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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 1498

DUPLICATE

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1498.

Witness

Michael Murray,  
457 Collins Avenue,  
Swords Road,  
Whitehall,  
Dublin.

Identity.

Lieutenant, Ballynacargy Company, Irish  
Volunteers.  
Captain, Ballynacargy Company, I.R.A.

Subject.

Activities of Ballynacargy Company,  
I.R.A., 1917-1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

File No S.2794.

1498

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 1498

STATEMENT BY MICHAEL MURRAY,

457, Collins Avenue, Swords Road,  
Whitehall, Dublin.

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I was born and reared at Ballynacarrigy, County Westmeath, and received my education at the local school there. Timothy O'Rogan, our school master, was very keen on Irish History and laid special emphasis on this subject so we, the boys of that time, were given a thorough groundwork on which to develop our patriotic sense.

In the winter of 1917 a Company of the Irish Volunteers was started in Ballynacarrigy and I joined this Company. In the Company we had about fifteen to twenty young men. James Gaffney was our first Company Captain. On joining we took no oath, nor did we make a declaration of any sort. We had no arms of any sort and used sticks and roughly fashioned wooden guns to train with. The instruction in drill and other subjects was imparted by men who had served in the British Army and parades were held at least once per week and sometimes oftener. As well as I can remember the County of Westmeath was organised as one Battalion area at this time and Seamus O'Mara of Athlone was the Battalion Commandant. Recruiting for the Volunteers then was on a very selective basis. Only men who came from very decent families and who were endowed with a strong national outlook were accepted for the force. They had to be young men of integrity and not given to talking which was then, as always, a dangerous matter.

When the election was held in South Longford in the early part of 1917, although we had no Volunteer or Sinn Féin organisation in the area at that time, we did help by accommodating men who were going down from Dublin to Longford, and acting as guides for them. The R.I.C. had a barracks in Ballynacarrigy which was garrisoned by a Sergeant and four or

five Constables, but they did not interfere with us then. Our parades and meetings were held in secret.

When the country was threatened by Conscription early in 1918, as the Volunteer ranks were thrown open to anyone who wished to join, there was a big influx of men into the Volunteers and the strength of the Company increased enormously. Drilling was now intensified and was done openly and always watched by the R.I.C. whom I think were just as much opposed to the measure as were we.

I think it was the policy of General Headquarters of the Volunteers to display their strength and determination to oppose the Act as much as possible, knowing that the R.I.C. would report, accordingly, to their headquarters and eventually to the British Government. Parades and meetings were now a daily affair. There was a big muster of Volunteers in Mullingar from all over the county which our Company attended. We had some pike heads made locally and a census was made of what shotguns and other weapons were made available in the area. The Volunteers were busily engaged in having every person sign the anti-Conscription pledge and in collecting for the anti-Conscription fund. Never before was there such unity in the country.

When, however, the excitement of the times had died down and when it became apparent that the British Government were not going to try to enforce Conscription, the enthusiasm for the Volunteers also died out and soon our big influx had gone or faded out and we were back practically where we were just prior to the crisis.

In the latter end of 1918 a General Election was held throughout the country. Sinn Féin, which had been gathering strength since the 1916 Rebellion and which had won a couple of bye elections, decided

to contest every seat against the Irish National Party who were at this time led by John Dillon. The Sinn Féin candidates, if elected, were pledged not to take their seats in the British Parliament but to establish an Irish Government in Dublin. Larry Cinnell, who had formerly been a member of the Irish National Party but who was now on the Sinn Féin platform, was our candidate. This was a busy time for the Volunteers who were better organised than Sinn Féin and on whom developed most of the work in connection with the election. They were engaged in checking registers of voters, collecting for the funds and canvassing voters on behalf of Sinn Féin. The Irish National Party had still a very strong following in the country and, in addition, there was in the country also a big element of British ex-Servicemen and their families. Both these elements were openly hostile to Sinn Féin and in this way they were aided and abetted by the R.I.C. The R.I.C. usually closed their eyes to the action of the Nationalist Party followers, while they were openly hostile to Sinn Féin supporters. As a result of this the Volunteers had to do duty at all Sinn Féin meetings to protect the speakers and ensure they got a hearing. Yet, despite all this high feeling and thanks to the action of the Volunteers in maintaining order, the election was held without any serious incident. In one case, Joseph O'Donoghue, who was afterwards shot by the Tans in Limerick on the night they shot Lord Mayor Clancy, had a bit of a dust-up over a flag with the National Party supporters and the R.I.C. But all ended well and there was no blood spilled. As elsewhere throughout the country, personation was rife on behalf of Sinn Féin and Cinnell was returned at the head of the poll.

Early in January, 1919, the Sinn Féin Members of Parliament met in Dublin and, having declared their allegiance to the Proclamation of 1916, set up what was to be the first Irish Government since the Act of Union, on a democratic basis. One of the first acts of this new

assembly was to float a Loan to finance its undertakings, and here again the Volunteers did great work in collecting for this fund. It was surprising the large sum of money that was collected in a small area. The people gave of their best and I don't suppose any of them ever expected to see it back again. Mick O'Reilly acted as local agent for the Loan and handled all monies collected. Every subscriber received a receipt from the Finance Department of An Dail for the money forwarded by him, and every penny so collected was accounted for. Truly, an amazing performance.

The Dail now accepted responsibility for the actions of the Volunteers and acknowledged them as the Army of the Irish Republic - the I.R.A. Every officer and man was now required to take an Oath of Allegiance to the Dail as the Government of the Irish Republic. With one exception all our men subscribed to this Oath without hesitation. The man who objected was just let go and he became inactive. Prior to this, the ex-British Army men who had been our drill instructors had also become inactive. Our Company strength was still around twenty-five. We still had no arms except a few bulldog revolvers which I expect came from Headquarters.

There was now a Battalion organised in the local area around Mullingar. Sean Grogan was the Battalion O/O and prior to him Mick McCoy had been O/C; Thomas Lennon was the Battalion Adjutant and Eddie Hynes was Battalion Quartermaster. The Companies going to make up the Battalion were "A" Company Mullingar, "B" Company The Downs, "C" Company Taughmon and "D" Company Ballincarrigy. The Captain of our Company - Ballincarrigy - was James Gaffney. The 1st Lieutenant was Nicholas Jordan and I was 2nd Lieutenant. The R.I.C. still occupied the local barracks with five Constables under a Sergeant Grimes. Grimes was a bad egg and was aggressive and trying to force trouble.

An attempt was made to attack and capture the Barracks in Ballynacarrigy early in the year 1919, but the attempt petered out in dismal failure. A large number of men were ordered to mobilise for this, but poor planning was the cause of various groups failing to contact one another with the result that men went astray and did not know what to do. When daylight began to approach the men returned to their homes without having achieved anything and for those that did succeed in getting to the mobilisation centre the attempt had to be called off. The only ones who carried out their duties in any shape were our Company who put down a series of road blocks.

As a result of the attempt the barracks was reinforced by a party of soldiers commanded by an officer. This party took up residence in the barracks and were about fifteen strong. While they were there the Company Captain Gaffney and I burned the Courthouse which was beside the barracks. The military were in the habit of going around the countryside on patrol at night-time and while they were so out we broke a pane of glass in a window in the Courthouse. I got through this window and opened the door from the inside. Gaffney and I had between two and three gallons of paraffin oil with us and we sprinkled the interior with this and set it alight. The whole interior of the place was destroyed and Courts were never held there again. While we were on the job the Military patrol returned to the barracks but we got away safely. While the military were in the barracks the different officers were very friendly with a family in the town named Poole. The Pooles ran the local Post Office there.

Early in the spring of 1920 the R.I.C. evacuated the barracks in Ballinacarrigy. The military had left prior to this. We could not destroy the barracks as it was part of a block of houses which were occupied by other people and would mean the destruction of the whole

block if burning had been resorted to and instructions were received from Battalion Headquarters that the place was not to be destroyed. Prior to the evacuation two of the R.I.C., who were members of the garrison, resigned from that force. Both of these men were friendly towards us. Another Constable named Woods, who was also friendly, was transferred to Mullingar. Constable Concannon and Largey were the two who resigned. Woods gave me ammunition and supplied me with little bits of information which were useful, such as the names of men who were on the suspected list and houses that were going to be raided and so forth. At the time of the Aupurn ambush in the Athlone area when Volunteer Finn was killed, Constable Woods cycled to my house in Ballynacarrigy from Mullingar, in civilian attire. He told me that Finn's home was going to be raided the following morning at a certain hour and that Finn's brother was going to be shot. The Finns lived in Killear. I immediately cycled to Finn's house and warned him to clear out which he did and the following morning the house was raided but young Finn was not to be found. His mother was a widow.

Sinn Féin was now well organised in the area and the Sinn Féin Courts were operating successfully. Local men of standing acted as Judges, and Solicitors from Mullingar and Castlepollard practised at the Courts which were held secretly. The people abided loyally by the decisions of the Courts. Even prior to the evacuation of the local R.I.C. barracks the Volunteers had been doing a certain amount of police duty. Now on the evacuation by the Police, the Volunteers became wholly responsible for the maintenance of law and order. This police duty was a big undertaking for the Volunteers who could only devote their spare time to such work. Despite this, they made a great success of it, as they had the co-operation of the people in general which the R.I.C. never had. There was always a void between the R.I.C. and the people and this had intensified since the Rebellion in 1916.

On the whole the people of Ballynacarrigy and the surrounding countryside were a very law-abiding peaceful people. There were, of course, the usual few petty robberies and land disputes, but those were easily dealt with and usually a good warning as to what would happen to such offenders, should they repeat the offence, had the desired effect. We had, of course, to detain prisoners who were arrested in other areas and for this purpose we used the recently evacuated barracks. The people who owned the barracks were friendly and gave us the use of it without charge. It was the policy not to detain men who were arrested in their own areas but to move them some distance to other areas, where they would not recognise the place they were detained in or the Volunteers who did guard duties over them. This was a safeguard against their supplying information to the British forces or identifying our men when they were released, and it worked out satisfactorily. The upkeep of those detention places commonly called "Unknown destinations" was a great nuisance to the Volunteers as it meant supplying a continuous guard for them and also supplying food and bedding for the prisoners and their guards. This was the type of work the Volunteers were engaged on for the greater part of the year 1920.

In the autumn of 1920 we were ordered to raid every house in the area where there were shotguns or weapons of any sort and collect them all in. Apparently the British authorities were going to collect or take up all such arms and this order was issued in an effort to forestall that attempt. We called on every house in the area where it was known that there was a gun or other weapon. Generally, it was only a matter of asking for the weapons and the people handed them up. But in a few cases a bit of persuasion with a gun had to be used. There was, however, no need to resort to shooting anywhere. We collected a number of shotguns of different types, some good, some of



no use whatsoever, and a small supply of cartridges for the guns. We also got a supply of small calibre revolvers. Amongst the persons we took a gun from was Colonel Malone (retired) of <sup>RR.</sup> Bagenstown. This was a valuable gun and stated to be worth £80. by the Colonel. Our Company Commander received a letter from the Colonel asking if he could have this gun back. I was instructed to have the gun returned to the Colonel, which I did, and he was very thankful to us. He behaved quite decently afterwards, and subscribed to collections for Sinn Féin funds. The guns were placed in dumps and quickly deteriorated despite our efforts, owing to damp.

Some <sup>TIME</sup> ~~two years~~ prior to the general raid for arms we raided the Hibernian Bank in Mullingar. Information had been received that a box containing weapons was deposited in the strong room of the Bank and our Company was ordered to carry out the raid. We got a car in Ballynacarrigy and four of us, under the command of James Redican, proceeded to Mullingar in daylight. Redican was supposed to be a G.H.Q. staff officer and was staying in our area at this time. We were armed with revolvers. We drove into Mullingar and parked the car in a side street close to the Bank. We then entered the Bank and held up the staff with our guns. Redican looked up the register of the Bank Keys and found the ones that opened the strong room. One of the girls who was on the staff fainted. We entered the strong room and took the box from it and placed it in the car and made our getaway safely. The box contained shotguns and revolvers and was the property of Colonel Pardon who lived in Gaybrook, Mullingar, and who had deposited it there for safe-keeping. The police were on the street outside the Bank while we were doing the job and did not notice anything unusual. The police followed us in a car but did not get contact with us and they searched around the countryside for us without any success. We used the small unfrequented bye-roads to get away. The arms were kept in our Company area.

Prior to this, Redican and a party of the local Volunteers held up the mail train at the Downs at about 11 p.m. at night and removed all the mails from it. He took the mails to Irishtown near Ballincarrigy where he censored them and took about three hundred pounds in cash from them. Included amongst the mails were letters for Lord French the Lord Lieutenant. It now transpired that Redican was not a member of the Volunteers at all. He was an ex-prisoner from Mountjoy Jail. Apparently while in Mountjoy he got acquainted with some Volunteer prisoners from the Mullingar area and convinced them he was up for political reasons while, in reality, he was doing time for some criminal offence. On his release he came to the Mullingar area posing as staff officer from G.H.Q. and soon was O.K. with the Battalion O/C. and other officers. G.H.Q. now sent down instructions that he was to be put out of the area, much to our surprise. I went to Redican and gave him his orders to clear out, which he did. The Volunteers were subsequently trying to locate him for some Bank robberies which he had done in some other part of the country. It was really a pity he was of that type because he had plenty of guts and courage and would be an asset to the Volunteers anywhere. He was subsequently arrested by the British forces again and was back in Mountjoy doing another term of imprisonment. While there he gave information to the British authorities about the Mullingar area. He wrote to me from Mountjoy telling me he was going to be hanged for shooting a policeman. I think he said he shot him in Leitrim or up that part of the country.

At this time there was a family living in Ballincarrigy named Poole. Mr. Poole had been an Inspector in the R.I.C. from which he was now retired for some years. His wife and family of two boys and three girls lived with him. They were a very respectable family and very highly thought of by all the people of the town and surrounds.

National Archives Act, 1986, Regulations, 1988

**ABSTRACTION OF PART(S) PURSUANT TO REGULATION 8**

**Form to be completed and inserted in the original record  
in place of each part abstracted**

- (i) Reference number of the separate cover under which the abstracted part has been filed: WS 1498/A
- (ii) How many documents have been abstracted: 1
- (iii) The date of each such document: 21 Sep 1958

(iv) The description of each document:  
WS 1498 Wilson & Kent Michael Murray p.10  
detail of a personal nature

(Where appropriate, a composite description may be entered in respect of two or more related documents).

- (v) Reason(s) why the part has been abstracted for retention:  
(c) Would or might cause distress or danger to living persons on the ground that they contain information about individuals, or would or might be likely to lead to an action for damages for defamation.

( These will be the reasons given on the certificate under Section 8(4).)

J. Moloney

Name: (J. Moloney.)

Grade: Col.

Department/Office/Court:

Date: 7 March 2003.

They ran the Post Office in Ballinacarrigy. One of the girls, Susan, but known to us as Susie Poole, was an outstanding character. I knew the Poole family very well as we were children who played and grew up together. Susie went to the local school and was then sent to a finishing school in some convent. She did not stay too long in this and ran away and came home to Ballinacarrigy.

Susie developed into a beautiful young girl. She had a lovely blonde head of hair and a Venus-like figure. She was very good-looking and had a charming manner and knew how to dress to perfection.

After some time spent in Ballinacarrigy she went away to work on the Stage in Dublin and then to London, I believe as a Chorus Girl. She was much sought after by the men who frequent the theatre stage doors after Shows and amongst whom were always a big percentage of British Army officers. While in London she made the acquaintance of a Lieutenant Goddard, afterwards Captain Goddard of His Majesty's Army, whom she married. Captain Goddard was serving, I think, with his Regiment abroad and from hence onwards Susie resided in London and Ballinacarrigy, but mostly in the latter place.

Officers from the British garrison in Mullingar visited her in Ballinacarrigy and particularly so from the time they established their outpost at the R.I.C. barracks there. Amongst her officer visitors was a Captain Foney who was the Intelligence Officer in Mullingar Barracks, and a Captain Wallace who was Adjutant of that barracks. Captain Wallace was madly in love with Susie (Mrs. Goddard).

I knew Captain Wallace very well and often had tea with him and Susie in her home and he knew that Susie was very friendly with me and had confidence in me. Wallace was a fine type of English gentleman with a very likeable disposition. He seemed to have great power in his appointment in Mullingar Barracks. On one occasion Susie told me that one of the other officers had threatened her with a gun when she would not acquiesce to his advances. She informed Captain Wallace about this and the officer was immediately transferred from Mullingar.

One day Susie came to me and told me that Military from Mullingar were going to search the Irishtown area where they had information that the Volunteers had an arms dump. This information was correct as it was there our shotguns and some other weapons were dumped. I immediately had the stuff cleared out of Irishtown and, right enough, the following morning they searched the place. On the lorry with them was Pedican who was then a prisoner in Mountjoy. This incident made me perceive that in Susie we had a potential source of information about the enemy. Knowing her love of adventure and other qualities on which I played, I approached Susie and suggested that she should work for us. She agreed to do so on the understanding that I would guarantee the safety of Captain Wallace and Captain Money. I gave this guarantee to her. I had complete confidence in Susie and was satisfied that she would not double cross me. From thence on Susie began to supply me with numerous and useful bits of information about intending British operations, such as places to be raided, rounds-up and men who were on the wanted or suspected lists, all gleaned from the officer friends. On one occasion I was having tea with Susie and Wallace. Wallace told me that Captain Money had said to him that if he continued to visit Ballinacarrigy his dead body should be found on the roadside one morning, and asked me if that could happen. I assured him that such a thing would never happen and he seemed much relieved and thankful.

I realised that in Susie we had an intelligence agent which could be developed on a much higher level than the petty information that could be got around Mullingar. Apart from the military side, Mullingar was an important centre for intelligence. Through the Post Office there, passed all messages both in clear and in code for the various military and police stations in the Midlands and West of Ireland. Mick Collins had the source tapped and the two telegraphists there, Mr. Hynes and Mr. Dunne, intercepted all messages of this sort passing through. They made copies of them and were even able to decipher them and pass them out to the Volunteers in clear. There were, however, delays in having this information sent to G.H.Q. and Collins sent down a special Intelligence agent to develop this source. The special agent was the late Harry Conroy who was originally from Sligo. Conroy posed as an insurance agent.

I got in contact with Conroy and told him about Susie and he agreed to meet her, which he did. Conroy went to Dublin as a result of this interview and ~~saw~~<sup>SAW</sup> Collins. I now received instructions to report to Dublin to see Collins, which I did. In Dublin I met Collins and Gearoid O'Sullivan and was put through the mill regarding Susie. Collins told me I was playing with fire but I replied that I had complete trust in her. Collins instructed me to bring Susie to Dublin to see him, which I did, and I introduced her to Collins and Gearoid. From thence on Susie was Collins' pidgeon and I had little or no contact with her. I do not think she knew who Collins or O'Sullivan really were, until after the Truce.. Collins got Susie to come to reside in Dublin in a Flat somewhere around Whitworth Road area where she entertained high-ranking Army and Police Officers of the British Forces. She also travelled extensively throughout the country, but I have no knowledge of what type of work she was doing for Collins.

National Archives Act, 1986, Regulations, 1988

**ABSTRACTION OF PART(S) PURSUANT TO REGULATION 8**

**Form to be completed and inserted in the original record  
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- (i) Reference number of the separate cover under which the abstracted part has been filed: US 1458/3
- (ii) How many documents have been abstracted: 277
- (iii) The date of each such document: 21 September 1952
- (iv) The description of each document:  
US 1478 pt 1 new sheet Richard Murray p 13+14

(Where appropriate, a composite description may be entered in respect of two or more related documents).

- (v) Reason(s) why the part has been abstracted for retention:  
**(c) Would or might cause distress or danger to living persons on the ground that they contain information about individuals, or would or might be likely to lead to an action for damages for defamation.**

( These will be the reasons given on the certificate under Section 8(4).)

*J. Moloney*

Name: (J. Moloney.)

Grade: Col.

Department/Office/Court:

Date: 7 March 2003.

On one occasion I met Captain Wallace and Susie by appointment in Dublin. Captain Wallace and I had a very frank discussion or debate on Irish and current affairs. Captain Wallace agreed with me that the British Empire was fastly declining and that the days of the British Army in Ireland were numbered. He did not visualise an Irish Republic, but some other form of settlement in which the British forces would evacuate the country.

I was next instructed by Collins to find out if Captain Wallace would agree to meet the late Erskine Childers and if so to fix up a meeting. I was not to let Wallace know who Childers was, but to inform Wallace that a gentleman of high position in the Movement would like to meet him. I contacted Captain Wallace and he agreed to meet the gentleman and the meeting was fixed to take place on a certain night in Brophill's Hotel, Mullingar. Wallace turned up for the meeting alright, but I got a dispatch from Collins cancelling it just prior to the time arranged. It was coming quite close to the Truce at this time and Collins may have decided not to go on with whatever he had in view, and complicate Captain Wallace at that stage.

From time to time messages were being sent by our people in different parts of the country, particularly in the Sligo and Leitrim areas to G.H.Q. reporting that a blonde lady was travelling around



with the Auxiliaries in their lorries. This was Susie. Susie's husband either resigned or retired from the British Army and joined the Auxiliary Force in Ireland, serving in the Sligo area. She told me afterwards that Collins got her to get her husband to come over here and join the Auxies. I don't know what Collins' motive in this would be except perhaps he believed he could use him for intelligence work also.

She probably had ideas about marrying Captain Wallace or Mick Collins or God only knows who.

I have read Susie's (Mrs. Goddard's) articles published in a certain English Sunday paper regarding her activities on behalf of the I.R.A. and, while I am not in a position to contradict what appeared, I do think that either she or the publisher were drawing the long bow quite a bit. However, I do know that she certainly contributed in a big way to bring about the downfall of the British Empire in Ireland and not for any monetary gain as she had ample money for herself. Her husband seemed to keep her well supplied in this respect. She never double crossed us although the temptation to do so must have been great. She had a heart of gold and would help anybody in distress whom she liked and above all it was an Irish heart. I met Captain Goddard after the Truce and he impressed me as a very fine type of man and I would say a very honourable one. I have a brother living in London who often visits Captain and Mrs. Goddard at their residence there and he informs me that they seem to be very happy together with the children and I am very glad that is so.

On one occasion Thomas Glennon, who was Adjutant of our Battalion - the Mullingar Battalion - sent instructions to me that there was a lorry belonging to the enemy coming to Ballinacarrigy to take away the furniture belonging to an R.I.C. man who had been stationed in the local

barracks before its evacuation. I was not in the town when this written instruction arrived and the dispatch was taken by the local Company I.O. who opened it, but took no action to carry out the instructions it contained. When I came back into the town I got the dispatch. It said that the lorry would have a driver and two Tans and I was to hold it up and shoot the two Tans. The lorry had just left the village when I returned. Another Volunteer and I immediately got two guns and cycles and pursued the lorry by taking shortcuts but, although we sighted it, we could not get within shooting distance of it and they got clear away.

On the 23rd February, 1919, a British Army lorry was parked outside the barracks in Ballinacarrigy. This was the time that the military were reinforcing the P.I.C. there. At night time, Jim Gaffney and I decided to burn it. We crept up to it under cover of darkness and threw some petrol on it and set it afire, and it was totally destroyed. We got away safely. Gaffney was arrested the following September and imprisoned in Mountjoy. He was allowed out on parole, but broke his parole and did not return. I tried to persuade him to return but he would not, and we all took a poor view of this. He never became active again.

There was a big mansion house at Sonna between Ballinacarrigy and Mullingar, and we received instructions to destroy this place as the military were going to establish an outpost there. I mobilised the Ballinacarrigy Volunteers and took with us a half barrel of paraffin, proceeding to the house. The house was only occupied by a caretaker and we sprinkled the place with the paraffin and set it alight. It was totally burned out.

Sometime in early 1920, the wife of a Constable of the R.I.C. who was living in Ballinacarrigy, told me that her husband who was stationed in Mullingar, was calling to see her that day. She said that two

lorry loads of police were going from Mullingar to Longford and would stop at Ballinacarrigy - as they would come along that way to facilitate him. I decided to ambush the lorries when they arrived in the village. I mobilised every available man of the Company for the job. We had between twenty and thirty men armed with shotguns, one rifle and a few revolvers. My plan was to let them into the village and then hold them there and shoot them up. We occupied a number of houses including the old R.I.C. barracks and awaited their arrival. Although we waited for some hours, they didn't turn up. They had proceeded direct to Longford via Rathowen and so bye-passed us. The following Friday a party of Auxiliary Police arrived and raided a number of houses, including the public houses, where they consumed all the drink they required even making the publicans get drunk, at all the publicans' expense.

The Truce found the Mullingar Brigade just beginning to show signs of making headway. James Maguire of Glenidon had been appointed Brigade O/C, and he had set about reorganising the area properly and carrying out test mobilisations. Prior to this, things had never been right. The organisation was anything but watertight and there seemed to be trouble and disagreement always at Battalion and Brigade Headquarters level with the resultant inactivity in all other ranks.

The only attempt at making munitions that I know of in the area was the casting and filling into shotgun cartridges of rough lead slugs.

There were no spies or informers shot in our area. I was never a member of the I.R.B. prior to the Truce.

Signed: Michael Murray

Date: 21st September 1956

Witness: Matthew Henry

