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The rise and fall of the anti-Treaty forces in
North Kildare, Grangewilliam 1922



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Edited by James Durney

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Foreword

The engagement at Pike Bridge/Grangewilliam on 1 December 1922 was the last major 'battle' to take place in Co. Kildare. Like numerous military engagements throughout the centuries many of the participants were natives of the area. Leixlip schoolteacher Paddy Mullaney was in command of an anti-Treaty column active in north Kildare, while the initial National Army force was under the command of Lt. Joe Ledwith of Maynooth. Both had served together in the War of Independence. Pike Bridge/Grangewilliam epitomised the Civil War as former comrades fought each other over ideological differences. Two of the National Army contingent were former serving members of Mullaney's Column and helped their old commanders, Comdt. Mullaney and Vice-Comdt. Mick O'Neill, conceal incriminating documents. The only fatal casualty, Pte. Joseph Moran, was a former British Army soldier, born in Naas and living in Kilcock. The engagement had far-reaching consequences. Five of the six National soldiers who deserted their posts at Baldonnel Aerodrome, Co. Dublin, to join the Mullaney Column were subsequently executed. Two of them were from Co. Kildare.

While those executions and the threat of a firing squad for the survivors of the column helped to end the Civil War, the subsequent fall-out and bitterness lingered for many years. When asked to attend the 1966 Easter Commemorations in Co. Kildare Patrick Mullaney, then living in his native Mayo, said he had no desire to return to Leixlip and its memories.

Seamus A. Cummins' study of the events leading up to and after the engagement at Pike Bridge/Grangewilliam is an important addition to the body of work produced in Co. Kildare during the Decade of Centenaries period.

James Durney
1 December 2022

Introduction

At 4.25 am on 28 June 1922 the Provisional Government of the nascent Irish Free State began its attack on the leadership of the anti-Treaty forces occupying the Four Courts Building in Dublin, who had rejected the Anglo-Irish Treaty, as ratified by Dáil Éireann, and had defied the authority of the Second Dáil.

As the conflict progressed the anti-Treaty forces took over various buildings in the O'Connell Street area and fighting became widespread in the city centre. By 5 July 1922 the anti-Treaty Forces in Dublin were effectively defeated and a retreat from the city had begun. From then on, centrally organised resistance to the Treaty and the Provisional Government, that had previously been coordinated from the Four Courts, changed to one of decentralised local resistance.

The anti-Treaty leadership captured in the Four Courts was imprisoned, and leadership of the military forces remaining intact fell, to Liam Lynch.

Lynch, on assuming the position of Chief of Staff, ordered all those under his command to return to their areas and generate opposition to the Provisional Government. The process of reorganising the anti-Treaty forces after the defeat in Dublin and the retreat to the localities took some time.

As a result, Dublin ceased to be a significant theatre of operations and the Civil War and military operations centred on the provinces.¹ Ernie O'Malley was appointed Assistant Chief of Staff by Lynch with responsibility for the northern and eastern areas of the country. The eastern area was divided militarily into three divisional areas.² North Kildare came under the area of operations of the 1st Eastern Division.

That these military operational areas mirrored those of the developing National Army was intentional. Prior to the outbreak of fighting in Dublin and the commencement of Civil War the anti-Treaty leadership in the Four Courts set up a parallel command structure within the Irish Republican Army (I.R.A.), anticipating the war that was to come.

Andy Cooney was initially in command of the 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A., under this parallel arrangement.³ With him was Mick Price as Quartermaster and Christopher “Todd” Andrews as Divisional Organiser.⁴ According to Andrews, “... *Andy Cooney had been appointed Commandant of the First Eastern Division in place of Sean Boylan, who with most of his men in the division had taken the pro-Treaty side. Cooney had installed himself in Millmount Barracks, Drogheda, which on being evacuated by the British had fallen into anti-Treaty hands. At Cooney’s request I was sent there on loan for a while to help organise the division. Having visited several areas I discovered that, except for Leixlip and Mullingar, there was little left to organise. In Leixlip there was a very determined schoolmaster named Paddy Mullaly [sic]. He had fifteen or twenty men under him who were well trained and disciplined ...*”⁵

Andrews had identified the rift that had developed between the North Kildare element of the pre-Treaty 1st Eastern Division, commanded by Seán Boylan, and the rest of the Divisional Area in Meath and Westmeath. This element was in the main the 3rd Battalion, of the 1st Brigade, 1st Eastern Division. It was commanded since 1921 by Patrick Mullaney of Leixlip. Andrews had also identified Mullaney, who he misnamed as “*Mullaly*” as the dominant military leader in the area who commanded the loyalty and respect of his men.

The vast majority of the pre-Treaty 1st Eastern Division followed Boylan and supported the Treaty and were subsumed eventually into the National Army. The North Kildare element of 3rd Battalion, under the command of Patrick Mullaney, repudiated the leadership and command of Seán Boylan and took up arms against the Treaty and the Provisional Government.

Causes for the rift were not entirely ideological. Since 1921 there had been resentment in North Kildare at the way in which officers from the area, particularly Mullaney, were passed over by Boylan for promotion to Divisional Staff in a reorganisation of the Division. Seamus Finn, Boylan’s second in command, was to recall “...*The appointment of Brigade Staffs did not meet with unanimous approval among us as some of our best officers were passed over and men who were not so well qualified were placed in charge...*”⁶ There was a great deal of criticism of the organisation by Divisional Staff of an ambush of a troop train at Stacumney, Celbridge, on 2 July 1921, which

could have ended in disaster but for the initiative and leadership in the field of Patrick Mullaney and the North Kildare participants. Boylan's operational capacity was a cause of concern but his rank in the Irish Republican Brotherhood (I.R.B.) made any replacement difficult. This was the first large scale ambush planned by the newly appointed Divisional Staff under Boylan, who did not attend, but delegated operational control to his second in command, Finn. It was left to Mullaney to play a crucial role in the withdrawal from a perilous situation that had developed and in mounting a later attack that impeded British forces from capturing members of the ambush party.⁷ Finn was later to record his regard for Mullaney and the men under his command.⁸

Mullaney had been a national schoolteacher in Leixlip since leaving St. Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra. As a young teacher he consorted with radical nationalist teachers such as Gearoid O'Sullivan and Fionnan Lynch through the Irish National Teachers' Organisation. He joined the Irish Volunteers, later the I.R.A., in 1917 during the general reorganisation of that body after the release of the Easter Week 1916 prisoners. According to Mullaney, he was recruited by Patrick Colgan then a member of Maynooth Company, Irish Volunteers, and a colleague of Domhnall Ua Buachalla of 1916 fame.⁹

By the time of the Truce in 1921, Mullaney was the dominant military leader in North Kildare, regarded as courageous and efficient with advanced qualities of leadership.¹⁰ To some and possibly himself, it was inexplicable that he had been passed over for promotion in the reorganisation of the 1st Eastern Division. His influence was further enhanced by his membership of the I.R.B. He had been recruited six months before the Truce: "*Sean Boylan brought me in as Centre (organiser) for Kildare*".¹¹ Later he was appointed to the Leinster Council of the I.R.B.¹²

As dissent from the acceptance of the Treaty by Dáil Éireann by the anti-Treaty forces in the I.R.A. developed from January 1922, the North Kildare area fell more and more out of the control of its divisional leadership. Numerous attempts were made by the Provisional Government to maintain the unity of the I.R.A. and various conventions and meetings were convened throughout the country to that end.¹³

In March 1922, Patrick Mullaney, Officer Commanding (O/C) 3rd

Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, received orders to attend with his officers, a convention of the 1st Eastern Division which was in Dunboyne on 28 March. According to Mullaney's account "...A big difference existed as to the steps to be taken as the situation at this time was very strained and critical..."¹⁴

According to Mullaney "*certain proposals*" were put to the officers of the division. At this stage the ongoing tensions between Seán Boylan and the Divisional Staff on the one hand and the North Kildare I.R.A. crystallised when the North Kildare group walked out. "...*the officers of the 3 Batt. present dissenting and left the building...*"¹⁵ There were attempts at reconciliation "...*All were summoned to a further meeting and as they could not see their way to carry on under new conditions again left...*"¹⁶

The "*new conditions*" were obviously the acceptance of the Treaty by the 1st Eastern Division with 3rd Batt. (Leixlip/Celbridge/Maynooth) now effectively aligned against the Provisional Government and its forces. It may have been around these events that Mullaney was offered a position at last on the Divisional Staff, possibly a conciliatory gesture, "...*the other crowd had appointed me Divisional Intelligence Officer which I did not accept of course...*" In April 1922, *An t-Oglach, The Official Organ of the Irish Volunteer* assessed the loyalty of the 1st Eastern Division as follows, "...*The entire Divisional Staff loyal to G.H.Q. No.1 Brigade. All brigade staff except for intelligence officer (Mullaney), loyal to G.H.Q., and three out of four battalions. The remaining Battalion Staff are disloyal but the majority of the rank and file stood with the G.H.Q...*"¹⁷

In the I.R.B. similar attempts were made to maintain unity.¹⁸ It was a secret oathbound organisation, well-practised in infiltrating other cultural and national organisations and influencing them to develop policies that the I.R.B. saw as developing a broad based and integrated movement for independence. It now used that same influence to develop support for the Treaty and the national leadership of Michael Collins. In this it was broadly but not totally successful.

Mullaney is verified as attending an I.R.B. meeting held on 19 April 1922 in 41 Parnell Square. Among the twenty-seven attending were Collins, Harry Boland, Liam Lynch, as well as Seán Boylan and Mullaney. The I.R.B. was dominated by Michael Collins and in general was pro-Treaty. Ultimately, these attempts to influence

Mullaney ended in failure.¹⁹ Mullaney's attitude can be gauged by his recollection of instructions he received from the I.R.B. prior to the Dáil vote on the Treaty. "...I was instructed to tell the TDs in my area to vote for the Treaty. I gave Dan Buckley and Art O'Connor the instruction I received but said they could do as they damn well pleased..."²⁰ This would indicate that before the Dail vote in January 1922, Mullaney was leaning towards rejection of the Treaty.

The T.D.'s for Kildare and Wicklow as the constituency then was, were Art O'Connor, of Elm Hall, Celbridge, Domhnall Ua Buachalla, of Maynooth (Dan Buckley, *supra*), Erskine Childers, Robert Barton (who was a signatory of the Treaty) and Christopher Byrne. On 7 January 1922, O'Connor, Ua Buachalla and Childers voted against the Treaty. At a local level Kildare County Council voted in favour of the Treaty.²¹

April 1922 seems to have been the defining point for Mullaney. There were no further attempts at reconciliation and Mullaney began a process of what he termed "reorganisation" of his area of operations as he set up his own parallel grouping to that of his former comrades in the old 1st Eastern Division. "Training under new organisation was carried out. Materials changed to new dugouts which had to be constructed owing to new conditions..."²² Mullaney listed those who followed him in dissenting from the proposals of the 1st Eastern Division Staff and subsequent attempts to heal the developing rift. Prominent among them were the Farrells of Leixlip, James Farrell, Jim Farrell, Thomas Farrell and John Farrell. Also mentioned was Mullaney's old comrade Edward Malone who was with Mullaney at Stacumney and subsequent events. The others were Michael O'Neill, Diarmuid O'Neill, Robert Crone, Jack O'Connor (Elm Hall, Celbridge), John Logie, (Straffan), W. Kearney, J. Dempsey. Matt Goff (Leixlip), J. Byrne, P. Hollywood (possibly Holmwood), P. Campbell, P. Nolan.²³

John Logie and Matt Goff were later to reconsider and become pro-Treaty. Logie joined the newly formed National Army and fought against Mullaney at Grangewilliam (although as will be seen with no malice and much regard). Not all proceeded to take up arms, some were arrested and rendered ineffective, others confined themselves to logistical support, others retreated from engagement as the Civil War dragged on. But others, as the anti-Treaty forces retreated from

Dublin, joined with Mullaney as he organised and deployed an anti-Treaty Flying Column in the area.

“So we arranged to bring about a raid”

Essential in any reorganisation undertaken by Mullaney would be the acquisition of arms and ammunition. In an audacious move, which would also humiliate the pro-Treaty 1st Eastern Divisional Staff, a raid was effectively carried out on their headquarters in Dunboyne.

*“...A raid was attempted and successfully carried out on the Div. H.Q. at Dunboyne. All the materials and records were taken away on lorries. Men on guard were overpowered by the raiding party. The raid was important as all the Div. Staff had joined with the Pro Treaty Party and meant to hold these records to be used by them...”*²⁴

Among those with Mullaney on the raid was Michael O’Neill who gave a more detailed account and background in later years. The basis for the raid was one of the various components of the bad feeling between the 3rd Batt. of North Kildare and the Headquarters Staff of the 1st Eastern Division. O’Neill relates *“...we brought arms over to Sean Boylan a short time after the Truce to Dunboyne the time they were asking each fellow which way he was going to go and we got the order to bring our rifles. We had about 10 to 12 rifles, Leixlip, Straffan, Celbridge. I brought the rifles... and Archie O’Connor brought some from his own place and ammo. At that time he got 3 rifles in that consignment. Shotguns and ammunition... We thought they were to go to the North and they were brought to a house of Sean Boylan...”*²⁵ This was the time of the Belfast Pogroms²⁶ and Michael Collins was *“...very sensitive to the question of defence of the Northern minority and, as the I.R.A. began to divide into pro- and anti- Treaty factions, Collins and his Minister for Defence Richard Mulcahy, went to considerable lengths to maintain the allegiance of the I.R.A. divisions in the six counties and to keep them supplied with arms...”*²⁷

The stratagem of using pre-Truce weapons was designed to hide their origin, as National Army weapons were supplied by the British who had records for them, *“...Collins attempted to minimise the risks involved in his clandestine operations by exchanging the weapons held by men in the anti-Treaty Southern Division led by Liam Lynch ... for the equipment he had received from the British...”*²⁸ The 3rd Batt. expected the arms they delivered to be replaced, but adding another

layer of grievance, whether by Boylan's instigation or not, the weapons were not replaced "...there was no exchange..." and the 3rd Batt. was effectively disarmed.²⁹ This was the genesis of the raid on Boylan's headquarters. "... So we arranged to bring about a raid and we raided Dunboyne, one of Sean Boylan's houses. Sean Buckley, Archie O'Connor was with us. At 3 when the sentries were asleep we surrounded the house, knocked on the door and the Staters came out. Buckley was in first. Andy Cooney was also present. He took possession of captured documents and papers. Arms and ammunition were taken ..."³⁰

The rift was total. Militarily, the I.R.A. in North Kildare had repudiated the Treaty and the authority of the Provisional Government of the Irish Free State.

War in the localities – North Kildare

By 29 June 1922 the National Army had ensured the inevitable defeat of the anti-Treaty forces in Dublin.³¹ The strategic naivety of the leadership of the anti-Treaty forces in confining their totality to the Four Court buildings became apparent and this absence of leadership, through capture, or evasion of capture, led to confusion. Mullaney was critical in hindsight "... *The Executive at the time of the attack on the Four Courts was appointed for the whole country, yet here you have men stuck in the Four Courts. There were no orders given to the country as to what they should do...*"³²

Ernie O'Malley himself referred to discussions among the leadership as "... *a drifting policy discussed endlessly in a shipwrecked way...*"³³ As a result it was difficult to get in touch with the divisions and independent brigades of the anti-Treaty forces, since no kind of communication had been established and despatches could not be forwarded.³⁴

This context explains how Mullaney was forced by circumstances to travel to Millmount Barracks in Drogheda, then held by anti-Treaty forces, to seek orders and clarification as to future tactics and strategy for the North Kildare area. Along with him were Michael O'Neill and Domhnall Ua Buachalla, the former T.D. They would have to travel through territory controlled by the Government and its forces.³⁵ The trio had hardly commenced their journey when they were arrested at a military roadblock at Kilcock. According to O'Neill, "... *There was a barricade across the road and [Comdt. Michael] Flynn arrested us.*

*He had been in the column in Kilcock which had 6 to 8 men in it before the Truce...*³⁶ They appear to have been detained in Kilcock and then Lucan for a number of weeks.³⁷ Mullaney confirmed detention in Lucan, “...Sean Finn of Athboy saw us in Lucan after my arrest, very friendly to me... he was with me at Stacumney...”³⁸

In time Michael O’Neill and Ua Buachalla were sent to Drogheda for detention in Millmount Barracks, which had now been retaken from anti-Treaty forces.³⁹ Mullaney was detained in the Curragh Camp where he soon was part of an escape committee along with Tom Harris, of Prosperous, Co. Kildare.⁴⁰

The arrest of Mullaney, O’Neill and Ua Buachalla deprived the North Kildare area of effective leadership. Mullaney had nominated his second in command, Thomas Mangan, of Maynooth, as commander of the 1st Meath Brigade while he was absent. But Mangan, who was a 1916 veteran, was soon captured and imprisoned in Dundalk. Mullaney’s place seemed to have been taken by Thomas Gallivan. Originally from Derry, Gallivan was residing in Leixlip, at Hillford House, and since 1919 was a member of Leixlip Company, I.R.A. He claimed to be in command of road blocking operations at the Stacumney Ambush in 1921, but was not involved in military action there. According to Gallivan, he was appointed Brigade Commander, 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division. Gallivan claimed a range of activities during his command in the absence of Mullaney, planned ambushes of National Army troops at Maynooth and Leixlip, destruction of bridges at Leixlip, destruction of railway and other systems of communication. He had a novel system of communications “*The carrier pigeon was sent from Leixlip to Hurley’s of Drumcondra. It arrived safely...*” Gallivan also organised arms dumps at O’Connor’s, of Elm Hall, Celbridge, and Cardwells, of Beatty Park, Celbridge.⁴¹ Mullaney, meanwhile, was busy ensuring his stay at the Curragh Camp was as short as possible. An initial attempt to overpower guards and walk out of the camp in their uniforms was foiled. A second and successful attempt involved a group of prisoners, including Mullaney, sawing through a barred window adjacent to a Board of Works lorry being loaded with bedding for transport to Dublin. With the connivance of some of the Board of Works men, Mullaney and others hid under the bedding and escaped.⁴²

In the meantime, Frank Aiken, who was initially reluctant to take

part in the Civil War, finally overcame his hesitancy and siding with the anti-Treaty forces led his men of the 4th Northern Division on an attack which captured Dundalk. This led to a general release of the prisoners held there, among them Michael O'Neill of Leixlip, "... *Aiken gave us arms to go back to our own area and boots that nearly killed us...*" While many prisoners were subsequently recaptured Thomas Mangan, former O/C of Maynooth, was arrested on 3 August 1922, in Lucan, but Michael O'Neill, Domhnall Ua Buachalla and an old comrade from Stacumney, Thomas Kealy, of Celbridge, evaded capture. Kealy was to rejoin his old commander Mullaney until capture at Grangewilliam.⁴³

O'Neill described his arrival at his home in Weston Park, Leixlip, "...*I got a change of clothes and I got out of the house. But I was no sooner out when the place was surrounded again...*" He made it to the O'Connor house at Elm Park, Celbridge, "...*and who escaped the next day and walked in but Paddy Mullaney...*" The third of the trio arrested together, Domhnall Ua Buachalla, did not return to the area. He went instead to live with his sister in Dublin. In his submission for a Military Pension he described his active service as "*faoi airm*", his commanding officer as "*me fein*" and his military operations as "*A d'iarraidh bheith saor o charcair*".

The pension committee decided "...*Ni raibh troid aige le saighdiuiri an tSaor Stait...*" and regarded him as having no Civil War service other than imprisonment in Dundalk. Mullaney was indignant that he was not awarded greater recognition, "...*Considering I was arrested with him on 1st day of Civil War and that he escaped from Dundalk and joined me after I escaped from the Curragh...*" Mullaney regarded the treatment of Ua Buachalla as "...*Unfair and wrong and unjust...*"⁴⁴

Isolating Dublin

On his return Mullaney was appointed Officer Commanding the 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, of the anti-Treaty I.R.A. Thomas Gallivan, in turn, was transferred by Liam Lynch to the Midland Division of the anti-Treaty forces where he remained until the ceasefire of 1923.⁴⁵

Mullaney began to consolidate the anti-Treaty forces in his area where allegiances could still be fluid. John Logie, of Straffan, and Matt Goff, of Leixlip, who took part in the Dunboyne raid, later joined the

National Army. Logie was to take part in the destruction of Mullaney's column at Grangewilliam, while Goff became a military policeman. Their ranks were filled by others who switched allegiances. According to O'Neill, "...Johnny Gaynor deserted with a rifle and ammunition from the 'Joy... 15 brought rifles with them when they deserted... we built the column slowly..."⁴⁶ The use of false names as a precaution in case of capture was not uncommon. Mullaney referred to a column member known as O'Brien who "...had been sent to us from Dublin..." This individual went through active service with the column, capture, trial, sentence of death, later commuted to imprisonment, as O'Brien. Mullaney only discovered his real name after he was reunited with a brother, also imprisoned in Hare Park Camp, the Curragh, after the death sentence was commuted.⁴⁷

Others who were mentioned by Mullaney as attaching themselves to the column were a "...Bert Hawney... a medical student was attached to the column... Brennan was another Dublin fellow I had in the column. He lives in Finglas now..." Also, "...Tyrell from Maynooth, a '16 man was with us and he was in our column..."⁴⁸ By 15 September 1922, National Army intelligence was aware that Thomas Gallivan had left the area and that Patrick Mullaney had taken command of anti-Treaty forces in North Kildare,⁴⁹ while Mullaney was also reporting up the chain of command a series of activities, arms dumps prepared, operations aimed at cutting communications with Dublin and planned ambushes. "... We intend to smash the railway and roads around the whole area and meet the Staters anytime we get a crack at them with a fair chance..."⁵⁰

From now on Mullaney was to forward regular reports of increasing aggression, destruction of bridges, cutting of railway lines, felling of telephone and telegraph poles. On 6 October Michael Price, O/C 1st Eastern Division, wrote to his G.H.Q. "...Our strength in Meath 1 consists of 15 men who are controlled by O.C. Mullaney with M. O'Neill as his Bde. Q.M. and Engineer. This crowd are on continuous active service as attempts at recruiting etc., have proved a failure... I must allow that most of the material this crowd have had gone to them in the last fortnight..."⁵¹ On 10 October he repeated his 1921 attack on Lucan Barracks,⁵² while a few days later a Commandant Buggle travelling to Dublin from Trim was ambushed near Leixlip, leaving him wounded and his despatches confiscated.⁵³

October 1922 saw Mullaney consolidate the organisation of his column, moulding it into a compact and resourceful anti-Treaty force of high morale and competency, seemingly able to roam at will throughout North Kildare destroying communications with central government in Dublin and challenging its authority whenever possible. That month the National Army assessed his force as “... *Officers 2, men 20, rifles 15, machine guns 1, motor cars 2...*” On 24 October 1922 the bridge over the river Liffey at Celbridge was blown up and on 6 November the Fever Hospital of the Celbridge Workhouse was burned down. Maynooth was briefly occupied on 30 November, and a shop, Dawson’s, raided for supplies.⁵⁴ However, Mullaney’s success was forcing the National Army to focus on his suppression. The column was increasingly isolated as the fighting spread ever southwards as the year progressed and defeat followed defeat for the anti-Treaty forces.⁵⁵

The onset of autumn and winter brought further organisational problems. Mullaney’s column did not have the logistic resources to billet its numbers safely and it sought food and shelter by occupying outhouses of the large houses in the area. Many of the owners of these buildings thought it discreet to absent themselves at this time, or to feign ignorance of any occurrences on their lands. Castletown, Celbridge, was one such bivouac but seems to have provided slim pickings. “...*He was poor then, Conolly, and only when his mother died did he get any money...*” They fared better in Clements, of Killadoon, where they slaughtered two sheep for food. They also stayed for a while at “...*Major Maunsell’s of Oakleigh Park...*” Life was becoming more precarious and hand to mouth. They could not risk robbing banks. “...*No stick ups for us was safe... we used our own personal money...*”

O’Neill related an anecdote, which while seemingly humorous, contained an edge hinting at the ongoing hardship of their lifestyle. At one stage the men were ragged for want of shirts. Mullaney ordered John O’Connor, of Elmhall, Celbridge, and a member of the column, to hold up one of the canal boats trading between Dublin and the south and commandeer shirts and bread. O’Connor duly sent word that the supplies had been procured and were available in Elm Hall. The column arrived in expectation of new shirts only to find that the hapless O’Connor had commandeered the wrong articles. “*What*

were they but ladies knickers” and the column departed as shirtless as it had arrived.⁵⁶

Canal boats were raided regularly, those between Sallins and Ardclough being most at risk, with food, tobacco, tea, clothing, and alcohol stolen. In early September the Railway Hotel, in Celbridge, was raided with whiskey, cigarettes and tobacco stolen, anti-Treaty forces being blamed. A comment in the report on the burning of the Workhouse Hospital later in November stated “...*The people of the village are much harassed by roving bands of armed men who seize shop goods...*”⁵⁷

Baldonnel (1)

“We submitted a plan and were asked if any of our men could pilot a ‘plane’.”

In a desire to strike a decisive blow that would take pressure away from the failing anti-Treaty forces in the south, Mullaney seems, by October 1922, to have planned one of the more spectacular operations of the Civil War. The original plan was an attack on Baldonnel Aerodrome and the capture of weapons and supplies. Later the plan was amended by others to include commandeering an aeroplane to bomb either government buildings, or Beggars Bush Barracks, in Dublin.

Baldonnel Aerodrome was developed in 1917 as part of the expansion of the Royal Flying Corps (R.F.C.), later the Royal Air Force (R.A.F.) The main contractors were Thomas Thompson, of Dublin. To assist delivery of materials such as cement and structural steel a narrow-gauge railway was constructed from the Great Southern and Western Railway station at Lucan South crossing through fields to the construction site. This line crossed the canal which ran parallel to the main line at the twelfth lock adjacent to Lucan by means of a trestle bridge. This railway acted as a marker for anti-Treaty forces who wished to approach the aerodrome from North Kildare or Dublin. In each of the attempts on Baldonnel the canal acted as a guide, canal cottages as command posts and at times, canal boats, were utilised as transport.⁵⁸

By May 1922, following the ratification of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, all British aircraft had been returned to England and the aerodrome handed over to the then Provisional Government who acquired aircraft of its own soon afterwards, most handed over by the evacuating

British forces. An R.A.F. Intelligence Report on the strength of the “*Irish Free State Air Force*”, dated August 1922 estimated its strength as three training aircraft, two civil machines and five “*reconn, bombing, fighting or artillery*”. A small force but enough to excite the imagination of those tasked with approving Mullaney’s original plan.⁵⁹

Mullaney in his recollections set the time of the planned attack on Baldonnel as at the end of September or beginning of October 1922.⁶⁰ He claimed the initiative was his, that he was familiar with the layout of the aerodrome as an uncle of his, who was previously in the R.I.C., had been in charge of escorting supplies to the aerodrome prior to the Treaty. As a result of information supplied Mullaney claimed to know the aerodrome “*inside out*”.⁶¹

Mullaney’s priority seem to have been the capture and destruction of the aerodrome and he confirmed infiltration of the National Army troops there “... *We could rely on from 20 to 30 men to help us on the inside...*” of which he named specifically Leo Dowling, Laurence Sheehy and a Seán McCann from Dunboyne. Seán McCann was in fact Thomas McCann of Drogheda, initially a member of the 9th South Louth Brigade, 1st Easter Division, I.R.A. He later joined the National Army and was posted to Baldonnel where he had a change of attitude as regards acceptance of the Treaty. He is referenced by several members of the column.⁶²

Confirmation of Mullaney’s claim of inside help, although not to the large extent claimed, came from a member of the column, Thomas Cardwell, of Celbridge. Cardwell, while originally from Celbridge, was a member of the Dublin Brigade in 1919. He worked then as a fitter in the Pembroke Electrical Station in Ringsend. In 1921 he returned to Celbridge on becoming unemployed and joined the Celbridge Company of the I.R.A. with Mullaney as his battalion commander. He was active throughout 1921 and took part in the Stacumney ambush that year.

During the Truce period Cardwell claimed he joined the nascent National Army, then based in the abandoned Celbridge Workhouse, on the orders of Mullaney as part of an intelligence operation. He had previously been appointed Intelligence Officer of the 1st Meath Brigade, in March 1922, by Mullaney who was carefully reorganising the North Kildare area to his liking. Cardwell was involved in what

he termed police work in Celbridge as part of his duties. As the tensions developed over acceptance, or non-acceptance of the Treaty, he became aware of individuals sympathetic to the anti-Treaty side among his fellow soldiers and so informed Alex Dwyer, his I.R.A. Company Captain, and Mullaney. As a result, Cardwell claimed, he initiated contact between Mullaney and five individuals he named as: Terry Brady, Anthony O'Reilly, Thomas McCann, Laurence Sheehy and one he named as Heaney.

According to Mary "Mollie" Dwyer, a sister of Alex Dwyer and an active member of the anti-Treaty Cumann na mBan, these contacts were ongoing. The Dwyer residence, at Hazelhatch, on the canal, was used as a rendezvous point where Mullaney could meet anti-Treaty elements from Baldonnel and acquire information and pilfered arms and ammunition. When the Civil War commenced, Thomas Cardwell was transferred to Trim and then Dundalk where he deserted with his arms, eventually rejoining Mullaney's Column.⁶³

It appears that any plan to capture aircraft and conduct a bombing raid was not part of Mullaney's design. His plan was the destruction of the aerodrome after capturing as many vehicles and arms and ammunition as possible. The plan to capture an aircraft came from higher up the chain of command after the plan was submitted. Seán Dowling of the Dublin Brigade informed Mullaney that a 'plane was to be captured and that the targets for bombing were to be "... *Government Buildings and Beggars Bush [Barracks] when the 'plane had been captured...*" Mullaney stated "...*I would have been satisfied to have captured Baldonnel...*" He had no information on the proposed pilot other than his name was Murphy.⁶⁴

Michael O'Neill provided collaboration on Mullaney's account and how the initial plan was altered further up the chain of command. He confirmed that the initial plan was the capture of Baldonnel and the removal of arms, ammunition, supplies and vehicles. The elaboration of the plan to capture a 'plane and mount a bombing raid came from their superior officers in Dublin. "...*We submitted the plan and we were asked if there were any of our men who could pilot a 'plane, as there were 3 to 4 'planes in charge of a sentry and ready to use. One was loaded with bombs, a small 'plane...*" According to O'Neill a pilot was eventually sourced by those who proposed the bombing, "...*A tall fellow who could fly a 'plane...*"⁶⁵

There are several accounts that confirm that the plan was taken very seriously in the Kildare area. James Dunne, of Kill, Co. Kildare, had been a member of the Irish Volunteers since 1917. By 1922 he was an anti-Treaty veteran of several prison escapes and “...*Vice O/C 7 Brigade 1 Eastern Division 1922-3...*” Dunne stated that “...*In November 1922 I got word to report to Celbridge area to co-operate with the North Kildare Meath Brigade Column of 30 men under Column O/C Patrick Mullaly [Mullaney]...*” According to Dunne the capture of Baldonnel was planned by Mullaney who was promised assistance from the Dublin Brigade “...*under GHQ Officer Todd Andrews...*”

Dunne confirmed that drivers had been recruited to drive away vehicles including armoured cars and equipment making the point that this was not to be a hit and run raid but a serious attempt to strike a devastating blow to the National Army by destroying its main aerodrome.⁶⁶

Mullaney in one of his accounts named some auxiliaries specifically recruited for the Baldonnel attack, “...*Alex Dwyer, P. Gallagher, Jas. Meade, P. Fagan, P. Healy...*”⁶⁷ These were all from the Celbridge locality. James Meade had been in charge of transport at the Stacumney ambush in July 1921 to ensure that commandeered vehicles would function in the event of a rapid withdrawal.⁶⁸ It is probable these auxiliaries, among others, were to drive away captured vehicles.

Dunne also referenced two ex-British airmen (presumably ex-Royal Flying Corps or Royal Air Force) to pilot two captured aeroplanes and bomb Leinster House. He also confirmed that Mullaney had secured the infiltration of Baldonnel by up to thirty anti-Treaty sympathisers. In Dunne’s recollection the Kildare force in total came to eighty men in all. Dublin Brigade were committed to provide 100 but in the circumstances Dunne described, only twenty turned up leaving the attacking force well short of the manpower needed for a successful attack so that according to Dunne, Christopher “Todd” Andrews, described as a G.H.Q. Officer, called off the attack.

Dunne claimed three attempts were made to attack Baldonnel, but evidence from witnesses would confirm two, with five anti-Treaty sympathisers joining Mullaney at the second failed attempt. Common to all failed attempts was the incapacity of the Dublin Brigade to supply sufficient support.⁶⁹ Tom Harris in his Military Service Pension Application declared his participation in at least

one Baldonnel attack “...Mobilised all available men in brigade Area and took them to Hazelhatch to co operate on an attack on Baldonnel aerodrome on instruction from H.Q. in mid November 1922...”⁷⁰ Hazelhatch Bridge near Celbridge crosses the canal which provided a route to Baldonnel. His brief comment on the failure of the attack was to the point. The attack failed because they had been let down by what was described as “*the Dublin crowd*”.⁷¹

There are some corroborative pieces of evidence from Cumann na mBan members of the Dublin Brigade. Peggy Cullen (formerly Doyle) claimed to have “...*personally helped to remove stuff for the attack on Baldonnel...*”⁷² Mary Flannery Woods was one of the Dublin contingent who turned up for at least one attack. She described assembling at Clondalkin for the big operation “...*which was to be an attempt to capture Baldonnel and garrison...*” They followed the canal due west and assembled at a cottage on the bank which was used as a command post. Woods was set as lookout with a rifle and side arm and had nothing to say about how the events unfolded. According to her she was the first to encounter the National Army men who left the aerodrome to join Mullaney. “...*I was at an outpost with rifle and small [arm] and was lying on a bank when I challenged a party coming towards me. They gave the correct password. They were in Free State uniform and I ordered them to remain where they were. I had not been told this was likely to happen. Some one came up from the house and told me to let them through and later I learned they were from Baldonnel Camp and were there to help us...*” This account complements O’Neill’s account of those leaving and their reasons “...*the five or six who were to have handed over the plane had to desert as they were afraid they would have been suspect...*”⁷³

The use of a password by the National Army men indicates prior planning and communication and vindicates Mullaney’s contention that he had recruited support for the anti-Treaty force within the aerodrome. Woods confirmed the recruitment of a pilot who came with them, supplied from the Dublin side of the operation. “...*We had a pilot with us who was to take up a plane if the operation was a success...*” She elaborated further attributing the failure of the Dublin Brigade to the attrition of anti-Treaty forces. “...*It was late in the Civil War nearly all were in jail...*” Those who did turn up were well armed with “...*rifles, small arms and machine guns...*” Woods made

her escape after the abandonment of the attack by canal boat towards Dublin. Of those in the contingent she referenced “...Tom Derrig, Sean Dowling, J. Doyle, T. Healy, J. Brogan...”⁷⁴

The only one of the superior officers on the Dublin side who gave any account of a planned attack on Baldonnel was Christopher Andrews who wrote of the plan in terms of the capture of a ‘plane only and ignored the other aspects of the plan. At the time of the Baldonnel affair he was a G.H.Q. Staff Officer for the anti-Treaty forces.⁷⁵ Significantly, he began his account “...By this time I had my innocent beliefs in the inherent virtues of the leaders of the Movement eroded...”⁷⁶

Andrews referenced the failure in mid-1922 of a plan to isolate Dublin by the destruction of all bridges leading into the city resulting in the capture of many of the anti-Treaty forces in Dublin, the so called “*Bridge Project*.” This may have led Andrews to be wary of future plans which involved large scale mobilisation of anti-Treaty forces and consequent risk of disclosure and capture.

Following the failure “...It was proposed to seize Baldonnel Aerodrome and commandeer an aeroplane loaded with bombs that were to be dropped on Government Buildings...” Andrews elaborated further, the aeroplane was to land on Merrion Strand after the mission. Originally Seán Dowling, who was Officer Commanding North-eastern Command, but later Tom Derrig was placed in command of the operation by G.H.Q. Andrews was the only participant to make the point that

“...The full collusion expected from the inside did not materialise...” This may well account for the discrepancy between the assurances of Mullaney and O’Neill that up to thirty participants inside the camp were willing to change sides in the event of an attack and the number who actually changed sides. He confirmed that two attempts were made to attack the aerodrome, each called off for lack of support from the Dublin side. This failure may be related to losses and poor morale resulting from the “*Bridge Project*”.

It is when Andrews described the detail of the bombing operation that the full force of his scepticism becomes apparent as he makes clear his complete lack of belief in either the competency of the pilot, or the viability of the plan, “...I do not know who checked his credentials, it is possible no one did...” It is unnecessary to quote his analysis in detail

other than to say it borders on the vitriolic. His forensic examination of the bombing plan was no doubt motivated by the fact that he had been assigned as bombardier to the pilot. “...*I was to go up with John [Seán] Dowling in the captured aeroplane to discharge the bombs on Government Buildings...*” He was convinced that the pilot nominated was a fantasist who could not in fact fly a ‘plane, and there is more than a hint that he believed this tendency towards fantasy was shared by those who concocted the bombing plan. Andrews might have been even more sceptical if he had been aware that an R.A.F. Intelligence Report of August 1922 had concluded that none of the aeroplanes at Baldonnel were fitted with bomb racks. Like Woods, Andrews escaped by canal boat, in his case to Dolphins Barn, where he was pleased to disembark “...*as the hold was alive with crawling insects...*”⁷⁷ It is unfortunate that Andrews did not develop a more complete analysis of the plan in total. As it is, his contention that the numbers in Baldonnel prepared to switch sides in the event of an attack is a useful counterpoint to the stated belief that a significant body of National Army troops would turn out to assist the attackers.

Baldonnel (2)

Failure and Recriminations.

Mullaney as the principal mover, in what may be called the Baldonnel Plan, recollected two attempts so we may take that as definitive. In his initial reconnaissance along the canal, he was assisted by one of his auxiliaries, Alex Dwyer, of Hazelhatch.⁷⁸ On the first attempt he gave no date, other than it was a Tuesday, when Mullaney, O’Neill and Tom Derrig based themselves in a command post about a mile from the aerodrome. This would place them close to the narrow-gauge railway off the main line at Lucan South. Mullaney claimed he brought twenty-two men expecting a larger contingent from the Dublin Brigade of which only thirty showed up. In Mullaney’s view this force in total, even with help from sympathisers inside the camp, was not sufficient for success and he so advised Derrig. A decision was made to postpone the attack for two weeks and the attacking force withdrew. Two weeks later Mullaney re-assembled his force only to find the Dublin Brigade failed to provide sufficient numbers so the attack was called off and cancelled permanently.⁷⁹

In order to create a distraction to cover the departure of the National

Army troops who switched allegiance, a sniping attack was mounted on Lucan Barracks as a diversion. Those who defected are named as “...Sheehy, Riley, McCann and Dowling came out...” They took with them a Lewis machine gun and pans of ammunition.⁸⁰ Mullaney resented the abandonment of the attack blaming it on the failure of the Dublin Brigade to turn up in sufficient numbers. “...I had no respect for Sean Dowling after the Baldonnell affair...” His bitterness was compounded by the fact that he had been liaising with Dowling. “I dealt with Dowling all the time”. He sent Fanny O’Connor to seek an urgent meeting to arrange for badly needed supplies. Dowling was playing cards and in no mood to be disturbed. He invited O’Connor to play and she played cards “reluctantly”, probably to humour him. Mullaney was scathing in further remarks, “...He was to come over one night for I sent Fanny O’Connor to see him... Later he said he was busy, but he wasn’t busy...”⁸¹

Christopher Andrews was also the subject of decades of resentment for the same reason.⁸² This may have been unfair and the comment of Andrews that the support within Baldonnell was exaggerated merits consideration, as does the comment of Flannery Woods that the Dublin Brigade had been depleted as a result of previous campaigns such as the “*Bridge Project*”. The subsequent executions of five of those who left Baldonnell the night of the final abandonment of the attack only added to the bitterness and guilt. He refused to discuss Baldonnell even in his pension applications and only to O’Malley in the 1950s did he provide any information, and then to justify his position and lay the blame for failure on the Dublin Brigade and G.H.Q. Staff.⁸³

Michael O’Neill as Mullaney’s second in command unsurprisingly supports the contention that the capture of Baldonnell if properly resourced “...would have been an easy job to carry out...” He elaborated on how initial contact was made with anti-Treaty sympathisers in Baldonnell with the canal providing a communication route from Lucan to Hazelhatch and Celbridge. According to O’Neill, “...O’Reilly of Celbridge, a local county authority, got in touch with us and he brought a chap Heaney and Lt. Dowling from Baldonnell a few times, ...they showed us a plan of Baldonnell...” “Lt. Dowling,” was in fact Corporal Leo Dowling, Heaney was Sylvester Heaney and O’Reilly was in fact Anthony Reilly, an orphan from the Celbridge Workhouse,

born on 13 June 1902, educated in the local Abbey National School and fostered out from the workhouse to the Mullins family of Simmonstown, Celbridge. Reilly joined the National Army, probably in April 1922 with the others, when the Workhouse ironically served as a temporary barracks and recruiting centre for the National Army.⁸⁴ His description as a “*local county authority*” from a comrade in arms hints of prejudice not yet dispelled in Irish society to this day.

Whether these young men understood the peril they were placing themselves in is a matter for conjecture. The audacious plan had failed. Had it succeeded the government and National Army response would have been ferocious. By this stage some on the anti-Treaty side were starting to conclude that the struggle was futile, and the future lay in political rather than armed opposition. The planned attack was to fade from memory and Andrews, Derrig, Dowling and others made no mention of it in their Military Service Pension Applications, almost as if it was a bad idea best forgotten.

Unintended Consequences

Grangewilliam 1 December 1922.

The abandonment of the attack on Baldonnel and the inability of the Dublin Brigade to mount large scale operations left Mullaney's Column in a precarious position. The Civil War was not going well for the anti-Treaty forces who were increasingly on the defensive in the South and West, their remaining main areas of operation.⁸⁵ This left them increasingly isolated from any support.

Typically, Mullaney remained defiant and aggressive. During November 1922 he continued to disrupt and destroy communications of all sorts between Dublin and the rest of the country. At different dates he effectively occupied Leixlip, Maynooth and Celbridge for brief periods as well as destroying the bridge over the Liffey at Celbridge and burning the Workhouse hospital there.⁸⁶ He was becoming an irritant to the Government forces, and should his position ever be located they would respond with overwhelming force.

The destruction of the Column came about not because of any planned engagement on its part, or of a skilfully executed operation by the National Army, but rather as the result of unplanned and unforeseen events which forced Mullaney into reactive actions which eventually led to his losing control of the situation.

There are several sources for the final confrontation between the North Kildare Column and government forces. The Military Archives contain a report headed "*Report on Leixlip/Maynooth Operations i.xii. '22 from Aodh Mac Neill, Col Comdt. to Director of Statistics GHQ Portobello Barracks, 11.45pm, 1 Dec. '22.* Aodh Mac Neill/Hugh (or Hugo) MacNeill, was a senior officer of National Army troops at Grangewilliam.⁸⁷ He was lucky to escape alive. Mullaney was to comment "...*Hugo Mac Neill had a look at us. He didn't know how near death he was that day for we had him covered with a rifle and Tommy Gun and before we could shoot something happened...*"⁸⁸

The *Irish Independent* of 2 December 1922, carried an account also that tallies with MacNeill, probably as a result of being briefed by an army source. The most comprehensive account is to be found in the *Leinster Leader* of 9 December 1922. This account confuses separate incidences in the initial stages but contains details that indicate information sourced from members of the government force in the intervening days.

Mullaney related nothing in the *O'Malley Notebooks* that would indicate that he planned or anticipated the events that occurred. O'Neill gave an account that supports that view.

At the end of November, as winter developed, the column foraged and bivouacked as was customary for them in abandoned houses or lands. In this case the column took over, on the night of 30 November 1922, Blakestown House, on the Leixlip-Maynooth road west of Leixlip. It is on the northern side of the road with the canal and parallel railway on the south side and is adjacent to Kellystown Lane, (now the L1014), which branches north from the main road.

According to O'Neill the column took over the stables at Blakestown House, releasing the horses there into the fields. The stables were barricaded and sentries posted. Close by and on the opposite side of the road and slightly to the Leixlip side was Collinstown House.

Shortly after 9.00 am on the morning of 1 December 1922 a military lorry left Lucan Barracks on a routine supply mission to National Army troops in Maynooth who were under the command of Captain Joseph Ledwith. The supply lorry was commanded by Vice Commandant Lynam; with him was a quartermaster sergeant in charge of the supplies and a private soldier acting as driver. Ledwith and his force were engaged in searching trains passing through

Maynooth railway station for anti-Treaty personnel and lines of communication.

A short distance from Collinstown, on the Maynooth side of Leixlip, the supply lorry broke down. Unaware of their surroundings the occupants of the lorry dismounted and set about repairs. Whether in panic, or without thinking through the possible consequences of their actions, the sentries at Blakestown House opened fire.⁸⁹

Hugo MacNeill supported this chronology “...At 9.30am this morning a Ration Lorry (Ford) carrying rations from Lucan to Maynooth was ambushed near Collinstown house on the road to Maynooth by a party of irregulars (anti-Treaty forces, as described by government forces)...”

The lorry party were armed only with revolvers which they managed to conceal from the anti-Treaty force. The ration lorry was then set on fire. Blakestown House was now unsafe for the column, so they moved with their prisoners three kilometres west to Grangewilliam House, possibly by means of the Deey Canal Bridge approaching Grangewilliam from the rear. Grangewilliam House is approached from the Leixlip-Maynooth road by crossing the canal and railway at Pike Bridge on to the current L5063. The distance from Pike Bridge to the entrance to Grangewilliam is several hundred metres only. “... The Irregulars then burnt the lorry and took the officer and two men with them as prisoners in a house near Pike Bridge which they evidently intended to use for the day..”

Comdt. Lynam survived, being eventually rescued. He left the army in 1927 with the rank of captain in 1927, but died in 1928 as the result of a motor accident. He was survived by his sister Mary Lynam of Confey, Leixlip.⁹⁰ According to O’Neill a ‘Seán McCann,’ “a good man to throw a bomb” put on the uniform of the captured sergeant. (This was Thomas McCann who had defected from Baldonnel).

A defence line was set out as a precaution. A small group were placed in a small graveyard and ruined church, Donoghmore, overlooking Pike Bridge to cover any advance on Grangewilliam House from the main road. They were armed with the Lewis gun taken from Baldonnel, manned by John Gaynor.⁹¹ A picket line was placed in a wooded area across from the entrance to Grangewilliam and covering any possible advance from Maynooth. The Royal Canal and a railway line lay between the main road and the Grangewilliam

lands, the only crossing point being Pike Bridge, thus providing security from investigative patrolling from that side.

The column's plan seemed not to stay in Grangewilliam but to move on to Maynooth, indicating they were not aware of Ledwith's force. Their prisoners were not ill-treated and were fed and placed under guard. "...*The attacking party were all armed with service rifles and some of them carried Peter the Painter and Smith and Wesson revolvers. Three of them were wearing uniform almost identical with that worn by the national troops...*" This may be a reference to some of those who left Baldonnel. The Peter the Painter refers to a C96 Mauser automatic pistol.⁹² Apart from their defensive line the Column were not on alert and were feeding in the kitchen when eventually surprised by government troops.⁹³

Crucially, the *Leinster Leader* and *Irish Independent* accounts relate that not all the troops on the ration lorry were captured. In the confusion of the firefight the column had not accurately ascertained the number of occupants in the supply truck, and so were not aware that they had not captured all. The driver, in the confusion remained hidden and evaded capture. Lynam and his sergeant clearly did not volunteer any information as to his existence "...*the driver had previously managed to get away...*"⁹⁴ MacNeill's report told of "*the officer and two men*" as prisoners making no mention of an escapee. One possible explanation is that later in the fighting that developed another National Army soldier was captured. MacNeill the writer of the report would have known that three soldiers were on the ration lorry when it was captured and that three soldiers were eventually rescued at the end of the engagement. He may have assumed they were the same as those on the lorry. An obvious escape route for the driver was via a roadside ditch to the canal and railway line. By the nature of his mission, he would have known of the presence of Comdt. Ledwith and his men at Maynooth station.

Assuming the driver made his way by railway line to Maynooth station to Ledwith, and his men and a functioning telephone line, there then commenced a series of events that was to destroy the last functioning anti-Treaty column in North Kildare. In any event, "...*Information of the affair later in the day reached Commandant Ledwith who had been searching trains passing through Maynooth to and from Dublin...*"⁹⁵

When Ledwith eventually assembled an attacking force he made straight across country to Grangewilliam House. He knew where his target was, possibly if not probably, from the escaped driver who even in hiding would have observed events, if only to ensure his own safety.⁹⁶ He also knew who his target was. Ledwith was active in 1919-1921 and accompanied Mullaney as part of a support group for a proposed attack on the R.I.C. in Castledermot. An attack that was eventually cancelled. On the way they were involved in a bizarre incident in which they crashed with a car containing as passenger General Hugh Jeudwine, General Officer commanding the Curragh. The damage was minor necessitating a slight delay only.

Mullaney stuck to his orders seeing their support for the attack in Castledermot as priority and talked his way out of the incident. (Perhaps Jeudwine was as happy not to provoke a shoot-out where he was isolated with only a driver and aide de camp for support). Ledwith was not impressed, “...*I had him covered with my revolver to shoot him. But Mullaney would not allow me...*” The Castledermot ambush was abandoned later in the day and Mullaney may have come to regret not taking Jeudwine prisoner. Ledwith certainly thought it a missed opportunity. On 1 May 1922 Ledwith was appointed Police Officer of the 4th Batt., 1st Eastern Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, under command of Seán Boylan. He was by all accounts a capable officer, and effective in organising a response to Mullaney and his column.⁹⁷

Ledwith requisitioned a small group of soldiers travelling on the Dublin to Mullingar train. They had a Lewis gun, the rest were armed with rifles. Along with his own troops Ledwith now had a force of around twenty men. He had use of a telephone and sent information and a request for reinforcements to Portobello Barracks, Dublin, and to Naas, Trim and Lucan. These would take time to arrive so in order to pin Mullaney and his men down he moved his men in extended formation across country keeping to the south of the main road, canal and railway, heading straight for the picket line Mullaney had set out in the wooded area to the Maynooth side of Grangewilliam. By virtue of having to advance Ledwith was the most exposed of the two opposing groups. Mullaney's group opened fire first killing one soldier, Joseph Moran, and taking another prisoner.

Private Moran and one other soldier appeared to have become

detached from the main group and while crawling towards Grangewilliam House on open ground were spotted and fired on; Moran being killed in the first volley with a shot through the head. “...*He never spoke a word but just lay quite still on his back...*” His companion was taken prisoner and brought to the house. But Ledwith had achieved his objective. His men opened fire and kept the Grangewilliam party engaged and pinned down.⁹⁸

Vicker’s, Lewis and Thompson guns

In the meantime, reinforcements were gathering. According to MacNeill’s report, having received information as to the incident at Blakestown House, and more importantly of the location of Mullaney’s column “...*near Pike Bridge...*”, a motorised detachment of troops was assembled at Wellington Barracks, Dublin (now Griffith College), consisting of seven officers, forty men, a Whippet armoured car, a Fiat armoured car and five tenders. They were under the command of General Dan Hogan, the officer in charge of the barracks. All in all, formidable firepower to bring down on the column at Grangewilliam.

The reinforcement group proceeded to Lucan where they picked up a guide who knew the locality. At Collinstown House they stopped at the burnt-out lorry to recover a commandeered car abandoned by the anti-Treaty group before proceeding to Pike Bridge and the crossing to Grangewilliam House. At Collinstown they were joined by troops from Naas. As this force approached Pike Bridge they came under fire from the graveyard at Donoghmore, which wounded one soldier. The firepower brought to bear on the group in the graveyard forced them to evacuate their position and retreat. Pike Bridge was forced, and a link established with Ledwith’s group.

A flanking movement was then begun to surround Mullaney. Brigadier MacDonnell moved back to the Deey Bridge canal crossing adjacent to Collinstown House and east of Grangewilliam while the Pike Bridge group with an armoured car and commanded by Commandant Saurin and Captain Travers pushed on to the rear of Grangewilliam which was now surrounded and came under heavy and sustained fire.

At this stage Lynam on behalf of the prisoners complained of the danger the unarmed prisoners were in, but apparently was told by a defender that “...*they were going to take the same risks as themselves...*”

This was no throwaway remark, as when the house had to be evacuated afterwards the prisoners were taken with the column as it retreated across country. Eventually, as the situation of Mullaney and his men became more desperate, they were discarded and made their escape.

Mullaney had no escape option but to try to escape in the developing winter darkness and perhaps outflank the government troops at Ballygoran near Celbridge and head into Castletown Demesne. However, more reinforcements had arrived from Mullingar, Baldonnel, the Curragh and Trim. Armoured cars and troops in Crossley tenders patrolled the road, trapping the column in a triangle of fire. On their left flank troops under Saurin and Travers had linked up with Ledwith. On their right flank were MacDonnell and his troops, who had crossed the Deey canal bridge, and on the roads bordering the Grangwilliam lands mechanised patrols cut off any line of retreat. Meanwhile, MacNeill described how another party travelled by road by Ballygoran House and nearby Kilwogan frustrating any line of retreat by that route. “...*the sounds of the firing from Vickers [machine guns on the armoured vehicles] Lewis and Thompson guns and rifles was heard for miles around...*”⁹⁹

O’Neill admitted the effectiveness of the operation, “...*We tried to return for Castletown by the obelisk but the armoured car beat us...*”¹⁰⁰

The *Leinster Leader* gave an eyewitness account of an unnamed officer, possible Travers or Saurin, describing the end, as according to MacNeill, it was they who took the surrender of Mullaney and his men. “...*With ten men, he said, I pushed my way along cautiously towards where the fire came from. It was like a chapter from a Red Indian novel. We crept along under cover until we suddenly saw about twenty men, three of them in uniform. We hesitated about firing, but one of them turning round caught sight of us and immediately they opened fire. We replied of course and it was all over inside ten minutes...*”¹⁰¹

MacNeill gave the time of surrender at 4.00 pm when darkness was falling. The timing was crucial, Mullaney had hoped to use the darkness to escape. “...*Every side we turned we met a bunch of them. In another half hour we would have got away in the dark. An armoured car cut the top off a bank behind which we lay. We fired away until we had no rounds left to fire...*” It was at this stage that one of the column was seriously wounded. “...*One F/S lost his head and let a burst of machine gun at Charlie O’Connor a shoemaker. In hospital for months*

*and months in the Curragh...*¹⁰² The dead soldier, Pte. Moran, and those wounded on both sides were removed by ambulance. The three prisoners were safely reunited with their units. Private J. Gilmore, of Wellington Barracks, was named as one of the wounded. He had wounds to his left arm and thigh, that part of his body exposed as he crossed Pike Bridge under fire from the graveyard to his left. He was taken to Jervis St. Hospital, Dublin. One of Mullaney's men named O'Connor was described as seriously wounded and was taken to Mercer's Hospital, Dublin. Twenty-two prisoners were taken, three of them wounded, along with twenty-one rifles, one Lewis machine gun, one Thompson submachine gun, five revolvers, one C96 Mauser automatic, five bombs and 1,000 rounds of ammunition.¹⁰³

Identification and Interrogation

Wellington Barracks.

Ominously, four of those who had left Baldonnel previously were identified on the spot. *"...Included in the captured party are 4 men who deserted from BALDONNEL CAMP a couple of days ago, taking their arms with them..."*¹⁰⁴

On capture the prisoners were searched and some beaten, according to Mullaney. *"...Paddy Nolan one of our lads who had been in the British army had army medals on his watch chain and a ruddy fella of F. Stater took them and brought them down with a bang on his head and drew blood..."* The arrival of Comdt. MacNeill on the scene put an end to the ill-treatment.¹⁰⁵

One of the National Army party was John Logie, from Straffan. He had been a member of Mullaney's column and fought with him at Stacumney.¹⁰⁶ Initially, Logie had sided with Mullaney against the Treaty and was one of the group that raided Seán Boylan's headquarters for arms. But old loyalties remained steadfast and probably saved Mullaney from execution. *"...A lad from Straffan, captain Jack Logie came up to me. He had been one of my lads. He said, will I search you Paddy? Do I said. No one will ever find what I get he said. Well take all these papers for they would send me over the top, and my watch. Don't let any of the papers be seen, I said to him. Later he gave me back a watch for the watch I gave him..."* Michael O'Neill confirmed the role of their old comrade, Logie. *"...John Logie from Straffan took the papers from me and I got rid of my ammunition on the way to*

*Dublin...*¹⁰⁷ The prisoners were then taken to Wellington Barracks for interrogation by the National Army Intelligence Department based there, where they were treated roughly. According to O'Neill "...everyone of the lads beaten except Mullaney and myself..."¹⁰⁸ That was soon to change and once again Mullaney had a lucky escape. Mullaney and O'Neill were placed in a cell which was guarded by Private Richard Sherry from Confey, Leixlip. He had enlisted in the National Army on 22 August 1922, in Wellington Barracks. Sherry was twenty-four years of age. He was too old to have attended the Boys National School, Leixlip, where Mullaney was a teacher, but he would have known of Mullaney by repute.

At midnight according to Mullaney there was a commotion outside the cell door as two officers, named Dolan and Bolster, arrived and demanded access to the men inside. Sherry refused and Mullaney heard Dolan and Bolster threaten him for refusing them access to the prisoners. Sherry in turn threatened to shoot them if they persisted and they left. It is not beyond the bounds of probability that Dolan and Bolster were intoxicated.¹⁰⁹

Dolan and Bolster were probably members of the Intelligence Department based in Wellington Barracks. The encounter was ominous.

On 7 October, three youths were engaged in posting anti-Treaty propaganda on walls, including calling for the killing of intelligence agents, were arrested. They were taken to Wellington Barracks for interrogation. The next morning their bodies were found in Clondalkin. Edwin Hughes and Brendan Holohan were seventeen years of age. Joe Rogers was sixteen years old.

Somehow, they had been taken from Wellington Barracks to Clondalkin and murdered. A midnight request by intelligence officers to interrogate a prisoner was suspicious, and Sherry would have been aware, as many in the Barracks were, of the murders of the three young men. His resolute action may well have saved Mullaney's life.¹¹⁰

Francis "Frank" Bolster was a former member of Collins's Squad. He was based in the Intelligence Department in Wellington Barracks and was reputedly not beyond ill-treatment of prisoners during interrogation.¹¹¹

Kilmainham, Courts Martial and Military Courts

From Wellington Barracks the prisoners were transferred to Kilmainham Jail, in Dublin. In Kilmainham the group who had left Baldonnel were separated from the others. Initially, four men were immediately identified and a fifth subsequently. They were sent for trial by court martial.¹¹² Their outlook was bleak. They had deserted their post in a time of war, deserting to the enemy taking arms and ammunition with them. Furthermore, they had taken part in armed conflict against their former comrades resulting in the death of one of them leaving them open to the charge of treachery by assisting in an attack on their companions in the National Army.

Cahir Davitt who had been appointed Judge Advocate General of the Irish Free State Army had completed *The General Regulations as to Discipline*, which contained *inter alia*, offences in relation to military service, mutiny, insubordination and also desertion with appropriate penalties from death downwards. The deserters were therefore subject to military as opposed to civil law.¹¹³ Davitt in fact was a humane person and was reluctant to sanction capital punishment in general. At times he was to persuade the Executive Council of the government to exercise clemency and commuting of execution.¹¹⁴ Davitt was later to make a crucial intervention in the military trial of Mullaney and his men.

Mullaney's men were also unlucky in the time of their capture. Following the activities of the National Army in the south there had been an increase in desertions in the Munster area that autumn. An earlier tolerance of changing sides because of personal conviction as to the morality of supporting the Treaty was lost by now in the increasing bitterness of the war. The Army Council of the government decided that an example should be made to deter future desertions and to enforce discipline and the five young men were to hand. Their youth, inexperience, lack of education, incapacity to analyse the consequences of their action, or the probability they were induced by others as part of a greater design, were never going to be mitigating factors. In 2019 Sean Enright named Mullaney as the one "...who had suborned the young National Army men..."¹¹⁵

The *Army Census Returns* for November 1922 were crucial to their convictions. Prior to the census the National Army had no conclusive evidence as to the identity of any individual in its ranks.

In the confusion of loyalties around acceptance of the Treaty it was not unusual for individuals to change sides, or indeed change names.

Four servicemen were identified at Grangewillam visually, and by means of the census return one other was added. All were based in “Baldonnel Post,” all seemed to have joined together in Celbridge on 3 April 1922 and so would have known each other from that date. All were companions in same unit, Number 3 Unit, 1st Batt., 1st Eastern Division. All were unmarried. They were as follows:

Cpl. Leo Dowling (18), of Yew Tree House, the Curragh Camp.

Cpl. Sylvester Heany (19), of Dillonstown, Dunleer, Co. Meath.

Private Laurence Sheeky (21), of Robinstown, Slane, Co. Meath.

Private Terence Brady (18), of Wilkinstown Navan Co.Meath.

Private Anthony Reilly, age not entered.

Reilly as a workhouse orphan may not have known his correct age. He was born on 13 June 1902. His home address was Hazelhatch, Celbridge. More properly Simmonstown is that of the Mullins family to which Anthony Reilly was fostered from Celbridge Workhouse. His date of enlistment is left blank, but it is probably the same as his companions. Reilly’s census return alone has an entry in red ink “*Deserter at present 21/11/22*”. This would indicate that the second attempt on Baldonnel was prior to that date and that all the defectors from Baldonnel left prior to that date. Mullaney and O’Neill at least had some awareness of the danger they were in from the beginning. O’Neill recorded, “... *We had asked GHQ to shift these men to another part of the country, the deserters from the free state, but they replied they were to be kept in the area...*”¹¹⁶ That decision sealed the fate of five young lives.

It is probably that not all those who defected at Baldonnel were identified. Initially, the Baldonnel group gave false names to escape identification.¹¹⁷ Mullaney claimed that six soldiers left Baldonnel that night, of which five were identified and later executed. Thomas McCann had his identity suppressed by someone friendly towards him.¹¹⁸ Gaynor, from Leixlip a former soldier, who had defected earlier, “... *he was in charge of a m.g. we got from Baldonnel the day we were captured...*”¹¹⁹ passed himself off as Mooney.¹²⁰ Whether he convinced the Intelligence Department in Wellington Barracks he was Mooney, or whether he enlisted as Mooney and reverted to Gaynor on capture, is not known. No John Gaynor in the appropriate

age range, or location, is listed on the Army Census Return.

Thomas McCann from Drogheda, who held the rank of sergeant in Baldonnell, evaded detection. Mullaney suggested that information identifying him was suppressed by a source friendly to him.¹²¹ O'Neill confirmed "...*The Staters didn't touch Gaynor or McCann. They had no record of their papers...*"¹²² By such stratagems was death avoided.

Courts Martial of the Five: "...Word was sent to us that they were to be executed..."

The courts martial of the five servicemen took place on 11 December 1922. Their sentences were a foregone conclusion and "...*word was sent to us that they were to be executed...*"¹²³

The executions were carried out on 8 January 1923 in, it is believed, Kilmainham Jail. Their cause of death is uniformly recorded "*Shock and haemorrhage following gunshot wounds*" and their death certificates denote place of death as Keogh Barracks and the informant of death as D. T. O'Doherty "...*Present at death, Keogh Barracks...*"

It is always possible that O'Doherty was based in Keogh Barracks and while witnessing the executions in Kilmainham completed the forms using his normal place of posting.¹²⁴ During the renovation of Kilmainham Jail in recent years various layer of prisoner graffiti have been uncovered, including one in a former prison cell commemorating those executed on 8 January 1923. It is in cruciform in shape on a wall and within the cruciform shape is written,

By their Comrades of the Column

R.I.P.

In Memoriam

Executed 8th. January 1923

There follows a list in alphabetical order, with some names misspelled, probably because the men were not attached long enough to the column to be known.¹²⁵

T. Brady

L. Dowling

Sylvester Heaney

A. O'Reilly

L. Sheehy

Hiding Evidence

Auxiliaries of the column had become active immediately in early December 1922 on the capture of the column and documents and material, dangerous to them and advantageous to the prosecution, were taken from their original hiding places and made safe and secure. Named as undertaking this task were Mullaney's comrades from the Stacumney ambush of 1921, the Farrells of Leixlip, James and Jim, Ed Malone, Robert Crone, Diarmuid O'Neill and a W. Toole.¹²⁶ Toole was not mentioned as being involved in Stacumney and was probably a post-Treaty supporter.

By January 1923 they had helped set support and communication lines with the prisoners, passing information in and out of prison and ensuring delivery of parcels. Postering and distribution of literature publicising the conditions under which they were held was organised locally.¹²⁷ Nonetheless, the column had been effectively destroyed. A communication from the anti-Treaty *Field General Headquarters, Dublin*, dated 7 December 1922 to all units in the Eastern Division area advised that the column was "*not functioning at present*".¹²⁸

Mullaney and the rest of the column were now awaiting trial by military court and possible execution. He left no record of who was captured at Grangewilliam and who went forward for trial by military court and refused to name them, possibly as a result of how events unfolded in 1923 as the column disintegrated. "... *With regard to this (Grangewilliam) and the taking of Lewis gun and rifles from Baldonnell I think it unnecessary to give names as all were interned for long enough and 5 were executed...*"¹²⁹

Just as the military authorities failed to detect all who defected from Baldonnell, Mullaney claimed that not all his men were captured at Grangewilliam. "... *One man from the column escaped capture...*"¹³⁰

Another member of the column captured at Grangewilliam Thomas Cardwell, of Celbridge, made the same claim. A typescript record of his interview with the Military Pension Board recorded his claim that one person escaped "*A chap named Keeney*".¹³¹ There was no one of that name ever mentioned in any of the documents relating to the column. The person taking the notes from which the statement was typed up may have misheard. It is within the realm of conjecture that the person referred to may be Thomas Kealy, of Celbridge, who was active with Mullaney from 1919-1923. Kealy would have known the

locality well enough to slip away unnoticed in the gathering dark of 1 December 1922.

In 1928 Thomas Kealy was best man and witness at the wedding of Thomas Cardwell and Elizabeth Kane so he must have been friendly with him and would have known if he was missing from the prisoners. The statement in his Military Pension Application was made some years later.

This would give the column active strength at Grangewilliam as twenty-two, with twenty-one captured. The five executions left the total facing trial and possible death sentence at sixteen.

Military Court

December 1922 was a particularly dangerous time to go before a military court. On 28 September 1922 the Provisional Government had issued a Public Safety Resolution which allowed for the execution, if found guilty by a military court of, in effect, taking up arms against the government. Initially its implementation was confined to Dublin. On 17 November five young men of the anti-Treaty forces, mere rank and file, were executed under the terms of the Resolution. A week later Erskine Childers was executed by means of what many would consider a spurious interpretation of the same.

On 7 December 1922 the anti-Treaty forces retaliated with the assassination of Seán Hales, a pro-Treaty T.D. This led to the issuing of a Proclamation by the Army Council on the same date confirming the death penalty if found guilty by military court of possession of any form of military, or part of, military equipment. This led in turn, on 8 December 1922, to the controversial execution of four members of the Four Courts Executive, considered by many to have been illegal (three days later the five from Baldonnell went for trial). From then on, the government intensified, and decentralised, their execution policy. In January 1923, thirty-four men were executed, the largest amount in any month of the Civil War.¹³²

It was in this context that Mullaney and his column went on trial. It is this context also that one must place the developing stress and tensions that began to bear down on the men particularly when it appears they were subject to two, and not one, trial. Initially the prisoners were charged with unlawful possession of arms and in taking part in an attack on the National Army. As such they were

well within the confines of the Resolution of September and the Proclamation of December 1922.

Their defence was conducted by Edmond Augustine Swayne, K.C., who mounted a collective plea of guilty for all the prisoners, possibly hoping for leniency in return for a guilty plea. They were found guilty, and in the context of December 1922 clemency was a forlorn hope. They were sentenced to death.¹³³ The papers and records of the military court went as was usual for review to Cahir Davitt, Judge Advocate General of the Irish Free State Army. It was Davitt who then discovered a fatal flaw in the conduct of the case. In his judgement, a collective plea of guilty should never be accepted in a capital case. In the *General Regulations as to Discipline*, which he had drawn up on behalf of the government, each individual involved must be allowed to make a plea on their own behalf (Regulations 53, 54). In capital cases Davitt favoured a strict interpretation of procedures and was reluctant to confirm the death penalties. Davitt felt he had no option but to recommend that the death sentences should not therefore be carried out. He is vague as to what happened afterwards. Davitt was of the opinion that the sentences should be commuted to a prison term. Subsequent events in 1923 would indicate that the sentences were not carried out but remained in place.

Davitt was to wonder in his recollections as to whether Swayne knowing the regulations governing the procedures, and Davitt's reputation, set a trap which the prosecuting officer of the court fell into. Or, it might just have been a gambler's throw by Swayne on the basis that the men had nothing else to rely on and pleading guilty might earn clemency. Swayne died in 1925, unmarried and without leaving any memoirs of his military court experiences.¹³⁴

Not implementing the sentences of execution suited government policy as it moved to a quasi-hostage situation, in effect conducting executions according to outbreaks of anti-Treaty activity in any particular area. Mullaney and his men were under suspended death sentences, their lives dependant on whether the government decided how useful to its purposes their deaths might be. According to Enright "...*They had become part of a bank of persons that might be drawn upon if the need arose for further executions...*"¹³⁵

The executions were inflicting damage on anti-Treaty morale particularly among the rank and file. Psychological stress on the

prisoners was immense. In time it would bring the column to disintegration. Life could be very difficult for a Civil War prisoner, at times subject to random brutality and always the constant fear of execution. In a sense the government had institutionalised executions and the National Army had demonstrated that the ordinary soldier would carry out executions if ordered. While January 1923 was a bloody month with thirty-four prisoners executed, February saw a pause with only one execution. Executions resumed in March with eleven and in April with ten. The executions concluded in May 1923 with four executions.¹³⁶

The prisoners were eventually transferred to A Wing, Mountjoy Jail, Dublin, after their appearance before the Military Court. Seán Lehane was O/C of A Wing, while Patrick Mullaney was appointed Adjutant. Michael O'Neill was appointed Quartermaster. Initially they were allowed out of their cells only one hour a day. Later this was relaxed and increased to several hours.¹³⁷ On 18 January 1923, Liam Deasy, the anti-Treaty Assistant Chief of Staff, was captured. Prior to capture he had been moving to a position of accepting that the Civil War was lost and that the way forward for anti-Treaty forces was by political means. Deasy was tried by a military court, found guilty and sentenced to death. He asked for, and was granted, a stay of execution to allow him to use his influence to bring about negotiations to end the war and secure a peace settlement. Deasy, by so doing, inflicted further damage on anti-Treaty morale, in the field and in prison, among the ordinary fighters. The leadership cohort of the anti-Treaty forces rejected his endeavours. Ernie O'Malley denounced him as a coward and reiterated his view that the death sentence should be embraced by those subject to it. "...*The men without rank have shown the way to die; it is our duty to follow the good lead...*"¹³⁸

Disintegration

The executions had weakened morale and were an effective weapon in the government armoury. Deasy's action weakened morale further and prisoners were beginning to decide for themselves as to whether they should embrace death or not.¹³⁹ By January 1923 the anti-Treaty forces faced inevitable defeat, "...*The first four months of 1923 saw a progressive disintegration of the Republican military effort. Any large scale military activity was impossible; columns could only remain in*

*existence if small; and arms and financial resources were extremely limited...*¹⁴⁰

It was in this overall context that the column began to disintegrate, worn down by the psychological stress of a suspended death sentence that could be implemented at will, imprisonment, crumbling morale and the collapse of the military struggle. The chronology of events leading to the collapse of the column can be found in an *Abstract of a Court of Enquiry onto Breach of General Order No. 8 by members of the Leixlip Column in March 1923*.¹⁴¹

By 1925 the I.R.A. had begun to hold Courts of Enquiry into the reasons why various members of the anti-Treaty forces had signed forms of good behaviour, undertaking to be of good conduct and refrain from any further military activity. In so doing they secured an amnesty and eventual release. These forms were referred to by the anti-Treaty forces as the “...*enemy form of undertaking*...” The Court of Enquiry transcript can be found in the Military Archives Captured Documents Collection (Lot 214).

These papers originated in a raid, on 27 March 1925, on a safe house for anti-Treaty forces. While the Civil War effectively ended with a ceasefire order of 6 April 1923 by Frank Aiken, Chief of Staff of the anti-Treaty military forces, supported by Eamonn de Valera President of anti-Treaty Sinn Fein, some sections of the I.R.A. fought on, repudiating political opposition. The house raided was 167 Strand Road, Booterstown, Dublin. It was the residence of Mrs. Winifred “Una” Gordon (formerly Cassidy) the widow of Peter Gordon a former inspector in the R.I.C., who died in 1912. She became an avid supporter of the struggle for independence and denounced the Treaty as a betrayal. In 1925 she married the republican leader Austin Stack. He died in 1927. Winifred survived until 1950.¹⁴²

The document is a collection of handwritten foolscap pages in blue ink containing an account of the proceedings, relating to the disobeying of the Leixlip Column of General Order No. 8. which was as follows: “...*Our troops when captured by the enemy are not to give him any understanding or sign any document as to their future action as soldiers of the Irish Republican Army in order to secure their release. They will only accept their release unconditionally. Any violation of this order will be regarded as a serious breach of discipline and the soldier guilty will be court-martialed for same...*”¹⁴³

The enquiry into the conduct of Mullaney and his men was conducted by:

F. M. Mahon, styled President of the Court.

Sean McBride, styled Commandant and Member of the Court.

Maurice Twomey, styled Commandant and Member of the Court.

In the terms of the court Mullaney was designated in I.R.A. terms as Brigadier, and the Column as a Brigade, of the 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A. Five men were named as having signed the form of undertaking in March 1923 – Patrick Mullaney, Michael O'Neill, Thomas Cardwell, John Curley and Bertie Hawney. Mullaney as O/C took full responsibility for his actions and his men. He defended them and himself vigorously.

Mullaney began his defence by outlining his service to the anti-Treaty cause from the time of the Treaty debates. He then returned to a well-worn theme by 1925, the failure of the attempt to capture Baldonnel. He cited “...*insincerity and negligence on the part of a Senior HQ Officer ...*” as a reason for failure. He also reprised his complaints of the failure of the Dublin Brigade to supply sufficient men for the attack. He was clearly referring to C. S. Andrews and, or Seán Dowling, and there was no escaping the implications of his comments. Mullaney and his men faced a court of enquiry wherein a negative finding would clearly imply cowardice while those who failed to support the Baldonnel attack had no action taken against them. One of those he referred to was now on the staff of the 2nd Dublin Brigade. Mullaney had little to add to the narrative of the capture of the column at Grangewilliam. He narrated the trials and executions of the five identified as having left Baldonnel.

The men of the column remained in Kilmainham during the January executions it seems, because he placed the transfer of the prisoners to Mountjoy Jail on 2 February 1923, where they were placed in A Wing.¹⁴⁴

Mullaney stated at this stage in his evidence that they had not yet been put on trial. This seem to run counter to the evidence of Davitt and Enright.¹⁴⁵ It is possible that the referral of the military court papers to Davitt and his recommendation not to proceed with execution, which would have been unknown to them, confused the issue in his mind. It is clear that there was no commuting of the sentence. What is indisputable is that the threat of a death sentence

hung over all of the men since all had been captured armed. Mullaney then moved to the heart of his defence and in so doing narrated how the morale of his men was collapsing. He began by pointing out that prior to the move to Mountjoy Jail an estimated thirty to forty other prisoners had signed the “*enemy form of undertaking*”, hitting general morale further. Shortly after the transfer to Mountjoy, on 2 February, the men in his column were approached to sign the form and avail of the amnesty that went with it. It was an insidious form of psychological manipulation by the authorities.

The continuation of the execution policy that generated fear, and anxiety was counterpointed by the offer of an amnesty by the simple signing of a form. All this in the context of the Deasy recommendation to seek peace was compounded by knowledge of the failure and futility of the military campaign.

It was at this juncture the column split and eight prisoners signed the form according to Mullaney. What they had in common was that they had previously been members of the National Army. Who all of these were is a matter of conjecture but in the circumstances of the time and their personal circumstances it is not a suitable subject for investigation. Thomas Cardwell was the one exception. He had joined the National Army on the instructions of Mullaney, left later to rejoin the column and refused the inducements to sign.

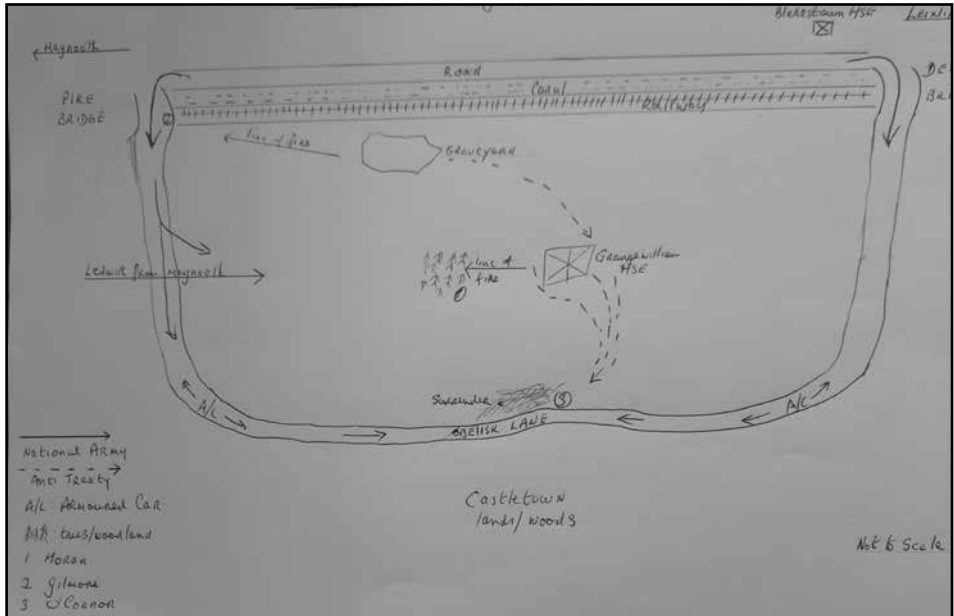
Military Court (2)

In the middle of March 1923, according to Mullaney, the psychological pressure was renewed. Mullaney and those who had not signed were given notice that they would be tried by military court at the end of that month. If the accounts of Davitt and Enright are correct this would be their second appearance and it was inevitable that the correct procedures would be followed, and a death sentence would follow. Their support group outside arranged legal representation for them, James Brady, solicitor.

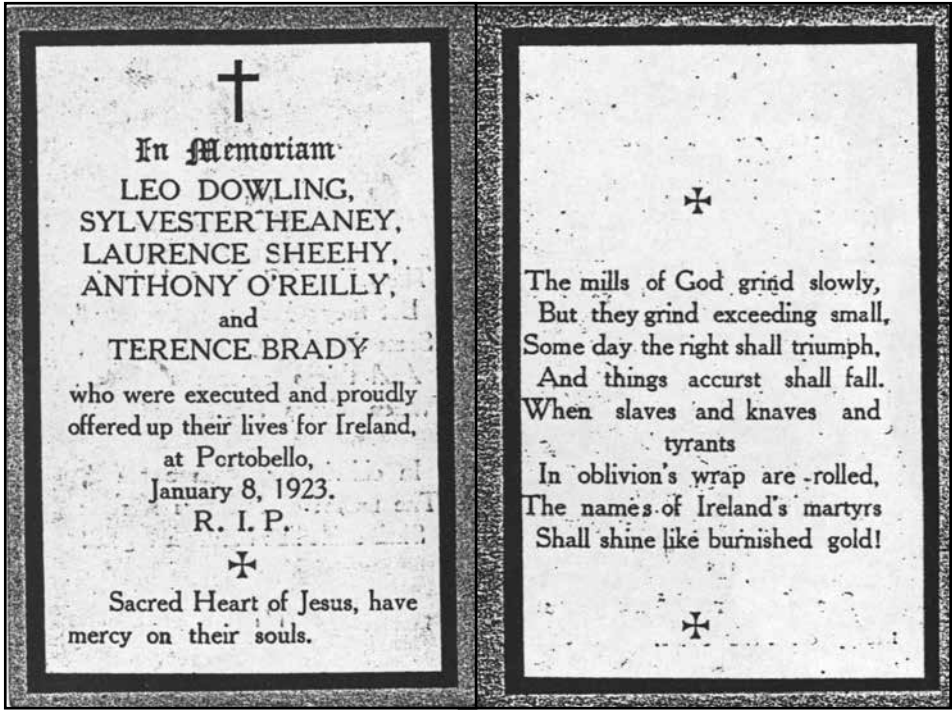
Brady came to Mountjoy for a preliminary briefing with the defendants. Mullaney as O/C and O'Neill as Vice O/C met with him on their behalf and on behalf of the men who were to be sent for trial. They were shocked to hear from Brady that prior to their meeting he had been briefed by the military court prosecutor Charles Casey. Casey had made it clear to Brady that if the remaining prisoners went



Pike Bridge



Map of the action at Pike Bridge-Grangewilliam drawn by the author



Memorial card for five executed men of the Mullaney Column



Kilmainham Jail cell with reference to not signing forms over door



Anthony Reilly, Mullaney Column member, executed in January 1923



Blakestown House and stables



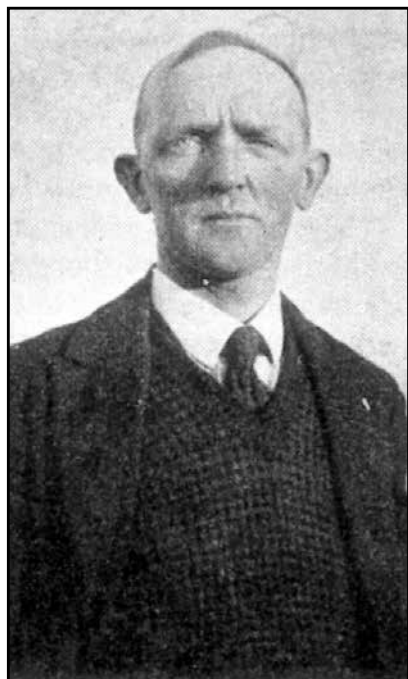
Donaghmore Cemetery in Grangewilliam



Mayo team

The picture was taken on the *SS Manhattan* on which the Mayo team – winners of the 1936 All Ireland – and selectors travelled to America in 1937. Patrick Mullaney was a selector and prominent in Mayo G.A.A. for years.

He is second row on right in the jacket.
Courtesy: Sunday Independent 30/5/2010



James Farrell, Leixlip Coy. I.R.A.



Handgun found near the National School, Leixlip, 1970s

before the military court and if they were found guilty, which was inevitable, they would be executed.

This was no idle threat, executions were continuing consistently during January, February, and March 1923. It was a successful policy as far as the government was concerned, breaking the morale of the fighters and prisoners and if it was necessary to execute Mullaney and the remainder of his men to continue this process then they would be executed without compunction. Casey made one offer only. If the men signed the form of undertaking, they would not face the death penalty. Casey like Mullaney was from Mayo, Casey being from the village of Straide. They were not known to each other.¹⁴⁶

Mullaney and O'Neill declared they would not sign or make any decision on signing without consulting with the rest of those liable for trial. They arranged with Brady to have a decision for him by 24 March 1923 the day before the trial. They had now committed themselves to a deadline for decision. Mullaney told the court of enquiry that he commenced taking advice from what he termed officers and persons of importance in A Wing but met with a reluctance to give a definite opinion one way or another. Ernie O'Malley was the most prominent and influential of the anti-Treaty officers in Mountjoy but was confined at the time to the hospital wing.¹⁴⁷

As a result, Mullaney sought advice from Seán Lehane, the Officer Commanding A Wing from March to September 1923.¹⁴⁸ Lehane's advice according to Mullaney's evidence was to let each man decide individually. By this stage Mullaney claimed that he knew some of the men had made up their minds to sign. He asked Lehane to communicate with O'Malley and obtain his opinion stating he would abide by whatever O'Malley decided.

However, by the deadline of 24 March 1923 no reply had been received. Mullaney and his men then exercised their discretion in the absence as they saw it of any firm advice or countermanding order, and they signed the form of undertaking.

O'Malley did in fact reply to Mullaney's request, but the reply came after the deadline set and when the forms had been signed. O'Malley typically repudiated any suggestion that the forms should be signed and advised the men should face the consequences of the military court. According to Mullaney, the forms had been signed by his men and he would not order them to withdraw their signatures as a matter

of honour. They had signed and would abide by the consequences of signing.

At the Court of Enquiry Mullaney made clear the reasons that guided his men and himself in signing. He was the O/C of his men. They would follow his command and refuse to sign if ordered. Therefore, he was responsible for their lives and that responsibility was his alone (and by implication not O'Malley's). He used the Baldonnel affair, again, to justify his claim that by late 1922 many of the G.H.Q. staff responsible for waging war against the government were not serious in their endeavours. Again, he charged negligence regarding the conduct of the Baldonnel attacks and again pointed out that no disciplinary action was ever taken over their conduct. Once again, the implication was clear. If the I.R.A. wanted to investigate the reasons for the loss of the Civil War it would be better advised to look elsewhere. Mullaney may have become obsessive about Baldonnel and blind to other reasons as to the failures of the Dublin Brigade. But it is possible at least that the more astute of the anti-Treaty officer cohort were coming to the conclusion, by late 1922, that the anti-Treaty struggle might best be served by political means. In later life Mullaney was to see C. S. Andrews and Tom Derrig, and others pursue political careers in Fianna Fáil, a party that grew in large part out of anti-Treaty Sinn Féin. More pertinently, Mullaney stressed that it was obvious to all by 1923 that the Civil War was lost and would inevitably end in defeat and failure. Therefore, he felt that ordering his men to take a course of action that would lead to their execution was a needless sacrifice of life which would confer no benefit thereafter. Mullaney then made what he considered a telling point "... *It was not a question of signing to obtain release, but to avoid death...*"¹⁴⁹

In a form of postscript Mullaney informed the court that it was only after the cease fire and order to dump arms of April and May 1923 that he discovered the military court had found the men guilty, sentenced them to death with the sentence commuted to seven years penal servitude by order of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State. He protested at what he regarded as the penalising of himself and his comrades, emphasising to the point of tedium that others who, in his opinion, did worse things and still held important positions. Mullaney denied that the forms were signed through cowardice, citing the service records of the column in support.

“Things fall apart”

Copies of MA/CDC/Lot 214 were forwarded to the Executive Council of the government as a matter of course for their consideration where they are now lodged in the National Archives filed under Department of An Taoiseach as NAI/I.R.A./DT/S4502. The file in the National Archives contains other documents from Lot 214 including despatches smuggled out of Mountjoy Jail and other communications relevant to the I.R.A. Court of Enquiry. Some of these documents have been lost or mislaid in the Military Archives. A further copy of the record of the Court of Enquiry was sent to the Department of Justice and is now lodged in the National Archives as NA/Dept./Justice/2007/50/13, among a range of other papers to do with the minutiae of the organisation of a body such as the post-Civil War I.R.A. While some versions give more detail than other, they align in essential information. By amalgamating the three sets of files we can obtain a fuller picture of the events in Mountjoy in March 1923.

We can now date the I.R.A. Court of Enquiry as commencing on 6 February 1925, the venue referred to as “*our hotel*”, from a document dated 28 January 1925 from G.H.Q. of the I.R.A. to “*D/Intelligence, D/Engineering and Commdt M. T.*”¹⁵⁰

After hearing Mullaney’s evidence the court adjourned to 25 February 1925 to hear evidence from witnesses. In chronological order, Mullaney defended himself and his men. The Court of Enquiry then called witnesses to test the veracity of his evidence. Michael Price, the Officer Commanding 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A., until captured in November 1922, gave evidence that he had sent a copy of General Order No. 8 to Mullaney and he believed he had received it. He qualified his evidence by stating he had the highest praise for Mullaney.

Seamus O’Donovan a member of the I.R.A. G.H.Q., gave evidence that he knew of no opposition to the “*Leixlip Men*” signing as “...*The morale at the time was very low, probably due to the members who had already signed the form...*”¹⁵¹ O’Donovan had been captured on 15 March 1923 and held in Mountjoy Jail and so was a late arrival to the prison. He was initially lodged in A Wing. He had been Director of Chemicals, one of the thirteen G.H.Q. Staff of the I.R.A. O’Donovan later took the anti-Treaty side and resumed the same position on the G.H.Q. of the anti-Treaty forces.¹⁵² O’Donovan’s evidence was

supplemented by a copy of a despatch he had smuggled out of Mountjoy Jail, on 28 March 1923, to the Chief of Staff, I.R.A. It was this despatch which led to the setting up of the Court of Enquiry. The fact that he was a latecomer to A Wing and that the military opposition to the Treaty was becoming more obviously futile did not deter him from taking it upon himself to inform the then Chief of Staff of the I.R.A. of his concerns at what he observed in A Wing. In his favour, it must be conceded that he was acutely conscious of his position as a member of the G.H.Q. Staff, I.R.A.

This document is missing from Lot 214 in the Military Archives but is contained in the Department of the Taoiseach file S4502 and in the Dept./Justice/2007/50/13, in the National Archives. It contains an account of the demoralising effect of the executions, repeated inducements to sign the form of undertaking and the effects of Liam Deasy's support for signing. In the few days O'Donovan had been in A Wing he had learned that many, in fact probably the large majority of the men, had signed the Form. His main targets are Seán Lehane, the Officer Commanding A Wing and Liam Deasy labelling their influence as "*pernicious*".

In the communication O'Donovan used the specific example of the Leixlip Column to make his point. He makes specific reference to Mullaney and his column. "*...Of the sixteen men in this column eleven had signed the form at the time of the Deasy defection... Five held out including Mullaney and the better men. Mullaney gave them their freedom of action... last night the remaining five signed the form. They all left for Collins barracks for trial this morning and returned about 4 pm...*"

O'Donovan then concluded, "*...with the example of the sixteen Leixlip men before them, what is the average individual to do who is called upon to sign... The army is disintegrating, nay disappearing, inside the prison walls...*"

A crucial point was that those of the stature of O'Donovan, or indeed, O'Malley, given their 1919-1921 records, were unlikely to face execution. That was a fate reserved for the "*average individual*" who were increasingly determined to reserve any such decision to themselves. In fairness to O'Donovan, he was more circumspect in his evidence to the Court of Enquiry. While he declared he had advised Mullaney not to sign, he conceded the officers on A Wing all agreed

with the position of Liam Deasy and he had no knowledge of anyone who opposed the signing. Furthermore, while a Prison Council, representing the prisoners had been established and in existence at the time, he agreed that the signing by Mullaney and his group had never been brought before the Council. He further conceded that morale among the prisoners was very low.¹⁵³

The role of the Prison Council was raised in the evidence given by an unidentified person titled the Quartermaster General of the I.R.A. He had been a prisoner in C Wing in Mountjoy from 1 March 1923 to December 1923. Prisoners in C Wing were not under sentence of death. The A Wing prisoners who were, were known as "*Capital Charge Men*". A Prison Council of seven members had been formed "*...about the end of March or first of April 1923 and that James O'Donovan had been the representative of the Army...*" Crucially, he declared that "*... he is positive that the question as to whether they should sign or not was never brought before the Prison Council for decision by James O'Donovan or anybody else...*"

The evidence of an individual titled Director of Intelligence of the I.R.A. confirmed he had taken over responsibility for communications with the prison in the first week of February 1923. He was clear that he was never written to by anybody in the prison for a decision as regards the Leixlip men signing the Form. But he confirmed he had received reports that nearly all the prisoners in A Wing had signed and were in agreement with Liam Deasy.

Lehane gave evidence that he was moved to Mountjoy in February 1923 to A Wing when the total number of prisoners there was around sixty. A number of these men had signed the Form before transfer to the prison. When the issue of the Leixlip men arose, he consulted with "*The principal men of A Wing*". No definite opinion was forthcoming, but he was left with the impression that the "*principal men of A Wing*" favoured the Leixlip men signing. Lehane had told the prisoners while on parade that they should not sign the Form, but he did not make it a formal order. He declared he had received no communication from O'Donovan regarding the signing and that Mullaney and his companions were the only men in A Wing who sought his advice on signing.

O'Malley had been asked to reply to Mullaney's request for guidance, and stated that "*...In the absence of O'Malley's reply he*

advised Mullaney and the others to sign...” He acknowledged that O’Malley’s reply received after the deadline was emphatically against signing, but, after receipt of O’Malley’s reply, he did not consider getting Mullaney and comrades to retract their signatures. The war was over and having men executed at this stage would be a useless loss of life. As O/C A Wing he held power, in the absence of a definite rule, to decide.¹⁵⁴

Between 1 December 1922 and early March 1923, therefore, eleven men of the column, broken by stress, the trauma of the government execution policy and a growing realisation that further military struggle was futile, signed the Form. On 24 March 1923, or shortly before, the remaining five, Patrick Mullaney, Michael O’Neill, Thomas Cardwell, John Curley and Bertie Hawney signed to avoid a death sentence.¹⁵⁵

The findings of the enquiry are recorded. It conceded that the majority of the officers in A Wing favoured the signing of the Form, that morale was poor and the influence of Deasy critical. It was accepted that Mullaney had sought a decision from Ernie O’Malley and such a decision came too late to influence events, and it did find that Mullaney and his men had committed a breach of General Order No. 8 but “...*The circumstances bearing on this case so outlined reduce to an extent their personal responsibility in signing the aforementioned form of undertaking...*” Those concerned, including Lehané were subject to reprimand by the Adjutant General of the I.R.A.¹⁵⁶

Mullaney and the others named were subsequently reprimanded by the court. But Mullaney had raised some concerns. On 12 March 1925, shortly after the completion of the Court of Enquiry, F. M. Mahon, styled President of the Court, forwarded to the Adjutant General of the I.R.A. Mullaney’s criticism of the G.H.Q. Staff and the Dublin Brigade and their responsibility for the failure of the Baldonnel attack.¹⁵⁷

Release and Consequences

Following the end of military hostilities in April 1923 Mullaney and his men were among thousands still detained by the government in various locations. There was one final protest among the prisoners with a mass hunger strike begun in Mountjoy Jail on 13 October, which spread to other areas of detention. “...*The strike became an ill*

*defined and poorly planned sympathy one which imposed enormous strains on individuals and their consciences...*¹⁵⁸

Among those who took part were at least three members of the Mullaney Column. Thomas Cardwell commenced his hunger strike in Mountjoy on 13 October 1923 and was transferred to Newbridge Barracks.¹⁵⁹ Mullaney claimed that some others took part in Newbridge, possibly James Dempsey, while there is evidence that two others, John O'Connor, of Celbridge, and Francis Brennan, of Finglas, also joined.¹⁶⁰ The inevitable collapse of the hunger strike caused bitterness, confusion and demoralisation.¹⁶¹

The government proceeded to the slow and ongoing release of prisoners, those left behind becoming the guarantors of the good behaviour of those released until finally the jails and camps were emptied of all but those with criminal convictions. By the summer of 1924 the vast majority of the prisoners were set free throughout the country, including those of the Mullaney Column.

The *Leinster Leader* of 14 June 1924 reported, under the heading, “...Sentenced Prisoners Set at Liberty...” *P. Mullaney of Leixlip who was imprisoned at the Curragh Camp under a sentence of ten years with Michael O'Neill, Leixlip, ten years, Jack O'Connor of Celbridge seven years, Tom Cardwell, Celbridge, seven years, Jim Dempsey, Celbridge, seven years and Tom Tyrell of Maynooth seven years, were unconditionally released on Saturday last and were returned to their homes on the evening train. All the prisoners were members of what was locally known as Mullaney's Column...*¹⁶²

Mullaney was released in June 1924 from Hare Park and soon wrote on 12 June to the “Secretary Education Office,” later An Roinn Oideachais/Department of Education. He gave his address as Leixlip and wrote, “...I have just been released from Hare Park where I was a prisoner for some time. I am anxious to resume duty in Leixlip boys National School where I had been working as assistant teacher up to the time of my arrest. The Manager Canon Deasy P.P. St. Mary's Maynooth is also desirous that I should return to my position as soon as possible and asked me to find out from you if I may do so at once...”¹⁶³

Since he signed the form of undertaking Mullaney was entitled to amnesty and his old teaching position. He received a reply dated 30 June 1924 informing him that his case was for review by a Military Committee on former internees who were previously employed

or paid from public funds.¹⁶⁴ Coincidentally, the same committee was forwarded from the Education Board a petition from parents of children attending Leixlip Boys National School that Mullaney be allowed to resume his duties. It was presented to the Education Board by Mr. Dowdall, merchant, of Leixlip, who was introduced by Mr. Pádraig O'Maille, a prominent government supporter who also vouched for Mullaney.¹⁶⁵

The review process took time and went on over the summer of 1924. Mullaney had to present himself for interview on 31 July 1924, for which he was allowed travel and subsistence as he was attending an Irish College in Balla, Co. Mayo. On 27 September the Executive Council of the Irish Free State, who monitored reinstatements closely, recorded "*Complicity overlooked. To be retained in service*".¹⁶⁶ On 18 October 1924 he was fully reinstated to his old position in Leixlip Boys National School.¹⁶⁷

Mullaney's tenure was short lived. The discovery of the record of the I.R.A. Court of Enquiry in 1925 (Lot 214) showed he had attended an I.R.A. Court of Enquiry. Such courts by definition challenged the authority of the State. Mullaney in attending was party to that challenge in the eyes of the government. In so doing he had breached his form of undertaking. Mullaney protested that he attended only to vindicate his good name and that he had broken with the I.R.A. and they with him, to the point of intimidation, but to no avail and his recognition as a teacher was withdrawn. His exile, struggle for reinstatement, agitation in Leixlip on his behalf and eventual securing a position in Balla as a principal of its national school while interesting and compelling, is outside the scope of this work.

Conclusion

August 1923 saw a general election following which the government returned to office with a comfortable majority. But there were obvious signs of disillusionment and resentment as a result of the execution policy in all its formats. To the discerning, and elements of the anti-Treaty movement were not deficient in discernment, there was a developing basis for an ongoing political movement to take power using the electoral system and by that means dismantle the Treaty.¹⁶⁸ Some might regret that such discernment was not developed much earlier.

Much of the history of this period, especially at local level, is narrative, emphasising military deeds, individual loss of life and local heroism, lapsing at times into sentimentality. The critical issue in any forensic historical examination of events should be what has been achieved. Using that criterion, it is difficult to disagree with the analysis of Maurice Hayes decades ago that, “*the Civil War was all loss*”.¹⁶⁹

Of those who were executed, Anthony Reilly lies under the shade of a yew tree in a quiet corner of Donaghcumper Cemetery in Celbridge. He was reinterred in 1924 as part of the government exhumation policy regarding those executed during the Civil War. Anthony Reilly is buried in the family grave of the Mullins family who fostered him out from the Celbridge Workhouse when he was a child. In 1938 the National Graves Association erected a monument over his grave.

The one fatality of the Grangewilliam incident, Private Joseph Moran, service no. 14685, was buried in Kilcock Cemetery, forgotten save for family, as are most of the National Army casualties. For them there are few annual parades or commemorations in their localities. The others of the column who were executed were similarly exhumed and rest in now quiet places selected by their relatives. All of their lives ended in violent and unnecessary death, insignificant victims of the maelstrom of passion, idealism, viciousness and madness that was the Civil War.

Killed in Action: Private Joseph Moran.

Private Joseph Moran was part of a group assembled by Captain Ledwith in Maynooth, when he heard of the occupation of Grangewilliam House by the Mullaney Column. The party advanced across country from Maynooth travelling west to east. It appears Moran became isolated from the main party and was shot through the head in open ground near the house. His death certificate described him as “*Private in the Irish National Army*”. Following an inquest held on 4 December 1922, his cause of death was recorded as “... *Shock and haemorrhage due to laceration of the base of the brain caused by a bullet wound received while on duty in an encounter with irregulars* ...”¹⁷⁰ He was buried in Kilcock Cemetery on 4 December 1922.¹⁷¹

Although originally from Naas, Joseph Moran lived at Balfeighan, situated on the Kilcock to Summerhill road. On 7 July 1919 he married

Bridget Clarke, also of Balfeighan, the daughter of Charles Clarke, a herd. On his Marriage Certificate Joseph Moran was described as a “soldier”. Bridget Clarke was described as “housekeeper”.¹⁷² This would indicate that Moran was at that stage a member of the British Army awaiting demobilisation. Following his death, his widow successfully applied for a pension under the Army Pensions Act. An investigation of means undertaken by the local Gardai regarding the circumstances of his widow stated that “...Deceased was employed by Kildare County Council before joining the National Army...”¹⁷³ It is possible that on demobilisation Moran found employment with Kildare County Council. He could then have enlisted in the National Army as it expanded after July 1922.

Misfortune followed Joseph Moran’s death. There were two children of the marriage, Charles Moran and John Joseph Moran, born 1919 and 1923 respectively. Since Joseph Moran was killed on 1 December 1922 and John Joseph was born 29 June 1923, Bridget Moran was just pregnant with John Joseph when her husband was killed.¹⁷⁴ Bridget Moran moved to Drogheda in 1926 to be near her mother Margaret Clarke who lived there.¹⁷⁵ The move was probably caused by her ill health as she died in Drogheda District Hospital in November 1928 of “*phthisis*” or tuberculosis, then rampant in Ireland among the poor and badly housed. She was aged thirty-one. Her youngest son, John Joseph Moran, died in 1929, while in the care of his grandmother who continued to care for the only survivor of the family, Charles Moran, on an allowance of eight shillings and sixpence per week, under the terms of the Army Pensions Act 1923, until he reached his sixteenth year.¹⁷⁶

Wounded in Action (1): Private William J. Gilmore

William Gilmore was one of a number of occupants of a Crossley tender as it and other vehicles forced a passage over Pike Bridge to confront the main body of Mullaney’s Column occupying Grangewilliam House. Gilmore was wounded in the left arm and thigh. This would indicate the fire came from the west of the bridge (to Gilmore’s left), where Mullaney had placed a sentry group in Donaghmore Cemetery to guard against any potential crossing of Pike Bridge by hostile forces.

His wounds were not considered serious when he was taken later

to Jervis St. Hospital in Dublin for treatment.¹⁷⁷ William Gilmore enlisted in the National Army on 6 November 1922 at Wellington Barracks, Dublin. He was aged twenty-two years on enlisting and was married. His next of kin was named as Mrs. S. Gilmore of 49 St. Therese Street, Belfast. Gilmore's home address was given as 49 Theodore St., Belfast.¹⁷⁸ He was just three weeks enlisted and hardly trained as a soldier when he and others were sent from Wellington Barracks to Grangewillam on active duty.

Wounded in Action (2): Charles O'Connor

Charles O'Connor was a member of Mullaney's Column who was seriously wounded at Grangewillam and suffered life altering injuries as a result. He is sometimes wrongly mistaken as one of the O'Connor family from Elm Hall, Celbridge. Charles O'Connor came initially from Gneeveguilla, Rathmore, Co. Kerry. He was born on 16 September 1899, the son of John O'Connor and Julia O'Leary. On his birth certificate his father is entered as a shopkeeper.¹⁷⁹ In 1916 Charles left school and was apprenticed as a saddler to Mr. Pat Tarrant of Killarney. He worked for Tarrant from 1916-1919. In 1919 he moved location working as a saddler in Mullingar and Tullamore, before returning to Kerry in December 1919. O'Connor joined the Irish Volunteers in 1917, and later served during 1919-1921 with the local I.R.A. as a member of the Killarney Battalion of the Second Kerry Brigade.

In April 1922 O'Connor enlisted in the National Army at Beggars Bush Barracks but as tensions rose around acceptance of the Treaty he changed sides before the attack on the Four Courts by the National Army. "*...I did not know what was right at the time...*", he stated, and described leaving Beggars Bush Barracks before the attack on the Four Courts, "*...we were confined to Barracks, two others and I. We had two guns and scaled the walls. A chap with me McCarthy, and I had civilian clothes. We left early in the morning for the country and struck the column in Kildare...*"

The column in Kildare was that of Tom Harris, not Mullaney. O'Connor was arrested in August 1922 and interned in the Curragh. There he met with Patrick Mullaney and became part of Mullaney's escape plan. His description of escaping the Curragh tallies very much with Mullaney's own account, but adds that many were reluctant to

attempt escape, *“..out of 300 prisoners we could only get ten to follow us... We jumped inside a lorry which was there for the Board of Works men, we had a tunnel half completed...”* O'Connor dates the escape as some days after the death of Arthur Griffith on 12 August 1922. From then on, he was one of Mullaney's Column and was the Thompson machine gunner, possibly because of earlier training with the National Army, *“...I was armed with a Thompson gun in company with my comrades who were also armed for active service...”*

From various accounts it seems O'Connor was wounded late in the engagement. Medical evidence supports O'Connor's own account that he was hit by a burst of Vickers machine gun fire from an armoured car patrolling the parameters of the engagement and which caused very serious injuries. Mullaney described how *“...I was present when he was wounded and assisted in bandaging him up. So also was Bertie Hawney of Ballybunion and M. O'Neill of Cooldrinagh, Leixlip. He was in hospital for a long period afterwards and when I saw him later he wore steel supports...”*

Thomas Kealy provided corroborative evidence in a statement dated 21 May 1933, declaring a personal knowledge of the facts. O'Connor described his injuries as follows, *“...I was wounded at Leixlip in a fight with Free State soldiers on the first December 1922. It must have been an armoured car which was quite close to me which wounded me. I was operated on in Mercer's Hospital while under guard by military police and 3 bullets were extracted from my back. I had seven operations and I never got the use of my leg since. I was fourteen months interned being released about February 1924...”*

From Mercer's Hospital O'Connor was moved to Portobello Barracks under the care of a military doctor. From there he was transferred to the Curragh Military Hospital. O'Connor therefore never spent time in Wellington Barracks under scrutiny of the Intelligence Department there, leading to his not being recorded on some lists of captured or his confusion with the O'Connors, of Elmhall. He had left the National Army months before the National Army Census of November 1922 and escaped any scrutiny as to his leaving Beggars Bush Barracks previously. His difficulties were not over following his release in 1924. From June 1924 to December 1924, he was in St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin, for care of his injuries and wounds and again from January 1925 to March 1925. His medical

expenses for this period were covered by a grant of £310 from the White Cross Organisation.

But his medical difficulties continued. In August 1932 he was again hospitalised in the County Hospital, Tralee, under the care of a Dr. P. Carey. A referee supporting his pension application under the Military Pensions Act 1932, Humphrey Murphy, of Farranfore, Co. Kerry wrote, “...*From all outward appearances he is a cripple for life and his parents are very poor...*” On 24 April 1944 O'Connor wrote to the Military Pensions Board, “...*I cannot do a days work because I cannot hold standing very long on my feet...*”

Charles O'Connor was eventually granted a disability pension and surgical shoes under the terms of the Military Pensions Act 1932. But as he aged his wounds contributed to further health problems. He had a land holding in Gneeveguilla of seven acres which he turned over to his brother, Michael O'Connor, in 1953. Prior to that, in 1952, he emigrated by ship to the United States of America where he had two brothers. From then on, he resided at various addresses in Jersey City. Charles O'Connor died on 19 March 1968. He was unmarried.¹⁸⁰

Executed (1): Terence Brady

Terence Brady was born on the 14 September 1904, one of six children, to Owen Brady and Catherine Sheridan, of Wilkinstown, near Navan, Co. Meath. He was the only son in the family.¹⁸¹ Owen Brady was an agricultural labourer with a family holding of less than an acre of poor land. The family dwelling was described as “...*a little thatched hut*”.

As a young adult Terence Brady worked as an agricultural labourer and an insurance agent for a farmer, Henry Quail, who was also an insurance agent. Brady received twelve shillings a week for his labour which went to the upkeep of the family. Since he received board from Quail he received nothing for his work as an agent. In January 1921, then aged sixteen years, Terence Brady joined the local I.R.A. James Swan, of Wilkinson verified his membership of the Wilkinson Coy., 3rd Batt. 2nd Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, of the I.R.A.

Laurence Sheeky, executed with Brady, was a member of the same battalion, and they may have been acquainted. On 3 April 1922 he enlisted in the National Army, then using Celbridge Workhouse as a Barracks, and was later transferred to Baldonnel. Sometime between

April 1922 and October 1922 he came to a decision, along with others, to support the anti-Treaty forces and participate in an attack on Baldonnel planned by them. Following the failure of the attack to materialise he defected to the anti-Treaty forces under the command of Mullaney. In September 1922 Brady was seventeen years of age. He served little more than a month with Mullaney's Column before capture and inevitable court martial. Terence Brady was executed at 8.00 am on 8 January 1923. He was just four months after his eighteenth birthday.

Under the terms of the Army Pensions Act 1932, his parents applied for and received a dependant's gratuity and allowance in respect of the I.R.A. service and death on active duty. Following the execution, they had received a gratuity of £100 from the White Cross Organisation. Their application was supported by Michael O'Neill and Patrick Mullaney who gave a detailed account of his service with the column. Michael Hilliard also supported the application adding, "...I took over the body for burial in the Republican Plot, November 1925..."¹⁸² (This would be after the bodies were exhumed and released for reburial in 1924.)

Executed (2): Leo Dowling

Leo Patrick Joseph Dowling was born on 8 March 1904 at Aldershot, Hampshire, England, while his father, Sgt. Patrick Dowling, was based there.¹⁸³ He was the only male sibling of five children born to Patrick and Ann Dowling. In 1911 the family lived near Monasterevin, Co. Kildare. On the census return he is described as Leo Patrick Joseph, aged seven.¹⁸⁴

The Dowling family later moved to the Curragh Camp when Patrick Dowling obtained a position with the clerical staff of the British Army there. Leo Dowling attended the Christian Brothers School in Kildare where he was highly regarded and was offered a position as a Pupil Teacher Monitor, for which he was paid a stipend. It would not have been uncommon for such to proceed, via training college, to a career as a national teacher. He abandoned this career path in 1921 and through the intervention of his father Leo obtained a minor clerical position in the Curragh Camp which he left after four weeks.

At the same time, Leo Dowling was increasingly drawn to the struggle for independence. From the evidence supplied by William

Bryne, O/C of C Coy., 6th Batt., Carlow Brigade, I.R.A., he was a volunteer in that company from December 1920. His I.R.A. activities may have caused him to leave his clerical employment to go on the run. At that time he would have been sixteen years of age. In 1921 he transferred to Suncroft Coy., of the same battalion under the same commander, probably as a result of the general reorganisation of the I.R.A. that year. He was certified, posthumously, as having served in the I.R.A. from December 1920 to May 1922.

On 3 April 1922 he joined the National Army in Celbridge, with a stated age of eighteen. His address was given as Yew Tree House, Curragh Camp, with his next of kin as Patrick Dowling of the same address.¹⁸⁵ He was later transferred to Baldonnel. By then he had achieved the rank of Corporal. While serving at Baldonnel he was introduced to some of the column, at least by Anthony Reilly, along with Sylvester Heeney. In October 1922, along with others, he defected from the National Army and joined Mullaney's Column fearing detection after the failed attack. He was the best educated of those who defected despite his age, and he may have become disillusioned with the Treaty settlement and easily persuaded to join the plan. We know from the evidence of Thomas Cardwell that Mullaney would have been ready to capitalise on any hint of disaffection in Baldonnel. From October 1922 to 1 December 1922, he served with Mullaney with the rank of Sergeant, indicating a degree of competence and the regard of Mullaney. Dowling was captured at Grangewilliam on 1 December 1922 and immediately identified as a former member of the National Army based at Baldonnel.

Leo Dowling was executed at 8.00 am on 8 January 1922 following a court martial. He is designated on his death certificate as Corporal Leo Dowling, reverting to his National Army status in death. Following the Army Pensions Act of 1932 his father, Patrick Dowling, was awarded a dependant's gratuity of £50.¹⁸⁶

Executed (3): Sylvester Heeney (Heaney)

There are different variations of the spelling of this surname used. Sylvester Heeney was born on 13 July 1904, the son of Bernard Heeney and Julia Heeney, formerly Carey, of Dillonstown, Ardee, Co. Louth. The father's occupation was listed as "cooper". The spelling on the birth certificate is clearly Heeney.¹⁸⁷ Prior to 1919 Sylvester Heeney

worked on his uncle's farm, belonging to a brother of his mother. The owner of the farm had emigrated to America and his sister Julia Heeney "...was virtually a caretaker of her brother's farm..." described as totalling "...14 acres of bad land..."¹⁸⁸

In 1919 Sylvester Heeney joined the local I.R.A., his service was verified by Frank Aiken who stated he was a volunteer in the 4th Northern Division. Accordingly, Heeney's I.R.A. service was reckoned as from "1919-8 January 1923".

Sylvester Heeney enlisted in the National Army on 3 April 1922 at Celbridge. It is here that the spelling of Heaney is used for the first time. His age was given as nineteen, which indicates a discrepancy with the age given on the 1911 Census Return. His address was given as Dillonstown, Dunleer, with his next of kin given as Bernard Heeney of the same address.¹⁸⁹ Like the other men executed he was later transferred to Baldonnel. According to O'Neill he was introduced to the Mullaney Column leadership by Anthony Reilly along with Leo Dowling and assisted in producing a plan of the aerodrome.

Heeney left Baldonnel with the other deserters and with them he faced a court martial. He was executed at 8.00 am on 8 January 1923. After the Army Pensions Act 1932, his mother Julia Heeney, applied for a Dependant's Gratuity, her husband Bernard Heeney having died in 1929 after years of poor health. The family were in poor circumstances at the time. She received a Dependents Gratuity of £112-10s-0d, in respect of her son. In 1953 following a subsequent amendment to Army Pension Legislation she was entitled to, and received, a further £80 per year on foot of his recognised I.R.A. service since 1919.¹⁹⁰

Executed (4): Anthony Reilly

Unlike the other executed Anthony Reilly has no Military Service Pension File. No one seems to have claimed him under the terms of the Army Pensions Act 1932. Anthony Reilly was born on 13 June 1902 in the Celbridge Workhouse to Bridget Reilly. There is also a birth recorded to Bridget Reilly for the 14 June 1902 of a female named as Mary. It is possible that both infants were twins and that the births took place late on the night of 13/14 June 1902. In both cases there is no record of a father. The birth certificate is clear on the surname Reilly with no prefix. Both children were baptised on 14 June in the

Parish Church, Celbridge, the mother named as “Brigida Reilly” and no record of paternity. The children were baptized “Antonius Reilly” and “Julia Mary Reilly” respectively.¹⁹¹

The 1911 Census Return recorded Anthony Reilly, aged eight, as a boarder with the Mullins family of Simmonstown, Celbridge. The Head of Family was recorded as Laurence Mullins, aged sixty-two, farmer, who was married to Alice Mullins. There were two daughters recorded, Julia aged twenty-seven and Mary aged twenty-six, both unmarried. Anthony Reilly was described as able to read and write indicating school attendance. The local National School then was the Abbey National School, on the banks of the Liffey, the structure of which still stands.¹⁹²

Anthony Reilly would appear to have been boarded out from the Workhouse by the family. The minutes of the Board of Guardians of the Celbridge Workhouse for December 1916 record, “...*An account was submitted by Mr. Keaveny, dated 30 November 1916 for 6 shillings 2 pence for school requisites supplied to Anthony Reilly, a boarded out child attending the Abbey (Celbridge) Natl. School. He also requested a small fuel allowance in respect of this child... A contribution to the school fuel fund was sanctioned...*”¹⁹³ Anthony Reilly would then have been fourteen years of age and coming to the end of his school life.

Between 1917 and 1921, the details of Anthony Reilly’s life are obscure. Given subsequent events it is possible he remained with the Mullins family working on their farm. Unlike the other executed he has no record of I.R.A. activity during those years.

On 3 April 1922 he joined the National Army in Celbridge enlisting as Anthony Reilly with an address at Hazelhatch, Celbridge. Hazelhatch is adjacent to Simmonstown. In the Army Census Return, 1922, his entry for age, next of kin and address of next of kin are completed in red ink as “not known”. Alone of the other executed his entry bears an amendment under the heading remarks. One in black ink stating “absent” and another in red ink stating “*deserter at present*”.¹⁹⁴ Enlistment in the National Army would have given Anthony Reilly a certain independence financially and otherwise. The Ireland of 1922 and for decades afterwards held a judgemental and cruel view of children born out of conventional marriage. Michael O’Neill’s reference to him, a comrade in the column and one who left Baldonnell to join with him and endure the privations of column life,

as “...a local county authority...” is very telling. According to O’Neill he was the one who took the initiative and introduced Dowling and Heeney to the plan and with them provided a map or plan of the aerodrome. Who initiated contact with him is a matter of conjecture. Reilly left Baldonnel and joined Mullaney’s column with the others as their position had become untenable after the failure of the attack. Reilly was captured on 1 December 1922 and with the other deserters he faced a court martial. Of the five he was the most bereft of family support or assistance. Anthony Reilly was executed at 8.00 am on 8 January 1922. He was almost twenty years of age.

Following the exhumations and reburial of the executed in 1924 the Mullins family claimed his body, and he was buried in the Mullins family grave in Donaghcumper Cemetery, Celbridge. In 1938 the National Graves Association erected a headstone over his grave.

The surviving members of the Mullins family never married. Mary Mullins died in 1944 and Julia in 1950.¹⁹⁵ Of his mother Bridget Reilly and his probable twin sister, Julia Mary Reilly, there is so far no trace. The Army Pensions Act 1932 saw none to claim him.

Executed (5): Laurence Sheeky

Laurence Sheeky was born on 18 June 1900, the son of Patrick Sheeky and Margaret Sheeky, formerly Lynch, of Braystown, Lobbinstown, Drogheda, Co. Louth. The family name on the birth certificate is clearly Sheeky, but is sometimes erroneously rendered as Sheehy.¹⁹⁶

The family had a holding of ten acres and as a young man Laurence Sheeky worked as an agricultural labourer, turning his wages over to his mother to support the family. He appears to have joined the I.R.A. “...in the Spring of ‘21...” and was a member of 3rd Batt. Clongil I.R.A., Wilkinstown, Navan, Co. Meath. His specific date of joining is unclear but John Swan, O/C 3rd Batt. I.R.A., verified his membership. His service was recognised eventually as “...*Volunteer C Coy. 3 Batt. 2 Meath Brigade from 1921-March 1922...*” This would have placed him in the same Battalion as Terence Brady. They may well have been acquainted prior to enlistment in the National Army.

Laurence Sheeky enlisted in the National Army in Celbridge on 3 April 1922. He is clearly registered as Sheeky, aged twenty-one, with his father, Patrick Sheeky, denoted as next of kin. Enlisting with him was his older brother John Sheeky whose address and next of kin

entries replicate those of Laurence Sheeky.¹⁹⁷ They may have enlisted, like others, to secure a meagre but steady stream of income to support their family. Laurence was transferred to Baldonnell after enlistment and left his post with the others after the failed attack in October 1922. He may well have discussed his reasons with Terence Brady and they may have influenced each other. Laurence may also have discussed it with his older brother John who did not leave.

Whatever hopes the two brothers had in joining the National Army, they died when Laurence Sheeky was executed at 8.00 am on 8 January 1922. John Sheeky left the National Army about three weeks after his brothers' execution. In later years he had difficulty in obtaining constant employment. His mother received a gratuity of £50 from the White Cross Organisation sometime after the execution. Following the Army Pensions Act of 1932, Margaret Sheeky applied for a Dependents Gratuity in respect of her executed son and eventually received a gratuity of £112-10s-0d. His service from October/November to 8 January 1923 was also recognised as membership of "*an Active Service Column*".¹⁹⁸

The One That Got Away: Thomas Kealy

Patrick Mullaney was adamant that not all of the column were captured at Grangewilliam, and one escaped, "*he lay in a drain and got away*".¹⁹⁹ This is corroborated by Thomas Cardwell who was captured at Grangewilliam who stated that "*a chap named Keeney*" escaped.²⁰⁰

There is no one of that name in the column on any of the Nominal Rolls for the I.R.A. in North Kildare. The nearest approximation of the name Keeney, which may have been misheard or mistyped, is Thomas Kealy of Celbridge, a long-term active member of the I.R.A., from 1919-1923. Kealy was at Grangewilliam. He was present when Charles O'Connor was seriously wounded and present when he was given first aid by Mullaney and Bertie Hawney.²⁰¹ This placed him present through the engagement to the end. He may well have been among the twenty-two prisoners reported by Hugo MacNeill to have been captured.²⁰²

Throughout the documentation on military courts, signing of forms of undertaking, and I.R.A. courts of enquiry the numbers are constant. Five were executed and the only number used to denote the remainder is sixteen. The conclusion can be drawn that between

MacNeill's tally immediately after the engagement, and the arrival at Wellington Barracks, one slipped quietly away. It was 4.00 pm on 1 December 1922 when the engagement ended, a dark winter evening. It may well have been possible, in the confusion of attending to dead and wounded, numerous people milling around, most unfamiliar with their surroundings, for someone with local knowledge to quietly slip away unnoticed, perhaps with the help of a former comrade. Not all the Free State soldiers were hostile. A former comrade from 1919-1921 and the Stacumney ambush, John Logie, was sympathetic to old comrades and helped Mullaney and O'Neill dispose of dangerous incriminating evidence. Mullaney and O'Neill were marked men, as were those identified as having left Baldonnel. Kealy would have been relatively anonymous. After Grangewilliam Kealy disappears from the narrative.

Significantly, Intelligence Reports on the North Kildare area mention a small anti-Treaty group still active in early 1923, after the column had been captured. The leading member is named as Keily, Kealy or Keely.²⁰³ Thomas Kealy was never reconciled to the Treaty in any of its manifestations. On 7 July 1936 he was convicted at a Military Tribunal of being a member of an illegal organisation and refusing to give an account of his movements to a member of the Gardai.²⁰⁴ Other convictions were to follow in the 1940s including imprisonment. These were not the actions of one who would ever have contemplated signing the form of undertaking in 1922 or any time thereafter. If he did not sign, or appear before a military court as a consequence of not signing, it could only have been because Kealy was not there with the others. He was the one Mullaney referred to, the one that got away.

The Column

Grangewilliam 1 December 1922

Unlike his account of the Stacumney ambush in 1921, Mullaney was deliberately vague as to the membership of the column, particularly to those captured at Grangewilliam. Any person Mullaney mentions he refers to incidentally in relation to other matters. "...*With regard to this and the taking of Lewis gun and rifles from Baldonnel I think it not necessary to give names as all were interned for long periods and five were executed...*"²⁰⁵

In the early stages of the Civil War, Government forces, relying on their knowledge of former comrades and their records of 1919-1921, rounded up and imprisoned those suspected of militant opposition to the Treaty and the defiance of its ratification by Dáil Éireann. Some like Mullaney, O'Neill, Cardwell, Kealy and others escaped imprisonment, and returned to their local area to organise armed resistance. Others joined or were assigned to Mullaney as they retreated east after the defeat in Dublin.

Hugo MacNeill in his official report to the Department of Statistics, Portobello Barracks, declared the total captured at Grangewilliam was twenty-two.²⁰⁶ Mullaney declared that one escaped and he was supported in this by Thomas Cardwell.²⁰⁷ The challenge is to identify, using a range of sources from the anti-Treaty side, those who were present at Grangewilliam on 1 December 1922. On that basis the present list is proposed, with the caveat that it cannot be presumed to be definitive, seeking as it does to penetrate the fog of war and memory. It is based on the "*Frayne List*" referenced by James Durney in his work on the Civil War in Kildare.²⁰⁸ The executed are excluded as they are treated separately in this work.

Patrick Mullaney. Officer Commanding the 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A. (known locally as Mullaney's Men, or the Leixlip Column). There are numerous references to him throughout this work. Patrick Edward Mullaney was born on 26 December 1892 in Lisduff, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo, to Patrick Mullaney, a farmer, and Mary, formerly Brennan. The 1911 census indicated he was attending National Teacher Training that year. He was appointed to Leixlip Boys National school in 1913. Mullaney joined the Irish Volunteers in 1917 and was active 1919-1921 and was also a member of the I.R.B. He opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty from 1922-1923. Mullaney was dismissed from his teaching position for attending an I.R.A. Court of Enquiry after the Civil War and spent a short time in Chicago. He was later reinstated as Principal of Balla National School, Co. Mayo. Patrick Mullaney married in 1935 and retired in 1958. His main interest after the Civil War was football, being a County player for Mayo seniors until injury ended his career. He was for decades active in the G.A.A. at county, provincial and national level. Patrick Mullaney died on 12 August 1974.²⁰⁹

Michael O'Neill. Long term second in command to Mullaney since

1921 at Stacumney ambush. He was a Staff Officer of the 3rd Batt., 1st Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A., on 11 July 1921 holding the post of Transport Officer. By 1 July 1922, he was designated Vice Officer Commanding 1st Brigade with Mullaney as Officer Commanding the Brigade, a command that lasted throughout the Civil War. His address was given as Weston Park, Leixlip. He later lived in Cooldrinagh, Leixlip, where he managed a dairy farm. His last address in the 1950s was in Clonsilla.²¹⁰

Brennan, Francis. Francis Brennan was a member of B Coy., 3rd Batt., Fingal Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A., on 11 July 1921 and on 1 July 1922.²¹¹ It is clear that he joined Mullaney in resisting the Treaty by force of arms in August 1922 and was one of the longer serving members of the column. He would have participated in the programme of destruction of communications and the attempted capture of Baldonel. He took part, from the beginning, in the October 1923 hunger strike.²¹² He is referenced in the O'Malley Notebooks, "*Brennan was another fellow I had in the column. He lives in Finglas now.*"²¹³ In 1926 Francis Brennan married Anne O'Shaughnessy, also of Finglas. Francis Brennan died in 1955 aged fifty-five. His place of residence was given as 25 McKee Avenue, Finglas.²¹⁴

Cardwell, Thomas. Initially Cardwell was a member of the Dublin Brigade. On becoming unemployed he returned to Celbridge and joined Celbridge Coy., 3rd Batt., 1st Brigade, under the command of Mullaney and fought with him at Stacumney in 1921. He joined the National Army in Celbridge on the instructions, he claimed, of Mullaney as part of an intelligence operation. Mullaney had appointed him Intelligence Officer of the 1st Meath Brigade in March 1922 when he was already anticipating a break down over the Treaty and reorganising his area. Cardwell claimed to have initiated the contacts that allowed Mullaney to formulate the plan to attack Baldonnel.²¹⁵ He appears to verify the escape of Thomas Kealy after capture at Grangewillam. Cardwell took part in a hunger strike in A Wing, Mountjoy Jail, in October 1923 and afterwards in Newbridge Barracks.²¹⁶ He was one of the last to sign the form of undertaking in March 1923 and then only with the permission of his commanding officer.²¹⁷ In later years he was employed as an agent in Dublin for Royal Liver Friendly Society, but that employment ended due to disability. In 1928 he married Elizabeth Kane and Thomas Kealy

was his witness. Thomas Cardwell died on 11 August 1954 at 27 Harrington Road, Glasnevin.²¹⁸ Even a cursory reading of his service record from 1919 onwards, and comments made about him by his peers, indicate he was a formidable member of the column.

Curley, John. Not much is known of John Curley. He was not mentioned in the O'Malley Notebooks by either Mullaney or O'Neill. But he is among those who refused to sign the form of undertaking until March 1923, and only with the permission of his commanding officer.²¹⁹

Dempsey, James. On 1 July 1921 James Dempsey was a member of A Coy. (Leixlip), 3rd Batt. 1st Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A. His battalion commander was Patrick Mullaney and Dempsey followed him in opposing the Treaty.²²⁰ Mullaney verified his capture at Grangewilliam.²²¹

Gaynor, John. On 1 July 1921 John Gaynor was a member of A Coy. (Leixlip), 3rd Batt, 1st Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A. His commanding officer was Patrick Mullaney.²²² It appears he initially joined the National Army and had a change of heart, defecting from the National Army to rejoin his former commanding officer. He is referenced often by Mullaney and O'Neill and was held in high regard. After capture at Grangewilliam he escaped the scrutiny of the Intelligence Department at Wellington Barracks as he had used the pseudonym Mooney throughout. He is referenced in the O'Malley Notebooks by O'Neill, "*...John Gaynor and Thomas McCann...were trusted men...*"²²³

Hawney, Bertie. Robert "Bertie" Hawney was born in South Africa the son of Thomas Hawney and Elizabeth Hawney, originally from the Ballybunion/Tralee area to which they returned prior to the 1901 Census. The family are well established in that area to this day and were former owners of Hawney's Hotel, later the West End Hotel, Tralee.²²⁴ It would appear Hawney came to Dublin prior to 1921 to study medicine but soon abandoned medicine for the struggle for independence. His first meeting with Mullaney was in a training camp for the 1st Eastern Division during the Truce period which they both attended.

Hawney appears to have had great personal charm, that and a mutual passion for Gaelic football ensured he and Mullaney bonded well. Decades later, Margaret Mullaney, the widow of Patrick

Mullaney, brightened considerably when she recalled Hawney.²²⁵ He was captured at Grangewilliam and attended to the badly wounded Charles O'Connor.²²⁶ He was among those who refused to sign the form of undertaking until March 1923 and then only with the consent of his commanding officer. Hawney was released from imprisonment early in June 1924. “...Among the Kerymen released from Hare Park Internment Camp during the week was Mr. Bertie Hawney of Ballybunion...”²²⁷

In 1935 Bertie married Ann Mulcahy of Causeway, Co. Kerry, the daughter of a former R.I.C. Head Constable. The Marriage Certificate lists his occupation still as “*Medical Student*”. They were married in the Church of Berkley Road, beside the Mater Hospital. Bertie and Anne Hawney left Ireland and resided in England where he died in 1969. “...*The death took place recently in London of Robert (Bertie) Hawney, formerly of West End Hotel, Ballybunion...*” According to the obituary Hawney had been one of the founder members of the Irish Volunteers in Ballybunion before moving to Dublin. He was buried in the family grave at Killahenny Cemetery, Ballybunion.²²⁸

Kealy, Thomas. On 1 July 1922 Thomas Kealy of Celbridge was a member of B Coy. (Celbridge), 3rd Batt. 1st Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A. His commanding officer then was Patrick Mullaney. He was present at Stacumney in July 1921. Kealy followed Mullaney in opposition to the Treaty and at the start of the Civil War he was arrested as a known opponent of the government. He was imprisoned in Dundalk Jail but when Dundalk was captured by Frank Aiken and his Northern Division, he and others, including Michael O'Neill, were released. They both evaded recapture and returned to assist Mullaney in developing his column.²²⁹ He was captured at Grangewilliam but is most probably the one Mullaney claimed escaped. Kealy remained opposed to the Treaty settlement in all its forms throughout his life. While undoubtedly present at Grangewilliam and captured there, he is omitted from the Frayne List, indicating he was not processed by the Intelligence Department at Wellington Barracks.

Kelly, Charles. Charles Kelly from Skerries was listed on 11 July 1921 and 1 July 1922, as a member of C Coy. (Skerries), 1st Batt. Fingal Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A. He was the third member of the Fingal Brigade to join Mullaney along with Brennan and Wyse. O'Neill referred to him, “*2 fellows from North Fingal, Kelly, Wyse,*

toppers they were". He may well have joined the column in August 1922 with Francis Brennan and William Wyse. Charles Kelly was in C Coy., 1st Batt., while Brennan and Wyse were both members of B Coy. 3rd Batt., Fingal Brigade. His brother Joseph Kelly also served in the I.R.A. from 1919-1923. In the Autograph Book of Thomas McCann, Charles Kelly gave his address as Church Street, Skerries.²³⁰

Kelly, James. He may be the same James Kelly, a native of Glasgow, who was assigned to the column by Ernie O'Malley in 1922. "*... I am sending you down a Jas. Kelly who originally came from Glasgow. He worked in Lehane area in Donegal for a time. He is a company sergeant...*" Kelly is referenced in a communication signed "JB" from the headquarters of the 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A., on 2 December 1922, the day after the capture of the column. "*...I take it that a report cannot now be got from Jas. Kelly as I understand he was captured with the 1 Meath Column yesterday...*" Joseph Brown (JB) was by then Divisional Director of Organisation. James Kelly seems to have been tasked with reporting back to Divisional Headquarters, whether with the knowledge of Mullaney is not clear. The recipient of the letter is unknown. Mullaney refers to a Kelly, "*...a ginger haired lad, a Scotch lad was sent to us...*"²³¹

McCann, Thomas. Thomas McCann was born in Duleek Street, Drogheda, in 1901. Sometime after the beginning of the Truce period he joined the newly organised 9th (South Louth) Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A. As the Truce period progressed he joined the National Army. His place of recruitment is not known as he was not on the Army Census of 1922. McCann was eventually transferred to Baldonnel Aerodrome as part of the National Army garrison there. Sometime between July and October 1922 he had a change of heart regarding the Treaty. McCann was among the six who left Baldonnel after the attack planned by Mullaney failed to materialise. He escaped detection because someone who knew him concealed his identity from the Intelligence Department in Wellington Barracks and suppressed information on him. There are several references to him in the recollections of Mullaney and O'Neill, indicating a certain regard. And he is referenced by O'Neill as a "*trusted man*". He took part in physical confrontations in Mountjoy with National Army guards where, "*it took a lot to bring him down*". The psychological stress endured by Thomas McCann and the others was acute. In later years

the fact that he had escaped military court martial and death, while five of his companions were executed weighed heavily on his mind. He died in 1970 in St. Mary's Home, Drogheda, aged sixty-nine. He was unmarried and earned his livelihood as a dock labourer.²³²

Nolan, Patrick. On 1 July 1921 Patrick Nolan was recorded as being a member of A Coy. (Leixlip), 3rd Batt. 1st Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A.²³³ His commanding officer was Patrick Mullaney. He fought at Stacumney in July 1921. Nolan followed Mullaney in opposition to the Treaty and was a member of his column. He was captured at Grangewilliam and suffered some ill-treatment there. Nolan was a former member of the British Army.²³⁴

O'Connor, Charles. From County Kerry. Seriously wounded by machine gun fire at Grangewilliam (supra).

O'Connor, John "Jack". John Stephen O'Connor, of Elm Hall, Celbridge, was on 1 July 1921 a staff officer of the 3rd Batt. 1st Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A., holding the rank of Captain of B Coy. (Celbridge). He fought at Stacumney in July 1921. His commanding officer was Patrick Mullaney who he followed in opposition to the Treaty. He was captured at Grangewilliam and eventually released in 1924.²³⁵

O'Brien, Thomas. Thomas O'Brien is something of a mystery. O'Brien according to Mullaney, "*had been sent to us from Dublin*". But O'Brien was not his real name. He went through life in the column, capture, trial and death sentence under the name of O'Brien. Only after he received a death sentence, on the first appearance before a military court, did he reveal his real name to Mullaney. O'Brien was later imprisoned in Hare Park Camp where he was reunited with his brother. Mullaney did not divulge his real name.²³⁶

Tyrrell, Timothy. Timothy Tyrrell was a veteran of Easter 1916 having fought in the G.P.O. and Moore Street, Dublin. On 1 July 1921 he was a member of Maynooth Coy. 3rd Batt. 1st Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A. Patrick Mullaney was his commanding officer. He followed Mullaney in rejecting the Treaty and was an early recruit to the column, claiming service from 1 July 1922. Following the Army Pensions Act 1932 he applied for recognition of service. Mullaney supported his application, writing "*...This is to certify that Timothy Tyrrell was O/C of the Maynooth Company from the time of the reorganisation in March 1922* (meaning Mullaney's reorganisation

in anticipation of armed resistance), *until his arrest with the I.R.A. in or near Leixlip in December 1922 with me. He had been with me on operations continually...*” Tyrrell estimated the effective strength of the column for most of the time as “*fourteen or sixteen men*”, its strength at Grangewilliam supplemented by those who had left Baldonnel.²³⁷

Wyse, William. William Wyse was born in 1899 in Finglas, Dublin. On 11 July 1921 and 1 July 1922, William Wyse was a member of B Coy. 3rd Batt. Fingal Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, I.R.A., the same company as Francis Brennan. Like Brennan he took the anti-Treaty side and most probably joined Mullaney in August 1922. In the letter published by the Brennan family (*supra*) in which Mullaney supported the Military Pension application by Francis Brennan, Mullaney made reference to Wyse indicating that he had similar service with the Column from August 1922. Wyse was highly regarded by O’Neill (*supra*). He signed the Autograph Book in the possession of the family of Thomas McCann giving his address as Jamestown Road, Finglas. In 1929 he married Margaret Butler. Wyse was described on the Marriage Certificate as a factory hand of Jamestown Road, Finglas. In later life he resided at Meadstown Cottages in that area.²³⁸

Cumann na mBan

The anti-Treaty forces in North Kildare were supported by a parallel body of women comprising the 3rd Batt. 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, Cumann na mBan. These women all had service records for 1919-1921 and some years before. Following the Treaty settlement, like the men under Mullaney’s command, they took the anti-Treaty side and provided vital support. For some, information is sparse, and many of those who applied for a Military Service Pension were refused. They sought recognition in a cultural environment hostile to them and submitted their applications to assessors who were all male. As Cumann na mBan members they were considered, no matter what their endeavours, to be auxiliaries only and even when granted a Military Service Pension it was at the lowest grade.²³⁹

The role of the women of Cumann na mBan in North Kildare during the Civil War is worthy of a separate study. But in the interests of historical accuracy and inclusiveness they are briefly recorded here.

Mary Barnewell. Mary Barnewell was listed on the Nominal Roll of the 3rd Batt. 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, Cumann na

mBan, for 11 July 1922, where her address was given as Maynooth. She was born in 1904 the daughter of James Barnewell, a farmer, and Mary Barnewell formerly Saul. In 1911 the Barnewells lived in Donaghcomper, Celbridge. Mary was a relative of the O'Connors, of Elm Hall, Celbridge, as their mothers were sisters, formerly Mary and Elizabeth Saul. She moved in the *milieu* of the O'Connors: Art O'Connor, a member of Dáil Éireann; John O'Connor, a member of Mullaney's Column; and her formidable cousins, Brigid Rose O'Connor and Frances O'Connor, both also members of Cumann na mBan. Her youth may have restricted her activity, but nonetheless she was arrested by government forces in March 1923 and imprisoned. "... *Miss O'Connor, Elmhall, Celbridge, sister of Art O'Connor, ex MP and Miss Barnewell, Hazelhatch have been arrested by National Forces...*"²⁴⁰ To date there is no record of an application for a Military Service Pension.

Eva Cardwell. Eva Cardwell was listed on the Nominal Roll of the 3rd Batt. 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, Cumann na mBan for 11 July 1921. To date there is no record of an application for a Military Service Pension. She was born Eve Mary Cardwell, the daughter of Leonard Cardwell and Susan Cardwell, formerly McGreeney. The family then resided near Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

The 1911 census return recorded that Leonard Caldwell and Susan McGreeney came originally from Armagh which may have influenced the family's political outlook. It also recorded Eve Caldwell as capable of speaking Irish, possibly indicating an association with the Gaelic League. Eva was the sister of the formidable Thomas Cardwell of the Mullaney Column and the family home at Beatty Park, Celbridge, was used as a depot for the anti-Treaty forces in the area. "... *The explosives are in O'Connors of Elm Hall Celbridge and Cardwells Celbridge...*" Cardwell's residence received regular raids from National troops.²⁴¹

Ellen Dillon. Ellen "Nellie" Dillon was listed on the Nominal Roll of the 3rd Batt. 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, Cumann na mBan, for 11 July 1921. Her address was given as Main St., Leixlip, which may be a place of work. She may be the Ellen Dillon born in 1894 in Newbridge, the daughter of Paul Dillon, a labourer, and Annie Dillon, formerly Rourke. In 1911 she is entered on the census form as "Nellie" and appears to have used that name throughout her life.

Nellie Dillon applied for a Military Service Pension. She listed her

activities in the North Kildare area as despatch courier, activity with the White Cross Committees and anti-Conscription work. She played a prominent part in the rescue and bringing to safety of Volunteer William Goodwin injured in the withdrawal after the Stacumney Ambush in July 1921. During the Civil War she claimed to be not openly engaged but, “*carried on in a minor degree*”, indicating support for the anti-Treaty position. O’Neill references her as Miss Dillon from Leixlip, “*a great girl*”. Nellie Dillon was refused a Military Service Pension.²⁴²

Mary “Molly” Dwyer. Mary Dwyer of Hazelhatch, Celbridge, was listed on the Nominal Roll of 3rd Batt. 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, Cumann na mBan, for 11 July 1921. Mary Catherine Dwyer was born in 1894 the daughter of Ambrose Dwyer, farmer and publican of Hazelhatch, Celbridge, and Mary Dwyer, formerly Corcoran. Her brother was Alexander “Alex” Dwyer who served under Mullaney 1919-1921 and later followed Mullaney in opposing the Treaty.

Mary Dwyer applied for a Military Service Pension. She claimed to have been active in Cumann a mBan in North Kildare from 1918 and throughout the 1919-1921.

She took the anti-Treaty side and supported Mullaney and his column as a despatch courier. At times she took despatches to and from Mick Price, one-time divisional commander. The Dwyer residence was open to the column for food and information on the movements of the National Army. It was also a rendezvous for Mullaney to meet sympathetic troops from Baldonnell and exchange information, arms, and ammunition. Mary Dwyer was refused a Military Service Pension. Alex Dwyer was granted a Military Service Pension according to her application. His file has not yet been opened online by the Military Archives. She later married and lived in Clondalkin as Mrs Mary Hart.²⁴³

Brigid O’Connor. Brigid O’Connor, Elm Hall, Celbridge, was listed on the Nominal Roll of 3rd Batt. 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, Cumann na mBan, for 11 July 1921. Brigid Rose O’Connor, born in 1896, was the daughter of Arthur O’Connor, grazier, and Elizabeth O’Connor, formerly Saul, of Loughlinstown (Elm Hall), Celbridge. She was a sister of John O’Connor, who served with Mullaney from 1919-1921 and served with the anti-Treaty column

from 1922-1923. Brigid Rose O'Connor applied for a Military Service Pension. She claimed to have been a member of Cumann na mBan since 1916, and to have been active in the Celbridge area during Easter Week and in the period from 1919-1921. Brigid described her service during the Civil War as "...continuous service by day and night... looking after and feeding the men of the local Column..." She also collected money on behalf of the dependants of captured men as well as carrying despatches, clothing and arms for the anti-Treaty forces. During that time her residence was often raided by the National Army.

She was refused a Military Service Pension. Under the Army Pension Act 1943 she applied for, and was granted, a Special Allowance, in 1961. She had lost an eye in a childhood accident and in later years was completely blind and under the care of her sister Frances and a cousin, Brigid Barnewell, sister of Mary Barnewell (supra), who had come to stay in Elm Hall. On receipt of the statutory pension for the blind, her Special Allowance suffered reduction. Brigid Rose O'Connor died in 1970.²⁴⁴

Frances O'Connor. Frances O'Connor, Elm Hall, Celbridge, is listed on the Nominal Roll of 3rd Batt. 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, Cumann na mBan, for 11 July 1921. She was a sister of Brigid O'Connor and John O'Connor.²⁴⁵ Frances Elizabeth O'Connor was born in 1895. She applied for a Military Service Pension in 1942. A copy of her draft application is in the possession of the author.²⁴⁶ Frances O'Connor joined Cumann na mBan in Celbridge in 1914 and remained active until 1924. She was very active from 1919-1921.

In June 1922 O'Connor took the anti-Treaty side and was appointed chief despatch carrier in the North Kildare area. She brought despatches continuously to Mullaney during the Civil War, directed men to the column and fed escaped prisoners, providing clothing and money. She also claimed to have assisted in the escape of prisoners from the Curragh. O'Connor liaised with the Dublin Brigade and Seán Dowling in the planned attacks on Baldonnel, although not to Mullaney's satisfaction through no fault of her own. Mullaney describes her as, "*of great use to us*". In March 1923 she was arrested and interned by the National Army, firstly in Naas and then in the North Dublin Union. O'Connor was released in October 1923.²⁴⁷

Her arrest is verified by an account in the *Irish Times*, "... Miss

*O'Connor, Elm Hall, Celbridge, sister of Art O'Connor ex M.P. and Miss Barnewell, Hazelhatch have been arrested by National forces...*²⁴⁸ It is not clear if she was granted a Military Service Pension.

Margaret Mullaly. Margaret Mullaly of Woodpark, Dunboyne, Co. Meath, was listed on the Nominal Roll for the 1st Batt., 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, Cumann na mBan, on 11 July 1921. She applied for a Military Service Pension in which she claimed service from 1 July 1922 to 31 March 1923 with the "*Leixlip I.R.A.*" but with little detail. Margaret Mullaly offered Patrick Mullaney and James Farrell as referees as to her Leixlip Service. She was awarded a Military Service Pension of £7-18s-4d a year.²⁴⁹

Margaret Summers (Somers). Margaret Summers, of Lucan, Co. Dublin, was listed on the Nominal Roll for the 3rd Batt., 1st Meath Brigade, 1st Eastern Division, Cumann na mBan. Margaret Summers/Somers was born in 1879 the daughter of James Summers, blacksmith, and Margaret Summers, formerly Jackson, of Anna Liffey, Lucan. She was also known as Maggi Somers. Margaret Somers applied for a Military Service Pension. She claimed to have joined the Lucan Branch of Cumann na mBan in 1914 and to have been active from then onwards in the Castleknock, Leixlip, and Blanchardstown areas. From 1 July 1922 to 31 March 1923, she was involved in "... *despatch work and general activity...*" On 8 August 1923, even though the Civil War was effectively over Summers was interned under the Public Safety (Emergency Powers) Act 1923, and the Public Safety Emergency Powers No. 2 Act, 1923. A copy of her detention order is enclosed with her application. She was detained in Kilmainham and the North Dublin Union.²⁵⁰ Margaret Summers was not awarded a Military Service Pension.

Abbreviations

- B.M.H. Bureau of Military History, Irish Military Archives, Dublin.
C.D.C. Captured Documents Collection, Irish Military Archives, Dublin.
D.I. Divisional Intelligence, Irish Military Archives, Dublin.
G.R.O. General Registry Office, Dublin.
M.A. Irish Military Archives, Dublin.
M.S.P.C. Military Service Pension Collection, Irish Military Archives,
Dublin
N.A. National Archives, Ireland.
O'MN. O'Malley Notebooks, University College Dublin Archives. The
references to Mullaney are denominated P17b/106 and 110. Those of
Michael O'Neill are denominated, P17b/107.
W.S. Witness Statement, Bureau of Military History, Dublin.

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To all of these I offer my sincere thanks.

ENDNOTES

- 1 For an account of the events leading up to the occupation of the Four Courts: Hopkinson, Michael. *Green against Green. The Irish Civil War* (Dublin, 1988), pp 123-126. Later in the text Hopkinson misnames Mullaney as Mullaly. Hopkinson, Michael. 'Civil War. The Opening Phase,' in Crawley *et. al.* (Eds.), *Atlas of the Irish Revolution* (Cork University Press, 2017), p. 675ff. For an account of the fighting in Dublin at the outbreak of the Civil War: Dorney, John. *The Civil War in Dublin: the Fighting for the Irish Capital 1922-1924* (Newbridge, 2017). Ferriter, Diarmuid. *Between Two Hells, The Irish Civil War* (London 2021), p.41ff., and p.92 ff. Fewer, Michael. *The Battle of the Four Courts: The First Three Days of the Irish Civil War* (Dublin, 2018).
- 2 Hopkinson, op. cit. p.130. For a treatment of the role of Ernie O'Malley: O'Malley, C. K. H. & Dolan, A. *No Surrender here. The Civil War Papers of Ernie O'Malley, 1922-1924* (Dublin, 2007).
- 3 Hopkinson, op. cit. p.219; Neeson, Eoin. *The Civil War in Ireland* (Cork,1966), p.189.
- 4 MacEoin, Uinnseann. *Survivors. The story of Ireland's struggle* (Dublin, 1980), pp 375-379. Mick Price, an ex-British army serviceman, was described as having socialist leanings, earning him the soubriquet 'comrade Price,' among his peers (p.369).
- 5 Andrews, C.S. *Dublin Made Me* (Dublin, 1979), pp 222-223. Paddy Mullaly described as the determined schoolmaster was Patrick E. Mullaney, N.T. Leixlip Boy's National School.
- 6 *Meath Chronicle* 29 April 1972. Seamus Finn on his recollections of his National Service 1919-1921.
- 7 Cummins, Seamus A. *Planes Trains and the Postman's Bicycle. The Stacumney Ambush, Celbridge, Co. Kildare, 2 July 1921* (Kildare, 2021). Incidental to the account of the ambush and its aftermath this work charts the developing tensions between Mullaney and his 3rd Battalion (Kildare/Celbridge) and the Divisional leadership particularly Seán Boylan. For example, the location of the ambush came under much criticism afterwards, Boylan was adamant that the site was chosen by Michael Collins. Mullaney insisted that Boylan chose the location. For reservations as to Boylan's capacity: MacEvilly, Michael. *A Splendid Resistance. The Life of I.R.A. Chief of Staff Dr. Andy Cooney*, Dublin, 2011, pp 59-60.
- 8 Finn, Seamus. Military Archives (MA) Bureau of Military History (BMH), Witness Statement (WS)1060, p.52.
- 9 National Archives. *Commissioners for Education Salary Books*, No. 2344; *O'Malley Notebooks* P17b/106, p. 26. MA/MSPC/A/57 (1), Mullaney. This file completed on 20 November 1940, contains the activity records of the 3 Batt., 1 Meath Brigade pre-Truce, and later the anti-Treaty 1st Meath Brigade commanded by Mullaney, comprising elements of the pre-Truce 3rd Batt.; MA/MSP/34/REF/35313, Mullaney's pension file contains a statement of service, 30 December 1935 and a sworn statement, 10 April 1937. It was accepted by the Pensions Board that Mullaney was O/C, 3rd Batt. on 1 July 1921 and O/C 1st Meath Brigade, 17 July 1922; Interview with Mrs Margaret Mullaney, widow of Patrick Mullaney, 7 August 1994. Margaret Mullaney died 23 September 1995.
- 10 Finn, *Meath Chronicle*, 29 April 1971; BMH, WS 1060 p.52.
- 11 O'MN, P17b /106, p.20, p.21.
- 12 Ibid. Michael O'Neill, Mullaney's Transport Officer and effective second in command, gave the location as the Springfield Hotel, Leixlip. According to O'Neill, Mullaney was staying there and suggested he was also inducted into the I.R.B. (O'MN, P17b /107 p. 45).
- 13 Coogan, Tim Pat. *Michael Collin*, (London, 1990), p.309ff; Hopkinson, op. cit., p. 93ff.
- 14 MA/MSPC/A/57(1), Mullaney, Brigade Report, March 1922.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 *An t-Oglach, The Official Organ of the Irish Volunteer*, 25 April 1922, and MA/MSP/34/REF/35313, Mullaney, sworn statement, pp 9-10. MA/MSPC/A/57(1), Mullaney, Brigade Report, March, 1922.
- 18 *An tOglach*, 25 April 1922; O'Donoghue, Florence. *No Other Law. The story of Liam Lynch and the Irish Republican Army 1916-24* (Irish Press, 1954), pp 186-246, gives a detailed account of attempts by the I.R.B. to maintain unity within the I.R.A.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 O'MN. P17b/106, p.20.
- 21 *Tuairisg Oifigiúil Diospoireacht ar an gConradh Idir Eire agus Sasana do signigheadh I Londain ar an 6adh La de Mhi na Nodlag 1921/Official Report Debate on the Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland signed in London on 6th December 1921*. Published by the Stationary Office, Dublin; also *Leinster Leader* 7 January 1922 "all practically unanimous for Ratification" and 14 February 1922, (Dáil vote).
- 22 MA/MSPC/A/57(1), Mullaney, Brigade Report, April, 1922.
- 23 Ibid. Also, Cummins, op. cit., O'Neill identified early supporters "... *The O'Connors and the O'Neills, O'Farrells, working class fellows...*" (O'MN, P17b /107, p. 41).
- 24 MA/MSPC/A/57/(1), Mullaney. Brigade Report, 22 May 1922; MacEvilly, op. cit., pp 92-93.
- 25 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 45, P17b/106, p.27

- 26 Coogan, op. cit. p.333ff; Elliot, Marianne. *The Catholics of Ulster. A History* (London, 2000), p. 371ff; Farrell, Michael. *Arming the Protestants: Formation of the Ulster Special Constabulary and the Royal Ulster Constabulary, 1920-27* (London, 1983), p. 81ff; Parkinson. For an overview of events in Belfast 1922, Parkinson, Alan F. *Belfast's Unholy War. The Troubles of the 1920s* (Dublin, 2004).
- 27 Farrell. op. cit., p.89. Also, Elliot, op. cit. "... *The Provisional Government in Dublin, alarmed at the attacks on Catholics in the North, did not help matters by partially rearming the I.R.A ...*" p. 376.
- 28 Coogan, op. cit. p.350.
- 29 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 45, P17b/106, p27.
- 30 Ibid. Also, *Leinster Leader* 15 April 1922. Michael O'Neill was originally from Maynooth and was a member of the Irish Volunteers there in 1916. He was not among those who marched from Maynooth with Domhnall Ua Buachalla in 1916 to take part in the Easter Rising, something which in later years may have led him to assert his republican credentials. Like others of the 3rd Batt., he had a poor opinion of competency of Seán Boylan, (O'MN, P17b/107,p.45). By 1921 O'Neill was based in Weston Park, Leixlip. He claimed to be a cousin of Tom O'Connor Scarteen, the I.R.A. leader in Kerry, (O'MN,P17b/107,p.46) Tom O'Connor Scarteen and his brother John were shot dead by anti-Treaty forces on 9 September 1922 at their family bakery in Kenmare. They had taken the pro-Treaty side. (Hopkinson, op.cit, p. 206)
- 31 Fewer. op. cit. p.129ff; MA/MSP/34/REF/35313, Mullaney, sworn statement, 10 April 1937, p. 9.
- 32 Hopkinson. op. cit. p.17, using the O'MN as source.
- 33 O'Malley, Ernie. *The Singing Flame. A memoir of the Civil War 1922-24* (Dublin, 1978), p.75.
- 34 Ibid, p. 147.
- 35 O'MN. P17b/106, p .26.
- 36 Ibid. P17b/107, p. 47, *Leinster Leader* 27 August 1922, indicating the prisoners were still held in Kilcock. The reference to "6 or 8 men in it before the Truce" may have been a disparaging comment by O'Neill indicating a lack of enthusiasm in Kilcock Company prior to the Truce of July 1921.
- 37 Neeson, op. cit., p. 189.
- 38 O'MN. P17b/106, p. 26, also Cummins op. cit.
- 39 O'MN. P17b/106, p. 26. P17b/107, p. 47
- 40 O'MN. P17b/106, p. 26.
- 41 MA/MSPC/34/REF/8907, Gallivan. For communications and arms dumps, MA/ Captured Document Collection Lot 138 (2);MA/MSP/34/REF/10614, Mangan, statement of P. Mullaney confirming transfer of command.
- 42 O'MN. P17b /106 pp. 26, 27, which gives a full account. Charles O'Connor who escaped with him and joined the column was badly wounded at Grangewilliam. The 1955 film *Colditz*, a much-lauded chronicle of British military resistance while under capture, contains an escape attempt which replicates Mullaney's escapade, French prisoners of war playing a similar supporting role to the Board of Work's men.
- 43 O'MN. P17b/107, p. 47 and MA/MSP/34/REF/10614, Mangan, sworn statement, 5 January 1937, p. 7.
- 44 O'MN. P17b/107, p.48, P17b/106, p.27. For Ua Buachalla, MA/MSP/34/REF/8261, statements, 4 July 1935 and 22 December 1941. MA/MSP/34/E/7032, Ua Buachalla, Mullaney to Military Pension's Board, 30 April 1936. It should be noted that the MSP is filed under Buckley.
- 45 MA/MSPC/34/Ref 8907, Gallivan, sworn statement, 12 January 1942.
- 46 O'MN P17b/107, p. 48. According to O'Neill the column reached a maximum effective strength of twenty-three. It would have had a supporting cohort involved in logistics and temporary activism.
- 47 O'MN. P17b/106, p. 39. Mullaney does not reveal the man's true identity.
- 48 O'MN. P17b.106, p.31. Also, O'Neill, O'MN. P17b/107,p. 52, refers to Hawney, "*Bert was a great ladies man. He had a terrific Kerry accent*". Timothy Tyrell, an Easter Week veteran from Maynooth, is sourced by O'Neill in O'MN, P17b/107, 50.
- 49 MA/CW/OPS/10 DI, 15/9/22.
- 50 MA/CDC/I.R.A./2/S12008/6, Officer Commanding 1st Brigade (Mullaney) to Officer Commanding 1st Eastern Division (Michael Price).
- 51 MA/I.R.A./2/S/12008/6, Operation Reports 1st Eastern Division, 12 October 1922. For Price, MA/CDC/Lot 1, Sub file A/0989. Ernie O'Malley Papers captured at 36 Ailesbury Road, Dublin, 20 November 1922.
- 52 MA/CW/OPS/10/DI, 11/10/1922.
- 53 Ibid, 13 October 1922.
- 54 MA/I.R.A./2/S/12008/6, Operation Reports 1st Eastern Division, 28 October 1922, and MA/CW/OPS/1, Communication Reports 8 November 1922. For general disruption caused by the column, see MA/CW/OPS/8 and MA/CW/OPS/10. Also, NA/FIN/COMP/2/9/199, a compensation claim lodged for injury to a pony "...maliciously injured from the malicious and wanton blowing up of the public road bridge at Celbridge..." and NA/FIN/COM/2/9/53, a claim for damages lodged on behalf of the Guardians of the Celbridge Workhouse which relates "...Early on the morning of the 6 instant a partyo (sic) men entered the workhouse premises and set fire to the Fever Hospital building..." The Celbridge Workhouse had initially been a National Army Barracks. The National Army had transferred some months before to Naas. A small detachment of troops had reoccupied the Workhouse for a few days, possibly because of the destruction of the bridge. This seems to have provoked the burning of the hospital.

- 55 Hopkinson. op. cit. pp 201-220.
- 56 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 50, for references to Conolly, Clements, Maunsell, for raiding for shirts, p. 51. O'Neill had a poor opinion of local landowners, but the Wardells of Belbrook were described as "very good to us", p.41.
- 57 Ibid. Also, MA/CW/OPS/10, dated 4 September 1922, for Railway Hotel, Celbridge (Now the Abbey Lounge Public House), 18 September 1922 for canal boat raids. For comment on raids for shop goods, NA/FIN/COMP/2/9/42.
- 58 O'Malley, M.C. Baldonnel Aerodrome 1917-1952, in *Dublin Historical Record*, Vol. 52, No. 2, Autumn 2003, pp 170-181.
- 59 O'Grady, J. P. 'From Baldonnel to Shannon. Irish Civil Aviation Policy 1921-1931,' in *New Hibernia Review*, Vol. 1 Winter 1997, pp 64-80; also *Aerospace Historian*, Vol. 21, No. 2, Summer 1974, pp 96-101 for a listing of aircraft possessed by the nascent Irish Air Corps in 1922. The R.A.F. Intelligence Report (PRO Air8/49/1145/9), is found in McCarthy, P. J. 'The R.A.F. and Ireland 1920-22, in *The Irish Sword. The Journal of the Military History Society of Ireland*, Vol. XVII, No. 8, 1989, pp187-188. The assessment of the competence of the pilots at Baldonnel is less than complimentary.
- 60 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 28. He describes meeting sympathetic soldiers every evening.
- 61 Ibid, p. 28 and p.37, where he described how in meeting so often they became "pals with our men".
- 62 Ibid. p. 28. Laurence Sheehy, who was later executed, was in fact, Laurence Sheekey. His misnaming has travelled in texts through the decades. Thomas McCann is also misnamed by Mullaney, a not unusual occurrence given the passage of time. If McCann and Sheekey defected with the others in October, and the column was captured on 1 December 1922, a misremembering of a first name or surname would not be unusual over the years. Thomas Cardwell, who was responsible for liaising with National Army troops reconsidering their position on the Treaty, remembered Thomas McCann correctly. For 9th South Louth Brigade, 1st Easter Division, I.R.A., MA/BMH/WS/507, Joseph O'Higgins, p.16. "...About a week before the Truce our area was incorporated into a newly organised area known as the 9 Brigade, 1 Eastern Division... From the time this new Brigade was formed an intensive campaign of recruiting, organising and training was carried out. Recruits flowed into our ranks in great numbers from the Truce onwards..." Also, MA/Claim for Service Medal, Thomas McCann, MD/45024, (by kind permission, Vivienne Conway). I am indebted to Ms. Vivienne Conway, grandniece of Thomas McCann, and others of his extended family, for their assistance.
- 63 MA/MSP/34/REF/20703, Cardwell, sworn statement, 11 March 1940; also MA/SP/34/REF/24095, Mary Dwyer, statement 14 November 1940. This supports Mullaney's claim that he was in regular contact with soldiers in Baldonnel (O'MN, 17b/106, p. 28, p. 37.)
- 64 O'MN P17b/106, p. 28. The putative pilot was to be brought up from the south of the country.
- 65 O'MN,17b/107pp 48-9 for O'Neill's account of the planned raid.
- 66 MA/BMH/WS 1571, James Dunne, p. 17.
- 67 MA/MSPC/A/57 (1), Mullaney, Brigade Report, 1922 no month given but stated they were mobilised for the attack.
- 68 Ibid. Meade, Healy and Dwyer had been among those who raided Dunboyne previously, where vehicles as well as arms were captured. Those named were also involved in sniping at military posts. Cummins, op. cit., for Stacumney.
- 69 MA/BMH/WS 1571, James Dunne, p. 69
- 70 MA/MSP/34/REF/16113, Harris, statement of 9 October 1935, p. 6, and p. 8, statement of 2 July 1936, p. 5.
- 71 Ibid, statement, 2 July 1936, p. 5.
- 72 MA/MSP/34/REF/2552, Peggy Cullen, formerly Doyle, Cumann na mBan member who conveyed arms and ammunition for the attack on Baldonnel, sworn statement, 10 September 1940.
- 73 MA/BMH/WS/624, Mary Flannery Woods, *Cumann na mBan, Reminiscences 1895-1924*. Appendix B, pp 3-4. For the motives of those she met, O'MN P17b/107, p. 40. O'MN P17b/106, p. 28 and p. 37.
- 74 MA/BMH/WS/624, Woods, Appendix B, pp 3-4; O'MN. P17b/106, p. 37.
- 75 MA/MSP/34/REF/57554, Andrews.
- 76 Andrews, C. S. *Dublin Made Me* (Cork, 1979), p. 219.
- 77 Ibid, pp. 237-239; In, MA/MSPC/WMSP/34/REF/43520, Seán Dowling, and MA/MSPC/WMSP/34/REF/8768, Thomas Derrig. There is no recollection of Baldonnel. Tom Derrig was Adjutant General of the anti-Treaty I.R.A. until his arrest in April 1923 (McCarthy, op. cit. p. 188).
- 78 Alexander Dwyer was the son of Ambrose Dwyer and Mary, formerly Corcoran. The family had a farm and grocery/public house at Hazelhatch which is still in existence but now known as McEvoy's. Tragically Alexander Dwyer was to die by drowning in the canal in 1951, <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/civilrecords/births/marriages/deaths>. Background information provided by the late Tim Cotter, Celbridge.
- 79 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 37.
- 80 O'MN, P17b/106, p.28,p.29, p37, and P17b/107, p,49, which lists the arms taken. The Lewis gun was a light machine gun developed during World War I. It was fed by top mounted circular pans of ammunition and was used by many armies including Oglagh na hEireann until the 1950s. Sheehy was in fact Laurence Sheekey, the others being Anthony Reilly, Thomas McCann and Leo Dowling, (note 62 *supra*). Thomas McCann was subsequently the only one to escape execution.

- 81 Ibid. O'MN P17b/106, p. 37. Frances Elizabeth "Fanny" O'Connor, of Elm Hall, Celbridge, was a member of Cumann na nBan in Celbridge. She was a sister of John O'Connor who was a member of the Column. Mullaney indicates a high regard for her and blames Dowling entirely
- 82 Interview with Margaret Mullaney, widow of Patrick Mullaney, 7 August 1994. When asked of her late husband's opinion of Christopher Andrews she replied "*He didn't think much of him*", in a tone and manner that precluded further elaboration.
- 83 Ibid. "*He never discussed those things with me.*" In 1966, the 1916 50th Anniversary Committee in Leixlip contacted Mullaney in Balla, Co. Mayo, and invited him to return to Leixlip as part of the celebrations. He refused, indicating he had no desire to return to Leixlip and its memories. (Interview with Conor O'Brien N.T., Leixlip, who was on the Committee, 31 May 1991.)
- 84 O'MNP17b/107, pp 48-49, <https://www.irishgeneology.ie>, <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922>; Minutes, Celbridge Workhouse, W/E 2/4/1909 and W/E 1/12/1916, County Kildare Library Archive.
- 85 Hopkinson op. cit. pp 198-247.
- 86 MA/CW/OPS/10/DI, 4/11/1922, 6/11/1922, 9/11/1922, 15/11/1922, 17/11/1922; MA/CW/OPS/Operational Report, 30/11/1922; MA/MSPC//57(1), Mullaney Brigade Report, May 1922.
- 87 MA/Intelligence Report, Command Adjutant, Eastern Command Headquarters Wellington Barracks, to Director of Military Statistics, GHQ, Portobello Barracks – Leixlip/Maynooth Operations 1.x11.'22. Ref. ½ O.S. Map. Sheet 16, square A-8. (Henceforth MacNeill, copy in authors possession by permission of the late Commandant Peter Young, Military Archivist). Also MA/Operations Report (Form B1) 1/12/1922, Lt. Commandant Saurin.
- 88 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 38.
- 89 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 51. MA/MSP/34/REF/35313, Mullaney's sworn statement 10 April, 1937, pp 10 -11 gives a very brief account.
- 90 MA/MAPC/24/B/957, Lynam, his sister Mary inherited his estate.
- 91 O'MN, P17b/107 p. 51.
- 92 *Leinster Leader* 9 December 1922. 'Peter the Painter' was a popular term for the C96 Mauser automatic pistol as the weapon was used in the 1911 Sidney Street Siege by a London anarchist, known only as Peter the Painter.
- 93 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 51, MacNeill Report; *Leinster Leader* 9 December 1922.
- 94 *Leinster Leader* 9 December 1922.
- 95 Ibid.
- 96 Ibid.
- 97 MA/MSPC/W24/SP/5733, Ledwith. For Jeudwine, letter to Secretary, Minister of Defence, 8 March, 1926. For Castledermot, letter to Pensions Board, 29 March 1926. For participation at Grangewilliam, sworn statement, 7 January 1927, p. 4. Prior to his enlistment, Joseph Ledwith, from Larabryan, Maynooth, was a canal lock keeper, and occasional cattle dealer. He died in 1970. Also, interview with Mrs. Margaret Mullaney, 7 August 1994, who recounted the story. Jeudwine and Mullaney engaged in friendly conversation while the I.R.A. group kept the British under cover with concealed weapons. Apparently Jeudwine told Mullaney that if he joined the British Army he would be undoubted officer material! It is inconceivable that he did not suspect the danger he was in and mounted a charm offensive on Mullaney. Mullaney relates the story in MA/MSP/34.REF/35313, sworn statement, 13 April 1937, p. 3., and in O'MN P17b/106, p. 41. Also, MA/MSP/34/REF/16113, Harris statement, 9 October 1935, p. 8.
- 98 *Irish Independent* 2 December 1922, *Leinster Leader* 9 December 1922.
- 99 MacNeill; *Irish Independent* 2 December/1922, *Leinster Leader* 9 December 1922.
- 100 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 52.
- 101 *Leinster Leader* 9 December 1922; also, MacNeill Report.
- 102 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 38.
- 103 MacNeill; *Irish Independent* 2 December 1922.
- 104 MacNeill.
- 105 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 39. P17b/107, p.53. According to O'Neill, "*No one was allowed to touch us in the field*".
- 106 Cummins, op. cit.
- 107 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 38; O'MN. P17b/107 p. 52.
- 108 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 53.
- 109 O'MN, P17b/106, p.38. For Richard Sherry, <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922>; Richard Sherry was born in 1898 to Patrick and Mary Anne Sherry (formerly Redmond) of Blakestown, Leixlip. In 1924 Richard married Margaret Byrne of Leixlip. He was described as a labourer, indicating he had left the army, and resided at Reyebrook Leixlip; <https://www.irishgeneology.ie/>
- 110 *Irish Independent* 1 October 1922; Dorney, J. op. cit, pp 186-9, gives a comprehensive account of the killings and the role the Intelligence Department in Wellington Barracks. Mullaney claims Sherry knew him (OMN.P17b/106,p.38).

- 111 Dorney, J. *the irishstory.com-the-red-cow-murders-october-7-1922*, which references the ill treatment by Bolster of Frank Sherwin as related by Sherwin, in Sherwin, F. *Independent and Unrepentant* (Dublin, 2006), pp 18-21. The I.R.A. sought to track and kill Frank Bolster. According to an I.R.A. Intelligence Report "...Kitty Walsh is at present staying at Hannaville Road on the corner as you come from Terenure... It is suggested that Bolster probably visits there..." MA/CDC/Lot 34, Sub file A/1022. They married on 28 April 1924, <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 112 O'MN. P17b/107, p. 53.
- 113 MA/BMH/WS1751, Cahir Davitt, pp.27-30.
- 114 O'Donnell, I. 'An Interfering Judge, a Biddable Executive and an Unbroken Neck,' in, *Irish Jurist*, Vol. 60, (2018), pp 112-122. Also MA/BMH/WS1751, Cahir Davitt, p. 82, "I have I believe already indicated I was not in favour of the execution policy."
- 115 Enright, Seán. *The Irish Civil War, Law, Execution and Atrocity* (Newbridge, 2019), pp 70-71.
- 116 O'MN, P17b/107 p. 49 and <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922>.
- 117 O'MN P17b/106 p. 37.
- 118 O'MN, P17b/106, p.37, "six soldiers came out". The six who left and the others had bonded and become pals.
- 119 O'MN, P17b.106, p. 37.
- 120 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 39.
- 121 O'MN P17b/106, p. 37, Mullaney recalls an officer stating, "I was looking for the file on McCann and I couldn't find it". Mullaney believed the file had been found but suppressed. Also Enright op. cit. p. 71; O'MN P17b/106, p. 41.
- 122 O'MN P17b/107, p. 51.
- 123 O'MN P17b/106, p. 53; Enright, op. cit. p. 63. *The Irish Independent* 9 January 1923 carried the notice of their executions as did the *Leinster Leader* 13 January 1923.
- 124 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/> For notice of execution, *Irish Independent* 9 January 1923.
- 125 O'Sullivan, Niamh. *Written in Stone: The Graffiti in Kilmainham Jail* (Dublin, 2014), contains many reproductions of Kilmainham graffiti treating them as a historical archive. Also, McAtackney, Laura. 'Recovering Revolutionary Ireland. The Recording of Graffiti in Kilmainham Jail,' in, *Archeology Ireland*, Vol. 28, No.2 (2014) pp 32-34; Bergin, Niall & McAtackney, Laura. 'Gendered Graffiti at Kilmainham,' in, *History Ireland*, Vol.13 No.1 (2015) pp 34-36.
- 126 MA/MSPC/A/57 (1), Mullaney, Brigade Report, December 1922.
- 127 Ibid.
- 128 MA/Captured Documents Collection/Lot128/Sub file A1118.
- 129 MA/MSPC/A/57(1), Mullaney, Brigade Report, December 1922.
- 130 MA/MSPC/A/57(1), Mullaney, Brigade Report, 1922, no month given but it is a further statement on the capture of the column. At times Mullaney duplicated his reports, possibly unintentionally.
- 131 MA/MSP/34/REF/2073, Thomas Cardwell, sworn statement, 11 March, 1940.
- 132 Murphy, Breen T. 'The Governments Execution Policy During the Civil War 1922-1923.' Unpublished PhD. Thesis, National University of Ireland Maynooth. On Childers see pp 102-120; on illegality of Four Court Execution, p. 143. Also Hopkinson, *op. cit.* pp 198-192; MA/BMH/WS/1751, Cahir Davitt, p.83; Garvin, Tom. *The Birth of Irish Democracy* (Dublin, 1996), p. 162.
- 133 Enright, *op. cit.* p.71; MA/BMH/WS 1751, Cahir Davitt, pp.60-61
- 134 Ibid.
- 135 Enright op. cit. p. 71, Murphy, op. cit. p.170.
- 136 Murphy, op. cit. p.101 and p.141. For the monthly tally of executions, p. 315.
- 137 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 44.
- 138 O'Malley, Ernie. *The Singing Flame* (Dublin, 1976), p. 216; Murphy, op. cit. p. 28.
- 139 Murphy, *op. cit.* pp 204-208; Hopkinson, *op. cit.* pp 228-238.
- 140 Hopkinson, *op. cit.* p. 228.
- 141 MA/CDC/Lot 214, henceforth Lot 214.
- 142 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 143 The document is not numbered, the quotation is from the initial page setting out the charges against Mullaney.
- 144 Military Archives, Captured Document Collection (Lot 214) Mullaney's preamble to his defence. The pages are not numbered.
- 145 Enright, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64, MA/BMH/WS/1751, Davitt, pp 59-61.
- 146 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 32. It was a generalised and isolated comment with no context. Also, Murphy, op.cit. Cahir Davitt, the son of Michael Davitt, was also born in Straide.
- 147 Hopkinson, *op. cit.* p. 231.
- 148 MA/MSP/34/REF/22228, Lehane, sworn statement 21 September 1935, p. 8. Also MA/CDC/S4502, Lehane evidence, pages not numbered.
- 149 MA/CDC/Lot 214. Conclusion of Mullaney's defence. The pages are not numbered

- 150 MA/CDC/S4502, Preamble to the Court of Enquiry, pages are not numbered.
- 151 MA/CDC/Lot 214; MA/CDC/S4502. Evidence of O'Donovan. The pages are not numbered
- 152 O'Donoghue, D. *The Devil's Deal, The I.R.A., Nazi Germany and the Double Life of Jim O'Donovan* (Dublin, 2010), pp 38-59. Also, MA/MSP/34/REF/1590, O'Donovan, sworn statement, 14 February 1936.
- 153 MA/CDC/S4502, and National Archives (NA)/Dept. Justice/2007/50/13. (Henceforth, 2007/50/13).
- 154 Ibid. The pages are not numbered. Lehane also responded to O'Donovan's allegation that his influence was "pernicious". He declared before the Court of Enquiry that he would not sign the form himself. In private conversation he may have given as his opinion that the wording of the Form of Undertaking was loose and open to different interpretation as an exercise in abstract argument, but he never held or said, that a Volunteer could honourably sign it.
- 155 Ibid. The pages are not numbered. From reading the proceedings of the Court of Enquiry it would appear that morale among the prisoners was low. They had come to a realisation that it was the "...average individual..." who was most at risk of execution and acted accordingly, developing an internal cultural version of "...don't ask don't tell..."
- 156 MA/CDC/Lot 214 and S4502; NA/Dept. Justice, 2007/50/13, pages not numbered. Lehane was considered to have exceeded his authority in allowing Mullaney and the others to sign the Form.
- 157 MA/CDC/S4502, correspondence sent from the court arising from its findings. The pages are not numbered.
- 158 Hopkinson, op. cit. pp 268-271.
- 159 MA/MSP/34/REF/20703, Cardwell. Also, Autograph Book of Thomas McCann and in the possession of his family and signed by Thomas Cardwell which indicates he was on hunger strike on 16 October 1923. I am obliged to Vivienne Conway, grandniece of Thomas McCann for this information.
- 160 MA/MSPC/A/57(1), Mullaney. Also, Autograph Book of Thomas McCann. It contains the signatures of John O'Connor, Celbridge, and Francis Brennan, Finglas, indicating they began the hunger strike from 13 October.
- 161 Murphy, op. cit., pp 256-257.
- 162 *Leinster Leader* 14 June 1924.
- 163 NA/Department of Education Central Registry Series, 1131, Box 9, Mullaney to The Secretary, Education Office 12 June 1924.
- 164 Ibid, The Secretary, Education Office to Mullaney, 30 June 1924.
- 165 NA/I.R.A./Department of An Taoiseach/S3406A/32, A Report of the Advisory Committee to the Executive Council on Patrick Mullaney, 4 September 1924.
- 166 NA/I.R.A./Department of An Taoiseach/S3406A/32, decision of Executive Council, 27 September, 1924.
- 167 NA/Department of Education Central Registry Series, 1131, Box 9, various references to his reinstatement.
- 168 Murphy, op. cit. p.251; Coogan, T. P. *De Valera: Long Fellow, Long Shadow* (London 1993), p.36.
- 169 Hayes, M. 'Dail Eireann and the Irish Civil War in *Studies, An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 58, No. 228, (1969) p. 21.
- 170 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 171 MA/MSPC/2D/39, Moran, statement of Captain John P. Stafford, undated but clearly contemporaneous.
- 172 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 173 MA/MSPC/2D/390, Moran, Garda Report on Means, Bridget Moran, widow, 26 June 1924
- 174 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 175 MA/MSPC/D38, Moran, Bridget Moran to Army Finance Officer, no date, but stamped as received 11 March 1926.
- 176 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/> and MA/MSPC/2D/390, Moran, Seamus Murphy T.D., to Army Pensions Board, 11 October 1929; MA/MSPC/D38, Moran, Army Pensions Branch, Life Certificate, stamped 13 November 1924.
- 177 *Irish Independent* 2 December 1922; *Leinster Leader* 9 December 1922 for his wounding.
- 178 <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922;>
- 179 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 180 MA/MSP/REF/10219, a sworn statement of O'Connor, dated 13 September 1935, contains the bulk of his evidence. MA/MSP/1/RB/1103, corroborative statements of Thomas Kealy and P. Mullaney. Mullaney confirmed linking up with O'Connor and escaping with him. O'Connor was released early, on 14 February 1924, probably due to his injuries; MA/MSP/34/E/506, Award of service medal with bar (pre-Truce), death 29 March 1968; MA/MSP/DP/4090, provision of surgical boots, declining health, permanent infirmity under as defined by Army Pensions Act 1943, transfer of house and land to brother; MA/MSP/V/56, medical reports, hospitalisations.
- 181 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 182 MA/MSPC/DP/427, Brady, Application for Dependant Allowance and Gratuity Form completed by Mrs. Kate Brady, contains a great deal of personal information, including giving place of execution as Kilmainham Jail; MA/MSPC/2RBSD/510, Brady, corroborative statements, Michael O'Neill, Patrick Mullaney, Michael Hilliard; MA/MSPC/2RB/4010, Brady, Investigation as to means, Mrs. Kate Brady;

- MA/MSPC/52/APB/17, Brady, recommendation to award gratuity. Also, <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922>
- 183 Durney, op. cit. p. 135.
- 184 <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>
- 185 <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922>
- 186 MA/MSPC/DP/1317, Dowling, Application for Dependant's Allowance or Gratuity in respect of Leo Dowling from Patrick Dowling, father. Patrick Dowling to Frank Aiken Minister for Defence undated but reply from Minister dated 30 November 1932. Statement of means noting Patrick Dowling was an ex-sergeant British Army with pension; MA/MSPC/2RB/49, Dowling, corroborative statements, William Byrne, Michael Hilliard; MA/MSPC/Y/217, Dowling, statement of means, Patrick Dowling; MA/MSPC/52/APB36, Dowling; recommendation of gratuity; <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922>
- 187 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 188 MA/MSPC/DP/4314, Heeney, Statement of means, Julia Heeney, mother of Sylvester Heeney.
- 189 <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922>
- 190 MA/MSPC/Y2, Heeney, approval of gratuity; MA/MSPC/DP/4314, Heeney, claim for Dependant's Allowance or Gratuity, Julia Heeney, mother.
- 191 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>; Baptismal Records, St. Patrick's Parish Church, Celbridge.
- 192 <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>
- 193 Minutes of the Board of Guardians, Celbridge Workhouse, 1916, Kildare County Archives. A similar request was recorded in the minutes for 1 December 1916.
- 194 <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922>
- 195 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 196 Ibid
- 197 <https://www.militaryarchives.ie/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922>
- 198 MA/MSPC/Y8, Sheeky, Claim for Dependant's Allowance or Gratuity, Margaret Sheeky, mother, statement of means, Margaret Sheeky, approval of gratuity; MA/MSPC/2RB/71, Sheeky, corroborative statements, Michael Hilliard, Patrick Mullaney, Seamus Swan (Clonglis). Mullaney referred to him familiarly as Larry (O'MN.P17b/106, p. 28).
- 199 MA MSP/34.REF/35313, sworn statement, 10 April 1927, p.11; MA/MSPC/A/57/1, Mullaney, Brigade Report Nov/Dec. 1922
- 200 MA/MSP/34/REF/2073, the totality of his account is given in a sworn statement, 11 March 1940.
- 201 MA/MSP/1/RB/1103, O'Connor, Kealy's corroborative evidence submitted 21 May 1933.
- 202 MacNeill.
- 203 MA/CW/OPS/BOX8 file 35-General Weekly Reports, Form A2 (Irregular). Kealy/Kealy/Kealy is referenced on reports dated 13/2/1923, 24/2/1923, 30/3/1923.
- 204 NA/Dept. Taoiseach/SFile/S9082.
- 205 MA/MSPC/REF/57/1, Mullaney Brigade Report Nov/Dec., 1922, Mullaney was always reticent on Baldonnel and the executions. MA/MSP/34/REF/35313, sworn statement 10 April, 1937, p.11.
- 206 MacNeill. MA/MSPC/34/REF/20703, Cardwell, sworn statement, 11 March 1940, Cardwell claimed twenty-one captured, but one escaped
- 207 MA/MSPC/34/REF/35313, Mullaney sworn statement 10 April 1937.; MA/MSPC/34/REF/20703, Cardwell, sworn statement, 11 March, 1940.
- 208 Durney, James. *The Civil War in Kildare* (Cork, 2011), p. 202.
- 209 MA/MSP/REF/57/1, Mullaney Brigade Reports; MA/MSPC/RO/482, No.1 Meath Brigade, organisation records 1 July 1922.<https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>; <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>
- 210 MA/MSPC/RO/482, No. 1 Meath Brigade, organisation records 1 July 1922.
- 211 MA/MSPC/RO/519, Francis Brennan, A Coy. 3 Batt. Fingal Brigade, 11 July 1921 and 1 July 1922.
- 212 <https://www.irishwar.com/I.R.A.-volunteer-francis-brennan>, contains a copy of a letter from Mullaney to Brennan concerning a military pension application. It confirms Brennan's service with the column August-December 1922. An autograph book in the possession of the family of Thomas McCann contains the autograph of Francis Brennan and confirms he was on hunger strike in October 1923. I am indebted to Vivienne Conway, grandniece of Thomas McCann, for this information.
- 213 O'MN P17b/107, p. 49.
- 214 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/> A Frank "Terry" Brennan was captured in the attack on the Four Courts on 25 May 1925. "Terry" was a family name given to Francis Brennan, but there is no conclusive proof so far that they are one and the same, <https://www.customhousecommemoration.com/2019/02/relative-jailed-burning-custom-house>.

- 215 MA/MSPC/34/REF/20703 contains the bulk of Cardwell's evidence in a sworn statement, 11 March 1940. Also, MA/DP/19768, details of employment, resignation and ill health, MA.MSPC/34/E/17898, verification of death and verification of death of Elizabeth Cardwell, 1995.
- 216 Autograph book in the possession of the family of Thomas McCann contains the autograph of Thomas Cardwell and confirms he was on hunger strike in October 1923.
- 217 MA/CDC/Lot 214/Sub file S4502.
- 218 <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 219 MA/CDC/Lot 214 Sub file S4502.
- 220 MA/MSPC/RO/482, No 1 Meath Brigade, organisation records 1 July 1922.
- 221 MA/MSPC/A/57(1), Mullaney.
- 222 MA/MSPC/RO/482, No.1 Meath Brigade, organisational records, 1 July 1922.
- 223 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 42.
- 224 <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>
- 225 Interview with Margaret Mullaney, widow of Patrick Mullaney, 7 August 1994.
- 226 MA/MSPC/1/RB/1103, O'Connor, corroborative statement, Mullaney, 17 May 1933.
- 227 MA/CDC/Lot 2214 Sub file S4502; The Kerry Reporter 14 June 1924.
- 228 *The Kerryman* 16 August 1969. Anne Hawney was a celebrated teacher of mathematics. She was a member of the Royal Meteorological Society and engaged in research in cosmic physics. She was described in one account as a "... dark haired Kerrywoman ...". Anne predeceased her husband, dying in July 1958. *Irish Independent* 27 August 1954, *Irish Independent* 23 October 1954, *The Kerryman* 22 August 1959.
- 229 O'MN, P17b /107, p. 48.
- 230 MA/MSPC/RO/519, C Coy. 1 Batt. Fingal Brigade, organisational roll 11 July 1921 and 1 July 1922; O'MN, P17b /107, p. 48. For coverage of the Kelly brothers I.R.A. Service 1919-1923, Charles F. Whearity, 'Joseph Kelly in the War of Independence and Civil War,' Paper 290, delivered 2012, Skerries Historical Society. I am indebted to Ms. Vivienne Conway, grandniece of Thomas McCann for her assistance.
- 231 O'MN, P17b/106, p.31; MA/CDC/Lot 25 Sub file A/1013 and A/1017.
- 232 O'MN P17b/107, p.51, p.53; O'MN, P17b/110, p.112. P17b/110 is a grim recollection by Mullaney of struggles physical and psychological in Mountjoy. MA/BMH/WS/507, O'Higgins. In 1969 Thomas McCann applied for a 1917-1921 Service Medal. Significantly, on his application he listed service in 1922 with the 3rd Batt., 1st Meath Brigade, the formal identity in organisational terms of the Mullaney Column (M/A Claim for Service Medal Thomas McCann MD/45024). I am indebted to Ms. Vivienne Mullaney, grandniece of Thomas McCann for his family background and information.
- 233 MA/MSPC/RO/482, No 1 Meath Brigade, organisational roll, 1 July, 1922/
- 234 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 38.
- 235 O'MN, P17b/107, p. 48 & p. 51; *Leinster Leader* 14 June 1924.
- 236 O'MN, P17b/106, p. 39.
- 237 MA/MSPC/RO/482, No 1 Meath Brigade, organisational roll 1 July 1922; MA/MSPC/34/REF/1061, Tyrrell, statement of service, 7 February 1935 and Mullaney, corroborative statement, sworn statement, 5 January 1937; O'MN, P17b/107 p. 50.
- 238 MA/MSPC/RO/519, irishwar.com-volunteer-francis-brennan; <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/> I am indebted to Vivienne Conway, grandniece of Thomas McCann for her assistance.
- 239 Ferriter, op. cit. pp 129-130 and pp 175-187, under the chapter heading "Fine Specimens of Womanhood."
- 240 MA/MSPC/CMB/Nominal Rolls, Cumann na mBan (CMB/1-165), <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>; <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>; *Irish Times* 1 March 1923,
- 241 MA/MSPC/CMB/14 [http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/Nominal Rolls, Cumann na mBan \(CMB/1-165\)](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/Nominal Rolls, Cumann na mBan (CMB/1-165).). <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>; MA/Captured Document Collection Lot 138 (2), Gallivan O/C 1st Meath Brigade, to Acting Assistant Chief of Staff; *Irish Times* 26 April 1923.
- 242 MA/MSPC/CMB/144, Nominal Rolls, Cumann na mBan (CMB/1-165), <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>; Cummins, op. cit., <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/> MA/MSP/34/REF/7 - Nellie Dillon; O'MN, P17b/107, p. 46.
- 243 MA/MSPC/CMB/144, Nominal Rolls, Cumann na mBan (CMB/1-165), <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>; MA/MSP/34/REF/24095, Dwyer, statement of service, 31 December 1935, corroborative statements, T. Gallivan, P. Mullaney, James Farrell, and MA/MSP/34/SP/25510, Dwyer, Service Medal, 1917-1921 awarded.
- 244 MA/MSPC/CMB/144, Nominal Rolls, Cumann na mBan (CMB/1-165); <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>; MA/MSP/REF/3902, O'Connor, statement of service, 24 February 1935; MA/34/SP/2460, O'Connor, letter of application, MA/DP/9249, O'Connor, special allowance award and subsequent reduction.
- 245 MA/MSPC/CMB/144, Nominal Rolls, Cumann na mBan (CMB/1-165); <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>
- 246 The draft application for a Military Service Pension is found in the papers of James Farrell, Church View, Leixlip, who served with Patrick Mullaney 1919-1921 and 1922-1923, although not then as a member of the Column. They were given to the author by a member of the Farrell family some years ago.
- 247 Ibid.
- 248 *Irish Times* 31 March 1923; O'MN, P17b/106. p. 37.

- 249 MA/MSPC/CMB/144, Nominal Rolls, Cumann na mBan (CMB/1-165); MA/MSP/REF/61108, Mullaly, service statement, 25 May 1950, evidence taken 1 February, 1951, corroborative evidence, B. Dunne, William O'Neill.
MA/MSPC/9073, Mullaly, pension award 30 April 1951. Margaret Mullaly died on 23 May 1974.
- 250 MA/MSPC/CMB/144, Nominal Rolls, Cumann na mBan (CMB/1-165), <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/>; <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie>. On the Census form the family name was given as "Somers." MA/MSP/34/REF/14767, Somers, statement of service, 29 October 1935, copy of Detention Order, 8 August 1923; MA/34/SP/15771, Somers, refusal of pension, 10 February 1941.

The "Wind Up"



P. E. Millaney

Leixlip, Co. Kildare.

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