

W. S. 1,254  
**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 1254

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

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1,254

Witness

Michael Coleman,  
Tiernanean,  
Butlerstown,  
Courtmacsherry,  
Co. Cork.

Identity.

Captain Barryroe Company Irish Volunteers  
Co. Cork;

Member of Brigade Column 'D' Coy.  
1st Battalion Cork III Brigade.  
Subject.

Barryroe Comp any Irish Volunteers,  
Co. Cork, 1917-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil

File No. S.2554

Form B.S.M. 2

# ORIGINAL

15. 8. 1254  
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BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21  
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STATEMENT BY MICHAEL COLEMAN,

Tiernanean, Butlerstown, Courtmacsherry, Co. Cork.

I joined the Irish Volunteers <sup>in 1914.</sup> when a company was formed in Barryroe. The area was fairly heavily populated; most of the people were small farmers.

When the company was formed Michael O'Sullivan became Captain, with James Moloney, 1st Lieut., and Daniel Santry, 2nd Lt. We had little knowledge of military training, but everyone was very keen and we spent much time in drilling and training.

In 1918 the threat of conscription livened things up and we were busily engaged in gathering in any arms available in the area. The people were looking to the Volunteers for a lead and we were parading publicly although closely watched by the R.I.C.

In June, 1918, Hugh Thornton, who was then Brigade Adjutant, visited our area and caused a test mobilisation to be carried out to test our training. The members of the company were called from their beds during the night and the company paraded to a man. Orders were issued that every man must be armed with some weapon, and, in the absence of sufficient guns, we seized harrow springs, which were converted into bayonets, pikes and spears.

The Crown forces had commenced to take serious notice of our activities and in June, 1918, they proclaimed a feis which had been arranged for Timoleague. We decided that the feis must be held and the company was mobilised. In the space of half a day we had made all

preparations and the feis was held in our company area. As the feis was being concluded, British military and R.I.C. arrived. The military fired several shots over the heads of the people, who scattered, while the R.I.C. made several baton charges which were later followed by raids and arrests. Our Company Captain was arrested and sentenced to three months in prison.

At this time an election for company officers was held which resulted in Michael McCarthy becoming Captain; Michael Sullivan, 1st Lt., and myself, 2nd Lt.

During 1918 we carried out raids for arms. The following were raided: Howel's, Ballycullinan, Courtmacsherry Lucas's, Rochfortstown, Perrot's, Lackeenduff, and Major Savage's and Daniel O'Leary's, Lislevane, Timoleague.

In August, 1918, the company paraded to the funeral of an I.R.A. officer named Willie Hurley. The parade marched from Baurleigh to Clogagh and was watched by British forces.

The organisation in our area was getting to the stage where men were anxious to be active, and the company was broken into sections and work commenced on making buckshot and filling cartridges. Each section had its share of work to do. Training was intensified and as the 1918 elections had put the Republicans on top we got ready for action.

In April, 1918, Michael McCarthy, Company Captain, left the area and James Moloney, who had been in prison, resumed charge of the company. Michael Sullivan became 1st Lt. and I remained 2nd Lieutenant.

In the early summer of 1918 word was conveyed to us that a man named Michael Murphy, who lived in Cork City but who used visit relatives in our area, was in touch with some soldiers stationed at Ballincollig Military Barracks and it was possible to buy arms at a reasonable price. We made a collection in the company area and by the end of the summer of 1919 we had procured two rifles, two revolvers, six Mills bombs, eleven hundred and fifty rounds of rifle ammunition and a considerable quantity of revolver ammunition. Our area was thirty-five miles from Ballincollig but we got the stuff through without a hitch. Some of the ammunition was sent by rail to Timoleague packed in biscuit tins. The arms and ammunition were held in our company area until the Cork No. 3 Brigade Column was formed, when it was handed over to help put the column in the field.

In August, 1919, a brigade training camp was held at Glandore. The late Dick McKee came down from Dublin and two men from our company were sent for special training. The camp had a great effect on the whole area.

The company were looking forward to increase our stock of arms and it came to our notice that when boats reached Courtmacsherry they were boarded and searched by a party of from six to ten marines. We kept the pier under observation and on the arrival of a boat I entered Courtmacsherry with a party of nine armed men with the intention of disarming the marines, but on this particular occasion the marines did not appear. It was clear that they had been warned of our presence.

The R.I.C. were becoming increasingly active against

us, carrying out frequent raids for arms.

On 5<sup>a</sup> February, 1920, plans were made to attack Timoleague R.I.C. barracks which was occupied by about six R.I.C. men. The attack took place on the 12<sup>a</sup> February. The general idea was to explode a mine against the barracks and assault the building when the mine exploded. The mine, however, failed to explode. A load of hay was procured and tilted against the barracks before being set alight, but this, too, failed to take effect and after some hours' firing at the barracks we withdrew. After the barrack attack the R.I.C. were reinforced by Black and Tans and they continued to raid around the company area.

The R.I.C. vacated their barrack at Courtmacsherry and Seán Hales, Battalion O/C, came to the area and led a party of us in destroying it.

The brigade officers decided in May, 1920, that action would have to be taken against the R.I.C. and Tans stationed at Timoleague. It was arranged that the local company would drive cattle off the lands of a British loyalist in the hope that the R.I.C. would be induced to come out to investigate. The cattle were driven off and Charlie Hurley, Brigade O/C, with two members of the Kilbriittain Company came over to our area. We had driven the cattle off lands that would bring the investigating party past Avawadda Cross. Charlie Hurley took charge, and with the two men from Kilbriittain we joined him. There were eight of us from Barryroe Company, making a party of eleven in all.

We took up positions behind the fences near Avawadda Cross, a scout being posted to warn us of the

approach of the R.I.C. After waiting half the day the R.I.C. were sighted, a sergeant, two constables and a Tan. Charlie Hurley warned us not to fire until he fired first. The party moved into our ambush position and they were nearly through the position when we opened fire. The two constables were shot dead and the sergeant was badly wounded. The sergeant continued to fire and was shot dead as he attempted to crawl for cover. The Tan ran away. Charlie Hurley ran after the Tan, who was dodging from side to side and who eventually got away.

After the ambush British military took up quarters at Timoleague Castle; a few R.I.C. men were stationed with them. After a while it was noticed that the R.I.C. went to Mass on Sundays under military guard. The situation was reported to the Brigade O/C, who arranged that I would go into Timoleague with a party from Ballyroe Company and join with members of the Timoleague Company in disarming the military guard. Charlie Hurley, Brigade O/C, was in charge and the plan was for us to mingle with the crowd coming from Mass and rush the military while Charlie himself held up the R.I.C. at the chapel. We were to make our rush on a signal from Charlie. On the Sunday selected we went to Mass in Timoleague armed with revolvers and came out with the crowd. The R.I.C. usually left the chapel last. We moved down the village but there was no sign of the military guard. The crowd began to thin out and our cover was gone. The job was then called off; people had begun to notice us and cleared off the streets. It appeared that the Mass finished early and that was the reason the guard was not on the street in time.

We were making every effort to get in an attack on

the British forces and in July, 1920, we arranged for a sports to be held in Ballinadee where it was expected a force of British troops would put in an appearance. We arranged to ambush the British in Ballinadee village. I took a party of about ten, armed with revolvers, a distance of eighteen miles to Ballinadee, but the military did not come near the place.

The British sent occasional patrols through our company area and we lay in ambush on three occasions at Curraheen without result.

In August, 1920, the Battalion Council were holding regular meetings and it was expected that the Company Captain and one other officer should attend. Our Company Captain had sent me to several meetings to represent him and the battalion officers were not satisfied. Finally the Company Captain got a definite order to attend a Battalion Council meeting, but he sent me again. Shortly afterwards it was announced that the Captain was reduced to Quartermaster and I was appointed Captain.

In September, 1920, the brigade commenced the intensive training of men for column service. The first camp was held in the Kilbrittain area. The camp was under Charlie Hurley, Brigade O/C, with Tom Barry as Training Officer. I went to the camp with Daniel Santry, 1st Lt., and John Hayes, 2nd Lt. The camp lasted a week and the training lasted all day and even into the night. We were an armed camp ready to fight at any moment while the training went on. At the end of the camp we moved out as a column. Tom Barry had at this time been appointed Column O/C. We lay in ambush several times

awaiting the British without result. We were moving across country all the time. The column was disbanded as the rifles were required for the next training camp. Some of the Column ran into a party of British troops at Newcestown, where a fight developed. I was not with the party.

I was recalled to the column on the 21st October, 1920, at Ballinphellic and on the next day we went into ambush position at Toureen on the main Cork - Bandon road about 11 or 12 miles from Cork. I was placed on the eastern end of the ambush position at a boreen sloping down to the road. A long cart was placed in the boreen and we were to push the long cart into the road when the lorries approached. Two or three lorries were ~~suspected~~ <sup>expected</sup>. We were to attack the first lorry, while a party under the Column O/C were behind a gate to attack the second lorry. A third party was further west to attack a third lorry if it appeared. About 9 a.m. the lorries were signalled and the first lorry came on. A land mine which had been laid in the road failed to explode. The first lorry rushed through before we could do anything and although we got in a few shots the lorry got through. The Column O/C and his party had brought the second lorry under fire and it was halted on the road. Tom Barry's party were fighting it out with the military. The survivors surrendered. Five military had been killed, three or four wounded, and the remainder (six or seven) surrendered. The rifles of the whole British party were collected and the lorry set on fire. We all assembled in a nearby farmyard and from there moved off across country to the Bandon river, crossing the river in boats to Kilmacsimons Quay and then on to Kilbrittain where we billeted.



Reports were received during the next day that the British military had wrecked the town of Bandon on the previous night, and on that night we moved to the town of Bandon to prevent more reprisals. I was with a party which manned the Metal Bridge on the verge of the town, but all was quiet in the town. The British troops were confined to barracks. The column was then disbanded and I returned to my own area. The Brigade ordered the collection of a levy on all property owners and farmers in aid of the arms' fund which was to maintain the organisation and especially the column. Our company collected £375, which was handed up to the brigade.

At this time, (October, 1920) communication between the different parts of the brigade area was becoming difficult and means had to be found to enable senior officers to travel through the different areas. One of the routes organised through our area was by boat across the different inlets. The use of the boats nearly led to a tragic end, for three of our men - Denis Murphy, Courtmacsherry, Denis Madden, Lislea, Courtmacsherry, and Jeremiah Mahony, now in England, were ordered to take a boat across Courtmacsherry Bay and bring Charlie Hurley, Brigade O/C, across from Kilbrittain Company area. They set out during a storm and when rounding a point the boat capsized and the men were thrown into the water. Four others, Dan Holland, John Donovan, James O'Driscoll and John Mahoney, were on shore watching and saw what had happened. Getting a local crew together, they launched another boat and rescued the three men, who were then clinging to the upturned boat.

Two other members of the company were called up to

go across for the Brigade O/C and they succeeded in bringing him across.

During all this time the routine work of the company was kept going. Roads were obstructed, lines for despatches kept going, and billets and food procured for men on the run.

At this time also one of my Section Commanders, Dan Holland, was taken to Battalion H.Q. and appointed Battalion Lieutenant of transport and supplies.

In December, 1920, we planned an attack on a British patrol which came to the village of Timoleague. I took about twelve men into the village and joined some of the Timoleague Company awaiting the patrol. The patrol did not arrive but we captured two unarmed British soldiers, whom we later released.

In January, 1921, the British attempted a round-up of my company area. They started by some of the Courtmacsherry garrison holding a line on high ground overlooking the area while troops from Bandon closed in. The round-up took place on a Sunday and it was usually on a Sunday we held our company parades. On the Sunday of the round-up we did not parade as we had met on the previous Thursday. During the round-up several members of the company were captured, including John Hayes, my 2nd Lieutenant. John Hayes was identified by one of the soldiers we had captured in Timoleague. Hayes was tried and sentenced to seven years.

James O'Hea and John Coleman were wounded escaping the round-up but we got them away safely. John Donovan of Timoleague Company, who was caught in the round-up, was

shot dead.

I was at my own house when the round-up started but I managed to get away, bringing John Coleman, who was wounded, with me. Several men got away under heavy enemy fire. Two of my men travelled a distance of six miles, being under fire the whole time.

As the result of the round-up there were vacancies in the company. Denis O'Brien was appointed 2nd Lt.

A second large-scale round-up took place in February, 1921, in which we lost several more who were taken prisoners. Owing to the intense enemy activity the brigade issued orders for the general blocking of roads and the destruction of bridges. My company was divided into sections for this work, each section under an officer or section commander.

We destroyed the bridge on the main road between Timoleague and Bandon close to Bandon, travelling a distance of twelve miles to carry out the job. We also had a section out blocking the Bandon-Clonakilty road about sixteen miles from my own area. The working parties were each guarded by about six armed men.

I need hardly say that there were many failures and disappointments when we were out with the column. Ambushes which were prepared did not come off and barrack attacks petered out owing to mine failures.

We were recalled to the column in January, 1921, and our first job was an attempted ambush at Mawbeg between Bandon and Ballineen. A spy had been shot and left on the road as a bait, but the British learned that we were there and did not come out. We moved out of that

spot and got nearer to Bandon to a place named Carhue where another spy was shot and left on the road, but the British would not come out.

We moved nearer to Bandon and prepared for an attack on Bandon town itself. The plan was to attack a curfew patrol which paraded the town every night. I was with a party which was to cover the military barracks and prevent the troops from breaking out to the assistance of the curfew patrol which was to be attacked by a party under the Column O/C. After waiting until the early hours of the morning without any sign of the patrol we fired some shots and withdrew.

On the night of January 26th, 1921, we went to Innishannon to attack the barracks, but the mine failed to explode and we just fired a volley and left. After Innishannon we moved to Newcestown where some of the column were disbanded.

At the end of January, 1921, the column moved again and went to Burgatia House near Rosscarbery. The house was the property of a British loyalist suspected of spying and he was to be tried. We entered the house on the night of the 1st or 2nd of February, 1921, and made all the inmates prisoners. The reason for occupying Burgatia House was that it was intended to attack Rosscarbery R.I.C. barracks on the following night and we wanted to get within striking distance of the village without having our presence known. Sentries were posted and we rested in the house overnight. Strict orders were given that we must not show ourselves. The house stood to the south of the Rosscarbery-Clonakilty road. Behind it to the south was

the Atlantic. It would have been a bad place to have been trapped. The senior officers looked after the owner of the house, whom they tried on a charge of spying while we were there. He was ordered to leave the country and his lands and property were confiscated. Everything went well until the next day when one of the sentries held up the local postman who came to deliver letters. After being interviewed by the local officers he was allowed to go on his rounds. In the early afternoon Black and Tans were seen approaching the house and we felt we were for it. Orders were issued that no man was to show himself and the Tans were allowed to come nearer; they were approaching the house up the avenue. When they got near the house we got orders to open fire. Many of them fell and the remainder scattered. Some of the column were ordered out into the yard and to move away from the house in small parties and to assemble on high ground east and west of the house. I was ordered with eight or nine others to man the upper windows of the house and keep up fire on the retreating British forces until some of our party had got into position outside. When they were in position we were withdrawn from the house and we moved to the east. One man - Brennan - had been wounded and we took him with us. We also took a horse to carry a land mine. We went to Kilbree while the Column O/C and some others returned to burn Burgatia House.

I returned to my own area. Changes were made in the column from time to time. Some men were returned to their own areas, while other men were called up for service. This ensured that there would be some men with column experience in every area and allowed the Column O/C to increase the strength of the column as required.

At first company officers were barred from column service, but this policy did not last long because the company officers would not have lasted long if they let members of the company go on attacks while they remained at home. The changing of the column personnel allowed the company officers to keep in touch with their own areas, and the fact that the company officers had been in a fight gave the men confidence in their officers.

Early in March, 1921, I was called to the column along with six members of my company. The strength of the column at this time was about 103 or 104. It was the largest column we ever had. We were brought to Shippool between Kinsale and Bandon and went into position to ambush a large convoy of British troops which was expected to leave Kinsale. We waited all day but the British did not travel. In the afternoon a plane flew over seeking our position. It was clear that the British knew we were in the area. We lay in the ditches while the plane hovered over us. We lay in billets that night and all next day. The column had been broken into sections. I was in No. 1 section under Seán Hales.

During the night we moved off for Crossbarry area. Crossbarry is on the old Bandon-Cork road about 12 miles from Cork. We went into billets in the houses round John O'Leary's of Ballyhandle. Scouts were sent out and sentries posted. We were not long in billets when the alarm was sounded and we were ordered to Crossbarry Crossroads. We all assembled in a field near the cross and the Column O/C explained our position to us. We were being surrounded by British troops who were approaching our position from Bandon, Ballincollig, Kinsale and Cork.

There was no retreat; we were going to stand and fight. The British were moving slowly by lorry and on foot, searching the country as they advanced. It was expected that the troops from Bandon would reach Crossbarry first and an ambush was prepared for them. The place selected for the ambush was on the Bandon-Crossbarry road on the Bandon side of the crossroads where two farmers' houses were close together. Two mines were placed in the road, with some distance between them, to trap some of the lorries when they came into our position.

Our section was placed on the Bandon side of the first of the farmhouses. The O/C (Seán Hales) ordered me to pick six of the tallest of the section and hold a gateway beside the farmyard while he took the remainder of the section further back and placed them on to a breen running off the road towards the north. We were on the northern side of the road. On my left, facing towards the road, was No. 2 section under John Lordan. Next to him on the left was John Crowley's section, next Peter Kearney's section, and out in the fields on our left flank was Denis Lordan's section. Chris Connell had a section on rising ground on our right flank and back from the road, while on our rear, which was also rising ground, Thos. Kelliher had a section.

The Column O/C told us the whole plan and the orders were that no man was to show himself until the attack opened, and when the fight started no man was to leave his position without orders; everyman was to fight where he stood.

We were in position for a couple of hours when a

long convoy of lorries was sighted on the Bandon-Crossbarry road. We could hear the sound of lorries from all directions for some time but this was the first sight. We kept quiet as the lorries came on and just as the first of the lorries passed us they stopped and the soldiers jumped out. Some one of our men had been seen. The order to open fire was given and we opened up on the soldiers nearest to us. Crowley's section on our left and O'Connell's on our right were blasting away. Some of the soldiers tried to find cover but the fire was too much for them and they broke away and jumped the ditch on the southern side of the road. In front of our position soldiers lay dead and wounded. Firing died down on our side for want of targets and some of us were ordered out on the road to deal with some of the British, who, after getting over the fence to our front, took up position behind ditches and opened up again. Orders were given to collect all arms from British and get the dead and wounded away from the lorries. We had started burning the lorries when firing broke out on our left flank; another column of British had come up. We were ordered back to our positions and got ready, but we were not required as the British were driven off by the flanking section. Next firing broke out on our right flank; a column of British from the Bandon side had circled to come round us. They were met by our flanking party on the right and driven off. The British then appeared on our rear, having come in across country from the north. They were very determined, but they were met by Thos. Kelliher's section and suffered many killed before they retreated.

We were now free from interference; the British



had been beaten back on all sides. The arms were collected and divided round. We had captured two machine-guns, one of which was broken. We formed up into our own sections. Three of our men - Peter Monahan, Jeremiah O'Leary and Con Daly - were killed in the fight and several wounded. I don't know how many the British lost; there were dead and dying in front of every section. We marched off and in a roundabout way reached Gurranreigh which was outside our brigade area. While at Gurranreigh we heard that Charlie Hurley, our Brigade O/C, had been caught by a raiding party on the morning of the Crossbarry fight and killed as he tried to fight his way through.

I should have mentioned that during the Crossbarry fight Flor Begley, Assistant Brigade Adjutant, marched up and down one of the farmyards in the centre of the position playing the bagpipes.

The night after Crossbarry we marched to Clogagh, over 20 miles away, where we gave Charlie Hurley a military funeral. After the funeral we marched to Ahiohill. We moved round the country for some days and towards the end of March the column was in the direction of Rosscarbery. Many changes had been made and the column contained many new men, some from the Bantry area.

I remember the evening of the 30th March. It was very cold and we were told we were going in to attack Rosscarbery barracks. A squad was selected to carry a mine to the barrack door, while another squad were to be in readiness to rush the barracks when the mine exploded. I was with a party who were to go on to the street and keep the upper windows of the barracks under fire. Parties were told off to cut telegraph wires and block

roads just before the attack started.

We moved in for the attack at midnight after removing our boots. Not a sound was heard in the village. The mine was lofted on the shoulders of four officers, who walked at a steady pace through the wicket gate and laid the mine at the barrack door. They crept back. Suddenly there was a large explosion. The house across the street from the barracks was blasted. We opened up and the assault party moved to rush the opening. There was a cry of "we surrender" from the barracks and everything halted. Then there was another shout "we hold the barracks". Orders were given to resume the attack. The Column O/C went in under cover of our fire and lobbed in some bombs, while the R.I.C. lobbed out some bombs also. This went on for some time until the R.I.C. and Tans were forced upstairs. Then paraffin was thrown in and the barracks took fire. The garrison threw their arms into the flames and came out through a window after lowering their wounded. Eight or nine of the garrison were wounded. Two were killed and their bodies burned in the barracks and twelve unwounded surrendered. We had no losses either killed or wounded.

In March, 1921, the execution of spies had started in our brigade area and in many cases the spies' properties were confiscated. In the case of the spy Bradfield, his cattle were brought into my company area where they were held until disposed of. My company was engaged on two occasions in removing cattle and property off the lands of a man named Goods of Barryhall who had been shot as a spy. We also cleared the contents from Goods's outside farm at Lislee. On each occasion cattle and property had to be

moved long distances through the brigade area, which was very heavily garrisoned by British troops.

My company was ordered by the O/C 1st Battalion to enter the 2nd Battalion area and cut the road and destroy bridges at Ring convenient to Clonakilty which was heavily garrisoned. In April, 1921, I received orders to destroy the hotel at Courtmacsherry (now known as the Esplanade). In order to destroy the hotel it was necessary to enter the village of Courtmacsherry, where there was a military garrison stationed about four hundred yards from the hotel. I picked a section of men from my company and was joined by a squad from Timoleague Company. We entered the village quietly as it was necessary to operate between the garrison and the harbour. While one party destroyed the hotel another party covered them, but there was no enemy interference.

On the 9th May, 1921, a meeting of the 1st Battalion Council was held at Kilbrittain for the purpose of arranging details of an operation which was to take place on the 14th. The brigade had ordered an attack on all enemy posts and personnel on that date. I was ordered to arrange to attack Courtmacsherry. I left Neill's of Kilbrittain along with David Sullivan and Con Murphy and called to Mahoney's of Cloundirreen. We entered the gateway at Mahoneys and went to the door to enquire of Mrs. Mahoney whether there was any news of Percival's column who had billeted at Clogagh school the previous night. It was very early in the morning and Mrs. Mahoney spoke to me from an upper window. She asked me to wait a minute. There was another Mahoney's house opposite and their dogs started barking. Suddenly

members of Percival's column came from the side of Mahoney's opposite and started to surround the yard in which we were standing. Sullivan and Murphy rushed from the yard and made for the open country. I slipped unobserved into an open-fronted carshed, got down beside a butt (cart) and bent up my knees so that I wouldn't be noticed. Percival's men crowded into the yard. Some of them had chased Sullivan and Murphy, firing as they went. The firing had ceased. Mahoney's was raided and they searched the yard but did not come near the butt where I was sitting. After some time an officer blew a whistle and all the troops moved out of the yard. I slipped out of my hiding place and made off in the direction taken by Murphy and Sullivan. About 150 yards from the house I found the body of Con Murphy. He had been shot dead. As I examined him another party of Percival's men arrived at Mahoney's. I moved away from Murphy's body and got shelter in a glen further along.

The military party got a pony and yoked it to the butt I had been hiding behind and brought it to where Murphy's body lay. They loaded the body into the butt and got old John Mahoney, who was over 70 years, to drive the pony. They raided the country before them and brought old John Mahoney with Con Murphy's legs hanging over the tail of the butt all the way to Bandon. Sullivan had escaped under fire.

Following on the meeting held on the 9th May, 1921, I arranged for nine men to transport arms to a point close to Courtmacsherry to be in readiness for the next day. On the 14th I placed men in position covering the Coastguard Station in Courtmacsherry to ensure that the garrison of

about sixty soldiers could not emerge. At midday I entered the village from the east, while John Driscoll, Con Lehane and Dan Minihane entered from the west. The party covering the station were to open fire when we opened fire in the village. As we went down the village we saw some British soldiers. We opened fire, killing one and wounding two. The other soldiers on the street ran for cover and as our own covering party opened up we got out of the village.

The Brigade Column was again reorganised and I was instructed to send Daniel Santry, 1st Lt., and William McCarthy to the column. After a few days Daniel Santry was sent back to me with orders to look out for a boat entering Dunmorley Bay. Santry was ordered to remain with me to arrange for a landing of arms. The boat was described as a yacht of about five tons. I don't know where the yacht was collecting the arms.

Along with my company, officers I took up quarters convenient to Dunmorley Bay. We kept three or four men with us to watch the coast between Galley Head and the Old Head of Kinsale for any boat bearing the description of the one expected to arrive. During all this time we held four cyclists in readiness to mobilise the area and get word back to the brigade if the boat arrived. I arranged for the overhaul of two small boats to unload the yacht and on two occasions we launched the boats and boarded and inspected boats that looked suspicious. The company arms were distributed throughout the company area so that men would be ready at a moment's notice. I arranged that on a given signal all roads, except one, leading to Dunmorley would be blocked and the road blocks guarded. A list of suitable carts were prepared and men

were under orders to rush them to Dunmorley on the free road. These arrangements stood until the truce, but no boat arrived.

Shortly before the truce Lord Bandon, who had been arrested as a hostage, was brought into my company area. The company was organised to supply scouts and sentries to keep track of British troop movements in order to avoid the release of the prisoner. On five occasions we had to move the prisoner to avoid British raiding parties. He had been warned that if there was a danger of the British finding him he would be shot. He was brought to Bandon on the day after the truce and released.

Signed: Michael Coleman  
(Michael Coleman)

Date: 21-9-55  
21.9.55

Witness: James J. O'Connor (James J. O'Connor)  
(Investigator)

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