar'án O'p'p'eir na h-Éireann as teae't go uci an Caisleán Nuao, Uo'mnaé Cásca eun a no'e'uighe. Is móp an é'p'e'eamant do'n cois'oe 'tá i mbun na h-o'ib'p'e gur éir'ig leo an íear is aoi'p'oe g'p'adann 'sa típ seo o'í'agáil eun ó'p'áó na h-ó'ca'oe do ta'airt. Uero í'p'p'oi'bl'oe eite ann leis, e'adair e'leir agus tuat eun í'op-éaom páit'e do e'p' pomt an Uae'tar'án, agus eun beit as éist'eaé't leis an gcaimnt a d'éan'p'ao sé a bíonn, ve g'naé, sume'amant agus g'onta.

Solus na b'flá'as uoib seo go léir a tuit.

## THE MEMORIAL

This Memorial was designed by Mr. Patrick J. Sheahan, F.R.I.A.I., M.I.C.E.I., the eminent Limerick Architect, and an Old I.R.A. man himself, who gave his great services free. It is situated in Church Grounds placed at the disposal of the Memorial Committee through the kindness of Right Rev. Monsignor Hannan, P.P., V.G., Newcastle West. It stands adjacent to the Church of the Immaculate Conception where the young men whose names are inscribed on the Memorial would surely wish to be remembered in the prayers of their people. Across the River Arra stands the embattled ruins of the Geraldine keep where many a battle was fought for Faith and Freedom long ago. And on the pathway outside the Memorial is the spot where the gallant Irish American Officer, the Fenian Capt. Geary, challenged Britain's might and fired the first Fenian shot in '66 against his country's oppressors.

The pillar, 36 feet high, is built of Irish stone, granite and marble brought from the four Provinces of Ireland. Three Crosses represent three of the Irish Provinces and the missing Cross represents our Six historic Northern Counties which are still to be won back for the Motherland. The beautiful marble figures at the base of the Memorial are symbolic of Eire handing on the torch

of Faith and Freedom from the dying Volunteer to the Youth of the Nation in each generation.

The Memorial Committee recalls on this great day of the Unveiling Ceremony by Ireland's President the early work done for this Memorial by Garrett McAuliffe, Vice-Commandant of the Brigade, and 1st Secretary, and the late Ben O'Sullivan who, as Chairman, was the moving spirit of the project and worked night and day for its success till his death last year. God rest them !

The Committee also wishes to thank the priests and people of West Limerick who so nobly and generously responded to their appeal for funds ; to the many friends outside West Limerick for their generous support ; and a special word of praise for the exiles in America who sent over the seas such a magnificent contribution to the Memorial Fund.

We thank the old comrades who, forgetting past differences, came together in every parish to make the project a success ; and last, but not least, the many voluntary workers who gave their time and labour unstintingly to the heavy work entailed in the preparation of the site.

### THE ROLL OF PATRIOTS

The young men whose names are commemorated in this Memorial include two of the 1916 Leaders who were both born not far from where this Memorial stands ; 13 who fell in the War of Independence in the following years ; and, in response to the noble appeal of the President at Bruff in 1953, who, like Wolfe Tone, advised Irishmen to forget past dissensions, two of the young men of the West Limerick I.R.A. who fell in opposite sides in the Civil Strife are commemorated in the Memorial.

#### EASTER, 1916:

Capt. Con Colbert, born at Moanlena, parish of Castlemahon on 19th Oct., 1888. In infancy moved to Athea with his family and was educated at the local school there and later at the Christian Brothers, North Richmond St., Dublin. Went to Dublin at an early age where he was engaged in commercial employment. Inspired from his earliest years with love of country, he inherited the Fenian tradition and was one of the most active of the Fianna Eireann leaders long before 1916, and close friend of the great Fenians, John Daly and Tom Clarke. He was in the Irish Volunteers from the beginning. When the call came on Easter Monday, 1916, he marched with his Company into the G.P.O. where he was amongst the bravest of the brave. Like all his comrades he fell undaunted before Maxwell's Firing Squad on May 7th 1916. Rev. Fr. Augustine, O.F.M., who was with him at the end, described in touching words the heroic manner in which he died for his country's freedom.



And may the song of battle soon  
Be heard from every hill and vale ;  
May I be with the marching men  
Who fight to free our Grainne Mhaol.

[Written by Con Colbert Christmas before the Rising].

## CAPT. DONAL SHEEHAN

Donal Sheehan was born 27 October 1886 in the townland of Ballintubrid, in the parish of Monegae, near Newcastle West. The youngest of a family of three, he received his early education at Killoughteen National School and later at the Courtenay School, Newcastle West. At the age of 18 he stood for a Civil Service examination in London which he passed. Early in 1916 he came back to Ireland rather than submit to English conscription and worked in Limerick for a short time. He went to Dublin before the Rising and joined with the other exiles under Joseph Plunkett at the Volunteer Camp at Kimmage and came down to Kerry with three comrades to make arrangements in connection with the landing of arms from the "Aud." He was drowned with two of his comrades at Ballykissane quay in West Kerry on Holy Thursday, 1916.



The bravest fell and the solemn bell  
Rang mournfully and clear  
For those who died that Eastertide  
In the springing of the year

[Anon].

1918 — 1921

## BRIGADE COMMDT. SEAN FINN

Brigade Commandant Sean Finn was born in Lower Main St., Rathkeale, in Oct. 1899. Attended Rathkeale National School under the late Mr. John Hayes, N.T. From his earliest years Sean was imbued with a deep love of Faith and Country. In 1914 he formed a Company of Fianna Eireann and was its leader until 1917 when he joined the Volunteers. In 1917 he became Battn. Vice-Commandant and later the same year became Battn. Commander. An active member of the G.A.A. he was Captain of the local Football team and a playing member of the Senior Hurling team. When the West Limerick Brigade was formed he was the unanimous selection as Brigade Commandant. He took part in many engagements against the enemy, notably in the most formidable barrack attack of the War of Independence, that of Kilmallock. Of noble character, he was a great favourite with all who knew him. He fell fighting a gallant rear guard action with a few comrades near the White River in the Parish of Ballyhahill on 30th March 1921. A noble Celtic Cross over his grave was unveiled by the Countess Markiveicz in 1924.



He gave to Ireland's cause his all,  
His heart's best love, his service high;  
To break her chain, to end her thrall  
He gave his life without a sigh.

[Father Ml. Hayes].

### CAPTAIN TIM MADIGAN

Timothy B. Madigan : born in Shanagolden, January 1897. Received early education at Shanagolden National School and later at Mungret College, after which he took up farming at which he was very successful. Took a great interest in Gaelic pastimes and was Captain of the O'Rahilly Football Team. When the Volunteers were organised after 1916 he was elected Capt., Shanagolden Co. Took leading part in Sinn Fein, Gaelic League and kindred organisations ; in May 1920 elected Sinn Fein member of Rathkeale District Council and in August 26th, same year, assisted by six members of his Company, he held up a police and Black and Tan patrol from Foynes barracks in the village of Shanagolden, as a result of which he had to go " on the run " ; and on 28th Dec. following was surprised by a raiding party of R.I.C. and Tans from Foynes. He was mortally wounded within 400 yards of his home and was buried in the family burial ground, at Kilbrathern.



### CAPT. PATRICK DALTON

Captain Patrick Dalton : born in Athea 1898. Attended local National School and went as a Clerk to Faleys', Hardware Merchants, Listowel, in 1913. Joined Volunteers in 1914 and became Captain, North Kerry Brigade and took part in all the activities in his area. He was murdered by Crown Forces with two of his Kerry comrades at Gort-a-Gleanna on 12th May 1921. His pathetic fate and that of his comrades inspired a ballad in the old Irish tradition shortly after their deaths which has been sung at fair and market and race meeting and many another gathering throughout Ireland and wherever Irishmen meet in foreign lands.



And the Beansidhe cried when Dalton died  
In the valley of Knockanure !

—Anon.

### CAPT. LIAM SCULLY

The story of Liam Scully has often been told. This brave young and talented Kerry boy was born at Glenbeigh and came to Limerick as Organiser for the Gaelic League. His memory is commemorated in both East and West Limerick memorials. He was mortally wounded at the close of the Kilmallock Barrack Attack and was brought to West Limerick by Sean Finn and his comrades and buried in the lone Templeglantine cemetery. A Celtic Cross was erected by his West Limerick comrades over his grave at Templeglantine in June 1927 and unveiled by Austin Stack. The late patriot priest of Templeglantine, Rev. Father John Kelly, P.P., presided at the ceremony.

### CAPT. DONAL McENERY

Capt. Donal McEnery's story belongs largely to the Cork No. 1 Brigade. Born at Camas, near Newcastle West, he went to Cork at an early age to the drapery business. Joined the Volunteers there and was active with his Company. After the burning of Cork came back to his native parish and joined with the 1st Batt. in all activities. He was accidentally shot dead during the Truce while serving at Brigade Headquarters, Newcastle West.

#### LIEUT. DANIEL NEVILLE



Lieut. Daniel Neville, D. Company, 4th Battn., West Limerick Brigade, born near Ballyaglish, Ballysteen, 21 May 1895. Joined the Volunteers at an early age and took part in all the operations of his Company. A gentle, heroic boy, he was shot to death while carrying out an important I.R.A. operation on April 18, 1920.

#### LIEUT. DAVID BRENNAN



Lieut. David Brennan, of the Broadford Company, was known to his comrades as one of the most gallant I.R.A. men. Born at Broadford in 1896, he was educated at Broadford National School. Joined the Volunteers in 1917 and served with the Broadford Company, 3rd Batt. While engaged with his comrades in the destruction of the enemy institution at Dromcollogher Courthouse lost his life with two companions in the burning building.

#### SEC. COMMANDER LIAM DANAHER



Sec. Commander Liam Danaher was born at Bawnmore, Broadford, in 1897 and was educated at Broadford National School. Joined the Volunteers in 1917 and served with B. Coy, 3rd Batt. until he lost his life in the burning of Dromcollogher Courthouse in June 1920. A gallant young Volunteer.

#### SEC. COM. PADDY BUCKLEY

Sec. Com. Paddy Buckley of Dromcollogher joined the Volunteers at an early age with A Co., III Battn. and took part in all activities of his Company. Gave his young life in the burning of Dromcollogher Courthouse in June 22, 1920. Devoted young patriot.

#### VOL. MORTIMER DUGGAN



Volunteer Mortimer Duggan, N.T. : born at Broadford 1892. Educated at Broadford National School and St. Patrick's Training College, Dromcondra. He was a Gaelic scholar. In July 1912 he was appointed assistant teacher in his native Broadford N.S. He joined the Volunteers in 1915 and served with B. Co., 3rd Batt. until he was shot to death by Crown Forces in Broadford on Nov. 26, 1920. A brave and learned Volunteer.

## VOLUNTEER RICHARD BOYCE

Volunteer Richard Boyce was born at Bawnmore in 1894 and was educated at Broadford National School. He joined the Volunteers in 1917 and served with B Co., III Batt. until Febry. 1921 when he was shot by Crown Forces. Always ready to serve the cause of freedom.

## LIEUT. ML. O'SHEA

Lieut. ML. O'Shea : born at Granagh in 1890 and attended local National School. As a youth and young man he took a very keen interest in Gaelic games and was Captain of Granagh Junior Hurling team which won the Co. Championship in 1916. Joined the Granagh Co. Volunteers in 1917. A very active and efficient volunteer, he became 1st Lieut. in 1920. On the evening of May 10th 1921 he and a small party of volunteers were in charge of a prisoner in Coolrus. At 9.30 p.m. the party were removing the prisoner to another district when a search party of British military opened fire at the volunteer party and Michael O'Shea was fatally wounded by a dum-dum bullet. He was buried in Shanavoka Churchyard on 13th May, his father having recovered the body from the military who had taken it to Rathluirc.

## VOL. PATRICK O'BRIEN

Vol. Patrick O'Brien, a returned exile from the U.S.A. on a visit to his mother. The fight for Irish freedom inspired him to join the local Co. at Coolcappa. A copy of "An T'Oglac" June, 1921, says : " When opening a filled-in trench near Rathkeale he was killed by an explosion. On investigation it was found that a Mills bomb had been placed in the trench, a foot from the surface and a piece of wire was placed around a stone. When the stone was removed the pin of the bomb was drawn and the bomb exploded.

1922

## COMMANDANT EDDIE CREGAN

Commandant Eddie Cregan was born at Dungeehy, Newcastle West, in the year 1900 and educated at the Courtenay Schools, Newcastle West. At the age of 15 went to work on father's farm and joined Fianna Eireann in 1916 and the Volunteers in 1917, and was one of the most active members of the Newcastle West Co. He was arrested in June 1920. His home was raided night and day on his release and he could not sleep at home for 12 months before the Truce. Was at the destruction of Ardagh R.I.C. barracks and the daring exploit of the burning of Newcastle West Courthouse in the heart of the British held town, and all other operations of the 1st Batt. Joined the National Army in April 1922 and was killed in action in North Cork on 20th Aug. 1922.



## CAPT. PADDY NAUGHTON

Capt. Paddy Naughton : born in Limerick City on Jan. 22nd 1898. Joined the Volunteers in his native City in 1917 ; became a member of F Co., 2nd Batt., Mid. Limerick Brigade. In April 1920 following certain activities in Limerick City he was transferred to West Limerick Brigade area and he joined the Brigade Active Service Unit with which he served until the Truce of 11th July 1921. Taking the Republican side in the Civil War he was seriously wounded during a skirmish in Roche's St., Limerick, on July 20th 1922. He was brought to St. John's Hospital, Limerick, where he died a few days subsequently.

“ Their memory is green and sweet  
On every hillside, in every mart,  
In every city, in every street—  
Of a land where to fail is more than to triumph,  
And victory is less than defeat.

[S. Gwynn].