



Battle of Mount Street Bridge

By Eoin Carroll

What was the Battle of Mount Street?



The Battle of Mount Street Bridge was militarily, the most successful rebel engagement in Dublin. The aim was to prevent the British from entering the city centre and stopping the rebellion.

Though they were eventually defeated, the rebels held up to nearly full sized British battalions for several hours on Wednesday 26th April, 1916.

The casualties inflicted on the British by a small group of volunteers demonstrated their remarkable bravery and courage.

Monday 24th April

At 11a.m. on Easter Monday Lieutenant Michael Malone and Commander Eamon de Valera along with several other volunteers set out to Mount Street. Their orders were simple: prevent the British reinforcements from entering Dublin.

They took over Bolands Mill as well as other surrounding buildings including 25 Northumberland Road, Parochial Hall, Clanwilliam House and the Schoolhouse.

De Valera and Malone along with second Commander Seamus Grace each took their own set of young volunteers to command.

In the evening, Major A E Sandbeach received word that his division would soon be going overseas.



Tuesday 25th April

As the Sherwood Foresters disembarked, Lieutenant Malone was busy fortifying his post on Northumberland Road when his attention was drawn by the sound of British troops advancing to his position.

As the soldiers approached, Malone and Grace opened fire, hitting many of their men.

After the gunfire, the women and girls came from the houses waving white flags to remove the injured men from the roadway.



Beggars Bush Military Barracks

Wednesday 26th April

Early on Wednesday morning, the British troops arrived on the quayside in Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire). Many of the regiments were made up of young inexperienced men known as Sherwood Foresters.

As they marched from Kingstown to the canal bridge, people came out on the streets to wave and welcome the troops.

When they reached the junction of Northumberland Road and Haddington Road, Lieutenant Malone and Second Commander Grace opened fire killing 10 men. The British troops charged at the house resulting in more casualties.

Upon leaving for Dublin, the British failed to bring essential parts of their armory, such as a Lewis machine gun, which was to cost them greatly.



Sherwood Foresters marching to Mount Street

Wednesday 26th April

As the day went on they again charged at the building Malone and Grace were in, this time blowing back the door but resulting in more casualties.

Blocking the soldiers upon entry was a barricade of household furniture.

Gunfire was heavy in the house. Attempting to unjam his gun, Grace shouted to Michael Malone to get out of the house. He found refuge in the dark basement hiding behind a metal stove, avoiding serious injury from the grenades thrown in and staying undetected until the end of the battle.

Unfortunately Malone wasn't so lucky, running into a soldier on the staircase who snuck through the back door and shot him dead.



25 Northumberland Road near Mount St Bridge

Wednesday 26th April

After ensuring 25 Northumberland Road was clear, the Sherwood Foresters moved on towards the Schoolhouse. On their way they passed Parochial Hall where Volunteers fired at them causing twenty men to drop dead.

Having run out of ammunition, the Volunteers fled to the rear end of the hall but were arrested by the military attempting to escape through Percy Lane.

Finding the schoolhouse empty after storming the place, the British turned their attention to Clanwilliam House. The Volunteers stationed there open fired as the British troops came up Northumberland Road.

Time and time again the troops would try to cross Mount Street Bridge but would fail as the Volunteers fired into their ranks. The moans of the wounded filled the air as nurses and doctors from St Patrick Dun's Hospital carried away the men during a brief ceasefire.

When the firing from the house subsided, a small force of soldiers raced across the bridge, succeeding in reaching Clanwilliam House. They climbed in through a smashed window and threw grenades into rooms which started a fire.

George Reynolds, Dick Murphy and Patrick Doyle lost their lives in this fire while the other four positioned in the house managed to escape. Throughout the battle Irish snipers were positioned in Boland's Mill and a nearby railway track to assist the Volunteers.



Notable Leaders of the Battle

Eamon de Valera



Eamon de Valera was born in 1882 to an Irish mother and Spanish father. As a child, he was sent to live with his mother's family in rural Limerick.

Following his education as a scholar in Blackrock College, he studied mathematics, graduating in 1904, and joined the Gaelic league (an organisation to promote the Irish language) four years later.

In 1913 de Valera joined the Irish Volunteers and by 1916 was a commander who played a significant role in the Battle of Mount Street.

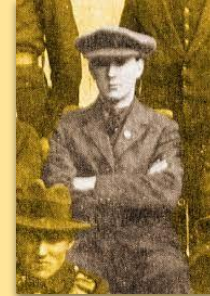
Michael Malone



Michael Malone was 28 years old at the time of the rising. He was a carpenter and had won prizes for his drawings and wood carvings. He was a Lieutenant in the Cyclist Corp, Third Battalion.

With three companions, he defended his position in 25 Northumberland Road but on the second day of the rising he sent two of them home because they were only boys. With Seamus Grace he defended against the British but met his death fighting valiantly. He is buried in the Republican plot, Glasnevin Cemetery.

Seamus Grace



Seamus (James Joseph) Grace was a Commander in the Irish Volunteers. He worked as a general clerk in the college of surgeons and joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood in 1912, but left for America in 1913.

After eighteen months he moved to Canada and served in the Canadian military before returning back to Ireland in 1915. He immediately joined the Irish Volunteers when he got back. With the help of Michael Malone he successfully defended against the British for several hours.

Notable Locations

25 Northumberland Road



25 Northumberland Road is a three-story, Victorian terraced townhouse on the south side of the Grand Canal.

On Easter Monday, it was occupied by Michael Malone, James Grace, Paddy Rowe and Michael Byrne, and was the southernmost location held by the rebels.

The building was home to Michael Cussen, who had evacuated his family and servants prior to the Rising.

Clanwilliam House



Clanwilliam House was part of a row of Georgian Houses on the city side of Mount Street Bridge, facing the Grand Canal.

During the rising, it was occupied by seven rebels. It was the last building to be overthrown by the British, during which the house caught fire, killing three of the rebels.

The Schoolhouse



The schoolhouse on Northumberland Road was the home of St. Stephen's Parochial School.

It was initially occupied on Easter Monday by four men from the Irish Volunteers.

By Tuesday they had vacated the building and it remained unoccupied.

Sherwood Foresters

The battalions known as the Sherwood Foresters were mobilised on Tuesday the 25th April 1916, the day after the rising was declared.

Most of them were new recruits, many with less than six months of military training, who had responded to Kitcheners post about fighting in the trenches. Because of this they had very little experience in house-to-house warfare which they would soon find themselves in.

They sailed overnight from Liverpool to Kingstown where they were met with crowds cheering them on. They marched nearly ten kilometres along the coast road to the city centre where they met fire from Michael Malone and Seamus Grace on 25 Northumberland Road.



Aftermath

The battle resulted in one of the biggest losses to both sides in the rising. It's estimated that at least 26-30 british soldiers fell and 134 were seriously injured, while four volunteers were killed.

When the rising was over, the city was shelled. Over 3,500 people were arrested which is more than twice the amount that took part in the rising.

The leaders of the rising, Eamon de Valera included, were arrested but he was eventually let go for a variety of reasons, but partial thanks to his American passport.

A memorial to this famous battle is located on the banks of the Grand Canal beside Mount Street Bridge.



The End