

Account of Ambush on Lorry of Black & Tans
at Hill of Allen to Kildare in March 1921.

In March 1921 it came to the notice of members of the Prosperous boy, that on almost every Sunday a contingent of Black & Tans and R. I. B. were accustomed to travel by tender from Kildare town, to visit licensed premises in the Robertstown district, in order to enforce the Sunday closing act.

It was decided to attack this lorry at the Hill of Allen, on its return journey to Kildare. The Battalion Council agreed to the plan made for the attack, and

Richard Harris, at that time Batt. - Vice Commdt - was put in charge with Edward Treacy, Capt Prosperous boy, and Michael Fitzgerald, Capt Allen boy, Seconds in command.

The Prosperous boy, moved their arms, consisting of 7 Lee Enfield rifles, 12 bombs and about 12 shot guns, to an empty house on the roadside near where the ambush was planned to take place. On Sunday March 13th 1921, the Prosperous boy met at Newtown Donore, at about 11.30 ^{AM} and crossed about 4 miles over the bog to Allen, where they met the men of the Allen boy.

Military Archives

According to plan, a farm house on the side of the hill was taken over, by our men, and the men with shot guns placed in position. Two men who had some grenade practice were placed behind a wall, beside which it was proposed the lorry should be halted, by rushing two farm carts across the road suddenly.

There was a steep fall away from the yard of the farm house, towards the road, and the carts could be pushed out by men under cover, and would run out on the road on their own momentum.

The seven rifle men were placed, on the road side under the hill about 100 yds back, from the place where the lorry was to be halted. They could, from that position, enfilade the road, and also prevent the enemy taking cover on that side of the road. A man had been put in position high up on the Hill, to signal the approach of the enemy.

All men were in position about 12:30. The enemy usually passed between 1:30^{p.m.} and 3 o'clock, and as our position was unconcealed from civilian passersby, we had to hold up everyone who went by, and put them under guard, at the back of the farm house.

Military Archives

We had to take this precaution to prevent the news of the events, from reaching Kildare town or the Curragh Camp which places were only 4 miles away. We remained in our positions until about 6 o'clock, and as at that time we had some dozen civilians held up and detained, and the residents of Kilmeague village, about a mile distant, knew what was occurring, we decided to abandon our positions.

The Allen boy was first dismissed and then the Prosperous boy started to move off. We had proceeded through several fields when some one heard the noise of motors. The order was given, to double back, for the roadside, and we were within one field's breadth from the road (about 500 yds) when the lorry appeared. The order was given to open fire and the lorry was met by a strong fire. The Gans jumped off the lorry, while the driver got it around a tree that was thrown on the road. They kept answering our fire, until the lorry was on the straight road for Kildare town. They then raced for the lorry under cover of the roadside bank, jumped in and got away.

Our 7 rifles fired about 100 rounds, and the men with shot guns fired a volley also, but at that range shot guns were useless.

It will be seen, that a matter of about 20 minutes saved the Black + Tans from destruction. Nobody could be blamed for the failure of a well planned ambush, laid within sight of the burragh camp. And we think that the following men, Michael ¹⁵¹¹³ Mc Cormack. Jas. Heffernan, Peter ¹⁸⁴²⁷ Kane, Joseph ¹⁵⁷⁸⁸ O'Keil. Jas. ¹⁴⁸⁵² Coffey. Michael ¹⁴⁹⁹⁹ Fields, Laurence ¹⁴⁸⁵⁴ Bondron. Whose claims for pensions were turned down, and who took part in above action, should have their claims reconsidered.

Signed Edward Tracey
(Late) O/C 4th Batt 7th Brigade

18427 Report 10/5/40 to Mr. [unclear]
15288 For Hearing [unclear] on 10/5/40.
14852 For Hearing do do.
14999 For Hearing do do.
14854 For Hearing do do.

Richard Harris.
Vice Comdt.
2nd Lt. Batt.
Kildare Brigade

Particulars of Ambush at Hill of Allen on Easter Sunday 1921.

The Battalion Council arranged for a number of engagements in the Battalion area on Easter Sunday 1921. One of the engagements was an Ambush at the Hill of Allen to be carried by the Prosperous, Allen, Robertstown, and Allenwood Companies. A lorry of R.I.C. & Black & Tans, was expected to pass from Kildare, on that evening. All the available members of the Prosperous, Allen, Robertstown & Allenwood Companies were mobilised for same in view of the proximity of the lorry camp. The enemy lorry did not turn up until late in the evening and a number of the men had been demobilised, and, therefore, our original plans did not work out. Our men opened fire on the lorry and the fire was returned, but the lorry got away. There were about twelve of the enemy in the lorry. There were no casualties on our side, and it was not known if there were any casualties of the enemy.

The Military and Black & Tans were very active in our area after the Ambush, and a number of our men were arrested.

A Sketch of Map is attached showing the position of the Ambush.

Signed
Pensions Collection

Edward Tracey
Thomas McHugh.

Military Archives

Curragh Camp
Kildare Town
1 mile

Milford

Tree across Road

Amhurst

Booy Road

Booy

Canal

To Mullingar

To Rathangan

Pluckers Town
Bandon

To Robertsh
7 Miles

To Spaw 7 Miles

Military Service Pensions Collection

4th Batt. 7th Brigade

Names of men who took part in the Allen Ambush.
Prosperous. Company.

Names.	Addresses.	Armed.
Richard. Harris	Prosperous. Sallins Co. Kildare	A.
Edward. Tracey.	Newtown. Donore. Naas "	A.
Thomas. Mc. Hugh.	Blackwood. Robertstown, "	A.
Michael Coffey.	Newtown. Donore. Naas. "	A.
James. Coffey.	Newtown. Donore. Naas "	A.
Joseph. O. Keile.	Newtown. Donore. Naas.	A.
William Booth	National Army "	A.
Michael Mc. Leornack.	Timahoe, boolearrigan. "	A.
Michael Fields	Blackwood. Robertstown "	A.
Peter Kane	Healys Bridge, Robertstown "	U. A.
Joseph. Connell.	Annsboro' Robertstown "	U. A.
Anthony Boughton	Sallins "	A.

Allen Section

Michael Fitzgerald.	Allen. Kilmeaque. "	A.
Joseph. Judge.	Kilmeaque. Naas "	A.
Michael O'Hara.	Grangehiggins Kilmeaque.	A.
Christopher. Connolly.	Kilmeaque Naas "	A.
Matt Maloney.	Allen. Kilmeaque. Naas.	A.
William Jones.	Battalion Office of Training	A.
Patrick Swords.	Booleagh. Kilmeaque.	A.
Robert Armstrong	Kilmeaque Naas "	S.
Thomas Haslem.	Allen. Kilmeaque	U. A.
Patrick Kenny	Allen Kilmeaque.	U. A.
Christopher Sheridan	Blonmoyle. Rathangan.	S.
John. Sheridan.	Not known.	S.
Michael Behan.	Ballyteague. Kilmeaque.	S.
James Downey.	Milltown New Bridge.	U. A.
Bernard. Mulhall.	Allen. Kilmeaque	S.
John. Donahow.	Mylerstown. Robertstown	A.
James. Hefferan.	Mylerstown. Robertstown	A.

4th Batt 7th Brigade. Continued

Names.	addresses.	Armed.
James. Walsh.	Kilmeague. Naas.	U.A.
John. Moore.	Allenwood. Robertstown	A.
Michael Moore.	Allenwood. Robertstown	A.
Patrick Walsh.	Kilmeague. Naas	T.
William Bagrall.	Allenwood. Robertstown	T.

Signed. Edward Tracey

Thomas McHugh.

SEE OVERLEAF.

Military Service
Pensions Collection