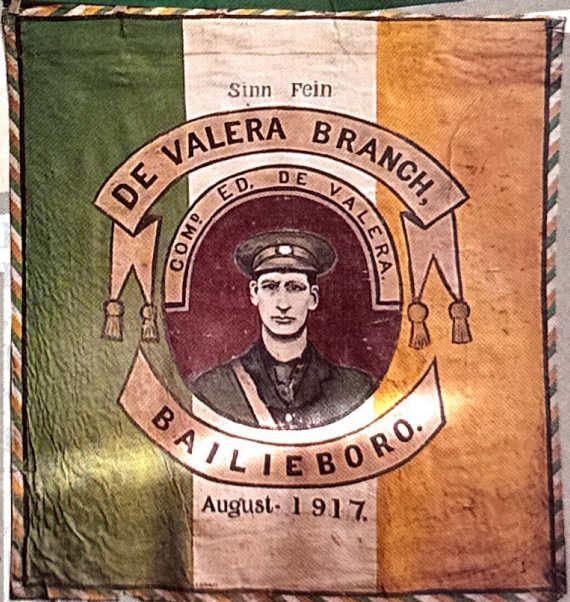
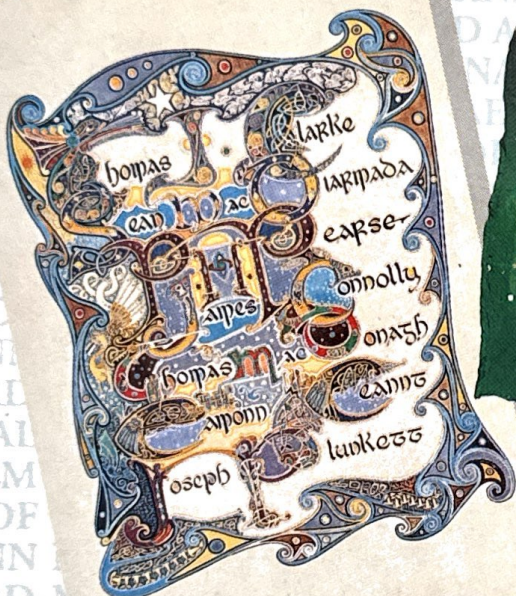


# NATIONAL MUSEUM of IRELAND ARD-MHÚSAEM na hÉIREANN

## The Road to Freedom

Photographs and memorabilia from  
the 1916 Rising and afterwards



by Michael Kenny







Ballintsleva and awaited a report.

The Westport Patrol entered the town at the Convent and took up positions at the Fairgreen. They learned that a patrol of 18 R.I.C. had proceeded earlier in the direction of Westport Station but, apparently, they learned of the presence of the I.R.A. patrol in the town and they went into the house of Dr. O'Rourke, Altamount St. The I.R.A. waited until dawn but the enemy did not return to barracks, so reluctantly they withdrew to Sandyhill, half a mile from Westport town.

The Newport Patrol made contact with the enemy and one R.I.C. man was killed.

In the early morning of May 19 Michael Kilroy moved the Flying Column to Clooneen, Kilmeena, on the Westport/Newport road and took up ambush positions in the hope of enemy movements in the area. With Michael Kilroy, O.C., at Kilmeena were:

Eamon Moane, B. Vice O/C, Westport	(Rifle);
Thomas Ketterick, B. Q/M.,	do. (Peter P. Pistol);
John Gibbons, B. Adj.	do. (Revolver);
John D. Gibbons, B. Staff,	do. (Shotgun);
Joe Baker	do. (Rifle);
Batty Cryan	do. (Shotgun);
Thomas Ainsworth	do. (Rifle);
John McDonagh	do. (Rifle);
Paddy Lambert	do. (Shotgun);
Martin Naughton	do. (Rifle);
Michael Staunton	do. (Rifle);
John Collins	do. (Martini Rifle);
P. Pearse	do. (Shotgun);
John Cannon	do. (Shotgun);
Patrick Jordan, O.C., Castlebar	(Rifle);
John Chambers,	do. (Rifle);
James McEvilly, do. (Rifle);	Michael Hughes,
do. (Rifle, Must.);	James Hughes, do. (Rifle);
William McCarthy, do. (Rifle);	Dr. J. A. Madden, do. (Rifle);
P. J. Cannon, do. (Rifle, Mauser);	James Swift, do. (Shotgun);
Thomas O'Donnell, do. (Rifle);	Thomas Maloney, do. (Shotgun);
Thomas Nolan, do. (Rifle);	Patrick O'Boyle, do. (Rifle);
John Cooney, do. (Shotgun);	Paddy Ainsworth, do. (Shotgun);
Jack Connolly, Newport	(Rifle);
Michael Brown, do. (Shotgun);	Paddy Molloy, do. (Shotgun);
Pat McLoughlin, do. (Shotgun);	Larry McGovern, do. (Rifle);
Paddy O'Malley (Rifle);	Jim Kelly (Rifle);
Jim Brown (Red) (Shotgun);	Pat Staunton (Shotgun);
Peter Corcoran (Shotgun);	Ned Murray (Shotgun).

The Column at Kilmeena were forty-one men, including the O.C., and they were armed with 22 rifles

16 shotguns and three with short arms. At this time three men were engaged on communications, they were: Joe Ring, O.C., Westport Batt. (Rifle); Jack Keane, do. (Rifle); Ned Hogan, do. (Shotgun).

The Column took up positions at Kilmeena in the early morning and the main position was behind a sod fence some fifty yards from the main road, between the now Memorial Hall and Cummins' House.

The morning hours dragged on and at 10 a.m. a car was signalled approaching from Newport direction but the Newport men recognised it as belonging to Canon McDonald, P.P., Newport, who was attending a round-up station in Kilmeena.

A short time later, two cars were signalled coming from Newport and this time men tensed and took careful aim. The covered cars were filled with people dressed in black and slowly came into the ambush position. Fingers pressed on triggers when, suddenly, someone called: "Don't fire; they are nuns." The two cars which had a miraculous escape were filled with nuns from Newport and Malranny on their way to attend a nun's funeral in Westport.

Again, men relaxed and the hours passed without incident until about 3 p.m. as the men waited for a meal which was being prepared in Cummins, after which the Column would withdraw towards the Half Parish. Suddenly, there was a shout: "The Tans are coming," and immediately positions were taken as the first lorry went through the ambush position. A scattered volley met it, but it went its way.

Soon, another lorry came into view and slowed at the approach to the Parochial House. It stopped there just behind Canon McDonald's car. It was several hundred yards from the ambush position. The Column new changed positions and opened fire on the party at the priest's house. The fire was returned and a machine-gun mounted on the bridge blasted the Column position. The exchange of fire continued for some minutes until the occupants of the first lorry which had