

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

No. **W.S. 1570**

ROINN



COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. **W.S.**.....1570.....

**Witness**

Dominick Molloy,  
Tolan Street,  
Ballina,  
Co. Mayo.

**Identity.**

Staff Officer, Intelligence, Mayo Brigade,  
and later North Mayo Brigade.

**Subject.**

Irish Volunteer activities, Ballina,  
Co. Mayo, 1917-1921.

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

Nil.

File No **S.2867**.....

Form B.S.M. 2

1570

ORIGINAL

I.R.B. } 1917.

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STATEMENT BY DOMINICK MOLLOY,

Tolan St., Ballina, Co. Mayo.

In May, 1918, a man named Ruane came to the Sinn Féin Hall in Ballina - in the building where Moylett's café now is. He told myself and Phelim (Alfie) Colleary that a German submarine had landed a number of rifles and dumped them in a cave on the coast near Killigalligan. Ruane was accustomed to meeting submarine crews when he was out fishing. He supplied them with fowl, water and vegetables and, maybe, poteen. He pretended to the neighbours that he was mad and spread the story that he had been told in a vision to light a fire in the open and perform certain rites thereat. These fires were signals arranged with the U. Boat Captain. The atmosphere he created had the effect of keeping the local people indoors during the periods required. Tom Ruane from Ballina, the O/C, was in Sligo jail and this other Ruane was not any relation of his. He wanted £100 for the information and for handing over the stuff. We sent John Moran and Martin Lacken of Ballina to report to Collins. They met him in a college or monastery in the suburbs of Dublin, but they had not proper credentials owing to Tom Ruane's absence and he, Collins, did not pay much attention to them or so it appeared to them.

While they were in Dublin, Fintan Murphy arrived in Ballina, having been sent by Collins on the suggestion of Dick Walsh of Balla. Ruane was staying with me. I did my best to detain him, but he was impatient to get home and had left a few hours before Fintan Murphy arrived. I told Fintan all I knew. He left and we heard no more from G.H.Q. on the matter.

On a Sunday, John Moran and Phelim (Alfie) Colleary and myself cycled to Balderrig to meet Jack Foy who was acting for Ruane from Killigalligan. We all met in the sacristy of Balderrig Roman Catholic Church and we went about three miles westward along the coast until we came to a large two storey house occupied by a family named Madden. We had some drinks there and we left for the shore, from where Foy had agreed to bring us in a currach to the cave where the arms were. When we reached the shore, as I found I had the keys of my shop in my pocket I asked Foy how long would we be and he said, "We'll be back on Wednesday". He thought the sea was too rough to venture the seven miles westward pull along the point of the cliffs. I agreed that the sea was too rough, so we decided to adjourn it to another day.

Tom Ruane came out of jail, heard the story and, accompanied by someone else, who I forget, he went to Belmullet and returned without any information.

Ruane, the boatman, knew an officer on one of the submarines. He had known him before the war in some capacity as Capt. White.

Our plan was to get the submarine to take the arms on board again and to land them near Enniscrone, from where we could take them by road to the Ox Mountains and dump them there. We got the idea from Foy that the Captain of the submarine would be prepared to re-ship the stuff and land it at Enniscrone.

We gave Ruane (boatman) £100 of my money. He disappeared and so did Foy, who was later a ganger in the Land Commission and who died in 1955.

In May, 1920, I received six cases which were consigned to me labelled TWIGS. They were brought down to my place from the railway station by a local carrier and arrived about 11 a.m. They were lying on the footpath outside my door for at least six hours, as it was a busy market day and I did not get time to take them in. I had my suspicions and sent for a few of the boys, who came along. Denis Sheerin was one. I forget who the others were. We brought them upstairs to my private dwelling and found on opening them that they contained about twenty rifles and eight or nine revolvers. They were taken away for safe storage and some of them were placed in empty coffins in a store the property of the Hewson family. These arms were later removed from Hewsons and stored in Coolican's stores, a very extensive merchant in the town. They were later distributed from there. I do not remember what district or where they went.

I took part in the ambush at Moy Lane where Sergt. Armstrong was killed, also the attack on Enniscrone Coastguard Station and the burning of Cloughane R.I.C. Barracks.

Signed: Dominick Malloy

Date: 29-1-1957

Witness: [Signature]

(Investigator).

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BÚRO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 1,570