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COSANTA.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

DOCUMENT NO. W.S. 1444

Witness

Lieut.-Colonel John P. O'Connell,  
3, Roger Casement Square,  
Cobh,  
Co. Cork.

Identity.

Captain, Cobh Company.

Subject.

Activities of Cobh Company, Irish Volunteers,  
Co. Cork, and  
4th Battalion, Cork No.1 Flying  
Column.  
1916 - 1921.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness.

Nil.

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ORIGINAL

STATEMENT BY MAJOR JOHN P. O'CONNELL,  
2 Roger Casement Square, Cobh, Co. Cork.

I was born in Cobh, Co. Cork, on 26th August, 1898. My first connection with national affairs was when I joined John Redmond's Volunteers in Cobh in 1914. When the split in the Volunteer movement came, I dropped out for a time, but rejoined the Irish Volunteer unit in Cobh in March 1915. I remember attending a Volunteer parade in Cork on 17th March 1915, with about twenty-five others from the Cobh company. A man named Maurice McCarthy was President of the company at that time.

Easter 1916:

On Easter Saturday 1916, a party of Cobh Volunteers went into Cork city. Amongst those who went were Michael Leahy, my brother Jim, Jim Fitzgerald and Paddy Whelan. Very late that night, I left home on a bicycle, and cycled into Cork where I contacted the main body of Volunteers at a hall in Sheares Street, Cork. On Easter Sunday 1916, the Volunteers were paraded by Tomás MacCurtain, and they then entrained for Macroom. A cyclist party of about thirty, of which I was one, set out for Macroom. We had reached Inniscarra when I had to return to Cork, as I was utterly exhausted, following my ride the previous night and the fact that I had got no sleep. I arrived back at the Volunteer hall in Sheares Street on Easter Sunday, and was there when the others returned from Macroom on, I think, Easter Monday. On Easter Tuesday morning, I returned home to Cobh with the other men of the Cobh company. So far as I can

recollect, we knew nothing of the Rising in Dublin until we came back to Cobh.

Reorganisation of Volunteers after 1916:

About the month of August 1916, the Cobh Volunteer company was reorganised, and I joined up. We had about forty men, with Michael Leahy as company captain. We had very little arms - perhaps a few revolvers and a rifle or two purchased from ex British soldiers, home on leave during World War I. We carried on with drilling and general training until the conscription crisis of 1918 arrived. This brought a big influx of recruits which resulted in a second company being formed in Cobh. When the conscription crisis ended, the numbers of Volunteers dwindled until eventually we were back to the one company again.

Raid on O'Keefe's Gunsmiths' Shop - Cobh:

The first item of much interest occurred in April 1918, when about six of us raided O'Keefe's gunsmiths' shop, Cobh, at night. The Volunteer hall was at the rear of the shop, and, from the yard, we got over a wall by a ladder, lifted a window of the shop and got inside. It was about 11 p.m. at the time. So far as I can remember, all we got in the way of guns were some .22 rifles and a shotgun or two. We did, however, get a fair amount of assorted ammunition. We left the house without disturbing the occupants who were asleep. Daithí O'Brien, then captain of Cobh company, was in charge. Mick Leahy, the former captain, was then the battalion (4th battalion) O/C.

Disarming of Soldiers at Carrignafoy, Cobh:

It was noted that a small military guard at

the admiralty reservoir were relieved regularly - early each morning - and Daithi O'Brien decided to disarm the party en route from the guardroom to its headquarters.

Early one morning in February 1919, about six or eight of us, a few of whom, including myself, had revolvers, waited in a gateway until the guard, consisting of an N.C.O. and three soldiers, came along. We jumped on the party, disarmed them and got safely away with their rifles. Daithi O'Brien was in charge of our group.

Disarming of Soldiers at Carrigaloe, Cobh:

In the month of October 1919, I happened to be in Cork with Daithi O'Brien and two other Cobh Volunteers, attending a hurling match. Returning to Cobh by train, we entered a railway carriage at Cork in which there were three soldiers, carrying rifles. O'Brien signed to me that we should jump the tommies at a signal from him. When the train started for Cobh, we got into conversation with the soldiers, and generally adopted a very friendly attitude, even to the extent of singing a few choruses of popular army tunes. By the time the train stopped at Carrigaloe, about two miles from Cobh, we were on the best of terms with the military. They were, therefore, taken completely by surprise when, at a sign from Daithi O'Brien, we suddenly attacked them, wrenched the rifles from their hands and, as the train stopped, jumped on to the platform, and away safely across Cobh island.

Attack on R.I.C. Barracks, Carrigtwohill:

On 3rd January 1920, Carrigtwohill R.I.C. barracks was attacked and captured by men from the Cobh

and Middleton companies under the command of Mick Leahy, O/C, 4th battalion.

On the evening of the day of the attack, I commandeered a van in Cobh - I was company quartermaster at the time - and brought Leahy, Daithi O'Brien, Tom O'Shea and three others (amongst the latter were James Aherne and Maurice Moore, both of whom lost their lives when the column was attacked at Clonmult in February, 1921) to Carrigtwohill. We were all armed with rifles, and arrived in the village about 10 p.m..

I was in a position behind a wall at the back of the barracks when the attack was opened by us, about 11 p.m. Daithi O'Brien of Cobh was with me. Mick Leahy, the O/C, and Tom O'Shea of Cobh were in a hayshed, a few yards away from me.

At the first burst of rifle fire from us, the police sent up Verey lights and returned our fire. O'Brien and I directed our aim on the loopholes in the steel shutters on the barrack windows. This went on for a considerable time, when John Moore of Cobh inserted gelignite in holes made in the gable end of the barracks, and blew a breach in the wall of the building. Diarmuid Hurley, O/C, Middleton company, and Jos Aherne of Middleton then entered the barracks through the breach, and called on the garrison to surrender. The latter came down the stairs, with their hands up. When I entered the barracks, I saw the police, numbering eight or nine, in the act of surrendering. The barracks was then entered by more of our men, and carefully searched for arms and ammunition. The rifles of the garrison, some revolvers and a large quantity of ammunition were captured, and taken to a safe destination by Volunteers

who were detailed for the job. I myself returned to Cobh early on the morning of the 4th January 1920.

Following Carrigtwohill, there was intensive raiding by police and military, with the result that Daithi O'Brien and two prominent Cobh Volunteers, named Stack, were arrested. I was appointed O/C, Cobh company, on the arrest of O'Brien. It was then about the middle of January 1920.

Attack on Military at Bunker Hill, Cobh:

Late in the month of February 1920, it was observed that a small party of military, armed with rifles, were on duty at Rushbrooke dockyard, Cobh, where an extension of the dockyard was in course of construction. I decided to ambush this party on the return journey to Cobh, and lay in wait at Bunker's Hill, on the western outskirts of Cobh, with about six or eight lads from the Cobh company. We were armed with revolvers. At about noon, a corporal and three soldiers came along on foot. We rushed them from our hiding place. I disarmed the corporal. Two of the privates were also disarmed. One soldier tried to run away, and was shot and killed by one of our lads. His rifle also was taken. We got off the road quickly, and hid the captured rifles temporarily. That night, we removed them to a safer destination.

Arrest and Imprisonment:

Some time in the middle of March 1920, my home in Cobh was raided by R.I.C. and military. I was arrested and brought to Cork gaol. I was there some time, without being tried, when I was served with an internment order and brought in a British destroyer, with other Republican prisoners, to Belfast. After

some weeks in Belfast gaol, I was put aboard a cruiser named Dunedin, and brought to Fishguard. From Fishguard, I was taken, with about twenty-five other prisoners, handcuffed in pairs to Wormwood Scrubbs, outside London.

I joined in a hungerstrike of Republican prisoners at Wormwood Scrubbs, and, after twelve days' hungerstrike, was taken to a hospital in London. I was about a month in hospital when I was released about the end of June 1920. I returned to Cobh again.

Attempt to ambush Lord French:

In the middle of July 1920, Lord French, the British Lord Lieutenant in Ireland, came to Cobh on a visit to the British admiral. Plans were laid to ambush him on his return journey to the quayside. In company with about a dozen other Volunteers, I lay in an ambush position, fairly close to the admiral's house. We had revolvers and a few grenades. Although we waited a considerable time, Lord French did not return by the expected route. Instead, he left the admiral's house by a back way and went down to a small harbour at Cushkenny, on the eastern outskirts of Cobh. From there, he boarded a launch for his destroyer out in Cobh harbour.

Following the abortive attempt on French, I left Cobh for Middleton, but left there again, for Cork city, in rather peculiar circumstances. When Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, was arrested on 12th August, amongst the papers found on him by the British authorities was a letter written to him by Jim Fitzgerald, one of the Cobh Volunteers, in which a

reference was made to my having taken part in the disarming of soldiers at Bunkers Hill, Cobh, earlier in the year. The chaplain, who was attending Terence MacSwiney in prison, got to hear of this, and sent word to some members of the Cork Volunteers who passed the information on to me. I cleared out of Middleton at once, and went into Cork where I got a job with the Cork Harbour Commissioners. James Aherne of Cobh was also with me. The date was in late September 1920.

I was in Cork when Mick Leahy, the 4th battalion O/C, was commissioned by headquarters to go to Italy to purchase arms, and it was arranged that Jim Aherne and I would follow him, when word was received that the ship with the arms was ready to leave for Ireland; Jim and I were to act as engineers on the ship during its voyage from Italy.

Leahy left Cork in December 1920, and as we had no word from him by the end of January 1921, Jim Aherne and I got fed up waiting, left Cork and joined up with the 4th battalion column, then billeted at Clonmult. It was then early in the month of February 1921.

Column attacked at Clonmult:

On Sunday evening 20th February 1921, the flying column of the 4th battalion, Cork No. 1 brigade, was surprised, surrounded and practically wiped out by British forces at a farm, known as Garrylaurence, near the village of Clonmult in East Cork. The details of the action are as follows:-

Clonmult is a small village of some dozen houses, situated about seven miles north-east of Middleton, a town about midway on the main road from Cork to Youghal.



For about five weeks prior to 20th February 1921, the column had been located in an unoccupied farmhouse which lay on the eastern slope of a gentle ridge, about six hundred yards from the village of Clonmult. The house was the usual type of farmhouse. The approach to it was by a long narrow boreen, giving entrance through a gateway into a haggard, or yard, in front of the house. This haggard, or yard, was about twenty yards by thirty, in size.

The house was a fairly long low building, with a thatched roof. It had only one door - the door on the front of the house - and it had three windows in front, and one in the rear. A bank, about four feet high, ran parallel to the rear wall of the house, and about four to six feet from it. A small outhouse adjoined each gable end of the house, but there was no direct communication to the house proper from either of these outhouses. There were a number of building - stalls and stables - in the western side of the yard, and a small isolated shed at the end of the boreen. There was a spring well at the bend of the boreen nearest the house, and a number of trees and bushes at both sides of the boreen at this spot. There were also a number of trees around the field bordering the haggard, on its western side. The surrounding country was, generally, fairly close.

The strength of the column was twenty, all ranks, and the armament consisted of seventeen rifles of various sorts - Lee Enfields and carbines - and three shotguns, fifteen revolvers of various types, six grenades, and sufficient ammunition to give about

fifty rounds per man. There was a reserve of about two hundred rounds. The O/C of the column was Diarmuid Hurley who was also O/C of the battalion, i.e., 4th battalion.

The O/C and the next two senior officers, viz., Jos. Aherne and Paddy Whelan, had left the column at Clonmult about an hour and a half before the engagement began. They had gone to select a position for an ambush at Cobh (railway) Junction on the Cork-Youghal railway line, about six miles east of Cork, and about eleven miles south of Clonmult. This ambush was planned for the following Tuesday morning, and the column was leaving Clonmult on that very Sunday, 20th February 1921, for a location nearer to the scene of the proposed ambush on Tuesday.

The mid-day meal had been served to the column at Clonmult. Packing up operations were practically completed. Sentries had unfortunately been withdrawn. Two members of the column had gone to the well to fill some water bottles. These two men had not got their rifles with them, but they did carry revolvers. The column was waiting for the local guides to lead it to the next company area, in its journey to the new location. The time was now approximately 4 p.m. One of the men happened, by chance, to look out through one of the front windows and saw some British soldiers crawling past the gateway at the far side of the breen. Almost immediately afterwards, fire was opened up on the house from practically all sides.

Although I had been but a week with the column in Clonmult, I had been placed in charge by Diarmuid

Hurley before he left, a little over an hour previously. I held a hurried council of war with three other members, and it was decided to make a sortie out. The reserve of ammunition was distributed, and also the grenades, and the column started to sing "The Soldiers' Song".

I led the sortie, carrying a rifle with fixed bayonet, and dashed, through a hail of enemy bullets, across the yard to a gateway. I turned up to the right, and was fired on by two soldiers from the corner of a field bordering the western side of the haggard. I returned the fire, wounding one; the other ran back. I turned round to look for my companions who had attempted the sortie with me, and discovered, to my astonishment, that I was alone. I went back down the boreen as far as the small isolated shed, previously referred to, but could not find anybody. From my position here, I could not see the doorway of the house, but, judging from the intensive rifle fire, I judged it would be madness to attempt to rejoin my comrades in the house. I, therefore, decided to try and get through the military cordon and secure some help locally. Circling the small shed, I went down a 'blind' boreen; near the end of this boreen, I was fired on by an officer. I fired back at him and stopped his firing. Leaving this boreen, I proceeded up a hill, along high ground over the house, and down behind it. While making this circle, I fired on two soldiers who were running in the direction of a crossroads, but without effect. I also noticed a party of five soldiers converging on the house from the north-west.

I went to two farmhouses, one in the boreen and

one at the end of it, looking for a bicycle, but without success. I then continued down the boreen and, at the road junction, met two young men who, I discovered on questioning, were local Volunteers. I queried them as to the arms in their company and their location. They told me they were kept in a farmhouse near the local graveyard, and consisted of seven or eight shotguns. I told one of them to go off immediately, get what help he could and bring the guns to that point. The other man I asked to come back up towards the house with me, to see what was happening. This man showed extreme reluctance to come with me, and finally refused to come, but went off with the other chap to collect the arms.

I then went back alone in the direction of the house, but was fired on by military going down the boreen. At that point, I turned back and was followed and fired on continuously by two soldiers who had evidently been detailed to get after me.

Another Volunteer, who had a push bicycle, then came on the scene. I did not know at the time that he was the captain of the local (Clonmult) company. He told me that the active service unit of the neighbouring North-East Cork battalion was located somewhere near the village of Ballyroe, six miles to the north, and he suggested going off and getting help from them. I agreed. This column did, in fact, get to Clonmult that evening, but too late to be of any assistance, as they had to travel on foot. When they did arrive, the engagement was over.

I continued to hover around the wooded ground near the road junction, waiting for the two messengers

to return, and dodging the attentions of the two soldiers who were following me. The messengers never came back. I did not even know where the graveyard was. Finally, I saw the thatched roof of the house, occupied by the column, ablaze. It was then about 5.30 p.m.

As to what happened in the house after I had left it, the following account was given to me by ex Lieutenant Diarmuid O'Leary, one of the two survivors of the column:

When I left the house, four others followed me. The two men closest behind me were killed by enemy rifle fire immediately outside the door. The third man reached the entrance gate, crossed the breen and went along an adjoining field, but was shot and killed, about a hundred yards away. The fourth man was called back by somebody in the house - he turned back and, luckily, got inside the house again, unscathed.

Fire was opened up on the enemy from all possible vantage points in the house. An attempt was made by the column to make a breach in the wall at one corner with a crowbar, in the hope of effecting an escape, but the British discovered this and opened fire, wounding some of the Column. Contact was made with one of the two men who, earlier on, had gone to the well for water. This man was wounded, but managed to crawl to a position at the rear of the house and spoke through the wall to members of the column.

After some time, firing was heard some distance away, in the rear of the house, and the column was considerably heartened as they thought that assistance was coming. Actually, the firing they heard was the

firing on myself by my two attendant soldiers.

Eventually, the British set fire to the thatched roof of the house, and there was nothing left but to surrender. Before this was done, all the arms were broken up and left in the burning house. The eleven members of the column then left the house, surrendered and were lined up, outside in the yard. Seven were shot in cold blood by Black and Tans, and the others would have met the same fate but for the intervention of a British military officer. The four survivors were taken away as prisoners, courtmartialled and sentenced to death. Two were executed, and the other two were saved from execution by the advent of the Truce in July 1921. These latter two men, Lieutenant Diarmuid O'Leary and ex Captain Patrick Higgins, had been wounded at Clonmult, and had only recovered from their wounds when the Truce came to save them from execution.

About a month after the fight at Clonmult, the means by which the British were able to come on the column by surprise was disclosed. An ex British soldier named Walsh had been trapping rabbits in the Clonmult area on the Saturday previous to the fatal Sunday. He saw some of the members of the column in the village of Clonmult. These, as a matter of fact, had been down to the village of Dungourney for Confession. Having located the headquarters of the column - in the farmhouse - he was travelling the road to Cork on the following day, Sunday, when he met a party of military in two lorries. Walsh's story was that they stopped him. However, he brought them right up to the crossroads junction where they left their lorries and surrounded the house. Walsh told this story after being captured by us. He confessed

that he got thirty pounds for his work. He was, of course, executed.

Another lucky break the British had at Clonmult was as follows: The two soldiers I had seen running away - on whom I fired - were evidently going for reinforcements. That is probably the reason why they did not stop to return my fire. They eventually went into Middleton on one of their lorries. Just as they reached that town, a party of Black and Tans, passing through from Youghal, were actually leaving Middleton. The two soldiers stopped them and had them diverted to Clonmult, thus considerably increasing the British forces there. Ordinarily, Middleton could not have provided more than eight or ten police as reinforcements.

In connection with the absence of any warning to the column on the sudden approach of the military on that Sunday afternoon - 20th February 1921 - I would like to record the fact that arrangements had been made to give the alarm to the column if any enemy appeared in the village of Clonmult, by the ringing of the local church bell. Precautions were not, however, taken on the other side, i.e., on the roads running northwards from Middleton. This neglect might be explained by the fact that these particular roads were ideally situated for ambushing purposes and were totally avoided by the enemy, apparently for that reason, except on this one occasion when they were guided there by the traitor, Walsh. It was also undoubtedly a big mistake to have the column sentries withdrawn that Sunday afternoon, but I would like to state here that I did not order their withdrawal.

Following the collapse of the blazing roof of the house in which the Column were trapped, and as the messengers I had sent for help had not returned, I made my way to Knockraha, a few miles distance. Later that evening, I met Diarmuid Hurley, the column O/C, Jos. Aherne and Paddy Whelan. They were returning from the scene of the proposed ambush at Cobh Junction, and had been informed, en route, of the disaster at Clonmult. The four of us returned to the tragic scene and found the bodies of our comrades laid, side by side, in a field near the house, their faces covered by canvas. Some local people had come along when the military had gone, and had collected the bodies which were subsequently interred in the Republican plot in Middleton cemetery.

The following members of the East Cork flying column were killed in Clonmult on 20th February 1921:-

James Aherne	- Cobh.
James Glavin	- Cobh.
Liam Aherne	- Middleton.
Jerry Aherne	- Middleton.
Michael Desmond	- Middleton.
David Desmond	- Middleton.
Donal Denehy	- Middleton.
Christopher O'Sullivan	- Middleton.
Michael Hallinan	- Middleton.
John Joe Joyce	- Middleton.
Joseph Morrissey	- Athlone.
Richard Hegarty	- Garryroe.

Executed in Cork Gaol.

Patrick O'Sullivan	- Cobh.
Maurice Moore	- Cobh.



Attack on troop convoy at Ballyedekin:

Following the disaster at Clonmult, the East Cork flying column might truly be said to be non-existent. Diarmuid Hurley, Jos. Ahern, Paddy Whelan and myself kept together, and, with the occasional help of a few others, had an odd crack at the enemy whenever the chance offered. One such chance worth recording occurred in the townland of Ballyedekin which is roughly seven miles from the town of Midleton, on the main Midleton-Youghal road. The date was 10th April 1921.

For some time prior to this, we had been experimenting with the making of land mines, one of which we tried out with good effect at Ballyedekin on a convoy of Cameron Highlanders. These mines were made from empty shell cases, picked up by fishermen, after being fired in practice from the British forts guarding Cork harbour, named Fort Carlisle and Fort Camden. The shell casings were filled by us with explosives, and worked with an electrically controlled detonator.

A short time prior to 10th April 1921, in company with Diarmuid Hurley, Jos. Ahern and Paddy Whelan, I was in billets in the neighbourhood of Churchtown, close to Ballyedekin when word reached us that a convoy of British troops was leaving Youghal on 10th April 1921, en route to Cork via Midleton. Hurley decided to set one of the land mines on the road at Ballyedekin, and explode it as the convoy passed. We recruited another man for the job, named Mick Kearney, an active Volunteer and later Commandant in the National Army. Mick lived in Churchtown and knew the terrain around that district (including Ballyedekin) very well.

On the morning of 10th April, we conveyed the mine to a previously selected spot on the road at Ballyedekin, and covered it with stones. Attached to the mine was a lead, about a hundred yards long. Jos. Aherne and Diarmuid were down a narrow bye-road, Jos. to press the switch which would explode the mine, and Diarmuid beside him to signal when to do so. Paddy Whelan and I, both armed with rifles, were on the same side of the main road as Jos. and Diarmuid, but about a hundred yards from where the mine lay. We were on the main roadside, on slightly high ground, and our job was to open fire on the convoy when the explosion took place, in order to cover the escape of Jos. and Diarmuid. There was no question of us having a stand-up fight with the military. We knew they would be vastly superior in numbers. Our main idea was to test out the home-made land mine.

About 4 p.m., Mick Kearney, who was concealed on high ground - but in view of us - signalled the approach of the convoy. As expected, it was a large one. It consisted, so far as I can remember, of four lorries and a few Crossley tenders, all full of military. Just as the first lorry crossed the pile of stones which concealed the mine, Jos. pressed the switch, and a terrific explosion occurred which resulted in the first lorry stopping. Paddy Whelan and I immediately opened up on the troops with our rifles, but not for long, because the soldiers in the lorries and tenders, not affected by the explosion, immediately got out on to the roadside and into the fields, advancing on our position rapidly, firing as they came. There was nothing for it but to beat a hasty retreat. In our

retreat, we were spotted by the soldiers who opened up with Lewis gun and rifles. We ran, crouching, by a furze covered ditch while the bullets whined overhead. Halting momentarily to take stock of the situation, Jos. Aherne, Paddy Whelan and I saw Diarmuid Hurley running across a field in full view of the enemy. The latter were then in an adjoining field to us, advancing in extended order in our direction, but seeing Hurley, they directed their fire on him. This gave us a welcome breathing space which we gladly availed of, to put further ground between us and the military. Eventually, we got clear, and made our way cautiously to a friendly farmhouse, a few miles away where, to our great delight, we found Diarmuid Hurley who had also escaped without a scratch.

I cannot give even an estimate of the British casualties that evening at Ballyedekin. Undoubtedly, they suffered as a result of the mine explosion, but the subsequent events occurred so quickly and were fraught with such danger to our small party that I cannot give any details of British losses on the occasion.

Death of Diarmuid Hurley:

On May 28th 1921, we lost our gallant leader, Diarmuid Hurley, in the following circumstances. A day or so prior to his death, he received information that military had shot up the town of Carrigtwohill without any action being taken by members of the local I.R.A. company. Diarmuid decided to go into Carrigtwohill and look into the matter himself. He decided to go alone, and said so to Paddy Whelan and me.

Armed with his revolver and a grenade, he

arrived at a road junction, about a mile from Midleton, when he met a patrol of R.I.C. and Black and Tans at almost point-blank range. Hurley opened fire with his revolver and flung his grenade, after which he jumped a ditch and ran across a field. He had got about a hundred yards from the enemy who opened fire on him. He fell, hit by a bullet in the back, with an exit wound in the stomach. He died where he fell. Later in the day, when the tragic news reached us, we brought his body to Churchtown, (strangely enough, the British did not capture it) where it was interred, temporarily, in a vault in the local graveyard. After the Truce of July 1921, Diarmuid's body was reinterred in the Republican plot in Midleton cemetery, with his comrades who died at Clonmult a few months earlier.

Following the death of Diarmuid Hurley, Jos. Aherne was appointed commandant of the 4th battalion, Cork No. 1 brigade, and Paddy Whelan, vice commandant.

Only about six weeks elapsed until the Truce came. During that time, there is nothing of any great interest to record. With Jos. Aherne and Paddy Whelan, I was in billets in the Ballycotton district when the Truce put an end to hostilities.

SIGNED

*J. P. Aherne (LT. - Wt)*

DATE

*19<sup>th</sup> June 1956*

WITNESS

*[Signature]*

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