

15. S. 731  
**ORIGINAL**

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
<b>NO. W.S. 731</b>

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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

**STATEMENT BY WITNESS**

**DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 731**

**Witness**

Mrs. Katherine Barry-Moloney,  
3 Palmerston Road,  
Dublin.

**Identity.**

Member of Cumann na mBan, 1920 - ;  
Sister of Kevin Barry who was executed on  
1st November 1920.

**Subject.**

National activities of her brother, Kevin,  
from 1917 up to 1/11/1920, the date of his  
execution.

**Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.**

Nil

File No. S.2042.....

Form B.S.M. 2

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STATEMENT BY MRS. K. BARRY MOLONEY,  
3 Palmerston Road, Dublin.

First Instalment.

My Cumann na mBan Activities:

I joined Cumann na mBan (University Branch) late in 1920. Eileen McGrane was Captain and Kathleen Murphy 1st Lieutenant. When Eileen McGrane was arrested, Kathleen became Captain.

I attended parades and carried out the usual routine duties. Anything I did outside the routine, such as, carrying guns or messages or clearing out a place that was in danger of a raid, was done to oblige friends in the I.R.A. in ways that most of the inhabitants of Dublin were doing. In fact, apart from my connection with Kevin's life from his arrest until his execution, there was nothing in my life at that period that would rank as military history. My life, like that of every other Republican, centred round the activities of the I.R.A. I did anything I was asked to do for our army and was in close touch all the time with every Battalion in Dublin because I had friends in them all. This was particularly the case with the 5th Battalion, the Engineers.

An incident touching the 5th Battalion occurred <sup>at/</sup> the time we used to keep stuff for Joe O'Farrell in our house in Fleet Street. He called one night to collect a bag of guns that we were keeping for him. They were in a fibre attaché case. I was afraid that the case was too light, so I lent him a good morocco leather bag. He left our house with his brother, Harry, and about seven or eight minutes later there was frantic knocking at the hall door. I dashed down to open it and Harry collapsed into the hall, saying "Joe's killed". He had not been killed but he had been badly wounded and spent the time from

then until his release in December <sup>'21/</sup> or January <sup>'22/</sup> in military hospitals. His wounding took place in the winter or early spring of 1921. You'll be able to place it by the fact that he was referred to in the newspapers as the man with the bag of guns.

In May or June of 1921 a number of us went on a picnic on a Sunday. We came back about 7 o'clock. It was a mixed group of friends, including some I.R.A. men and Cumann na mBan girls - mostly University students. We came back to Fleet Street around seven. Dan Bryan was there with a message for Tessie Power that her sister, Máirín, had been arrested in Galway where she was engaged on the Boycott and that No. - in Avondale Terrace had to be cleared of all traces of I.R.A. occupation. That was a house where a number of the 4th Battalion officers lived and the two Power girls were very closely in touch because their brother, Dan, was one of the I.R.A. men that stayed there. Máirín Power had given a false name on arrest - Parker - and the I.R.A. in the house had been warned on the Saturday night that it was only a matter of days until her connection with that house would be traced. They had cleared all they could on the Saturday night but there were a few things left which Tessie was to clear on the Sunday. Dan Bryan had traced Tessie to Fleet Street.

Tessie, Mary McCarthy and myself went up to clear the place. There was very little left, which was a tribute to the men who had been doing the job the night before. There were two rifles which Tessie wrapped in paper, draped in her navy cape and took away. I later learned that she confided them to the care of the tram conductor whom she knew and who kept them safely on the platform until the tram arrived in Fleet Street, where

Tessie dumped them in our basement until they could be removed to a safer place.

Mary McCarthy and I collected a revolver, some ammunition and large parcels of papers. We missed the last tram. Curfew was at 10 o'clock. We walked down Leinster Road and it was 9.50 when we reached Rathmines. Ten o'clock struck when we were at the Harcourt Street corner of Stephen's Green and by God's grace we reached 21 Dawson Street without incident. When we got inside the door of the flat, we sat on the stairs and burst into hysterical tears. I can't say whether the house in question was ever raided.

These incidents show the very casual nature of the work which came my way in those days and I merely record them as an illustration.

On account of our home in Tombeagh, Hacketstown, Co. Carlow, where some of our family were always living and my brother, Mick, was Battalion O.C. and my sister, Shel, was in the local Branch of Cumann na mBan, there were always transactions with the Carlow Brigade, procuring and carrying arms and messages from Dublin to our home, but in this connection so far as I personally was concerned, since I lived in Dublin, nothing more dramatic ever happened than finding myself on a couple of occasions in a carriage carrying a gun when a Black and Tan got in at Baltinglass to travel to Dublin, or vice versa..

How Kevin and I got interested in the Republican Movement:

As a schoolboy at Belvedere College, my brother, Kevin, joined the I.R.A. towards the end of 1917 when he was under sixteen years of age. He and I were the two

in the family who were Republicans before 1916. I had always been interested in politics and I followed the Home Rule movement in newspapers and at meetings since I was about twelve. I was present at the great Home Rule meeting in O'Connell Street in 1912, at which Pearse spoke. I was somewhat shaken by Redmond's offering us to the British at the outbreak of war, although I remembered that France was our traditional friend and that we were under an obligation to help her. Shoals of the young men I knew were volunteering in 1914 for the British army. I was first brought up against reality in the Grafton Picture House when I found it impossible to stand for "God Save The King" during a performance.

My first knowledge of any Irish movement other than the Home Rule movement came with the announcement of the arrest of Ernest Blythe for anti-recruiting activities. Other arrests followed and the "mosquito" press became more available.

I was in Cork for the week-end of the outbreak of the war and I remember reading the 'Irish Volunteer' on the way down. I had bought it before that whenever I had the opportunity. After the outbreak of war and Redmond's declaration of loyalty to Britain, I did not know anybody who was in the/ movement which stood for the use of force against England. My mother was a widow with seven children, of whom I was the eldest, and we led a somewhat secluded and conventional life..

My brother Kevin was at school in St. Mary's, Rathmines, and in November, 1915, he bought tickets for himself and myself for the Manchester Martyrs' Commemoration in the Mansion House. Eoin McNeill presided. Bulmer Hobson made a fiery speech. We felt

then we had found our proper atmosphere, although outside of Bobby Bonfield and the McNeill boys there was no single person in the packed Mansion House that we knew.

From that on, we were always discovering people among our friends who had the same ideas and I was now moving around more, being over eighteen.

Kate Kinsella:

I should mention that we had an old servant called Kate Kinsella, a Dublin woman born in Cork Street. She was born in 1853, came to work for my father and my Aunt Judith in 1879 and stayed with us until she died in 1937. Her mother had seen O'Connell released from Kilmainham. <sup>always said that she/</sup> She/herself had seen John Devoy escaping in Cork Street from roof to roof after the Rising in Tallaght. She was a friend of Tim Kelly, who was one of the three men hanged for the Park murders, and she knew the other two. Her father was a great personal friend of Skin-The-Goat. Up to 1916 she had little use for physical force movements because "they had let Skin-The-Goat die in the Union". She was illiterate but had a brilliant mind and memory.

When the firing started on Easter Monday she went out into the street to see what information she could gather. She dashed past me and lit two candles on her little altar. I said, "What are the candles for, Kate?". She replied, "For the boys that took the Castle", and from that until her last breath she was an uncompromising republican.

When Frank Henderson was leaving the Hammam in 1922, he gave me the Brigade funds - £800. I was wearing this money under my clothes when I was arrested after the surrender. I was not searched. We were marched down to Amiens Street Station, and Muriel

McSwiney and myself were released after an hour or so by Paddy Daly who seemed to be in charge of the area. On arrival in Fleet Street, I handed the money over to Kate for safe keeping. She kept it hidden in her bosom. A few days later I saw Frank Henderson and asked him what I was to do with it. He asked me where it was and I told him. He said, "Leave it there and I'll send for it when I want it". I went south and came up to be with my family for the 1st November and found that Kate had still £270 and receipts for the rest. By the time I came up on 26th November to take charge of the Prisoners' Dependents' Fund, it was all used up and she had receipts for every pound of it. All during the Civil War Kate was a centre for despatches and she never made a mistake about them. She had many G.H.Q. and Brigade despatches at the same time and never confused them, although she kept them all in her bosom wrapped in separate pieces of newspaper. When de Valera - who had been a hero up to then - founded Fianna Fáil, she was finished with him.

My whole family became interested in the Republican Cause:

From 1916 onwards, the way was clear. As a family we were in full sympathy with the Republican movement and gave every help that came our way, such as, contributing to the collections, selling flags, keeping things for people, etc. My mother, by the way, was Seán T. O'Kelly's first nominator for the 1918 election.

I personally was most anxious to join Cumann na mBan but, for family reasons, as I was the eldest of seven and my mother's chief adviser in all her affairs, I felt my first duty was to her. We had a business in Fleet Street and a farm in Carlow, both of which required

her constant attention, not to mention the rearing and educating of my six young brothers and sisters. My mother depended on me for decisions and up to 1920, when the war became intense, I felt that it would be selfish to run the risk of depriving her of my moral support. It was the intensification of the war with England at that stage that swept all other considerations aside. In the meantime my two brothers had joined the Volunteers and my sister, Sheila, joined Cumann na mBan in Tombeagh, where she mostly lived. She was up to her neck in any Volunteer activity that took place there.

Kevin joins "H" Company of the 1st Battalion of the Volunteers:

When St. Mary's School closed after 1916, Kevin went to Belvedere. During his second year there, when he was in Middle Grade Honours Intermediate, he joined the Volunteers somewhere in Parnell Square. I think he was always in "H" Company of the 1st Battalion but I am not sure of this. He was a very short time in that Company when he was made a mobilisation officer, of which he was very proud. This office entailed mobilising the Company for route marches and other Sunday morning parades. In actual practice, it meant that he often came home late on a Saturday afternoon after a Rugby match or a hurling <sup>match</sup> to find a pile of mobilisation orders awaiting him. After a hurried meal, he set out on his bicycle to deliver them. At that time "H" Company seemed to have no particular territorial location because, although most of the men lived on the north side - some of them outside the northern side of the city, some of them in Finglas - there was one of them living in the tramway cottages in Dartry. He would come home some time after 11 p.m. to be up next morning for the parade at 8 a.m.

After a few months as mobilisation officer, he was promoted to Section Commander with no special duties. I learned afterwards that, when he joined the Volunteers, everybody thought his Belvedere cap a great joke and they decided it was a flash in the pan and they would keep him until he got tired of it. When he proved regular and punctual in attendance, the officers began to think he might be serious and decided to try him out. So they gave him the mobilisation job, thinking he would tire of it very quickly. When there was no sign of this happening, they were satisfied he had the makings of a good Volunteer and, out of consideration for his youth and his work at school, they made him an N.C.O. so as to relieve him of the gruelling work without apparent demotion. He formed a deep and lasting friendship with Bob Flanagan, the Company 1st Lieutenant, who was a brother of P.J. Flanagan who ran the 'Irishman' at the Wood Press offices in 13 Fleet Street. He got honours in Middle Grade that year and Senior Grade Honours the next year and a Corporation Scholarship to the University.

In the Volunteers, as in everything else, he had a gilt-edged career. Most important people noticed him and liked him. Peadar Clancy and he were very close friends. He seemed to be able to wangle himself into odd little actions and engagements both in Dublin and on holidays at home in Carlow. The "H" Company people will probably have covered their own activities and mentioned those in which he took part. The King's Inns raid was a 1st Battalion action in which he took a part and there was some incident connected with it, of which I was told in the years between, that made the men laugh during the engagement. I cannot remember what it was but it will be covered by somebody in the Company records.

During his last holidays at home in Tombeagh during the summer of 1920, a special messenger came with orders to the local Battalion to burn down John Redmond's house in Aughavanagh, as there was information that it was about to be occupied by British troops. Naturally Kevin wangled in on the job.

When they arrived at Aughavanagh, Max Green and his wife, Joanna Redmond, were in occupation. They were naturally very angry but the Volunteers explained the necessity for the action and Kevin acted as negotiator between Max Green and the special messenger. The upshot of it was that Max Green gave his word of honour that no British troops would occupy the house. It was spared by the I.R.A. and it was never occupied by British troops. It is now an Óige hostel.

Kevin comments on the Oath of Allegiance to An Dáil:

Some time in the winter of 1919-1920 he came home one night after the mid-week parade. I usually waited up for him to share his supper and hear such news as he could tell me. This evening he said in a rather grim fashion, "We took the oath to-night". I said, "Good! You are a real army now". I should explain that this was the oath of allegiance to "Dáil Éireann which is the Government of the Irish Republic". He said in a worried way, "I don't know. But I'll tell you one thing. When this damned Dáil takes Dominion Home Rule, they need not expect us to back them up".

In 1922 Mick Collins and I were having one of many arguments about the Treaty. Mick listed a number of very fine soldiers who supported it and said, "How do you know your brother would not have supported it too?" I told

him this little story and, with characteristic generosity, he said, "That is good enough. I won't say that any more".

Kevin is arrested:

On Monday, 20th September, Kevin was to sit for an examination at 2 o'clock. He had come up from Tombeagh some days before and, on instructions, had not stayed at home. He stayed with my uncle, Patrick Dowling, 58 South Circular Road. About 4 o'clock on that Monday afternoon I was in Mr. Aston's office in Abbey Street. I got a telephone call from my uncle's manager. Tom Cullen had been his manager but I think that at this time Tom had joined the Active Service Unit and it was probably his successor who rang me up. He told me that they had just had an intensive military raid, which every piece of Kevin's property had been taken away. It is interesting that this was a military raid - not auxiliaries - and among the things taken and never returned were a perfectly new suit of Donegal tweed, a spare wristlet watch and a couple of good fountain pens.

The manager had gathered that Kevin had been arrested. From that moment I knew by some obscure instinct that Kevin was finished. I had no knowledge of how or when he had been arrested. I had no knowledge of any soldier being killed and, up to then, no prisoner had been executed since 1916. But from that moment I knew there was no hope. This instinct worked more clearly when I was young. I find it dying away as I grow older, but it was unerring when I was young, if anyone I loved deeply was involved. I mention this because of the lies that have been printed about our family's non-co-operation in rescue attempts for the alleged reason that up to the last we were hoping for a reprieve.

I told Mr. Ernest A. Aston, my employer, and he immediately sent me home. On the way home I bought an 'Evening Herald' which contained a garbled account of the action. It was the birthday of my youngest sister, Peggy, and a number of young people were coming to tea, including three or four of Kevin's closest friends. I told Mother and we made our plans to go ahead with the tea, dress in our best and make the rounds of the jails looking for information between tea time and curfew. We left the party in full swing and made the rounds but without locating Kevin. Next morning my uncle got a message that he was in the Bridewell. He went to see him at once and Kevin told him that he had given his address and was going to stick to it. That was Tuesday. He told him about the torture and said his arm was painful but probably somebody would look after it soon. Later that day he was moved to Mountjoy without any appearance in Court.

On Wednesday morning Paddy Flanagan sent down a messenger for me to come to see him at the Wood Press in 13 Fleet Street. He was editor of the 'Irishman'. His brother, Bob, was 1st Lieutenant of "H" Company and had been seriously wounded in the action at Monks Bakery. He had been rescued by a cabman who took him to one of the hospitals - I think Jervis Street but I could not swear to it - and he was never caught.

Paddy Flanagan told me that army orders were that none of us were to go near Kevin, that there was a hope that the British might feel that a mistake had been made and that only my uncle and outside friends, who were not connected with the Republican movement, should visit him. Meantime he was treated as a remand prisoner in Mountjoy

and his meals could be sent in to him. This we arranged for.

On Thursday at lunch time Paddy Flanagan sent for me again and in his office I met Seán O Muirthile, who told me that the case was to be handled by G.H.Q., that we would receive our orders through him or Paddy Flanagan and that, in any doubt or crisis, Paddy Flanagan could always get us guidance at short notice. Meantime we were not to show ourselves as connected at all with Kevin; there was still the hope of confusing the British.

Mr. Aston ascertains that Kevin is to be tried for murder:

On Friday afternoon Mr. Aston, in great sorrow and anxiety, told me he had bad news for me. He had gone to Sir Hamar Greenwood, through the intervention of Sir Henry McLaughlin who was a prominent Freemason, an extraordinarily decent human being who had been given his title for his recruiting activities in the 1914-1918 war.

Greenwood had told Mr. Aston that Kevin would be tried for murder. Mr. Aston had pooh-poohed the idea of Kevin being a murderer. He said to Greenwood, "The boy is only a child. I know him well". Greenwood said, "He may be a child in years, but he is a long time mixed up with that crowd." Mr. Aston then told me that, as far as he knew, he would be tried under the new Act which enabled courts martial to pass a sentence of death by hanging.

The weeks that followed are more or less concertinaed in my mind. We arranged Kevin's visits for close friends who were, some of them, harmless and some of them just not known to the enemy. His closest personal friend was Jerry McAleer from Dungannon. He had been at Belvedere with Kevin and they had started Medicine

together. Jerry was a member of the I.R.A. but was not known. He lived in digs in Dublin. He qualified as a doctor and he is now Group-Commander in the R.A.F., and I read lately in the 'Irish Times' that he is very close to the top. We see him very often when he is in Dublin.

As I have said, we were told by the I.R.A. not to visit Kevin but my mother was naturally most anxious to see him. We got permission for her to go in disguise and under an assumed name. She went as Miss McArdle - her mother's maiden name - and dressed up in borrowed clothes in the house of a friend of ours who accompanied her to Mountjoy. This was Kathleen Carney, now Mrs. Vincent Gogarty of Drogheda, who was a close personal friend of James McMahon's family. I should have said that Dr. Hackett, the prison doctor, attended to Kevin's arm immediately after his arrival in Mountjoy and for a couple of weeks his arm was in a sling when the visitors saw him.

Immediately after his arrival in Mountjoy he established himself with the warders by giving one of them a tip - Busy Bee - for the race that was to be run on the Wednesday. An amusing story reached us too of a remark made by a prisoner who had been taken on a big raid up the mountains on the Sunday. This boy said to a visitor, "They are arresting all sorts of people now. They brought in one of their own last night by mistake, a fellow with a wristlet watch and his hair sleeked back".

G.H.Q. make preparations for the defence of Kevin:

At some stage during these weeks I was told to go and see Eamonn Duggan who would be in charge of the defence. Kevin had sent out messages by everybody that he was not to be defended. I put this as strongly as possible to Mr. Duggan, but he told me that he was acting

under G.H.Q. orders and that we and Kevin would have to do the same. At that time nobody recognised the Court and for us this was the most nightmarish period of the whole business. On Saturday, 16th October, Mr. Duggan told me that the courtmartial had been fixed for Wednesday, 20th. He was making frantic efforts to have the date changed, because he had to appear in another I.R.A. case before the House of Lords (I think it was the Silvermines case) on that day or the following day. If they refused to change the date of Kevin's courtmartial, he would have to hand the case over to another solicitor. Actually I was told later that Eamonn Duggan was married on that Wednesday. He combined his wedding trip and the House of Lords business.

On Monday morning, the 18th, Mr. Duggan told me that he had failed to get the date altered and that Seán Ó hUadhaigh would take charge of Kevin's case. He had only that morning received the summary of evidence which he gave me to take to Seán Ó hUadhaigh. I went to Eustace Street to Seán's office and no words could ever describe the comfort and strength that Seán Ó hUadhaigh exuded as compared with Mr. Duggan's legal personality. From that day to this, Seán Ó hUadhaigh has been the friend and adviser of all the Barry's.

Seán told me that G.H.Q. had decided that Tim Healy was to defend Kevin. He asked me to go out to Healy's, taking the summary of evidence, to tell Tim about my brother's fierce resentment at having to recognise the court and to get his views on the whole thing. I went and Tim read the summary of evidence. He said that, on the face of it, they were determined to find Kevin guilty and that the only plea he could make successfully was one

of insanity. I refused this out of hand, without consulting anybody. He then said that there was a possible chance of saving his life in a refusal to recognise the Court, that it would throw on the English conscience the responsibility of hanging an eighteen year old boy who refused to defend himself. He was most kind and he wept bitterly at the sadness of the case. I could see that he thought there was something odd about me because I was not weeping too. He gave me a long lecture on the essential badness of the English people. I did not argue with him but I did not agree, although I felt that he knew them better than I did. He told me that if Bonar Law were Premier he might be able to do something, but that Lloyd George was an unspeakable cad. Towards the end of the visit I remember I was trying to cheer him up. I felt so sorry for an old man who could not understand a young soldier's point of view. He gathered up a lot of ~~hetheluse~~ fruit off the sideboard for my mother and sent one of his sons with me in his car to Seán Ó hUadhaigh's office. Seán was satisfied. My mother and the rest of the family fully endorsed my decision about the insanity plea and, for the first time, the weight was lifted off our minds because the way was clear for Kevin to do what he wanted to do as a member of the I.R.A.

On the morning of Wednesday, 20th October, it was pouring rain. Mother and I went with Seán Ó hUadhaigh and Uncle Pat to Marlboro' Barracks. The courtmartial was fixed for 10 o'clock. The other friends who attended were Fr. Augustine of Church Street, Joe O'Farrell, a family friend and a member of the 5th Battalion (the man with the bag of guns, to whom I have already referred), Eileen O'Neill, also a family friend, now Mrs. David Barry,

and Kevin's closest friend, Jerry McAleer.

The Courtmartial:

At 10 o'clock the Court filed into the room but the prisoner had not arrived. It was amusing to see the amount of brass that was gathered together to try one's young brother. The Presiding Officer was a General and there were, I think, ten other officers descending from him, on either side, through various ranks. I have since heard this General's name but I can't remember it now. He was a very tall man with a dark melancholy face and a lot of dark hair. The minutes passed and gradually an uneasiness appeared at the long table. Still no prisoner. At 10.20 there was a kind of subdued hysteria at the table. We all felt puzzled but beautifully detached. Then at 10.25 Kevin was brought into the room by a military escort. This was the first time that I had seen him since his arrest. He looked well and very cheerful and desperately amused when he saw the table full of British officers. Seán Ó hUadhaigh immediately asked for a short adjournment to give him time to consult with his client. He explained the circumstances of the case being handed over to him at the last minute and said he had had no opportunity to arrange a defence. Kevin scowled but came back beaming after the adjournment.

After the opening formalities, he said, "As a soldier of the Irish Republic, I refuse to recognise the Court". There was consternation at the long table. The General very kindly tried to explain to him the gravity of the situation. He did not answer but took out of his pocket a copy of the previous day's 'Evening Telegraph' which he proceeded to read. Seán Ó hUadhaigh briefly explained that the prisoner refused to recognise the

Court, that he would take no further part in the proceedings but remain as a friend of the family. The trial then proceeded. After each military witness had made his statement, the President of the Courtmartial asked Kevin had he any questions. Kevin said "no" several times. Then he got impatient. He put down his paper and he said, "Look! I have told you I don't recognise the Court. I have no interest in what anybody says here. You are only wasting your time asking me". The President flushed very dark red but said mildly, "It is my duty to ask you. I think as a soldier you can appreciate that". "Righto", said Kevin, "If it facilitates you, I have no questions". And from then on, he answered "no" politely every time he was asked.

About 1 o'clock there was an adjournment for luncheon. The prisoner was taken away first, then the Courtmartial filed out and finally we were free to go. We went to the nearest place, the North City Arms, a hotel near the Cattle Market.

After luncheon there was not more than an hour of the trial. The President then announced a short adjournment and during this we were allowed to talk to Kevin in the barrack yard. After a little while, he drew me aside and he told me, in case he should not have another opportunity, what had actually happened at Monks' Bakery.

Kevin's account of the ambush:

As I said before, he had come up from Tombeagh to do the exam. He had left his revolver at home. When he heard about this action, he insisted on being allowed to take part. His officers, Seamus Kavanagh, Tommy McGrane

and Bob Flanagan, were very reluctant to allow this on account of the exam. that day. But he persuaded them that it would be all over and done with long before 2 o'clock. I am sure that the records contain an account of this action and, in any case, I am trying to record only things of which I am reasonably certain. His station in the action was on the pathway outside the entrance to the Bakery. His job was to keep the lorry covered. Having persuaded his officers to allow him to take part, he was issued that Monday morning with a .38 automatic which had just been reconditioned. His gun jammed on the third round. He knelt down beside the lorry, discarded that round, fired another one with which he claimed to have killed one of the soldiers. He was amused at the evidence given, in which they were unable to account for the death of this particular soldier. I should perhaps have said earlier that the Judge Advocate General had made it clear at the outset that they were not accusing him of the death of any or all of the three men killed, that they had only to prove that he was one of a party who came there armed to attack British soldiers, of whom three had been killed, and that any and every member of the attacking party was technically guilty of murder.

He explained to me that, when he stood up after discarding the third round, he lifted a flap of the lorry, fired and got this man. The gun jammed again on the fifth round. He knelt once more, but this time it was more difficult. He was busy with the gun when he sensed a difference in the atmosphere and, looking around, he saw that he was alone. He dived in between the wheels of the lorry, hoping to escape in the confusion, when they moved off. At this stage I should perhaps mention - but of this I am not absolutely certain; it is only hearsay and

not from Kevin - that the pre-arranged signal for retreat was to be a blast of the whistle. I am told that this whistle was not blown because it was possible to collect "eyes". Nobody noticed that Kevin was missing until the uproar started up the street.

I go back now to what Kevin told me. The British soldiers were all back in the lorry and the man in charge had his foot on the wheel to get in, when a woman on the opposite side of the street shrieked out, "There's a man under the lorry!" He tried to escape through the wheels on that side, but the soldiers tumbled out of the lorry on all sides and he was captured. He was taken at once to the North Dublin Union. His affidavit covers what happened there.

Incidentally, I should mention that some months after his execution we were most distressed to hear that this woman had been driven mad and was in an asylum as a result of the blame attached to her by her neighbours. There was nothing we could usefully do about it beyond explaining where we could that, in Kevin's own account of it to me on the day of his courtmartial, he was convinced that she cried out because she was afraid that the man under the lorry would be run over.

He also told me the reason for his late appearance at the courtmartial. Somewhere in the North Circular Road the armoured car broke down. There was consternation among the escort. For about twenty minutes they waited on the North Circular Road for another armoured car. That was one reason for his amusement when he entered the Court - the fright and fear among his escort during the delay and the friendly relief they expressed to him when they delivered him safe.

Towards the end of my short talk with him, I noticed Uncle Pat, Sean Ó hUadhaigh and Father Augustine talking very seriously together. Father Augustine came over to me and he said, "Katty, we want you to take your mother home. Sean Ó hUadhaigh thinks that this is the adjournment for evidence of character. From what Mr. Aston told you, the evidence of character will be prejudicial to Kevin and we are afraid that the sentence might actually be pronounced in Court. We'll stay on till the end".

I took Mother home and, after about an hour, Uncle Pat arrived. When the Court re-assembled, it was announced that the sentence would be promulgated in due course. Kevin was taken away and Uncle Pat followed to Mountjoy in a taxi. He was actually at the big gate of Mountjoy when the armoured car passed in and Kevin waved to him. That was all we knew for that day.

The next morning Kate Kinsella, to whom I have referred earlier, came back from Mountjoy with his breakfast. All his meals had been sent in from a restaurant from the beginning, but he had asked one of his visitors to tell us that the breakfast was not as good as Kate's and, after that, she had taken his breakfast up every morning. She was back before 8.30 and her own early association with the Invincibles gave her the clue - which we lacked - to this refusal of the prison authorities to accept his breakfast. She tried to get an explanation from the warders who were very friendly and decent, but they said they knew nothing about it - they were merely acting on orders. I shall never forget the sound of her loud crying once she got inside the halldoor.

I went to Mountjoy that day, since I had been told that no good purpose could any longer be served by keeping aloof. I should have said that we had obtained permission from the I.R.A. to attend the Courtmartial. Kevin told me quite calmly and rather proudly that about 8 o'clock the previous evening the District Courtsmartial officer, Captain Wilson (or Captain Barrett - I cannot now remember which is the name, but I am sure it could be verified.) - this British officer with whom he was on the best of terms and who had visited him frequently in connection with the summary of evidence - had entered his cell, handed him his sentence, burst into tears and left the cell. He was to be hanged on the 1st November. "Mind!", he said, "There is to be no appeal". I said, "No, we would not do that". He said, "I know you wouldn't, but I depend on you to see that nobody in the family lets me down". This had reference not to my mother or brother or sisters, but to our uncles who were kind and good and well-intentioned and sympathetic but were not convinced Republicans. I should say here that they followed meticulously and cheerfully the line he laid down. On that morning he said to me, "The sentence has to be confirmed and they tell me here that there is a hope it may be changed to shooting. I must say I'd rather be shot". He said he was living in luxury on the fat of the land, that he had been told he had only to ask for any kind of food and drink and it would be supplied. There were two Auxiliaries with him that morning, and night and day until the end. He was allowed four visits every weekday, two in the morning and two in the afternoon, and up to three persons at each.

A lot of organisation went into the arranging of these visits and they covered a very wide circle of his

friends. So far as I can remember, only once did the organisation go astray. One afternoon that I visited him, he was much annoyed because some girls had got in and some of the family had been turned back. He said, "I don't want my past appearing any more. I'd rather see my family while I can". All his visitors reported that he was in his normal high spirits and full of fun.

On the Thursday (28th October) I was on the last visit of the day. Uncle Pat and Shel and Elgin had taken the earlier afternoon visit. I met them as they came out and they told me the death sentence by hanging was confirmed. Shel and I were wearing new Irish tweed suits, which had been ordered before his arrest but which he had never seen. When I went in to see him, he said, "Gosh, they're great! Both you and Shel look grand in them". He went on, "I suppose they told you they're not going to 'let me like a soldier fall', but at least 'they'll hang me like a gentleman'." This last was a quotation from the last play we had seen together, Shaw's "Devil's Disciple", which had been produced in Dublin during the summer.

Thinking over what has been set down here, I have a guilty feeling that I have overplayed my own part in it. The only excuse I can offer for this is that I am being extremely careful to stick to facts to which I can testify. I have handed in some more objective statements, which can be taken as an appendix (A) to a personal statement. They were carefully written before my illness and when my mind was working better. I think it was in the closing months of 1948 that I wrote them. Some serious writing had been done about my brother and the manuscript was handed to me. I am not at liberty to say more - since

the book has not yet found a publisher - than that it was written by a sympathetic Republican with a long military record. I found in it so many discrepancies that I prepared these statements. I verified my facts where I could and, in the covering letter sent to the writer, I set out the living persons in Dublin whom I had consulted. This letter is part of the appendix and it will be noted that the date is December, 1948. I have noted in this letter in the appendix how far I got afterwards and these notes represent the position, as far as I know it now. It was not very far because I began to feel reluctant to do a number of things which were outside my job and my home life. When I finally collapsed in August, 1949, it was a relief to find that this reluctance had been due to a deterioration of health and not of character. I had intended to hand in the appendix to the Bureau at some stage when I would find the energy to do it and, when I got Miss Kissane's letter asking for a statement on my activities, I welcomed the opportunity to get my brother's story, as I know it, into the military records of his country.

Thinking over what has been set down, I am afraid that I seem to figure in it myself to an undue degree. I can only explain (1) that I have told the story from my personal knowledge, (2) that, since my illness, I am not so adept with words as I was before; (3) that, as I have mentioned before, I was the eldest of a family of seven and my mother was a widow and from an early age I had willy-nilly a kind of leadership in the family. I should like to say here, for fear it was not been made clear in my story, that my mother was magnificent all along the line. She accepted the fact that Kevin was a Republican soldier and that whatever came his way in that capacity

was to be faced cheerfully and without complaint by his mother. At the time we all took this for granted. It is only now when our own children are grown that we realise the real heroism of the mothers and fathers of the war of independence who had been reared in a gentler age and who so heroically accepted the position of their children throwing away not only their lives but their careers and prospects.

My brother, Mick, and my sisters accepted equally with mother and myself the line of conduct prescribed by G.H.Q. My brother, Mick, attended to his farm and to his Volunteer duties in the Carlow Brigade. He, of course, came to see Kevin and, in that way, attracted the notice of the enemy to himself. He was arrested within a month and was only released after the Treaty was ratified. The family finances never recovered from his loss on the farm. My sisters, Shel, (now Mrs. Maher, Clogorrow, Athy, Co. Kildare) Elgin (now Madam Richard O'Rahilly, Cursis Street, Palmerstown, Co. Dublin), Monty (now Mrs. J.L. O'Donovan, Whitehall Lodge, Churchtown, Co. Dublin) and Peggy (now Mrs. John M. Cronin, 25 Leahy Terrace, Sandymount), were full of enthusiasm and gaiety and willingness to face anything. Our uncles and our aunt, Mother Cecilia of the Bon Secours Hospital, Cork, while not Republicans, were loyal and helpful and scrupulously respected Kevin's principles and conduct. Our Republican friends were helpful and encouraging beyond what any words of mine could express and our non-republican friends were sympathetic and tactful. In fact, the amount of kindness that our family received in those weeks which I have covered was really amazing. It must be remembered that, up to the Thursday before his death, he was a private casualty. He was not then a

national hero and such kindness and consideration as were received before the full light of publicity was centred upon him was merely personal.

Kevin's affidavit describing his ill-treatment:

On that Thursday morning, 28th October, I was told to go to the Wood Press, 13 Fleet Street. Dick McKee was waiting for me there. He said he wanted me to go that afternoon with Sean Ó hUadhaigh and a J.P. ~~to take~~ to take from Kevin an affidavit giving a complete statement of his torture after his arrest. Dick explained that this was his own idea. He was convinced there would be no reprieve as things were going. He thought that, if this affidavit were published in all the newspapers, but particularly in the English newspapers on Saturday, it would rouse the English conscience. Here it may be superfluous, having regard to the English newspapers of that time, but since I have already made so many digressions, it is no harm to recall the extraordinary volume of public opinion in England, so freely expressed, against Government policy in Ireland.

Dick explained that he had made arrangements with Desmond Fitzgerald, our Dáil Director for Propaganda, to meet me and him at 5.30 in Arthur Griffith's office in Brunswick Street (now Pearse Street). I was to have the signed affidavit to hand to Desmond who would make all other necessary arrangements.

I went to Sean Ó hUadhaigh's office and he arranged to meet me at Mountjoy after the afternoon visit. He would have with him a Justice of the Peace and he would make the necessary arrangements for our admittance.

The Justice of the Peace was Dr. Myles Keogh, who was, I think, at the time Under-Sheriff for the City of Dublin. He was very nervous and puzzled. Inside the gaol there was a feeling of suppressed excitement, and Sean later told me that, when he telephoned for permission to take the statement, he rather sensed a hope that Kevin was about to crack up and give the information the British military wanted from him.

We were shown into the board-room. Poor Dr. Keogh's nervousness increased at sight of the armed Auxiliaries seated in the room with Kevin. Sean explained briefly that the I.R.A. required this statement and they got down to work. A couple of times during the taking of it, when Kevin seemed to be at a loss for a British military term, one or other of the Auxies supplied it. They were most friendly and co-operative with him and deeply respectful with us. Kevin was on the best of terms with every Auxie that guarded him. Looking back at it now, it does seem extraordinary that these men, who were British ex-officers, accepted quite calmly and reasonably the justice and truth of the accusations that my brother was making against a regular officer and several non-commissioned officers of the British army. At the time, I took it for granted.

On the tram going back into town, Dr. Myles Keogh was in a terrible state of mind. He kept trying to impress on Sean and myself that something must be done to save this boy who was in such grave danger. Sean and I, who in our different ways were living with the danger, were much more calm; but we appreciated his kindness and concern; and I learned afterwards that, from that time onwards during the week-end, he used every scrap of influence he possessed to avert the execution.

I was carrying the affidavit and, when Myles Keogh had left us in Westmoreland Street, Sean impressed on me the importance of its safe keeping. He asked me if possible not to give it to Desmond Fitzgerald for fear of capture. If there had been time, we should have gone to Eustace Street to Sean's office to make a copy of it. But it was nearly time for my appointment with Dick and Desmond and this was impossible.

I arrived at Arthur Griffith's office where he and Dick were waiting for me. Arthur Griffith at that time was Acting President of the Republic, as Mr. de Valera was in America. He was really excited by the plan and he was not an excitable person. Dick was very pleased with the statement of the facts, as dictated by Kevin ; with the help of the Auxies. The only trouble was that Desmond was not turning up. Dick became increasingly uneasy, as he had an important appointment at 6 o'clock. Many years later I learned from two sources that this appointment was a military meeting somewhere in Parnell Square, at which Mick Collins presided and at which the plans were made for the attempt at Kevin's rescue on Saturday.

At seven minutes to six, Dick said he could wait no longer but that I was to stay there until Desmond arrived at whatever hour. He had impressed on Desmond but he said that Griffith and I were to stress it further, the necessity for the publication of the affidavit in Saturday's newspapers.

At six-thirty Desmond arrived. I showed him the affidavit and asked him to allow me to type a copy of it in Griffith's office. He assured me there was no necessity, that he could keep it safer than I could but that he would return it to me the next day. As we left

the office in Pearse Street, he regretted that his typist would have gone home and that he would be unable to have copies made to give to newspaper representatives whom he was meeting that night. I immediately offered to make as many copies as he wanted. I had the key to Mr. Aston's office in Abbey Street, where there was an excellent typewriter and also a duplicator. At that time I was a first-class typist. He demurred and I pressed him rather hard. He said, "Miss Barry, I shouldn't dream of troubling you!" Something gave inside me and I stood outside one of McKenzie's windows and I said, "Mr. Fitzgerald! Do you realise that this is my brother? No matter whose life was at stake, I would not stop to think of trouble; but this is my brother". I must have been unduly vehement, because he looked a little scared and very gently asked would I leave the matter in his hands. I felt rather ashamed of myself, since at the time he was doing a good job remarkably well. So I went home.

Saturday's papers did not contain the affidavit but it appeared in all the English and Irish papers of Monday - the day of Kevin's execution. We never heard the explanation, which was probably a good one. It probably would not have affected the issue anyway.

K.B.M.

*Thursday*

On ~~Monday~~, the 4th November, in the course of a debate in the House of Commons on British Government reprisals in Ireland, this affidavit was read in full by Mr. J.H. Thomas, who mentioned that he had received it from a "man who was the employer of this boy's sister". The man was, of course, Mr. Aston. The debate is reported in Hansard in the volume for the period 1st to 19th November (No. 134).

Some months later, Desmond returned the affidavit which, as at that time no Republican hiding place was very safe, I gave to Mr. Aston who deposited it in his bank - the Ulster Bank - where it remained till after the Truce.

I shall lend the affidavit to the Bureau to have it photostated (appendix B.) You will notice that it is signed only by Kevin and Dr. Myles Keogh but the handwriting is Sean Ó hUadhaigh's.

Newspapers comment on Kevin's sentence:

On Friday morning Father Augustine, a Capuchin monk of Church Street, spent two hours with Kevin. He had been in to see him before and had hoped to be with him at the end. He had, however, to travel to Cork for Terry MacSwiney's funeral and so he said good-bye to Kevin on the Friday morning. He told us that for the whole two hours Kevin never once faltered at the thought of death on Monday. The only regret he expressed was that he had been able to do so little. This sounds priggish and unnatural; but, so far as I can remember, what he said to Father Augustine was, "I wish I could have had time to do a bit more".

Father Augustine is living at Rochestown, Cork, and would be able to amplify this bald account, as well as having a mass of information about the 1916 men. He has always been a delicate man and has not been able to travel to Dublin for years.

On that Friday, I found Kevin in a state of glee. When I went into the boardroom, he rubbed his hands and said, "Did you see the papers? My death is going to be a national calamity". He was particularly amused at the way the 'Independent' was "swinging the lead!" Actually,

that was the first day since his arrest, so far as my memory goes, that the papers had made any particular fuss about him. Terry MacSwiney's hunger strike and death and the complications about his funeral had been the chief Republican news featured. Also, no execution had taken place since 1916 and, although Kevin was sentenced to death on the 20th October, apparently the public thought that the sentence would not be carried out. The confirmation of the sentence came as a surprise in the Thursday's newspapers, and both the 'Freeman' and the 'Independent' let themselves go on Friday. At this distance in time, I cannot feel very clear about the press, more particularly since at the time we were concerned with the press only in so far as what was written of him could serve the cause for which he was to die. At the risk of repetition, I must say again that we, as a family, whatever other people may have thought, never doubted that he would be hanged on the Monday morning. That Friday seems to me now a whirlpool nightmare of dashing round and dealing with all kinds of people. Some people came to ask us to sponsor a petition for a reprieve, others to offer sympathy and ask if there was anything they could do, others to inquire why no rescue was being organised - these were mostly people who would not know one end of a gun from another. My personal concern was to see that Kevin's wishes were carried out and that no word or action of his family could be twisted into letting him down. He had laid this as a charge upon me, so that, in addition to my own personal inclinations, I felt I had the sanction of his wishes. I remember dashing down Anglesea Street and meeting Alderman James Moran, later Senator Moran - a very nice man but not a Republican. He looked very distressed and, to cover up the awkwardness of the moment, he said,

"You are in a great hurry!." I said, "Yes, Alderman Moran, I am up to my neck organising the successful execution of my brother". It was only when I saw his look of shock that I realised it had been a cruel thing to say to a man who was on the opposite side of the great gulf fixed at that time between Republicans and those we called pro-Britishers.

On the Saturday morning, I looked in at the office about 10.30 to open the post. During all these weeks I had enjoyed such freedom from my office as very few employers would give. I dashed in some time during the morning most days, opened the post and dealt with it as far as I could, left the rest for Mr. Aston. Sometimes he came in before I left and sometimes not. I dashed in again some time in the afternoon or in the evening and finished the day's work, according to the notes he had left for me. I wish I could pay adequate tribute to his kindness and consideration, apart altogether from his activities on Kevin's behalf.

Mr. Aston's efforts in London to get a reprieve:

The sentence of death by hanging was no surprise to him and it was his opinion that it would be confirmed. He understood Kevin's stand and our stand in refusing to make any approach or appeal to the enemy authorities. But he held that he was free to do what he considered his duty to prevent an outrage. On Monday, the 25th, he asked me for a photograph of Kevin. He explained that he was crossing to England that night with Commander McCabe, who was a personal friend of the Lloyd George family. This Commander McCabe was an official in the Local Government Board. He was a Catholic Irishman who had distinguished himself in the British Navy during the

1914-1918 war, winning the D.S.O. for the sinking of German submarines.

Mr. Aston believed that it was only at the highest level that Kevin's execution could be stopped and he asked for this photograph. I was so terrified of letting Kevin down that I refused the photograph until I would get I.R.A. permission. I was told it was perfectly all right to give the photograph, since Mr. Aston understood our attitude.

On the Saturday morning, when I went into the office, I found Mr. Aston there. He was very gay as he said, "It is all right. The reprieve is through". I looked doubtful and he continued, "I have Lloyd George's personal word of honour". This was so funny that I laughed. He looked a little hurt but said very patiently, "I'll put it in another way. If I weren't satisfied, I would not be here. I'd be still in London". I was so sorry that I had been ungracious, but I explained to him my deep instinct that Kevin was to die on Monday morning. He said, "Don't be morbid! Run home now and tell your mother the good news. There is nothing here that can't wait".

Saturday - Plans for Kevin's release:

I went home and told Mother and, before we had time to try to work it out, Frank Flood called with two other men, one of them whom I now know to have been Captain Charlie Byrne. They said they wanted to see me privately. He told me there was to be an attempt at rescue that afternoon and that he had come to give me my orders in connection with it.

At 3.15 precisely I was to ask at the gate of Mountjoy Jail for a visit. They estimated that I would

be let in about 3.30. They would allow ten minutes for possible delays inside and at 3.40 they would enter the jail to rescue Kevin. The whole thing depended on exact timing. The military guard was changed at 4 p.m. each day and the I.R.A. wanted to be clear of the jail before 3.50 p.m. I was to take with me one other girl on whose presence of mind and courage I could absolutely rely. Our job was to mark the two Auxiliaries, one each, and at whatever cost keep them from shooting Kevin. We were told not to trouble about Kevin or the warders; we were to think only each of our own Auxiliary - provided we could take care of them, the I.R.A. men would take care of the rest. I was to understand and I was to make clear to the other girl that, while our lives were not a really serious consideration, it was of vital importance that we should not be killed before the rescue was completed.

I implored Captain Byrne to call it off. He said he was acting under orders from G.H.Q. I asked him would he go back and put it to G.H.Q. that it was a desperate gamble with the lives of very valuable men. I pointed out the value to the English conscience of Kevin's being "shot in an attempt to escape" - this was beginning to be a popular propaganda phrase at the time. I also suggested that my brother was just a young soldier and that such desperate measures for the saving of his one life were hardly called for. Captain Byrne said he had been given a job to do and he had to carry it out. I said, "But you will all be killed!" He answered very tersely, "It'll be a pleasure!"

I did not dare to tell Mother, as I thought the strain and suspense would be too much for her. I decided that, since it was very possible that the other girl and

myself would be killed, it was only fair to take one of the family. Shel, the sister next in age to me, had gone to Tombeagh that morning, so I had to decide to take Elgin, who was then not quite sixteen years of age. I knew she would be calm and confident. I was over twenty-one and had at that time a little property left me by my father, so I made my will and had it signed and witnessed by two servants; one of these was Kate Kinsella, of whom I have already told. I told Kate the whole story and asked her to pray hard and to explain the position to Mother, if I were arrested.

We were at the jail gate at 3.15. The crowd outside looked bigger than usual. Among the relatives waiting for visits to other prisoners were a number of very suspicious-looking young men, many of whom I recognised. We handed in our names at 3.15 precisely and, coming up to 3.30, it was our turn next. A motor car was driven up the avenue and a tall priest stepped out of it, went to the wicket and asked to be allowed to see Kevin Barry. I knew him by sight as a Father Brennan, some time curate in Hackettstown, but I had never met him and did not wish to speak to anybody at that time. I naturally thought his visit would follow ours and I remember wondering what his feelings would be when the row started. To my horror, he was admitted at 3.30, and we waited and waited and were not called. At 3.40 Captain Byrne edged over to me and, looking away from me, spoke out of the corner of his mouth, "That damned priest has queered the pitch. I am afraid I'll have to call it off. Still, if you get in soon, be prepared for anything up to 4 o'clock". Almost immediately we were admitted.

The plan of Mountjoy is so well known that it

seems superfluous to go into it here, but I want to make the following facts very clear and definite. I shall, therefore, tell this now as though I were entering Mountjoy for the first time. Just inside the wicket gate, which is part of the huge iron-studded gaol gate, there is what I shall call a gate-house. On the right-hand side as you go in, there is a small stairway leading up to a small waiting-room. This is where we were searched by a wardress. After the search, we were taken through the large barred gateway which forms the back of what I have called the gate-house opposite to the gaol gate. The entrance to the prison buildings is directly opposite this barred gate, at a distance of what my poor memory would describe as about thirty yards of pathway. To right and left is open space, which on all previous occasions was empty. On that Saturday the space on both sides of the pathway was occupied by armed Black and Tans and British military. I should say there were well over a hundred - drawn up in formation, facing the pathway on either side, but so placed as to be only visible as we passed through the barred gate. Now, these were mainly Black and Tans, as distinct from Auxiliaries, and I knew at a glance that they must have been specially imported for the occasion, as Dublin was served by Auxiliaries, not by Black and Tans. This was intimidating when I thought of the thirty or forty lads outside, who were facing this unknown risk. As you entered the prison buildings, there is a long hall at the end of which is the central hall of the gaol. This long hall was crowded with Auxiliaries - not in formation, just moving around. On the right-hand side of this entrance hall and with windows on one side only - the east side - was the board-room. When we went into this room, I made for the larger of the two Auxies on guard and

pulled my chair as close to him as possible. Elgin sat as near the other one as she could without attracting attention. I have no memory of anything Kevin said that day beyond the reference he made immediately we went in to Father Brennan's visit. I know the conversation was rapid and easy, because I remember my split personality - one part strung up, scared to death, waiting and still observing, the other part behaving as if nothing was happening. About five minutes to four somebody shouted outside and I thought this was it. But, by the Grace of God, I waited for more and nothing more happened. Then four o'clock struck and in the reaction I found it difficult to keep my tongue going. However, the visit was over about five past four and, as Kevin was saying good-bye to me, he said that he was not going to write any farewell letters to the immediate family. He said he was writing to friends who had written to him and visited him; but that for the family he would rather say good-bye on his feet.

On the Tuesday or Wednesday after his death, we received from Mountjoy a parcel containing little odds and ends. Strangely enough, I cannot now remember who wrote the letter accompanying it, but I think it was the Governor of Mountjoy. I know that there were various bits and pieces assigned by Kevin to the various members of the family, and my share was a fountain pen, which he had received in Mountjoy from some friend of his outside, and a copy of 'Knocknagow' which we had sent in to him. The pen had a heartbreakingly amusing significance. Among his characteristics was a queer instinct for giving the right gift at Christmas and birthdays and times like that. In the spring of that year, there had been a

presentation to Sir Horace Plunkett by a group of prominent men. Mr. Aston was the honorary secretary of the committee. As his private secretary, I had done a great deal of work in connection with it and I was, of course, invited to the dinner in the Gresham at which the presentation was to be made. I had excused myself because at the time Sir Horace stood for something like Dominion status and, ~~actually~~, I was very fortunate, because there was a scene at the dinner. Lord Monteagle was presiding and he turned up wearing his decorations. As is well known, Monteagle was a very decent man and sympathetic to the Republican cause; but I believe that on this occasion he ruled that, since he had not been told not to wear his K.P., the formality must be observed of a toast to the King. Martin Fitzgerald, who had shortly before purchased the 'Freeman's Journal', refused to drink the toast, made a scene and had to be removed from the Aberdeen Hall. As I should have had to accompany him, I was very pleased that I had not put myself in harm's way. Since the whole episode was very distressing to people who, according to their lights, were doing their best for this country, I was very relieved that I had not to take part in it. At the last meeting of the committee, they presented me with an outsize fountain pen. It was about 8 inches long and correspondingly thick, decorated with gold bands, one of them bearing my name. It was an amusing token of appreciation, but quite useless to me as a writing instrument. However, it was a fascinating toy for Kevin, who carried it with him everywhere he went, and it was one of the things that disappeared forever when he was captured. The first time we spoke together after his capture, which was at his courtmartial in Marlboro' Barracks, he asked if I had got it back and he was quite disproportionately contrite at

its loss. Then and several times later, I assured him that it had been useless to me and, when a few days after his death I received the pen from Mountjoy, I knew its significance.

The copy of 'Knocknagow' I had sent in to him and, on the fly-leaf and the title page, he had written and dated a humorous description of himself. This is a copy of it:-

"K.G. Barry, M.S. (medical student)

A dangerous criminal.

A decided menace to the British Empire.

Captured 20th Sept. 1920.

Tried 20th October, 1920.

Hanged 1st Nov. 1920.

Up the prisoners of war.

Amongst the many crimes put down to this dangerous man is that he did put pepper in the cat's milk and steal a penny from a blind man beside wilfully, feloniously and of his malice aforethought, smiling derisively at a policeman.

Kevin Gerard Barry

Condemned cell

Mountjoy Prison

30th October, 1920.

Caoimhghin de Barra

Comhplacht H.

Cath a hAon.

Drong Atha Cliath

Up the Republic."

When we came out of the prison after our last visit, we found nobody waiting outside. On the North Circular Road Tom Keating was standing. He was a member of "H" Company whom I had seen, among others, at the gate inside. When he saw us, he literally burst into tears. Elgin and I got into a tram and, coming down North Frederick Street, Elgin began to cry silently and hopelessly. She had been bright and gay all during the visit and was able to postpone the reaction while in the sight of the enemy. I did not attempt to stop her as, even in these days, the psychological value of tears after shock was well known; but I took her into Paddy Flanagan's office at the Wood Press, 13 Fleet Street, so that she could recover before we went home. Several members of the rescue party came into the office while we were there and their distress was terrible. They assured me that there would be another attempt.

I should have said earlier that, from the time Kevin was sentenced, his comrades called continually at our house to ask us to tell Kevin that they would attempt to rescue him. We refused categorically. On that Saturday evening Frank Flood - God rest him - implored me to tell Kevin, even on the Sunday, that they had tried and would try again. I refused again and said that it would be most cruel to interfere with Kevin's happy state of mind, in which he was ready to die for the Republic.

Some time during the Saturday afternoon, Mr. Aston came to see Mother. I was out at the time but, when I came home, she told me that he had heard by a telephone call from London at 1.30 that something had gone wrong about the reprieve. She said he was terribly distressed and assured her that he would not give up. She was

considerably less distressed than he was, as she had at no time really countenanced any approach to the enemy.

On Sunday morning, 31st October, at about 11.30, Kathleen Carney, a very great friend of ours, who was also a very great friend of James McMahon's family - she had been at school with his daughters in Roscrea - came to us in great excitement. She said that Mr. McMahon wanted Mother to send a personal telegram to King George V. If Mother would draft the telegram, McMahon was waiting to send it off at once. My mother was furious and, as a matter of fact, it was a couple of months before she could bring herself to be more than polite to Kathleen. It fell to my lot to soften the sharpness of my mother's refusal and to ask her to explain to Mr. McMahon that, while we appreciated his personal kindness, there was a definite principle at stake - the principle for which my brother was glad to die.

The Archbishop and others intervene on behalf of Kevin:

Some time that day we heard that Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, had gone with the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alderman Laurence O'Neill, to protest to the British authorities. The account of this is covered by newspaper reports at the time, but the Lord Mayor afterwards told me that the Archbishop had made a very real sacrifice in approaching the British authorities at all. He had made it a rule when he became Archbishop of Dublin that he would not have anything whatever to do with Dublin Castle, and the Lord Mayor told me that he/had felt that, since the Archbishop had never previously approached the Castle, the breaking of his rule would have tremendous weight. So they went to see Sir Neville Macready, Sir John Anderson and finally Lord French, the

Lord Lieutenant. I remember the Lord Mayor telling me that the Lord Lieutenant's Aide-de-Camp was an old Stonyhurst boy and that, in all the anxiety and tragedy of the day, he, Alderman O'Neill, could not help but be faintly amused at the Aide-de-Camp's helpful interest arising from the freemasonry of the "black Militia". I cannot remember the Aide-de-Camp's name. The Lord Mayor also told me that the Archbishop was restive at being advised to go from one to another of the enemy's chiefs; but they both felt that, having undertaken the job, it was worth carrying through, whatever the issue might be.

I know some protest was organised by the legal profession but at what level I never knew. My only knowledge of it came from a funny story told us by Vincent Shields, now of Loughrea, then a solicitor's apprentice in Dublin, a great friend of Kevin's. He had been sent to induce Sir Thomas Molony to associate himself with it and the story concerned Lady Molony's distress when she discovered that this Kevin Barry was "so respectable".

There was also a medical protest or appeal. My knowledge of this arises from the fact that our great friend, Dr. Eileen Dixon, who was then a medical student, actually went around with Mr. Frank Morrin collecting signatures from doctors. I got the impression the organisers were Mr. Morrin, Mr. Harry Meade and Dr. Jim Maginnis, but I have no real knowledge beyond what I have set down here.

There were several visits allowed on the Sunday, three visitors at a time. The last visit was to be taken by my mother, my brother, Mick, and myself. One of the visits was given to two Belvedere Jesuits, Father

Michael Quinlan and Rev. Thomas Counihan who were both friends of Kevin, but particularly Fr. Counihan who had been a very great friend during all Kevin's time in Belvedere. One of my sisters was with them and the other members of the immediate family with my uncle followed. I believe that, when the Jesuits went into the board-room, they felt nervous and had been rehearsing little things to say to Kevin; but when he saw them he burst out laughing and he said, "I have the laugh on you fellows now. You are going to spend the rest of your long lives hoping for a good death. I am going to have a good death tomorrow morning". With the family he was quiet but equally serene.

Sunday's plan for rescue:

Mother and Mick and I were just on the point of leaving the house when Jack Plunkett arrived to say that we were not to take the last visit, that Dick McKee and Oscar Traynor were going in, disguised as priests, as part of another attempt at rescue. We pointed out to him that it would look extremely suspicious if his mother did not arrive to take her last visit and that, in any case, the visit would have to be applied for by a certain time. My recollection is that we were to be at the prison gate for the last visit at 3.30, but Jack Plunkett thinks, in a connection to which I shall refer back later, that it was 3 o'clock. However, beyond this slight discrepancy in time, his memory of the facts agrees with mine. He said at once that they had not known of the time factor and that he would have to report back to Headquarters. I pointed out to him that we had just time to get to Mountjoy on the tram, and he said he would be waiting for us at the tram stop outside Mountjoy to tell us whether or not we were to go in. We agreed to abide by the I.R.A.

decision.

I must digress here to explain that on, I think, April 22nd, 1949, a news item appeared in the 'Irish Press' under the title, "Mr. Traynor on New Republicans", reporting a lecture given by Oscar Traynor, in which the following reference to my mother appeared:-

"A plan to send in two men disguised as clergymen in an attempt to rescue him was not agreed to by his mother, and Kevin Barry was executed."

My mother and I went at once to Sean O Uadhaigh to ask him to get this matter righted. As a result, the 'Irish Press' eventually published a statement by Jack Plunkett who, thank God, was still alive and was the only living person who could have branded Mr. Traynor's statement as false. I shall obtain from Sean O hUadhaigh all the documents in the case for copying and use as an appendix to this statement.

When we got off the tram at the corner of Berkeley Road, Jack was sitting astride his bicycle by the footpath. Mother and Mick passed on and I loitered rather, and as I passed he said in a low voice, "You are to go ahead. There isn't time. We'll have to try something else". So we went on and handed in our names. Before we were admitted, Father Albert came up the avenue at the head of a great crowd of University students who had asked him to come and recite the Rosary.

The last visit to Kevin:

We went inside and the military precautions were even more elaborate than on the Saturday - military and Black and Tans drawn up on either side of the pathway, and

Auxiliaries swarming in the hall. In addition to the two Auxiliaries normally with Kevin and the chief warder who sat at a table in the board-room, there were five or six other warders, at least three of them armed with revolvers swung on a lanyard above the right elbow. Kevin was cheerful and gay. We sat down and I proceeded to talk. It was difficult at first, because several of the warders were crying. My mother was composed but quiet, and my brother, Mick, was at no time a great chattering. I mentioned about Father Albert and the students, and Kevin rubbed his hands and said, "Oh, gosh, if I could only catch one more sight of them". We talked about various things. He mentioned the "two J's" and made various remarks about the visits of our sisters. I gave him a message which somebody had given me outside the gaol, to tell him that the University would be outside in the morning praying. He became serious at once and he said, "Tell them that is foolish. They'll be all shot". For a few moments I couldn't speak because I suddenly thought: "When they come up in the morning, he'll be alive as he is now. When they go away, he'll be dead forever". He was sitting with one leg over the other and he suddenly began to swing his foot and whistle, "Steady Boys And Step Together", and he gave me a sideways smile, so I started again and gradually we were all talking quite naturally. Then Mr. Meehan, the Deputy Governor, came into the room and said, "I am sorry, Mrs. Barry. I'm afraid you'll have to go". So we said goodbye and the last thing he said to me as he kissed me was, "Give my love to the boys in the Company". We turned at the door for a last look and he was standing at the salute. When the door closed, my mother was battling with her tears. The hall was clear of Auxiliaries except for a group at the end. But she was heroically determined to

show no weakness in face of the enemy. Before we reached the hall door we met Canon Waters whom we had not met before. He spoke kindly to my mother but expressed great worry about Kevin. He said, "This boy does not seem to realise he is going to die in the morning". My mother said, "What do you mean?" He said, "He is so gay and lighthearted all the time. If he fully realised it, he would be overwhelmed". My mother drew herself up and she said, "Canon Waters, I know you are not a Republican. But is it impossible for you to understand that my son is actually proud to die for the Republic?" He became more flustered and we parted. We were upset by this encounter because he was the chief chaplain and the nearest thing to a friend that Kevin would see before his death, and he seemed so alien.

When we came outside the gaol gate, Father Albert told us that he had asked for a special visit. He got this and it seemed to us miraculous. We waited until Father Albert would come out. By this time, the whole space between the outer gate of Mountjoy and the gaol gate was filled with people who had been attracted by the crowd of University students. Many of them came up to us to ask us was it true about the reprieve and we could only say we didn't know. I remember one fat woman turning back to a friend and saying loudly, "Everybody in Dublin knows it except his own people!", and I knew from her tone that she thought we were trying to make ourselves important.

Father Albert came out and spoke to the crowd. He told them that Kevin was in excellent spirits and, with his last goodbye to his mother, had left the world behind him. Father Albert had asked him for a message and he said, "That is making such a fuss. I haven't any last

messages". Father Albert pressed him and at last he said, "The only message I have for anybody is 'Hold on and stick to the Republic'." These were the actual words Father Albert heard, although later this last message was trimmed up in various ways. One of them was "Live for the ideals for which I am about to die". Anything more foreign to Kevin's outlook is very difficult to imagine, but "Hold on and stick to the Republic" was the very essence of him.

We went home and the house was full of people all the evening. We went to bed about eleven and got up about seven. We all went to 7.30 Mass in Clarendon Street and stayed for 8 o'clock Mass. As we went to Mass in the dark November morning, his face met us in the newsvendors' stalls in Grafton Street. I think it was the 'Daily Sketch' or the 'Daily Mail' had a full-page picture of him and, around the lamp-post over it, a newsvendor had wrapped the 'Freeman's Journal' poster, "He Must Die".

When 8 o'clock Mass was over, we left the church and, as we walked down Grafton Street, we met University Branch of Cumann na mBan marching back from Mountjoy, Eileen McGrane, Captain, and Kathleen Murphy, 1st Lieutenant, at the head. Eileen McGrane gave the order, "Eyes right" as my mother passed.

After Kevin's execution:

Among the crowds of visitors who came to see us for weeks after the execution were two to whom I must refer. On the Monday afternoon Canon Waters called to see my mother. He was full of kindness and sympathy and appreciation of Kevin's bravery. Any little bad

impression of himself that he might have left on her on the Sunday afternoon was completely wiped out on this occasion. He also wrote a letter, of which a copy appears as appendix D<sup>1</sup>. On the 3rd November he wrote a further letter about Kevin's burial, of which a copy is also attached (appendix D<sup>2</sup>).

I want to say here that, about three weeks after Kevin's death, my mother received a very courteous letter from the Governor of Mountjoy, Colonel Munroe, inviting her to name a time at which it would be convenient for her and any members of the family who wished to accompany her to visit Kevin's grave. She did so and it was only in 1948, after a native government had been in power for twenty-six years, that she received another invitation. General Seán McKeon wrote to her in late July, 1948, saying that it had come to his notice that she had never been invited to visit her son's grave and asking if he might have the honour of taking her there at any time convenient to her. He also mentioned that he was sending her a permanent pass for herself and friends, so that she could visit the grave at any time. She wrote expressing heartfelt appreciation of his kind thought, but said she was not well at that time and, in any case, would like to go quietly and would appreciate the pass. Unfortunately, she has never been able to go since.

In 1922 and again in 1932 the question was raised of moving Kevin's body. All the other men executed in Mountjoy by the British are buried in the same plot. On both occasions, we said that, as Kevin had died for the Irish Republic, his body could remain in Mountjoy until the Republic was restored. The relatives of the other men followed our lead. I am the only member of the family

who has visited the grave since 1921, as I was once allowed to see it without a permit from the Minister for Justice. The little plot is beautifully kept and the National Graves Association has now marked the graves. I was told by prisoners in Mountjoy during the remainder of the British occupation that the British soldiers on guard in Mountjoy planted flowers on Kevin's grave and kept it in spotless order.

The second visitor on Monday, 1st November, to whom I must refer here, was Mr. Aston who called in the evening. He told me that he had discovered the reason why Lloyd George had broken his word about the reprieve. On the Saturday, Sir Henry Wilson, then Chief of the Imperial Staff, had threatened to resign unless Kevin were executed, as he said he could not be responsible otherwise for discipline in the British army. I cannot refer to any printed mention of this, but I have seen references to it in print, especially at the time of the death of Sir Henry Wilson.

Warder's story of bribe offered to Kevin to betray his comrades:

About three weeks after Kevin's death, one of the warders in Mountjoy, whose name I did not ask, came and told us a story. He said that very shortly after Father Albert left Kevin on the Sunday evening, he was taken into the execution chamber and asked to give the names of his officers and comrades in the raid on Monks' Bakery. He was told that, if he did this, he would receive a free pardon, be sent at the expense of the British government to finish his medical studies in any university in the world he liked to name, and would receive, in addition, a pension of £2,000 a year for life. The warder said he grinned and looked up at the beam and said, "Yes, I think

that will bear my weight all right". The only reference I have ever seen to this story appears in the 'House of Gregory' by Vere Gregory (page 99 et seq.). We have no confirmation of this story but we believe it absolutely because it carries the truth in it. Nobody could have invented the answer that Kevin is supposed to have given. His whole life is expressed in it.

SIGNED

Katherine Barry Moloney  
(Katherine Barry Moloney)

DATE

27th September 1952.

27th September 1952.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURE STAIR MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 731

WITNESS: Tom Curran

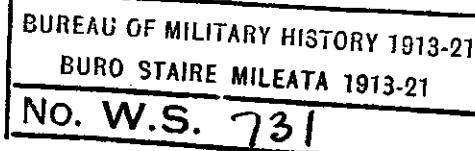
COPY.

*Appendix A*

3 Palmerston Road,

Dublin.

10th December, 1948.



I enclose my material under the following six sections:

- (1) I.R.A. G.H.Q. and Kevin Barry's Court Martial.
- (2) Kevin Barry's Account of his part in the action at North King Street on 20th September 1920.
- (3) Story of Affidavit.
- (4) First Rescue Attempt.
- (5) Second Rescue Plan and Last Visit.
- (6) Attitude of Kevin Barry and his family towards reprieve.

In (1) I have mentioned Joe Farrell. He agrees with my account of the Court Martial. He has an interesting story which I had not heard before about some reprieve movement in London in which Maurice Healy was active. A telephone call from London at 6 p.m. on Sunday 30th October stated that the reprieve was granted - message from Maurice Healy. If you think it worth while I could get more details.

In (5) I have mentioned Jack Plunkett. He confirms my story except that his memory is that he was trying to reach Mountjoy by 3 p.m. and was late. However, he says that since he was actually there before us I am probably correct in stating 3.30 as the time - actually it was the latest time at which to ask for a visit that day. Fr. Albert's visit referred to later in (5) was a concession.

Regarding (1) I saw last evening General Mulcahy and See note at end left with him the extracts you had given me and also my own material. He substantiates my assertion of the early, close and continuous interest of G.H.Q. He will write me further.

A.

Regarding (2) Johnnie O'Neill has written an account of the action at North King Street. He has sent it to B. Lieut. T. McGrane for confirmation and will let me have it in the course of a day or two.

Regarding (3) I have handed copies of all 6 to Sean C. Ó hUadhaigh who will return them with his comments in the course of a day or two.

Regarding (4) I have not yet succeeded in running to earth Captain Charlie Byrne. Yesterday his daughter rang D. me to say he had to go away for the week-end but would see me next week. General Mulcahy offered to get after him to hurry him up but I thought it would not be necessary. Elgin confirms my account of our part.

Regarding (5) Major General Hugo MacNeill has some men digging up whatever they can get in various sections E. of Military Records and Archives. He hopes to let me have a fair amount by the week-end. He has some personal knowledge of the big attempt on Sunday evening 31st October, which had to be called off.

Regarding (6) Kathleen Carney was the messenger but I F. have done nothing about contacting her. Should I?

The position then is that:

- (a) I am giving you my statements
- (b) I have obtained confirmation of the correctness of my statements, where these concern them from:

Elgin	Joe Farrell
Jack Plunkett	Dick Mulcahy.
- (c) I await further information on my statements from Sean Ó hUadhaigh and Dick Mulcahy.
- (d) I await I.R.A. statements and information from H.C., Captain Charlie Byrne and Hugo MacNeill. I am keeping up pressure to get these as quickly as possible.

In this formal report to you may I formally record my joy that you have undertaken this book on Kevin, my admiration for the manner in which you have handled it, my respect for the monumental amount of work which you have had to undertake in order to make it the fine thing it is, and my humble thankfulness that I may be able to help a little in clarifying the obscurities, in the understandable absence of official I.R.A. documents, of the actual happenings of the time as they were known to Republicans.

*Katherine Barry Moloney*  
Good luck

Sincerely,

- 
- A. Dick Mulcahy has not, in fact, written but expressed his willingness to give me any required information about Kevin. At a later stage when my statement is complete I propose to submit it to him for his comments.
  - B. I never got this account. Lt. McGrane is now dead.
  - C. Sean Ó h-Uadhaigh corroborated my remarks in so far as he was concerned in the facts.
  - D. Charlie Byrne came to see me before Xmas and corroborated my account. He has a wealth of information about G.H.Q. plans in connection with Kevin.
  - E. Hugo later told me that he had failed to get a co-ordinated statement because of personalities and politics in H. Coy.
  - F. Kathleen is now Mrs. Vincent Gogarty, 27 Laurence St., Drogheda.

*K. B. M.*

*22nd January 1952*

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 731

I.R.A. G.H.Q. AND KEVIN BARRY'S COURT MARTIAL

Within a week of Kevin's capture, I was told by P.J. O'Flanagan, brother of Lt. R.A. Flanagan of H. Company, who was seriously wounded in the Monks' Bakery affair, that G.H.Q. would keep in touch with the family through his (P.J. O'Flanagan's) office at the Wood Press, 13 Fleet Street, where, among other activities, P.J. edited "The Irishman". Sean O'Muirtuile would call in and leave messages, or when necessary meet me there. A day or so later I was asked to call there and met Sean O'Muirtuile who said G.H.Q. had placed the case in the hands of Mr. Eamonn Duggan, T.D., Solicitor, whom I was to go and see. Since the charge would be murder it would probably be necessary for Kevin to recognise the Court and be defended. I saw Mr. Duggan then and on several occasions later. He complained that he found Kevin difficult - he did not want to recognise the court. I saw Sean O'Muirtuile frequently over the weeks that followed. About Friday, the 15th October, Mr. Duggan was much perturbed. He had tried without success to get the British to alter the date of the Court Martial from the 20th October. He had to leave Ireland on that day in connection with a case which had gone to the House of Lords. He said he would make a final effort, and if he failed to get the date altered he would have to hand the case to another solicitor.

On Monday the 18th I learnt that Sean O'Huadhaigh, Solicitor, of Little, Doyle, and Woods, wanted to see me. I went there and he asked me to go out to see Tim Healy with the Summary of Evidence. G.H.Q. wanted Tim Healy to defend if he thought he could save Kevin's life. Healy read the summary of evidence, and told me, with tears, that there was no doubt that they meant to hang Kevin.

He said: -

- (a) The case was watertight and he could hold out no hope of a successful defence unless he were to plead insanity.
- (b) Kevin would stand a better chance by being allowed to follow his inclination and refuse to recognise the court - thus throwing on the English conscience the onus of hanging an 18 year old prisoner-of-war who had not been defended.
- (c) He could hold out no hope that even this would succeed because of the "badness" of Lloyd George. If Bonar Law were Prime Minister there might have been some hope, but as things were then there was none.

He actually wept most of the time, and very kindly sent me home laden with hot-house fruit for Mother.

On Wednesday, 20th October, the following attended Kevin's Court Martial in Marlboro' (now McKee) Barracks:-

Mother	Mrs. Barry
Sister	Myself, then Katherine Barry.
Uncle	Patrick Dowling.
Solicitor	Sean O'Huadhaigh.
Friends	Rev. Fr. Augustine, O.S.F.C. Miss Eileen O'Neill, Jerry MacAleer, Joe O'Farrell.

We were in the room before the Court assembled. At 10 o'clock the officers of the Court Martial took their places at the long table. Kevin did not arrive until 10.45. Sean O'Huadhaigh then asked and was given an interview with Kevin. When he had said that Kevin refused to recognise the Court, he sat with us during all the proceedings. Kevin refused to question witnesses. Part of the time he read the previous day's "Evening Telegraph". At one stage he said to the President of the Court Martial: "It's no use asking me if I want to question witnesses, I don't recognise the Court". The President said "It is my duty to ask you". Kevin said: "I don't see why I should facilitate you, but if it is any consolation, no, I don't want to ask any questions" or words to that effect.

There was an adjournment for luncheon, which we had at the City Arms Hotel. About an hour after resumption, there was the interval for "Evidence of Character". During this interval we talked with Kevin. After a while I was asked to take mother home, because Sean O'Huadhaigh was afraid sentence might be passed that evening. Shortly after we reached home Uncle Pat arrived. He and the others had waited until the end. Mr. Jos. O'Farrell can vouch for this. Uncle Pat went straight to Mountjoy to see if he could learn anything there. While he was outside, the armoured car passed in with Kevin, but Uncle Pat could get no information.

Next morning the prison refused to accept Kevin's breakfast which was sent in every day. We knew then that he was sentenced, and later in the day he said that the sentence was handed to him on the evening of the 20th by the Court Martial officer, who burst into tears and left the cell hurriedly.

I met Sean O'Muirtuile several times after that, and at no time did he mention our co-operation in any rescue attempt. The first mention was made by Capt. Charles Byrne on the morning of the 30th October when I received and followed out the instructions he mentioned as coming from "Headquarters". I did not then know if this was G.H.Q. or Brigade.

(Signed).

KATHERINE BARRY MOLONEY.

KEVIN BARRY'S ACCOUNT OF HIS PART IN  
THE ACTION AT NORTH KING STREET ON  
20th SEPTEMBER, 1920.

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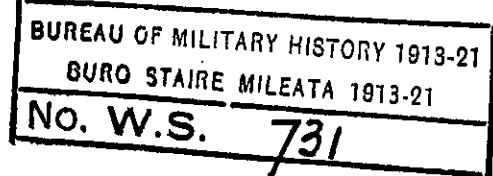
During the Court Martial on 20th October there was an adjournment "For evidence of Character". Kevin was taken out into the yard and we were also told to go there. He was allowed to talk to us. It was the first conversation I had had with him since his capture - the family had been told by the I.R.A. not to visit him. He had given his address as 58 South Circular Road, where he had been staying with our Uncle, Patrick Dowling, as he had been warned some time before not to sleep at home. The I.R.A. hoped that the British Military Authorities might not connect the prisoner with Kevin Barry of 8 Fleet Street, who was known to be in the I.R.A. Mother had visited him in Mountjoy, under the name of Miss MacArdle, her mother's maiden name. She did not use her own maiden name because it would connect up with our uncle's name, Dowling, and she might be followed home to Fleet Street.

During the interval in his Court Martial he told me what had happened on 20th September. His gun jammed on the first shot. It was not his own, which he had taken with him to Tombeagh when he went on holidays. He had only come up to town for an exam., and had insisted on being included in the Monks' Bakery job which should have been well over before his exam. at 2 p.m. The gun had been issued to him for the occasion, and he said it had just been reconditioned. When it jammed he discarded the first round, fired two rounds, and it jammed again on the fourth. This time he could not free it quickly, so he knelt down beside the lorry for shelter, while he

struggled with the jammed gun. His whole attention was concentrated on the job of freeing it. Suddenly he noticed a silence, or a change in the noises. He looked around and saw none of the I.R.A. party. The signal for retreat was to be a whistle, but no whistle had been blown. He thought the best thing to do was to dive in between the wheels of the lorry and take a chance of getting clear when it drove away. The soldiers were all in the lorry, and the Sergeant had one foot on it, to get in, when a woman shouted, (probably hysterically, he thought) "There's a man under the lorry". The soldiers swarmed down and captured him. He had not succeeded in freeing the gun.

(Signed)

KATHERINE BARRY MOLONEY.



AFFIDAVIT

Thursday - 28th October 1920.

Sometime in the forenoon I got a message that I was to go immediately to the Wood Press, 13 Fleet Street, where in the office of Mr. P.J. O'Flanagan, Editor of "The Irishman", I usually received G.H.Q. instructions concerning Kevin. On this occasion Dick McKee told me that I was to take Sean O hUadhaigh, Solicitor, and a J.P. into Mountjoy that afternoon and tell Kevin that, on Dick's order, he was to make a sworn affidavit concerning his torture in the North Dublin Union after his capture in North King Street on Monday, 20th September 1920. I was to take the affidavit straight from Mountjoy to Arthur Griffith's Office in Pearse Street, where Dick would be waiting. He had arranged that Desmond Fitzgerald, Dail Minister for Propaganda, would be there to collect it, and give it next day to the Press, with the object of having it published in the World Press, and particularly in the English papers, on Saturday 30th October.

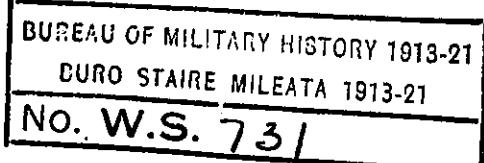
Sean O hUadhaigh secured Dr. Myles Keogh, and we went to Mountjoy in the early afternoon. Kevin was reluctant to make such a fuss, but on being told that it was Dick McKee's order he made the affidavit. An interesting sidelight at this interview, held in the Boardroom of the prison, (as were all interviews after the death sentence) was the interest in the proceedings shown by the two auxiliaries on guard that day, and the friendly conversation between Kevin and them.

I went direct to Pearse Street, arriving there about 5p.m. Arthur Griffith, then acting President of the Republic, in the absence in U.S.A. of de Valera, and Dick

McKee, O/C. Dublin Brigade were there. Desmond was due at 5.30. We talked until about 5.50., when Dick had to go because he had an important appointment at 6 o'clock. He told me to wait for Desmond and to impress upon him the vital importance of publication of the affidavit in Saturday's Press. Desmond came about 6.30., having been unavoidably delayed. I handed him the affidavit, which some months later was returned to me, and which I still hold.

(Signed)

KATHERINE BARRY MOLONEY.



FIRST RESCUE ATTEMPT.Saturday - 30th October 1920.

I went early to the office to carry out routine duties as private secretary to Mr. E.A. Aston, who had gone to London to work for a reprieve. Mr. Aston came in about 10. 30. and said everything was settled - the reprieve was safe. I was rather ungraciously incredulous because at no time did I believe there would be a reprieve. Mr. Aston said: "I have Lloyd George's personal word of honour". Again ungraciously I laughed. Very patiently, Mr. Aston said: "I'll put it in another way. If I were not perfectly satisfied, I should not be here; I'd be still in London". I had the grace to apologise and to thank him, but said that I did not believe it would work out. I then left for home. Shortly after I came in Frank Flood and another H.C.O. man - Paddy Kenny, I think - called with a stranger. The stranger, whom I now know to be Captain Charles Byrne, was obviously in charge. He told me there was to be a rescue attempt that afternoon and they wanted my co-operation.

I want to state here that this was the first time I, or any of the family, had been asked for co-operation in a rescue attempt. Earlier that week members of H.C.O. had spoken to us of attempts, and we had tried to dissuade them - not, as has been stated, because we believed in the possibility of reprieve, but because we could not encourage the risk of losing other valuable I.R.A. lives in what would probably be an unsuccessful attempt to save the life of a member of our family. At that time the British were freely using the formula "shot in an attempt to escape" in order to cover up the murder of I.R.A. prisoners. We

We believed that this would provide them with an easy way out of the difficulty in which they undoubtedly, that week, found themselves, of hanging an 18 year old prisoner-of-war. I must stress that these were our opinions freely expressed to members of H. Company, but until the Saturday morning no member of the family had been asked for active co-operation.

Captain Byrne told me to take with me one girl who could be relied upon for courage and initiative. We were to present ourselves at the gate of Mountjoy and ask for a visit at exactly 3. 15 p.m. From observation and experience he estimated that we should be admitted about 3.30. He would allow 10 minutes for possible delays inside and at 3.40. he would attack. The job for myself and the other girl was to tackle the two Auxiliaries and prevent them from shooting Kevin before the entry to the Boardroom of the rescue party. The warders, he said, they had made arrangements for. He explained that the whole affair must be over by 3.50, because the military guard on the jail was changed at 4. p.m. At or slightly before that hour a British military lorry would drive in with the Guard who were going on duty. Kevin, and the rescue party, must be away before them. The accurate timing of the job was of supreme importance.

I tried to argue with him along the lines given above. He said "It's an order from Headquarters". I said; "Can't you get them to reconsider it?" He said: "I've got my orders. I must carry them out". I said "But you'll all be killed". He said crisply and conclusively: "It'll be a pleasure. That's what we're in the army for". Frank Flood asked me somehow to let Kevin know, as he had asked me earlier in the week to tell him that they would make an attempt. I refused always, saying that it would be unfair to raise hopes of rescue since Kevin was so

happy at the prospect of death for the Republic. Kevin read the papers and knew all about the reprieve movements. He had a firm belief that he would not be reprieved. He enjoyed the fuss the papers were making. Frank was bitterly disappointed at my refusal. Captain Byrne repeated my instructions and they left.

I did not mention the matter to Mother, but I discussed it with my sister Elgin. She was only 16 years of age - Shel, who was next in age to me, had had to go to Tombeagh, Monty, a younger sister, with her. Our youngest sister Peggy was Mother's greatest consolation. My brother Michael was out of the question, since I had been told to take a girl. Elgin insisted on coming, and I knew that her courage and initiative were at least as good as my own.

We arrived at Mountjoy at exactly 3.15, and handed in our names. At the outer gate we had seen a few men we recognised. Mixed up among the crowd of relatives waiting for visits to other prisoners at the inner gate, were men whose object we knew and others whose appearance proved unmistakeably that they were bound on the same mission. I recognised Captain Byrne, but naturally we showed no recognition of any man at either gate. We awaited admission.

About 3.25. a Ford car drove in and a priest whom we did not know at that time stepped out and asked for a visit to Kevin Barry. He was admitted before us. At 3.40. Captain Byrne edged over towards me and out of the corner of his mouth muttered: "I'm afraid I'll have to call it off. That priest upset everything. However, I'll do my best. Be ready for anything". Just then the priest came out, and we were admitted.

Inside there were obvious precautions against a rescue

attempt. The main hall of the jail was crowded with Auxiliaries. There were extra warders in the Boardroom (but these, as Captain Byrne had told me, were arranged for). One of the Auxiliaries was standing at a window on the <sup>left</sup> side of the room, to the right as you face the fire-place, which is on the wall to the north. The other Auxiliary was seated near the west wall on the other side of the fireplace. Kevin was at the fire. We sat in the best positions we could choose, having each picked an Auxiliary. Until a clock struck 4. we were "ready for anything" as Captain Byrne had told us to be. When the visit was over, we went to the Wood Press Office, where a few H.C., men were gathered in great grief, but with a fixed resolve to try again.

(Signed) KATHERINE BARRY MOLONEY.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 731

SECOND RESCUE PLAN, AND LAST VISIT.SUNDAY, 31st OCTOBER, 1920.

On Sunday there was a series of visits allowed. The last visit was to be for Mother, my brother Michael and myself. We had to be at Mountjoy by 3.30. p.m.

We were preparing to leave home shortly before 3. o'clock, when Jack Plunkett arrived to say that we were not to take the visit. The Brigadier, Dick McKee, and, I think, Oscar Traynor were to go in disguised as priests, and arrangements had been made inside and outside for a rescue attempt. We pointed out: -

1. That the visit must be asked for before 3.30.
2. That suspicion might be aroused if Mother did not avail herself of the last visit; but
3. That we were willing to abide by whatever decision they reached.

Jack said they had not known the time of the visit, that he would report back, and, in order that we should be in time in case we were to take the visit, he would meet us outside Mountjoy.

We went by tram, and Jack was standing by his bicycle at the tram stop near the jail. He said as we passed: "Go ahead, there would not be time for this attempt. We'll try something else".

We went in. This interview, like all others since the death sentence, was in the Boardroom. When you enter the main gate of Mountjoy, you pass through the gate house (by another locked gate only opened for entrance and exit and immediately locked again). You go straight ahead along a path to the entrance to the prison proper. To right and left, wide paths or roads lie roughly east and west.

Drawn up on both these paths that afternoon were armed British Military and Black and Tans. The Black and Tans must have been imported, because they were not normally in Dublin City - we had Auxiliaries. My memory gives an impression of about 100 men in all, but I am not prepared to vouch for the accuracy of my guess.

In the Boardroom there were, as usual, the two Auxiliaries, but there was an unusual number of warders, some of them armed. A chief warder was seated at the large table with a revolver before him. At least two other warders had revolvers slung by lanyard from the right elbow.

Just before we got in for the visit hundreds of students of U.C.D. had arrived with Fr. Albert, O.S.F.C., to recite the Rosary outside the jail. Shortly after we met Kevin we mentioned this to him. He said "If I could only see them again". I said I had been asked by Cumann na mBan to say they would be outside in the morning to pray. He said "Better not. Somebody might get shot". It suddenly crossed my mind that when Cumann na mBan marched away in the morning he, who was now talking to us, would be dead. For a moment or two I could think of nothing to say, and there was a silence. Some of the warders were crying. Kevin sat with one leg over the other. Suddenly he began to whistle "Steady boys and step together", swinging his foot to the rhythm. We all rushed into conversation of a family and personal nature. About 4.40 p.m. the Deputy Governor, Mr. Meehan, came in and said "I'm sorry, Mrs. Barry, but I'm afraid you'll have to leave now". We said goodbye. The last thing Kevin said to me was "Give my love to the boys in the Company". At the door we turned and he was standing at the salute. He wore his trench-coat that day with the collar turned up at the back, as was his habit. He had a white scarf.

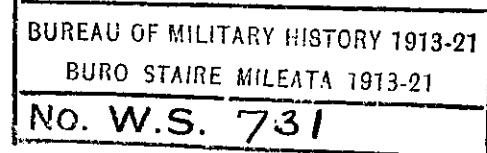
Mother was magnificent. She did not breakdown. In the corridor outside we met Canon Waters, the Chaplain. He expressed some doubt as to whether Kevin actually realised that he was to die in the morning. He could not understand his gaiety. Mother said "Canon Waters, can't you understand that my son is proud to die for the Republic"?

When we came through into the front again, the crowd of students had been joined by hundreds of citizens. Fr. Albert was still there. He asked, on the spur of the moment, to be allowed to see Kevin. This was permitted. We waited until he came out. He spoke about Kevin's joy knowing that the students were outside. Fr. Albert had asked him for a message for them. At first he demurred, then on being pressed said: "The only message ~~is~~ have is, Hold on. Stick to the Republic". These are the actual words Fr. Albert quoted. Newspaper account of "Live for the ideal for which I am about to die" are palpably literary paraphrases. News of the reprieve was all over the crowd. Strings of people asked us for information. We knew nothing, to their great disappointment. We left about 5.30.

Later we heard that this gathering formed the nucleus of a crowd which spread up and down the North Circular Road. By seven o'clock it had assumed such proportions that the British sent out armoured cars to patrol the North Circular Road. It was this crowd and the armoured cars, we were afterwards told, that caused the calling-off of the final desperate plan to breach the wall of Mountjoy and rescue Kevin by storming the jail.

(SIGNED)

KATHERINE BARRY MOLONEY.



ATTITUDE OF KEVIN BARRY AND HIS FAMILYTOWARDS REPRIEVE.

On my first visit to Mountjoy - after the Courtmartial on 20th October - when Kevin had told me about having been handed the death sentence by the British Courtmartial Officer, he said to me: "Mind, there's to be no appeal". I said: "You know we wouldn't do that". He said: "Well, I depend on you to see that nobody in the family lets me down". None of us had anything to do with appeals for reprieve, nor did we feel there would be any reprieve. We were grateful to friends and strangers who worked to that end.

On Sunday, 31st October, the eve of the execution, a mutual friend of ours and of the family of Sir James MacMahon, Under-Secretary, came in great haste to Mother to ask her to send a telegram to King George V. protesting against the execution of her son. I have not sought the permission of this friend to give any name, but we were informed that the telegram would, by special arrangement, be immediately conveyed to the British King. Mother refused, on the ground that any recognition by her of the British King would compromise her full support of the Republican Army.

(Signed) KATHERINE BARRY MOLONEY.

I - The Swear Statement of Kevin Barry.

County of the City of Dublin to wit) I Kevin  
Barry  
of 58 South Circular Road  
of ~~8 Fleet Street~~ in the County of the City  
of Dublin Medical Student aged 18 years  
and upwards solemnly and sincerely  
declare as follows:

1. On the 20th day of September 1920  
I was arrested in Upper Church Street  
in the City of Dublin by a sergeant of  
the 2nd. Duke of Wellington's Regiment  
and was brought under escort to the  
North Dublin Union now occupied by the  
military. I was brought into the  
Guardroom and searched. I was then  
removed to the defaulters' room by an  
escort with a Sergeant-Major. The latter  
and the escort belonged to the 1st Lancashire  
Fusiliers. I was then hand-cuffed.

2. About quarter of an hour after I  
was placed in the Defaulters' Room two  
Commissioned Officers came in. They both  
belonged to the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers.  
They were accompanied by three sergeants  
of the same unit. A military policeman  
who had been in the room since I  
entered it remained. One of the officers  
asked my name which I gave. He then  
asked for the names of my companions  
in the raid or attack. I refused to give  
them. He tried to persuade me to give  
the names and I persisted in refusing.  
He then sent a sergeant out of the room  
for a bayonet. When it was brought in  
the sergeant was ordered by the same  
officer to point the bayonet at my  
stomach. The same question as to the

names and addresses of my companions was repeated with the same result. The sergeant was then ordered to turn my face to the wall and point the bayonet to my back. I was so turned. The sergeant then said he would run the bayonet into me if I did not tell. The bayonet was then removed and I was turned round again.

3. The same officer then said to me that if I persisted in my attitude he would turn me out to the men in the Barrack Square and that he supposed I knew what that meant with the men in their present temper. He said nothing. He ordered the sergeants

to put me face down on the floor and push my arm. I was pushed down

on the floor after my handcuffs were removed by the sergeant who went for the bayonet. When I lay on the floor one of the sergeants knelt on the small of my back, the other two placed one foot each on my back and left shoulder and the man who knelt on me twisted my right arm, holding it by the wrist with one hand while he held my hair with other to pull back my head. The arm was twisted from the elbow joint. This continued to

the best of my judgment for five minutes. It was very painful. The first officer was standing near my feet and the officer who accompanied him was still present.

4. During the twisting of my arm the first officer continued to question me as to the names and addresses of my companions and also asked me for the

\* in office of the Royal Army Medical Corps attached  
to the Dublin Division the following morning and ~~left~~  
afterwards

for 4 or 5 days.

~~left~~

Name of my company commander or any other officer I knew.  
5. As I still persisted in refusing to answer these questions I was let get up and I was again handcuffed. A civilian came in and he repeated the questions with the same result. He informed me that if I gave all the information I knew I would get off. I was then left in the company of the military. Policeman the two officers the three sergeants and the civilian having together.

6. I could certainly identify the officer who directed the proceedings and put the questions. I am not sure of the others except the Sergeant with the bayonet. My arm was medically treated by the ~~Surgeon~~ I was visited by the Courts-martial Officer last night and he read for me the confirmation of sentence of death by hanging to be executed on Monday next and make this declaration conscientiously believing same to be true and by virtue of the Statutory Declaration Act 1835.

Declarer and Subscribed before me at Mountjoy Prison in the County of the City of Dublin this 28th day of October 1920

John L. de Neale

X Kevin O'Gara Barry X

A Justice of the Peace  
in and for the said  
County.

(Extract from THE IRISH PRESS, April 28th, 1949.)

THE PLAN TO

RESCUE

KEVIN BARRY

The Editor has received the following letter from Mr. Oscar Traynor:

"On last Thursday evening, I stated in the course of a lecture that a plan to rescue Kevin Barry, who was under sentence of death in Mountjoy Prison, 'was not agreed to by his mother, because of the possible loss of further lives'. The last eight words were omitted from the Press report.

"As I was one of the two persons who were to pose as clergymen and make the attempt, I have what I believe is a clear recollection of the answer, which was brought back by the courier who was sent to acquaint Mrs. Barry of the proposal.

"It has been conveyed to me that the courier's account differs from mine. While conceding the possibility of error, I can only state what was my own recollection of the affair.

"I do wish to state, however, with all sincerity that I had no intention of saying anything which would in any way hurt the feelings or reflect upon Mrs. Barry. Rather I was pointing out her anxiety lest other lives would be lost in what might well have been an unsuccessful attempt to save her son."

THE DAY BEFORE.

Mr. Sean O hUadhaigh, writing on behalf of Mrs.

Barry, gives the following account of the incident referred to by Mr. Oscar Traynor in his lecture:

"On Sunday, the day before the execution, a series of visits was allowed and the last was for Kevin's mother, his sister, Katherine, and his brother, Michael. They were about to leave for Mountjoy when Mr. Jack Plunkett arrived at the Barry house in Fleet Street, to say they were not to take the visit, as two officers of the I.R.A., disguised as priests, were to go in and arrangements would be made inside and out for a rescue attempt.

"My client pointed out that the visit must be asked for before a certain hour, that suspicion might be aroused if she did not avail herself of her last visit, but that she and the family were willing to abide by whatever was decided.

"Mr. Plunkett said he must report back to H.Q., and in order that they should be in time in case they were to take the visit, he arranged to meet the Barry family outside Mountjoy. They went by tram, and met Mr. Plunkett standing with his bicycle at the tram stop near the jail. He said, as they passed: 'Go ahead; there would not be time for this attempt; we'll try something else'."

Mr. O hUadhaigh adds that this account of the matter is borne out by Mr. Plunkett.

Mr. O hUadhaigh also states that our report suggests that Kevin Barry's mother was responsible for denying her son a chance of being rescued.

It was, of course, far from our intention to make any such suggestion, and we sincerely regret that

(3)

our report should have conveyed to Mrs. Barry the implication of which she complains. - Editor, I.P.7

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 731

Z/ED

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BUREO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 731

29th April, 1949.

Oscar Traynor, Esq., T.D.,  
 14 Dollymount Avenue,  
 Dollymount,  
 Dublin.

Dear Sir,

With further reference to my letter on behalf of Mrs. Barry, my client has now read what was published in the "Irish Press" on yesterday, 28th instant. She points out that you referred in the course of your lecture to "a plan to rescue Kevin Barry". As a matter of fact, there were three plans to her knowledge, in two of which the co-operation of the mother and family of the prisoner was called for and freely given. The first plan involved two of Kevin's sisters, Katherine and Elgin, who were present in the board-room at Mountjoy along with their brother and with definite duties assigned to them, at the time when the outside portion of the rescue plan was frustrated by a change in the time factor which the I.R.A. could not have foreseen, which occurrence took place on Saturday; the second plan was that which is the subject of the present correspondence, and in which Mrs. Barry, her daughter Katherine and her son Michael were willing to abandon their visit to Kevin if such were the decision of the I.R.A., this being on the Sunday, and the third plan of which she has knowledge was for later on Sunday evening and was frustrated by the new military dispositions made by the British. The Barry family had no part to play in this plan.

For your information and in view of what you say in Thursday's "Irish Press", I enclose herewith a copy

Z/ED

29th April, 1949.

Oscar Traynor, Esq., T.D.

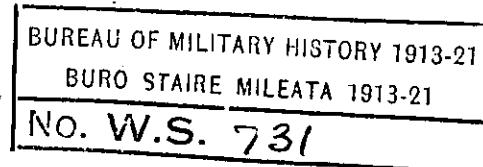
of the signed statement of Mr. Jack Plunkett, which I feel sure you will accept as being conclusive as to the facts, having regard to the liaison duties allotted to him.

I suggest that in the interests of historical accuracy you should now put the matter right in public.

As a matter of fact, I understand that Mrs. Katherine Moloney has quite an amount of information about the Saturday afternoon attempt, and could also get in contact with Captain Charlie Byrne, who was the officer sent by G.H.Q. to allot the duties to be carried out by her sister and herself.

Yours faithfully,

SEÁN Ó hUADHAIGH.



E.

## APPENDIX C.

Z/ED

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BUREO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
NO. W.S. 731

29th April, 1949.

The Editor,  
The "Irish Press", Ltd.,  
Burgh Quay,  
Dublin.

Sir,

I am surprised to find that you have not published in the proper position or in full the letter which I wrote you on behalf of Mrs. Mary Barry complaining of the false and libellous statement contained in your issue of 22nd instant. From every point of view, the publication which has taken place on 28th instant is unsatisfactory to my client. I observe that Mr. Oscar Traynor, writing to your paper, points out that a very material part of the statement made by him was omitted by you. He admits that he is open to correction in what he did actually say, and I now enclose a copy of the statement of Mr. Jack Plunkett, who was the officer of the I.R.A. actually engaged in carrying the communications between H.Q. and the Barry family, which clears up the question as to what did occur and makes it absolutely beyond doubt that the statement made by Mr. Traynor and published by you of my client was incorrect. I now demand that you publish Mr. Plunkett's statement in full and in a position in the next available issue of your newspaper corresponding to that occupied by the original offending statement.

I observe that your expression of regret is qualified by a disclaimer of any intention on your part to suggest that Kevin Barry's mother was responsible for denying her son a chance of being rescued. This,

- 2 -

The "Irish Press", Ltd.

29th April, 1949.

however, is precisely what your report did suggest, and, if Mr. Traynor's statement is correct, it was not even a correct report of his lecture.

My client has not yet had an apology for the statement published by you of her, which is now shown to be entirely without foundation, to the effect that "a plan to send in two men disguised as clergymen in an attempt to rescue him was not agreed to by his mother, and Kevin Barry was executed". This still remains to be done by you, and it ought not to require proceedings in a court of law to dictate to a respectable newspaper that a very full apology is due to the mother of an executed Irish soldier for having published such a libel about her, whose conduct as a loyal citizen of the Irish Republic, then and later, has never been open to question.

Obviously the advice which I shall give to my client with reference to her future attitude and conduct towards your paper will be to a large extent conditioned by whether or not you comply with the demand made in this letter.

Your obedient servant,

SEÁN Ó hUADHAIGH

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BÚRÓ STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 731

Z/ED

30th April, 1949.

re Mrs. Barry

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ATTENDING Mrs. Moloney on the telephone, when we arranged the form of a letter to the "Irish Press" and the form of apology, and it was arranged that I would send it off to-day.

APPENDIX C.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21  
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21  
No. W.S. 731

Z/ED

30th April, 1949.

The Editor,  
"The Irish Press", Ltd.,  
Burgh Quay,  
Dublin.

Sir,

I enclose herewith form of apology which I require you to publish in your next available issue on the front page as a condition of my client, Mrs. Mary Barry, refraining from taking any further action on foot of your libellous publication relating to her.

Your obedient servant,

SEÁN Ó HUADHAIGH.

We regret that on Friday, 22nd April, we published under the heading "Mr. Traynor on New Republicans" and the sub-heading "Kevin Barry's Gallantry" a statement concerning Mrs. Mary Barry, mother of Kevin Barry, which we now know to have been false.

We regret the pain and annoyance which the publication caused to this lady, whose conduct as a loyal citizen of the Irish Republic has never been open to question.

(Extract from the IRISH PRESS, April 30th, 1949)

THE PLANS TO RESCUE  
KEVIN BARRY

Mr. John Plunkett, writing in reference to the events which preceded the execution of Kevin Barry states:

The day before Kevin Barry's execution I was summoned to meet a member of G.H.Q. staff and a member of the Dublin Brigade Staff who were considering the possibilities of rescuing Kevin. I was sent to the Barry's house in Fleet Street to ask that Mrs. Barry would not take the visit that was arranged for her, but that the visit be reserved for two priests.

The Barrys considered that such action would be thought very suspicious by those who were guarding Kevin; they pointed out that they were just about to leave for Mountjoy to take the visit at the prescribed time and they asked me to go back and confirm either the existing arrangement or the new one for the two priests. It had been understood that I was to return and report in any case.

I went to Brigade H.Q., and after some delay was given a message that had been left with a junior officer for me. This was to the effect that the original arrangements was to be gone on with, that the Barrys were to take the visit, not the priests, as there was not time for the latter proposal, and that another attempt would be made later.

I met the Barrys as they got off the tram opposite the Mater Hospital and I gave the message to Kathy as

they passed. Mrs. Barry and Michael were a pace or two in front.

Later that evening I was instructed to prepare a charge of explosive large enough to blow a hole in the outer wall of Mountjoy. The materials were collected and I prepared the charge in a stable at the back of the North Side of Merrion Square. A number of men had been provided as guards, one at least being from the Dublin Brigade as distinct from any Headquarters unit. The assembly of the charge took some considerable time before it was quite ready a message arrived to the effect that the attempt could not be gone on with for the time being, at least. It was not gone on with.

The next day I was informed by a member of G.H.Q. staff that it had been called off on account of the fact that arrangements had been made by the British for one of the guards to shoot Kevin if any disturbance took place.

Even apart from the notification that the explosion would have given his guard, a heavy system of patrols had been located all around the jail.

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THE IRISH PRESS  
DUBLIN.

Editorial Department.

1st May 1949.

Messrs. Sean O Huadhaigh & Son,  
51, Dawson Street,  
DUBLIN.

Dear Sir,

I have received your letters in which you complain of our report of Mr. Oscar Traynor's references in his lecture to the proposed rescue of Kevin Barry.

I enclose cutting of Thursday's issue of the Irish Press in which we published your complaint on behalf of Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Barry's account of the incident, Mr. Oscar Traynor's explanation and an expression of regret on our own behalf for the annoyance caused to Mrs. Barry by our report.

In Saturday's issue (cutting enclosed) we published Mr. John Plunkett's account of the incident.

We have given our readers all the relevant information at our disposal and I do not see that there is anything more that we can do in fairness to Mrs. Barry.

The "apology" which you now ask us to publish implies that we questioned Mrs. Barry's loyalty as a citizen of the Irish Republic. That suggestion is without foundation. It also declares that Mr. Traynor made a false statement about an incident in which he took part. That is a matter on which we are not qualified to judge. We can only give the relevant information at our disposal, which we have done.

In the circumstances we cannot agree to publish the statement.

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM SWEETMAN  
EDITOR

## APPENDIX C.

Z/MF/B.95.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BUREO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 731

3rd May, 1949.

Mrs. Mary Barry,  
3, Molesworth Street,  
Dublin.

Dear Mrs. Barry,

I enclose a copy of a letter which I received yesterday from Mr. William Sweetman, the Editor of the "Irish Press", and a copy of my reply. He enclosed cuttings of the issue of Thursday in which they published our complaint, etc., and of Saturday's issue in which they published Jack Plunkett's account.

Personally, I do not think there is anything further you can do, short of taking an action for libel, which I know you would be disinclined to do and which I would be very disinclined to advise.

Yours sincerely,

SEÁN Ó hUADHAIGH

Enc. 2.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 731

Z/MF

3rd May, 1949.

William Sweetman, Esq.,  
Editor,  
The "Irish Press",  
Burgh Quay,  
Dublin.

re: Mrs. Mary Barry.

Dear Sir,

We are in receipt of yours of 1st instant and note what you say. We are conveying the contents of your letter to our client. We shall take her instructions as to the course to be pursued in consequence of your, in our opinion, unreasonable and unjustified refusal to express regret.

Yours faithfully,

SEÁN Ó hUADHAIGH & SON

Holy Cross College,  
Clonliffe,  
Dublin.

November 1st, 1920.

My dear Mrs. Barry,

Poor Kevin, your dear boy, is gone. Deep as is my own grief, I know it is as nothing to that which must fill your heart and I pray that God, Who alone can do it, will comfort and console you.

I was with Kevin to the end. At seven o'clock Father MacMahon and I went into his cell. I said Mass first and gave Kevin the Holy Viaticum. Father McMahon then said Mass and I knelt beside the poor boy, while he made his Thanksgiving. At the end of this Mass, I put him in a chair to rest, as he had been kneeling nearly an hour. I stood by him and whispered prayers into his ear, which he repeated with the greatest docility and fortitude. He made Acts of Faith, Hope, Contrition, Charity, Resignation, Forgiveness, and also said prayers to the Sacred Heart, Holy Mary, St. Joseph, Angel Guardian, St. Patrick, St. Oliver Plunkett, with the greatest fervour.

He went between Father MacMahon and myself to the scaffold with the most perfect bravery, without the slightest faltering, repeating his little ejaculations and the Sacred Name till the very last instant of his life.

His courage all the time was superhuman and rested, I am sure, on his simple goodness and innocence of conscience. He went to die as a

priest to offer a sacrifice - in all humility and submission to the Divine Will, with a full confidence that he was going into Paradise, and a hope that his death might perhaps do something to heal the wounds of his country. Kevin's thoughts, however, were on the things of Eternity.

You are the Mother, my dear Mrs. Barry, of one of the bravest and best boys I have every known, his death was one of the most holy, and your dear boy is waiting for you now, beyond the reach of sorrow or trial. This, I hope will be a consolation to you and I hope that God will strengthen you and poor Kevin's brothers and sisters. You have my deepest sympathy and prayers.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN WATERS.

P.S. Father MacMahon anointed him immediately after the bolt was drawn. I had previously given him Papal Blessing with plenary indulgence. The little book and picture which I am sending, he used in his last minutes and I told him I would give them to you.

J.W.

Holy Cross College,  
Clonliffe,  
Dublin.

3/11/20.

My dear Mrs. Barry,

I thought you would like to have an account in writing of poor Kevin's funeral, so I set down the few things there are to say.

Fr. McMahon and I were summoned to bury him at 1.30 p.m. We found the coffin already closed, fastened down, placed in the centre of a large workshop not far from the place chosen for the grave. The coffin was a plain deal coffin without breastplate or ornament whatever, but substantial looking. It was roughly painted. We began the requiem service in the workshop, and then four warders bore the remains to the graveside and they were followed by a few others. The grave was made in a little laurel plantation in the left, by the entrance gates and not far from the gate into the women's prison, a quiet spot, not likely to be desecrated or walked on, but still near enough to the highway to remind us of him and to say a prayer as we pass. The grave appeared to me to be about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep. There we laid all that was mortal of poor Kevin in blessed clay and with all Catholic prayers and rites. The warders covered in the grave and we said the De Profundis. Some half dozen soldiers who came to the door of their barrack close by and some matrons who were looking in from a neighbouring window were the only spectators. It was a sad funeral indeed, but I hope to live to see him removed from this to receive from his countrymen the

honours due to his heroic virtues.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN WATERS.

P.S. I did not see the remains but the Governor of the prison told me that his face was in no way changed except for a very slight discoloration and that beyond this there was no sign of violence.

J.W.

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