

## **List of Suspected Civilian Spies Killed by the IRA, 1920-21**

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*Note about the form of entries in this database: Each of the entries in the Cork Spy Files follows the same format: (1) the name of the suspected spy, including certain variations in the forename or surname that appear in the sources; (2) the victim's age (if known, and usually as derived from the 1911 census); (3) the victim's residence if known and given without parentheses; (4) the place of death, given within parentheses; (5) the exact date of the incident, i.e., the date on which the suspected spy was killed or mortally wounded, or the date on which the victim was abducted or otherwise disappeared, though death took place on a later date; (6) the full range of our sources for each death, with abbreviations as needed, and for which a full list will soon be supplied on the website as part of a comprehensive bibliography; and (7) a note providing all valuable information about the victim available to us and considered relevant.*

### **1. Civilian Timothy A. Quinlisk** (aged about 25), (Ballyphehane, south suburb of Cork city)

Date of incident: 18 Feb. 1920 (ex-soldier executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: Death Certificate (Cork No. 1 Rural, St Finbarr's), 18 Feb. 1920; *CE*, 20, 24, 25 Feb., 4 March 1920; *CWN*, 28 Feb. 1920; *IT*, 28 Feb. 1920; WS 719 of Maurice Ford et al., 9 (BMH); Daniel McCarthy's WS 1457 (BMH); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 12-18 (BMH); Jeremiah Keating's WS 1657, 3-4 (BMH); Joseph O'Shea's WS 1675, 7-8 (BMH); O'Donoghue (1971), 166; Borgonovo (2007), 31, 76, 100 (note 71); Murphy (2010), 40; McCarthy (2012), 45-62;

<http://www.irishbrigade.eu/recruits/quinlisk.html> (accessed 27 July 2015).

Note: An ex-soldier, Quinlisk was shot in nine different places at close range; his 'head and body were literally torn with revolver bullets'. See *CE*, 20 Feb. 1920. The murder took place late at night on 18 February 1920. The body was found by a local herdsman, who notified the police; they in turn informed military officials. Soldiers then recovered the body and took it to the city morgue, where it lay unidentified for three days before burial. The death certificate was issued for an unidentified male whose body had been found at Ballyphehane with laceration of the brain and right lung resulting from bullet wounds. See Death Certificate (Cork No. 1 Rural, St Finbarr's), 18 Feb. 1920. Quinlisk claimed to have been a member of the brigade formed in Germany by Sir Roger Casement. He was well educated and spoke French and German fluently. He was a native of County Wexford. After the war he was discharged from the British army. He lived for a time in Dublin and then in Cork city. See *CE*, 24 Feb. 1920. Quinlisk comes first on John Borgonovo's list of twenty-six civilians executed as spies by the IRA in Cork city in the years 1920-21. Borgonovo indicates that Quinlisk was shot dead at Tory Top Lane, which became a place

favoured by the IRA for carrying out such executions. See Borgonovo (2007), 31, 76, 100 (note 71).

Quinlisk was an inept spy. City Volunteer leaders had quickly placed him under close surveillance and found more than enough reason to execute him. The Cork No. 1 Brigade Council agreed that he should be shot. The execution party consisted of Michael Murphy (O/C, Second Battalion), Frank Mahony (Intelligence Officer, Second Battalion), and Jimmy Walsh (a company captain in the same battalion). Murphy coldly recalled of the not-quite-dead Quinlisk, 'I then turned him over on the flat of his back and put a bullet through his forehead.' Murphy later cited some of the damning evidence against Quinlisk in his BMH witness statement: 'I might here state that on the same evening [that Quinlisk was executed], following a raid on the mails by some of our lads, one of the letters written by "Quinn" [as he called himself] in [Volunteer Albert] de Courcey's house (presumably) and addressed to the County Inspector, R.I.C., was found. In that letter Quinlisk stated that he had got in touch with a prominent I.R.A. officer (meaning me, I suppose), who told him that Mick Collins was in Clonakilty, and this Volunteer officer was to introduce Collins to Quinlisk when he (Collins) arrived back in Cork. On the morning following the execution of Quinlisk, I took all the letters and papers we had taken from him to Florrie O'Donoghue, brigade adjutant. One of these letters was addressed to the R.I.C. authorities, saying that he (Quinlisk) now had information about Michael Collins and would report again in a few days when the capture of Collins seemed imminent. . . . The Cork No. 1 Brigade Commandant Seán Hegarty got in touch with G.H.Q., Dublin, immediately following the identification of "Quinn" as Quinlisk, and word was received back from Mick Collins that Quinlisk was definitely a spy in the pay of the British, as he (Collins) had received within the past few days certain papers from a source connected with the British authorities in Dublin Castle, which included Quinlisk's application for service as a secret agent of the Castle and his acceptance as such by the Castle authorities.'

Hundreds of people went to view the body while it lay for identification purposes at the Cork city morgue for 'at least three days' under the guard of an RIC man, 'but, of course,' said Murphy, 'nobody identified him. He was then taken from the morgue by police and military and buried in the burial ground for paupers at the top of Carr's Hill, Cork.' When Quinlisk's father came from Waterford to claim the body about two weeks later, he had a confrontation with Murphy, who had been informed by the clerk of Cork poor-law union of the father's application to the workhouse authorities: 'I asked the man his name but he refused to give it to me. I said to him: "Now, Mr Quinlisk, I know you well; your son John [sic] was shot here as a spy, and you had better take him and yourself out of this town within twenty-four hours or you will meet with the same fate.'" See Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 16-18 (BMH).

According to a newspaper report, Timothy Quinlisk's father Denis Joseph Quinlisk of 5 Rose Lane, Waterford, applied to the master of Cork union workhouse for the exhumation of his son's body, buried on 21 February 1920 at Lapland (better known

as ‘Carr’s Hole’) in Cork city, so that the remains could be reinterred in Wexford, his native county. See *CE*, 4 March 1920. At the time of the 1911 census the victim’s father Denis had been an ‘acting sergeant’ in the RIC residing at 10 Cathedral Square in Waterford city. He and his wife Alice were then the parents of five children (three sons and two daughters), ranging in age from 7 to 16, all of whom were co-resident with them. Timothy Quinlisk (then aged 16) was their eldest child. The Quinlisks were Catholic.

**2. Civilian James Herlihy** (aged about 31) of [Kearny’s Lane], Cork city (Pouladuff district)

Date of incident: [?] July 1920 (ex-soldier executed as spy by IRA)

Sources: *FJ*, 23, 24 Feb. 1921; *II*, 23, 24, 25, 28 Feb. 1921; British Army World War I Pension Records, 1914-20 (WO 364, TNA); Daniel Healy’s WS 1656, 12-13 (BMH); Jeremiah Keating’s WS 1657, 6 (BMH); Patrick Collins’s WS 1707, 8 (BMH); Borgonovo (2006), 123, fn. 16; Borgonovo (2007), 81, 144; Murphy (2010), 41; O’Halpin (2013), 340.

Note: An ex-soldier, Herlihy was taken into custody as a spy by men of G Company of the Second Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade. He was ‘removed to the Pouladuff district south of the city, where he was executed by a firing squad from the company on instructions from the brigade’. James Herlihy ‘and some other civilians were known to our Intelligence Service to be in touch with the British military and to have supplied to them the names of prominent I.R.A. men in our district. We also learned that these spies had been supplied with revolvers (by the British) for their protection in case of attack by the I.R.A.’ Patrick Collins of G Company, who knew Herlihy well, had asked him on the day before he was executed ‘why he gave us away to the enemy’, and ‘he said he could give no reason why he did it, but added that he had given the military a wrong address in my own case’—a detail that Collins confirmed. See Patrick Collins’s WS 1707, 8 (BMH).

An IRA spy named Cornelius (Con) Conroy, who worked in Victoria Barracks as ‘a confidential clerk’, had fingered Herlihy as a person whom Conroy ‘knew to have given information to the military authorities regarding certain prominent I.R.A. men in our area, in which he (Herlihy) lived. On instructions from our brigade Herlihy was taken out to the Farmers Cross district and shot. His body was buried there.’ See Jeremiah Keating’s WS 1657, 6 (BMH). Conroy was of extraordinary value to the city IRA since he was in fact the ‘confidential secretary to the [British] O/C, 17th Infantry Brigade, in Cork’. Unfortunately for the IRA, in a British military raid on the house and land of Michael Bowles at Clogheen at the beginning of 1921, British forces captured correspondence and copies of orders issued to the British military that had been obtained from Conroy. As a result, ‘Conroy was discharged from his position, and we lost one of our most valuable intelligence officers.’ See Daniel Healy’s WS 1656, 12-13 (BMH).

Conroy went on the run but was eventually captured. He was among thirteen or

fourteen 'civilians' tried in late February 1921 at Victoria Barracks for 'levying war against His Majesty' and for being in possession of arms, ammunition, and explosives. In the dock with him and the other 'civilians' was self-admitted Volunteer John MacSwiney, brother of the former Lord Mayor of Cork Terence MacSwiney, who had famously died on hunger-strike in Brixton Prison on 25 October 1920. A military witness identified Conroy as one of the clerks who had worked in the office of the battalion adjutant in Victoria Barracks. The prisoners had been captured at Rahanisky House in Kilcully parish near Whitechurch earlier in the month. Mrs Mackay, in whose house most of these men were captured, testified that Conroy had a standing invitation from her to stay overnight whenever curfew restrictions made that necessary, and that she had not seen any arms or heard any seditious words from him or any of the others with him. Volunteer John MacSwiney acknowledged in court that he regularly carried a revolver for self-defence because before and since Christmas in 1920 he had 'had definite information that what were known as the murder gang of the Black and Tans were after me'. See *II*, 25 Feb. 1921. See also *FJ*, 23, 24 Feb. 1921; *II*, 23, 24 Feb. 1921. Three of the prisoners were released after the military trial concluded on 26 February, but Cornelius Conroy and nine other prisoners were remanded in custody. See *II*, 28 Feb. 1921. How many suspected spies or British intelligence officers Conroy had fingered for the IRA is unknown, but James Herlihy was hardly the only person to be killed because of information secretly supplied by Conroy to the Volunteers.

James Herlihy's slightly older brother William had also been a British soldier, having enlisted at age 28 with the Royal Irish Rifles (4th Battalion) by attestation at Cork on 6 February 1915, when his address was 14 Malachy's Lane near Gillabbey Street, Cork city. He was quickly discharged as medically unfit on 10 March (about one month later) and just as quickly he enlisted with the Royal Field Artillery Regiment by attestation on 13 April 1915, only to be discharged again on 25 June of that year, with the striking notation in his record that he was 'not likely to become an effective soldier'. This scenario was repeated yet again, when William Herlihy enlisted with the Royal Munster Fusiliers on 3 August 1915 while 'wounded', and after having refused surgery on his foot (he could not march), he was discharged for a third time on 10 December 1915 as 'unlikely to become an efficient soldier'. See British Army World War I Pension Records, 1914-20 (WO 364, TNA).

At the time of the 1911 census William Herlihy (then aged 24) and his younger brother James (aged 22) co-resided with their older sister Kate (a housekeeper aged 26) and their parents Timothy Herlihy and his wife Helena in house 11 on Kearny's Lane in Cork. The pensioner Timothy Herlihy (aged 72) and both of his sons listed themselves as cab drivers for the census-taker, and that was the occupation given by William Herlihy when joining the Royal Irish Rifles and later the Royal Field Artillery in 1915. The Herlihys were Catholic. They had known more than their share of sorrow. The mother Helena Herlihy had given birth to as many as twelve children in her forty-seven years of marriage, but in 1911 only three of them survived; then their second surviving son James was shot dead and secretly buried

by the IRA in July 1920. The ex-soldier status of both brothers increased the suspicion with which the IRA regarded them. See Patrick Collins's WS 1707, 8 (BMH).

### **3. Civilian John Crowley** of Lissagroom near Upton (Ballymurphy)

Date of incident: 10 July 1920 (ex-soldier executed as suspected spy by IRA on 24 July)

Sources: *CE*, 16 July 1920; Executions by IRA in 1920 (Military Archives, A/0535); IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0649); MSP34/REF29651 (Military Archives); Frank Neville's WS 443, 4 (BMH); Tadhg O'Sullivan's WS 792, 5 (BMH).

Note: The ex-soldier John Crowley of Lissagroom near Upton went missing on 10 July 1920, according to a newspaper notice placed by his brother Michael. See *CE*, 16 July 1921. In his BMH witness statement Frank Neville reported that John Crowley had been executed as a spy on 24 July 1920 by members of the Knockavilla Company of the Bandon Battalion of the Cork No. 3 Brigade: 'Word came out from Cork at this time that there was an ex-British soldier named Crowley in the company area who had informed on members of the [IRA] party which had ambushed the R.I.C. at Upton. For this he had got an award of £20 . . . and had been promised another like sum. He was arrested and executed.' Along with Tadhg O'Sullivan, quartermaster of the Cork No. 3 Brigade, Volunteer leaders Tom Hales, Dick Barrett, and Charlie Hurley were reportedly involved in the arrest, trial, and sentencing to death of John Crowley at Crosspound. See Tadhg O'Sullivan's WS 792, 5 (BMH). The former Volunteer John O'Sullivan declared in his pension claim that he was present at Ballymurphy at the execution of a spy—probably John Crowley—who was an ex-soldier; O'Sullivan also asserted that he had been the first to detect the spy and had reported the matter at the next meeting of his Volunteer company. See MSP34/REF29651 (Military Archives).

In 1901 John Crowley was one of the at least six children (four sons and two daughters and probably many more—see below) of the Lissagroom (Ballymurphy) agricultural labourer Daniel Crowley and his wife Mary. Five of their children (not including their son John) were co-resident with them in that year. The oldest son then at home was Andrew Crowley (aged 15). It is therefore likely that the absent John Crowley was the oldest child (or among the oldest); it is uncertain when he began serving the British crown as a soldier. According to local historian John Desmond of Bandon, John Crowley's brother Cornelius worked for the Protestant farmer Charles Harrold of Lissagroom, whose house was to be at the centre of the site of the famous Crossbarry ambush of 19 March 1921. By the time of the 1911 census Mary Crowley had become a widow and all of her children except her daughter Eliza had left the family home. Mary Crowley was by local report the mother of as many as twenty-one children—a brood known in the vicinity as the

'Crowley Thousand'. The Crowleys were all Catholic.

The victim's sister Mary (Crowley) Murphy declared in a letter (from Belrose near Upton) dated 11 April 1922 [?], 'I am sorry to say or think I had a spy belong to me. If I only knew he was one, I would have shot him myself.' Crowley had left some money deposited with the Post Office, and his sister Mary Murphy had said reasonably enough on 27 December 1921, 'I might as well have it as to leave it to the government.' See IRA Executions in 1920 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0535). According to local historian John Desmond of Bandon, Mary Murphy's husband worked as a ploughman for the Protestant Beazley family of Lissagroom, who gained unwelcome notoriety on 19 March 1921, when their farmhouse too featured prominently in the famous Crossbarry ambush laid by the IRA for British forces. Mary Murphy and her husband occupied a cottage and an acre of land at Belrose in the Upton district. The acre on which the cottage was built was once part of the substantial farm of the O'Mahonys of Belrose—the famous Cork republican family. This would help to explain her hypersensitivity on the subject of suspected spies in her family.

#### **4. Civilian James Gordon or O'Gorman** (The Rea near Knockraha)

Date of incident: [?] late July or early Aug. 1920 (ex-soldier in civvies, abducted and killed as suspected spy detective by IRA)

Sources: *II*, 5 March 1920; *FJ*, 5, 31 March, 1 April, 15 July 1920; *CE*, 12 March, 5 April, 15 July 1920; *Nenagh News*, 17 July 1920; WS 719 of Maurice Forde et al., 6-7 (BMH); Joseph O'Shea's WS 1675, 12 (BMH); *Outrages and Reprisals* (Military Archives, A/0530); MSP34/REF27648 (Military Archives); Murphy (2010), 34, 40, 64; Ó Ruairc (2016), 119; Audiotapes of Martin Corry, Denny Lynch, et al., Tape 6, OH/MC (CCCA);

<http://www.rubiconheritage.com/2014/10/29/mapping-archaeology-irelands-war-independence-case-study-knockraha-cork/> (accessed 28 March 2016).

Note: A member of the RIC before 1914 and an ex-soldier who had been wounded in the Great War, the Catholic and County Leitrim native Gordon reportedly had rejoined the RIC and in 1919-20 had been moving from one RIC station to another. It had been noted that after his arrival in different areas supporters of 'the national movement' had been shot. Having recently come to Cork city from County Tipperary, Gordon was picked up while drunk on the Cork quays after being reported to Volunteers of E Company of the First Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade by the proprietress of a public house in the vicinity. Gordon was taken into their custody, placed in a cab, and brought to the Pike, north of the city, where he was detained. An incriminating notebook found in his possession led 'the brigadier' of Cork No. 1 to sanction his execution, which was later carried out elsewhere. Before he was shot, a priest by arrangement heard his last confession. Neither the date nor the place of his execution was indicated. See WS 719 of Maurice Forde et al., 6-7 (BMH). Gordon was probably a civilian even though republican sources thought otherwise. His name appears in the Compensation Commission Register under [?]

August 1920, with the notation 'L' for acceptance of British liability, and with a note that only £34 in compensation was awarded. See Ó Ruairc (2016), 119.

Volunteer Joseph O'Shea of E Company, one of the IRA gunmen who shot Gordon or O'Gorman, recalled the circumstances many years later: 'In July 1920 I received information that a Black and Tan named James O'Gorman was in Cork city. This man was suspected of complicity in the murder [on 28 March 1920] of two I.R.A. men named Dwyer of The Ragg, near Thurles, Co. Tipperary, and it was understood that he was leaving Cork for England by boat. I received instructions to watch for this man and take him prisoner. On an evening in July, following receipt of a report from our intelligence service, I went with five others from E Company to Penrose Quay, Cork. In due course O'Gorman came along, obviously going to the Cork Steampacket Company's boat, which was sailing for England that same evening. I held him up and, with the others, put him into a motor car which we had ready nearby. He was brought to the Kilcully district north of the city, where he was kept in a house under armed guard for a few days. He was then taken by car to Knockraha in East Cork where he was executed.' See Joseph O'Shea's WS 1675, 12 (BMH).

In his IRA pension claim Edward Maloney of Knockraha, who described himself as the 'governor' of the local 'Sing Sing' prison, stated that a captured Black and Tan prisoner had been brought from Cork city by IRA men and held at Knockraha for three weeks before his execution. Maloney asserted that he had witnessed the execution of this captive, whom he claimed was the first member of the crown forces and first spy to be executed at 'Sing Sing'. In the same file with Maloney's pension claim there is a document submitted by prominent IRA member Martin Corry of Knockraha (dated 9 May 1941), briefly noting that in 1920 'Gordon [was] executed'. See MSP34/REF27648 (Military Archives). Gerard Murphy claims that Gordon was the first of numerous British spies or informers to be executed at the IRA 'Sing Sing' prison at Knockraha outside Cork city. See Murphy (2010), 34, 40, 64; <http://www.rubiconheritage.com/2014/10/29/mapping-archaeology-irelands-war-independence-case-study-knockraha-cork/> (accessed 28 March 2016). Martin Corry also mentioned the execution of Gordon at Knockraha in the audiotapes of Martin Corry, Denny Lynch, et al., Tape 6, OH/MC (CCCA).

Gordon is likely to have been the Knockraha prisoner discussed in the context of allowing some of the inmates of 'Sing Sing' to get exercise since, as they were to be executed, they would not later be able to give away the location of the prison. According to James Fitzgerald, the historian of Knockraha, 'Dave Savage of Ballinakilla was involved in exercising one prisoner who was in Sing Sing. This prisoner was an ex-member of the RIC who was involved in some of the murders after the ambush of Solohead[beg] in South Tipperary. They would allow him out in the field in the vicinity of Sing Sing to give himself some exercise.' See Fitzgerald (1977, 2005), 88.

The story of Gordon's fate had a fascinating prehistory. Some Cork republican

activists, as previously noted, connected Gordon with the military reprisals carried out by British forces leading to the deaths of Volunteers James McCarthy and Thomas Dwyer at The Ragg/Bouladuff and at the Mall in Thurles in Tipperary on 27 and 29 March 1920 respectively. These Cork city Volunteers understood the victims to have been 'the Dwyer brothers', but the John Dwyer killed at Annesgrove near Drumbane in the Thurles district on 14 July 1920 was not related in any way to the death of Thomas Dwyer. The herd John Dwyer was in fact killed in all likelihood by Volunteers as the forewarned but undeterred caretaker of evicted lands; their gentry owner had seen his residence Annesgrove House burned down by Volunteers in order to prevent its use by British troops. See *Outrages and Reprisals* (Military Archives, A/0530); *CE*, 15 July 1920. *FJ*, 15 July 1920; *Nenagh News*, 17 July 1920.

The funerals of Volunteers Dwyer and McCarthy both drew extraordinarily large crowds. Dwyer's exhibited other arresting features as well. 'The funeral yesterday of Thomas Dwyer, The Ragg,' declared the *Irish Independent* on 1 April 1920, 'was a striking manifestation of the widespread horror felt at the tragedy and an impressively eloquent tribute to the esteem he enjoyed in life. . . . In Thurles the day was observed as a general holiday, [with] hundreds of townspeople travelling to attend the obsequies. Volunteer and Cumann na mBan contingents were present in large numbers, including several cycle detachments, some of which travelled very long distances. The tricolour, draped, was universally worn. Requiem Mass was celebrated at Inch church by Rev. E. Hackett, C.C.,' Borrisoleigh. 'There was a large number of clergy in the choir. . . . At noon the funeral left for Drom cemetery, 6 miles away. For fully an hour before, contingents of Volunteers and streams of vehicles began to arrive at the church, where they were marshalled by the local Volunteers. The coffin was draped in the tricolour. Between Inch and Drom extraordinary evidences of sympathy were witnessed, blinds being drawn in the houses all along the route. As the remains passed, the people reverently knelt and prayed. A company of Volunteers preceded the hearse, while others formed a guard on either side. The procession took an hour to pass a given point and was about two miles in length. A sensation was caused two miles from Drom when it was learned that the cemetery was in the hands of military and police. This unexpected development caused much resentment. A detachment of the Northamptonshire Reg[imen]t and a small body of police under D.-I. Wilson [RIC District Inspector William Harding Wilson, killed by the IRA on 16 August 1920] had been drafted from Templemore some hours earlier and placed on guard within the cemetery. When the funeral reached Drom, the extraordinary spectacle was presented of a cemetery held by military from the inside while Volunteers controlled the approaches. . . . Military lined the walls [of Drom cemetery], a company also being drawn up along the path from the gate to the church door, while armed police stood near the grave. The Volunteers leading [the cortege] were halted opposite a section of the military while the coffin was being taken from the hearse. The coffin was then borne by Volunteers around the church grounds. As the remains passed, the military saluted. At the graveside the last prayers were recited by Rev. M. Finn, P.P., Drom. Beautiful floral wreaths were laid on the grave, which was surmounted by a large black cross

draped in the tricolour and inscribed: "Let me carry Your cross for Ireland, Lord." The Rosary having been recited in Irish, the "Last Post" was sounded while the Volunteers stood at the salute. The interment concluded, the Volunteers marched away, cyclists' contingents returned to their districts, and the people quietly dispersed, leaving the military and police in occupation of the church grounds.' See *II*, 1 April 1920. See also *FJ*, 30 March, 1 April 1920; *CE*, 30 March, 6 April 1920; *II*, 31 March, 5 April 1920; *Kerry Weekly Reporter*, 3, 10 April 1920.

What had prompted the killings of Volunteers Thomas Dwyer and James McCarthy (each aged about 29) was an IRA attack earlier in March 1920 on one of 'strong patrols of police and military' that 'went around the town of Thurles by day and night'. On Thursday, 4 March, a group of three IRA gunmen 'called into Larry Fanning's public house in The Ragg for a drink. [The Ragg or Bouladuff is a village near Thurles.] They were not long inside when two R.I.C. men named Henue [John Heanue] and Flaherty came in, apparently for refreshments also. On the spur of the moment the I.R.A. trio [Jim Stapleton, Paddy O'Brien of Silvermines, and Jim Larkin of Upperchurch] decided to attack the police and so opened fire with revolvers. Constable Flaherty managed to escape, but Henue [Heanue] was shot dead as he was trying to get inside the counter [of the pub]. . . . The shooting in The Ragg led to widespread raiding by police and military around Thurles and its neighbourhood. . . . On the night of 27.3.1920 a party of R.I.C. went to raid McCarthy's in the Mall at about 1:30 a.m. Four of this family were members of the I.R.A. One of them, Jimmy, went to open the door for the raiders, and as soon as he had done so, they shot him dead. On the succeeding night another party of masked R.I.C. men from Thurles barracks raided the house of Tom Dwyer in The Ragg and shot him dead in his bedroom in the presence of his sister, a young widow. Dwyer, who was also an I.R.A. man, had been seen talking to Stapleton and his companions a short time before the attack on the police in Fanning's pub earlier in the month. On the same night that Dwyer was shot, the R.I.C. force concerned attacked the shop and home of Richard Small [of] The Ragg. His son Mick Small, vice-commandant of the 1st Battn., was then one of the most prominent members of our brigade. The R.I.C., masked also, threw a number of bombs into the house and wrecked the front portion of the premises.' See James Leahy's WS 1454, 27-29 (BMH).

**5. Civilian John Coughlan** (aged about 46) of [Barry's Lane], Cobh/Queenstown (Aghada near Midleton)

Date of incident: 14 Aug. 1920 (abducted and committed suicide in IRA custody)  
Sources: *CC*, 7 Sept. 1920; *CCE*, 11 Sept. 1920; *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; Interview with Mick Leahy, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/108 (UCDA); Murphy (2010), 35, 41, 389 (note 19); O'Halpin (2013), 339.

Note: Coughlan allegedly hanged himself while being held in IRA custody for having allowed his daughters to be used as 'prostitutes' by members of the British forces. His body was tied to a cart axle and thrown into the sea. The IRA claimed later to have obtained evidence that Coughlan was a spy. Coughlan appeared on the list of

'missing persons' published in the *Irish Times* of 22 August 1921. There the date of his kidnapping was given as 14 August 1920. He died in IRA custody at Aghada near Midleton. It must have been Coughlan's body that washed ashore at Ballybranagan Strand, 8 miles south of Midleton, on 3 September 1920. Although the body was reportedly too decomposed for identification, the fact that it was tied to a cart axle pointed strongly to Coughlan. See *CC*, 7 Sept. 1920. His remains were buried in Knockgriffin Cemetery. The only John Coughlan listed in the 1911 census as resident in Queenstown (apart from a one-year-old baby) resided in Barry's Lane with his wife Anne, a son, and three daughters whose ages in 1920 would have been about 24, 19, and 14. Coughlan was a Catholic and a 'general labourer'.

This bizarre and ghoulish story finds its most extended explanation in an interview given by former Volunteer Michael (Mick) Leahy to Ernie O'Malley sometime in the early 1950s: 'The strangest thing about the first spy who met his death through us was that we didn't shoot him. In Cobh we arrested this fellow [John Coughlan] for using his two daughters as prostitutes for the British and we took him to Aghada and we wanted to [illegible] for a while. He was kept in May Higgins [house] in a loft and there was a girl there. She was bringing him up his breakfast when she found him hanging to a rafter, dead. We were in a [illegible] then, for he had been arrested in broad daylight, so I got 4 lads to bury him. Paddy Sullivan from Cobh, who was later executed in Cork gaol after he had been caught in [the Battle of] Clonmult, [was one of the 4 lads.] Later on, he asked me, did we see "The Examiner." And when I read it, I found that a body, which had been tied to an axle, had washed ashore on Inch Strand. The lads had not buried him. They had tied him to an old car axle and had flung him out into the sea. He was in the morgue in Midleton, I was told, in the workhouse. "Did you search his clothes," I asked. "No, but we knew his face." We visited the morgue, but at the time the bad flu was raging and the morgue was full of corpses. We went along from corpse to corpse with a flash lamp, pulling up the clothes to look for our man. At last we came to a corpse and when we pulled back the cloth, we found that the crabs had got hold of his face and that there was nothing of it left. A month later, we got evidence that this man had been a spy and that's why he hanged himself!?' See Interview with Mick Leahy, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/108 (UCDA).

#### **6. Civilian Patrick Toomey (or Twomey) of Macroom (Macroom)**

Date of incident: Sept.-Dec. 1920 [?] (executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: Interview with Daniel Corkery, O/C, Macroom Battalion, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/111 (UCDA); Brown (2007), 39; Brady (2010), 170-84;

<http://www.theauxiliaries.com/men-alphabetical/men-c/cafferata-ro/diary/cafferata-diary.html> (accessed 27 April 2016).

Note: In his diary the Macroom-based RIC Auxiliary Lieutenant Raymond Oswald Cafferata discussed the case of a cattle drover named Patrick Toomey (or Twomey) who had been shot dead in the town of Macroom as a suspected informer. In Cafferata's telling, Paddy Toomey was not only the town drunk but was also 'a bit

simple in the head, so we used to pick him up and take him to his bit of a one roomed cottage and wrap him up in a few old blankets he had and leave him to sober up. We often gave him a few bob hoping he'd buy a bit of food with it or something for his chest and lungs, which were in a dreadful state. This bit of kindness led to the rumour getting round the village that we were giving Paddy money in exchange for information as to the I.R.A. Paddy couldn't have given information on anything, let alone the I.R.A. . . . But rumour is a dangerous thing, however, however founded, and one night one of our curfew patrols heard a couple of shots and on investigation found Paddy up a dark alley face downwards with a couple of Colt .45 Automatic bullets through him. On him was pinned a small note with one word on it, "Informer"! This was the first time that any of us really realised that we were in the middle of a serious business. Poor Paddy was just a harmless old cattle drover, and here he was shot to ribbons on suspicion only.' See <http://www.theauxiliaries.com/men-alphabetical/men-c/cafferata-ro/diary/cafferata-diary.html> (accessed 27 April 2016).

This passage in the undated Cafferata diary stands in agreement with a note in one of the Ernie O'Malley Notebooks recording an interview with Daniel Corkery, O/C of the Macroom Battalion. Corkery recalled for O'Malley that two spies had been shot in the area, one of whom 'was a half fool who wanted to be in with the other crowd'. See Interview with Daniel Corkery, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/111 (UCDA). Since C Company of the Auxiliaries, to which Cafferata belonged, came to Macroom in the summer of 1920 and departed shortly after the famous Kilmichael ambush of 28 November 1920, taking the diarist Cafferata with them, we have a rough date for the killing of Toomey as sometime between September and December 1920. In all likelihood Twomey was Catholic. [Twomey's death was not reported in any newspaper. All searches, at least, have been in vain. Nor was there a military inquest. The entry must therefore be treated with some caution.]

**7. Civilian Séan or John O'Callaghan Jr** (aged about 27) of 13 Picketts Lane, Bandon Road, Cork (Farmers Cross, south of Cork city)  
Date of incident: 15 Sept. 1920 (abducted and killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: British Casualties (A/0438, Military Archives); Executions by IRA in 1920 (A/0535, Military Archives); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Interview with Connie Neenan, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA); Jeremiah Keating's WS 1657, 5-6 (BMH); Patrick Collins's WS 1707, 9 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 51, 76, 100 (note 71), 165, 168, 169-70, 174, 179; Murphy (2010), 41; Ó Ruairc (2016), 119.

Note: A civilian clerk in Victoria Barracks, O'Callaghan was overheard in mid-September 1920 talking by telephone and giving information about the IRA to Captain Campbell Kelly, the intelligence officer of the British Sixth Division based at the barracks. A young woman working in the local telephone exchange heard their conversation and quickly alerted the IRA, whose members reportedly shot O'Callaghan dead later the same day. See Interview with Connie Neenan, Ernie

O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA). Séan Hegarty, vice-commandant of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, gave the order for the execution of O'Callaghan, which was carried out by Volunteers Jeremiah Keating, Patrick Collins, and John O'Connell. They took him 'to the Thomas Ashe Hall on Father Mathew Quay, where he was detained until about three o'clock in the afternoon. When we were bringing him out to a car outside the door of the hall, he made a bid to escape but was chased and tripped up by one of our lads. We then got him into the car and took him out the country to the Farmers Cross district, where he was shot and his body buried.' See Jeremiah Keating's WS 1657, 5-6 (BMH).

O'Callaghan appears on a list of twenty-six civilians killed by the Cork city IRA in 1920-21. His name is given in the Compensation Commission Register under 17 September 1920, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £950 in compensation was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). John O'Callaghan Jr was in 1911 one of the four living children (five born) of the Cork city groom John O'Callaghan Sr and his wife Mary of 13 Picketts Lane. These children (a daughter and three sons) were all co-resident with their parents in that year. John O'Callaghan Jr (then aged 17) listed his occupation as 'machine boy' for the census-taker. The O'Callaghans were Catholic.

**8. Civilian John Hawkes, alias 'James Mahony'** (aged 26) of 3 O'Leary's Lane, off Barrack Street, Cork city (Skibbereen workhouse grounds/Coolnagarrane)  
Date of incident: 13 Oct. 1920 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: Death Certificate (Skibbereen District, Union of Skibbereen), 13 Oct. 1920; Civil Registration of Deaths Index, 1864-1958, Skibbereen District, vol. 5, p. 317 (FHL Film No. 0101608); *CE*, 14, 15 Oct., 15 Nov. 1920, 29 June 1921; *IT*, 14, 15 Oct. 1920; *CCE*, 14, 23 Oct., 20 Nov. 1920; *SS*, 16 Oct. 1920; *II*, 20 Oct. 1920; *CWN*, 13 Nov. 1920; British Army World War I Service Records, 1914-20 (TNA); British Army World War I Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-20 (Ancestry.com); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Oct. 1920 (CO 904/113, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Edward Young's WS 1402, 12 (BMH); Daniel C. Kelly's WS 1590, 5 (BMH); Jeremiah Keating's WS 1657, 7 (BMH); Dolan (2011), 25; Ó Ruairc (2016), 119.

Note: A masked man (no doubt a Volunteer) confronted 'James Mahony' on 13 October 1920 as he was about to leave Skibbereen workhouse, where he had stayed overnight. At the military inquiry into this death an eyewitness to the murder, the acting workhouse porter James Warner, testified: 'Mahony ran into the porter's box. . . . Both men [the victim and his assailant] struggled in the box, and Mahony asked for mercy, but the armed man said, "No; I will shoot you." Witness asked for mercy for the man, but the armed man threatened that if he interfered, he would be shot. Mahony's assailant overpowered him and dragged him a distance of ten yards out of the box and fired three shots at him with a revolver. The assailant then went away,

he could not say in what direction.' See *CE*, 15 Oct. 1920. At least one of these shots struck the victim in the head. See Death Certificate (Skibbereen District, Union of Skibbereen), 13 Oct. 1920.

Mahony was not the victim's real name. At the inquest the executed man was said to be John Hawkes, an itinerant watchmaker and tinsmith. According to a statement given to the authorities, Hawkes 'was kidnapped by Sinn Feiners and kept a prisoner by them for over six weeks'. He told how he had been taken into the custody of Volunteer police after he got into a heated conversation in Dunmanway about some watches he had sold earlier. After his escape from the Volunteers on 24 July 1920, he had indeed spent time at the Bantry RIC barracks. After several days with the Bantry police Hawkes 'was transferred to the military barracks at Bantry, where he was allowed to remain for some weeks for his own personal safety, for it was known that his persecutors were hunting for him because he had taken the protection of the police'. See *CE*, 15 Nov. 1920. Though advised by the police not to tramp back to Cork city, he set out to do so, with the fatal overnight stop in the Skibbereen workhouse on 12-13 October.

According to the BMH witness statement of Jeremiah Keating, it was the interception of a letter from Hawkes to his mother in Cork city that had first led to suspicions by the IRA that he was a spy. See Jeremiah Keating's WS 1657, 7 (BMH). In addition, when Hawkes escaped from IRA custody, he 'apparently gave the names of those who had arrested [him] and held him prisoner to the British, as there were wholesale raids following his escape'. See Edward Young's WS 1402, 12 (BMH). Hawkes had previously served in the Royal Munster Fusiliers in France but had been discharged in April 1915, according to his mother, 'because he got a bad cold in the trenches' and had been declared 'unfit for further duty'. See *CE*, 29 June 1921. His name appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 13 October 1920, with the notation 'British supporter', and with the note that £300 in compensation was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

The wartime and immediate post-war period in the tragic life of John Hawkes suggest that he suffered from serious mental problems. Born into poverty at or near Kinsale in about 1894, Hawkes found himself in the Bandon union workhouse in Ballymodan at the age of about 6 with his mother Margaret (a labourer's wife) and his older sister Mary (Minnie) at the time of the 1901 census. He later established a chequered record of British military service. After working as a farm labourer in the Kinsale district, he enlisted (for six years) at the age of 18 in the Royal Munster Fusiliers (RMF) by making the required attestation in Cork city on 17 February 1912. He then entered service with the RMF (2nd Battalion), first at a post in Ireland until 6 October 1914, and next briefly abroad as part of the British Expeditionary Force to France. But he was sent back to Britain on 28 November (less than two months later) and immediately admitted to the 2nd Northern General Hospital in Leeds. Doctors at a hospital in Boulogne had determined that Hawkes suffered from

a 'mental deficiency'; he had been invalided to Leeds, where he was detained in hospital until late January 1915. He subsequently obtained his discharge on 14 April of that year as 'no longer physically fit for war service' and returned home. Later still, after the Great War had ended, he re-enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) on 25 November 1919. This re-enlistment was supposed to last from two to four years 'with the colours'; at this point Hawkes gave his age as almost 24 (not quite correctly) and his occupation as watchmaker. But he was again discharged—on 23 December 1919—after having served for less than a month. He was nevertheless the recipient of the British Army Service Medal and the Victory Medal, which were received posthumously by his mother in October 1921. In between his service with the RMF and later with the RAMC, Hawkes was in desperate straits. In late August 1918 he lodged an unsuccessful appeal with the local War Pensions Committee in Cork city, noting that he had been 'awarded a pension of 8d. a day for 18 months final [*sic*] & his period expired some time ago. He states that if he could obtain a pair of spectacles, he would be employed at once as a watchmaker. He has no home and no money and will have to go to the workhouse if his appeal fails.' See Lieutenant White to Colonel Pickwood, 23 Aug. 1918, British Army World War I Service Records, 1914-20 (TNA); British Army World War I Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-20 (Ancestry.com).

In 1911 Margaret Hawkes, the victim's mother, lived with her daughter Mary (a laundry worker) at house 4.1 in Crowley's Lane (off Bandon Road) in Cork city. She listed herself as married (for twenty years) rather than as a widow, but both her husband and her son John resided elsewhere. At the time of her son's death in October 1920 his address and hers was 3 O'Leary's Lane (off Barrack Street), Cork. John Hawkes, his mother, and his sister Mary were Catholic.

**9. Civilian Joseph Cotter** (aged about 29) of [99 Hibernian Buildings], Cork city (Boreenmanna, Cork city)

Date of incident: 13 Oct. 1920 (possibly abducted and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: Death Certificate, 13 Oct. 1920; *CE*, 16 Oct. 1920.

Note: Cotter's body was discovered on 15 October 1920 in a disused quarry in the eastern suburbs of Cork city between the Ballinlough and Boreenmanna Roads; he had been missing for two days. He had several wounds on his face, head, and neck. After the onset of curfew on 13 October, a soldier had fired a shot at residents, and Cotter may have run to the vicinity of the quarry in order to avoid curfew patrols. Aged about 29, he worked as a clerk for the Royal Army Service Corps in Victoria Barracks—a position that exposed him to suspicions of spying. See *CE*, 16 Oct. 1920. Evidence given at a subsequent military court of inquiry and submitted to the coroner indicated that Cotter had suffered a fracture at the base of his skull after falling accidentally (perhaps) over the edge of the quarry, and that the place of death was Boreenmanna. See Death Certificate, 13 Oct. 1920. Joseph Cotter was one of the seven living children (eleven born) of the widowed Margaret Cotter. Of the five

children who resided with her in 1911, two daughters were bookstall clerks and a third daughter was a dressmaker; one resident son was a printer/compositor, and the other—Joseph Cotter—was listed as a clerk. He and all his family were Catholics.

**10. Civilian Thomas Downing** (aged about 39) of Castlevue Terrace, Lower Road, Cork (The Rea near Knockraha)

Date of incident: 23 Nov. 1920 (ex-soldier abducted and later killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 27 Nov. 1920; *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; Executions by IRA in 1920 (Military Archives, A/0535); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Hart (1998), 299; Borgonovo (2007), 28, 100 (note 71); Murphy (2010), 41, 91-93; Ó Ruairc (2016), 119.

Note: Ex-soldier Downing 'was kidnapped while going to a Discharged Soldiers' and Sailors' meeting on last Tuesday [23 November 1920]'. Immediately after his disappearance the following notice was circulated in Cork: 'KIDNAPPING IN CORK. NOTICE. If Mr Downey [*sic*] is not returned to his home within 56 hours, Cork citizens prepare, especially Sinn Feiners. Black and Tans.' The anti-IRA notices that circulated about Downing in Cork city after his abduction suggest that he did have a connection with the police and/or the Black and Tans. The same issue of the *Cork Examiner* that reported his kidnapping and the threat of reprisal also contained accounts of a second big bomb explosion in the city (killing two and wounding one) and a further series of fires and explosions in the early hours of 27 November 1920—'the fifth outbreak of fire' that week. The reporter noted: 'Residents around the centre of the city had to go through a terrible ordeal. The frequent explosions reverberated with an appalling message.' See *CE*, 27 Nov. 1920. The Auxiliaries and the city IRA were escalating their murderous conflict. Although Downing's name was to appear nine months later on a list of 'missing persons', he was executed as a spy by city Volunteers on 28 November 1920. He worked as a civilian telegrapher or 'telegraphonist' for the Royal Engineers at Victoria Barracks—a position that almost automatically brought him under suspicion by the IRA. See Executions by IRA in 1920 (Military Archives, A/0535); Borgonovo (2007), 100 (note 71); Murphy (2010), 91-93. According to Peter Hart, Downing was also the head of the ex-British servicemen's association in the city. See Hart (1998), 299.

Downing was listed in the 1911 census as a 'telegraphist' at the Post Office in Cork city. He was then one of the boarders in a large house at 6 Wellington Terrace in Cork city. The boarding house was operated by the railway policeman William Sharpe and his wife Mary. The members of the Sharpe family belonged to the Church of Ireland, but Thomas Downing was a Catholic. His name appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 24 November 1920, with the notation that British liability was accepted. His wife Bridget (Bride) Downing was awarded compensation of £750 for her husband's death, and the children were awarded £1,250, or a total of £2,000 altogether. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**11. Civilian Brady** (Tory Top Lane, Cork city)

Date of incident: ca. 23 Nov. 1920 (executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: Charles Browne's WS 873, 25-26 (BMH); Browne, *History of the 7th [Battalion]* (2007), 41; Murphy (2010), 40; Ó hÉalaithe (2014), 141, 351.

Note: A native of Dublin, Brady was working as a printer in Macroom when he came under suspicion as a possible enemy agent. He spent one night in September 1920 'drinking with Auxiliaries at the Market Bar [in Macroom] and was overheard by the proprietor, Mr Shields, and two recently resigned R.I.C. men, brothers named Vaughan, giving information that Barret[t]'s house in the South Square was being used by the I.R.A. as a billet. . . . Brady was arrested by us, convicted after a trial, and deported from the country. He returned after some weeks and again made contact with the enemy, this time at Union Quay Barracks, Cork. He was shadowed one night as he left this post and was shot dead at Torytop Lane.' Charlie Browne, the adjutant of the Macroom Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, provided the foregoing report on Brady in his BMH witness statement. See Charles Browne's WS 873, 25-26 (BMH).

In his memoirs former Volunteer Jamie Moynihan related how the Black and Tans involved in the killing of Volunteer Christopher Lucey on 10 November 1920 had returned to Macroom and begun to celebrate in the Market Bar that evening: 'They were toasting one man in particular, and he described in detail how he had taken aim and fired the fatal shot. The barman, an ex-RIC man named Vaughan, was able to identify the man, and he informed the Macroom Volunteer officers. All companies in mid-Cork and city were notified about his man, and a few weeks later he was again identified by Volunteers in Cork city when he signed his name to a docket when ordering military supplies. When he returned to collect his order, he was taken prisoner and executed.' See Ó hÉalaithe (2014), 141. The book adds (p. 351) that this Macroom-based informer had first been deported to England; he later returned to Cork city and was shot dead on Tory Top Lane in November.

The two stories seem to be related but do not align factually. It is possible that Brady was one of a number of persons who were 'disappeared' in this area, as there was no evidence of a body. Despite the seeming certainty of these two sources about Brady's execution, it has proved impossible to find confirming evidence about Brady's fate in a death certificate, a police document, or any newspaper reference. Nor can he be identified in the 1911 census. The entry must therefore be treated with some caution.

**12. Civilian James Blemens** (aged about 55) of Blackrock (possibly Carroll's Bogs on southern outskirts of Cork city)

Date of incident: 29 Nov. 1920 (abducted and later killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *II*, 1 Dec. 1920; *CE*, 2 Dec. 1920; Executions by IRA in 1920 (Military Archives, A/0535); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private

Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 33 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 28-33, 52, 92, 100, 168, 171-73, 179; Murphy (2010), 41.

Note: A horticultural instructor with the Cork County Agricultural and Technical Committee, Blemens was abducted from his home on Blackrock Road in Cork city by armed men at about 7 p.m. on 29 November 1920. His son Frederick had been 'reported missing earlier in the day'. See *II*, 1 Dec. 1920. They were both executed as spies on 2 December after having been tried and convicted by members of the Cork No. 1 Brigade of the IRA. The city IRA believed that Blemens and his son Frederick were among the most active members of a pro-British body often styled the 'Anti-Sinn Féin Society' that was supposedly based at the city Y.M.C.A. James and Frederick Blemens appeared on the list of 'missing persons' published in the *Irish Times* of 22 August 1921. The date of their kidnapping was given there correctly as 29 November 1920. According to city Volunteer leader Michael Murphy, the IRA abducted James Blemens and his son Frederick and executed both of them 'as members of the senior spy section in the [city] Y.M.C.A. Their names were given to me by [a youth named William] Parsons. We also had information about them from letters captured by our lads in raids on postmen for mails.' See Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 33 (BMH). James Blemens was an Anglican. His name appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 29 November 1920, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £3,000 in compensation was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**13. Civilian Frederick Blemens** (aged about 30) of Blackrock (possibly Carroll's Bogs on southern outskirts of Cork city)

Date of incident: 29 Nov. 1920 (abducted and later killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *II*, 1 Dec. 1920; *CE*, 2 Dec. 1920; Executions by IRA in 1920 (Military Archives, A/0535); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 33 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 28-33, 52, 92, 100, 168, 171-73, 179; Murphy (2010), 41; Ó Ruairc (2016), 119.

Note: Like his father, Frederick Blemens was considered by the city IRA to be among the most active members of a pro-British body often styled the 'Anti-Sinn Féin Society' that was supposedly based at the city Y.M.C.A. At the time of the 1911 census Frederick Blemens and his younger brother James were employed as grocer's clerks. In addition to the young James Blemens (called James S. in the family), the survivors in the immediate family included their now widowed mother Elizabeth Blemens, her daughter Matilda, and three other siblings of Frederick Blemens. In 1911 they resided at house 61 at Knockrea in Blackrock. The name of Frederick Blemens appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 2 December 1920, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £3,000 was awarded. See Ó Ruairc (2016), 119. Frederick Blemens was an Anglican.

The burial place of Frederick Blemens and his father James Blemens is unknown.

But in a interview with Ernie OMalley about three decades later, the former city Volunteer leader Michael (Mick) Murphy discussed the alleged spying activities of the Blemenses and their relative James Charles Beal (abducted on 14 February 1921)—all three executed as informers supposedly connected by the IRA with the Cork city Y.M.C.A. Right after mentioning these three men in his interview with O'Malley, Murphy declared: 'We buried the bodies in Carroll's bogs; every spy who was shot in Cork [obviously a great exaggeration] was buried so that nothing was known about them. They just disappeared.' See Interview with Michael (Mick) Murphy, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA). Carroll's Bog or Tramore Marsh is not far from the home of James and Frederick Blemens in Blackrock, where or near where the IRA had abducted them. Once the site of the Cork city landfill, Carroll's Bog lies near 'the junction of the Tramore River and Trabeg stream along the south east boundary' of the city. See <http://www.vernonmountpark.ie/history-valley.php> (accessed 10 May 2016).

**14. Civilian George Horgan** (aged about 20) of Mathew Place, Ballintemple, Cork city (Lakelands, Blackrock)

Date of incident: 9 Dec. 1920 (abducted and killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CE*, 10, 14 Dec. 1920; *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; Executions by IRA in 1920 (Military Archives, A/0535 and A/0649); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Borgonovo (2007), 29, 100 (note 71); Murphy (2010), 41, 92, 94; Ó Ruairc (2016), 119.

Note: A working-class Protestant, Horgan was abducted from his residence at Mathew Place in Ballintemple by the city IRA on 9 December 1920. The IRA executed him the same day for espionage on a farm at Lakelands in Blackrock. The next day persons claiming to be Black and Tans published notices with the following threat: 'If G. Horgan is not returned by 4 o'clock on to-day (Friday), 10th December, rebels of Cork, beware, as one man and one shop shall disappear for each hour after the given time. (Signed) "B's and T's."' See *CE*, 10 Dec. 1920. Horgan's disappearance was in fact one of five that led to similar notices on the streets and in the newspapers from the 'Anti-Sinn Féin League'. Thus in Horgan's case connections with the police and/or the Black and Tans seem likely. What makes them appear even more likely is that Horgan's father had served in the RIC, and Horgan himself had been a member of the Royal Army Service Corps. Borgonovo lists Horgan among the twenty-six alleged spies executed by the city IRA in 1920 and 1921. After much of Cork city was in fact burned on 11-12 December 1920 (with the Auxiliaries of K Company especially prominent among the arsonists), another notice appeared stating that the earlier one containing the threat to burn one shop for every hour that passed after 4 o'clock on 10 December had been bogus. This new notice came, so the document itself claimed, from 'a deputation of Cork police, including Auxiliary R.I.C.'. See *CE*, 14 Dec. 1920.

The only Protestant named George Horgan residing anywhere in Cork city or its suburbs in 1911 was one of the eight children (including three co-resident sons) of

the widowed butter-factory worker Anna Horgan of Ballintemple in Blackrock. Anna Horgan and her three sons, including George Horgan, were adherents of the Church of Ireland.

Anna Horgan of Ballintemple later sought compensation for the death of her son George at the hands of the IRA. A widow for the previous eighteen years when the Recorder of Cork heard her claim in January 1922, she testified that she had three sons—Denis, James, and George. ‘The three joined the army at the outbreak of war. Denis was invalided [home] and subsequently died, [with] George and his brother [James] serving during the war. On the 9th December [1920], at 5 o’clock in the morning, a number of armed men knocked up the household, and George Horgan was called for. He came down the stairs and in reply to their questions said that he was George Horgan and asked them what they wanted. They told him to dress and he did so. The household by this time was roused, and applicant [Anna Horgan] got into a great state of distress. He went to her to comfort her and told his brother James not to appear lest anything should happen [to] him. The men searched the house, and when they had finished dressing, they took him to the kitchen, searched his pockets, and took him away. Before going, he appealed to his mother not to worry, that he would be all right, and bade her good-bye. From that day to this he had not been seen or heard of, though the utmost inquiries were made through all sources. As an ex-soldier when he entered civilian employment, he was on friendly terms with the military and police, and used frequently [to] speak to them, many of them being friends he met during his service.’ The kidnappers were ‘armed and disguised’ as they took away her son George, whose age she gave as 21. The Recorder of Cork awarded £900 to Anna Horgan. See *CE*, 13 Jan. 1922. The name of George Horgan appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 9 December 1920, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £900 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

### **15. Civilian Denis (Dinny) Lehane** (Knockraha)

Date of incident: sometime in 1920 (abducted and later executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: Interview with Michael (Mick) Leahy, Ernie O’Malley Notebooks, P17b/108 (UCDA); Michael Leahy’s WS 1421, 34-35 (BMH); Herlihy (1999), 261.

Note: The former East Cork Volunteer leader Mick Leahy, who worked in close association with the notorious Martin Corry (Leahy called Corry the ‘chief executioner’ around Knockraha), claimed that the first person whom he had personally executed was ‘an R.I.C. man named Dinny Lehane’. An individual with this name had enlisted in the RIC in 1907. See Herlihy (1999), 261. But the absence of any public record of this death suggests that it is more likely that Lehane was an RIC agent rather than a regular policeman. According to Mick Leahy’s interview with Ernie O’Malley, Lehane was in the company of an armed RIC escort on a barge that travelled from Cork city down the River Lee to Hawlbowlane for supplies. A

Volunteer in civvies who had gotten aboard the barge on a pretense reportedly witnessed Lehane 'making a bee line to get away' after an RIC lookout on duty had fallen asleep. The Volunteer 'collared him [Lehane and] then sent up for some of the boys. They found papers . . . ; he was an R.I.C. man and had a list of men who were on the run whom he was spotting.' Firmly convinced that Lehane belonged to the RIC [very unlikely], the IRA took him as a prisoner to Knockraha. After a court-martial he was sentenced to death by firing squad, but in the end Lehane was shot and killed by Volunteer Edward Moloney, the so-called 'governor' of 'Sing Sing'. Lehane had told his IRA captors that he was not a Catholic, but on the edge of eternity he asked to see a priest. Mick Leahy replied that it was too late, but he did say the Act of Contrition for Lehane and had him repeat it after him. 'Then we all knelt down and said the Rosary before we shot him.' See Interview with Michael (Mick) Leahy, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/108 (UCDA).

Former IRA leader Michael (Mick) Leahy had served as captain of the Cobh Company and had played an instrumental role in organising the Knockraha and other Volunteer companies in East Cork. He went on to become first the O/C of the Fourth (Midleton) Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade and then vice-commandant of the Cork No. 1 Brigade itself in succession to Lord Mayor of Cork Terence MacSwiney, who had died after a long hunger-strike in Brixton Prison on 25 October 1920. Leahy was gone from Ireland from the beginning of January until late June 1921. This circumstance makes it most likely that the execution of Lehane occurred before January 1921. See Michael Leahy's WS 1421, 34-35 (BMH). Lehane was probably a Catholic.

**16. Civilian Daniel Lucey** (aged about 23) of Macroom (Kilcorney area near Millstreet)

Date of incident: 20 Jan. 1921 (kidnapped and later killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Matthew Kelleher's WS 1319, 7-8 (BMH); Edward Neville's WS 1665, 4-5 (BMH); Interview with Charlie Brown, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA); Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: Daniel Lucey appeared on the list of 'missing persons' published in the *Irish Times* of 22 August 1921. The date of his kidnapping was given there as 20 January 1921. According to Edward Neville's BMH witness statement, Lucey 'was visited by two men [i.e., Volunteers] from Donoughmore area disguised as British officers. He was asked if he had seen any of "the boys"—meaning I.R.A. men—lately. He gave his questioners all the information he had, while, with some other men from Rusheen Company, I waited outside the door. He was taken prisoner on the spot and was held prisoner for about a fortnight, during which time he was tried by the brigade staff and sentenced to death. He was executed after a fair trial in Kilcorney area, Millstreet Battalion, Cork II Brigade.' See Edward Neville's WS 1665, 4-5 (BMH). Matthew Kelleher, a native of Kilcorney and an officer (second lieutenant) of the local Volunteer company, recalled that members of the Macroom Battalion of the

Cork No. 1 Brigade had placed Lucey in the custody of the Kilcorney Company towards the end of February 1921, and that 'he was held prisoner in the area for about a week before he was tried as a spy and executed'. See Matthew Kelleher's WS 1319, 7-8 (BMH).

Macroom Volunteer leader Charlie Brown also recalled this episode and the victim's background: 'Lucey, who was of good family, was married and his brother was a priest. He was of violent temper and he was quarrelsome in disposition. He had fallen out with a few Volunteers in Ballinagree [Ballynagree]. He was seen talking to the Auxies in Macroom, so the lads sent a party of men dressed in British uniforms to his house and he told them about the local lads, so they took him north of Musherah, where they shot him and buried him.' See Interview with Charlie Brown, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA).

Daniel Lucey was in 1911 one of the ten children of the Macroom agricultural labourer James Lucey and his wife Ellen of 5 Bridewell Lane. Co-residing with them in that year were one daughter and six sons ranging in age from 3 to 19. Daniel Lucey (then aged 13) was the second oldest son living at home. His name appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 21 January 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £1,400 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**17. Civilian Denis (Michael) Dwyer** (aged 23) of Castletown-Kinneigh (Farranalough, Murragh parish)

Date of incident: 21 Jan. 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *II*, 24, 26 Jan. 1921; *FJ*, 24, 26 Jan. 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/149A/70 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Jan. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); MSPC/RO/56 (Military Archives); Denis Lordan's WS 470, 13 (BMH); William Norris's WS 595, 5 (BMH); Denis Collins's WS 827, 9-10 (BMH); William Desmond's WS 832, 28 (BMH); Michael Coleman's WS 1254, 10-11 (BMH); William McCarthy's WS 1255, 1 (BMH); Seán Murphy's WS 1445, 10 (BMH); William Foley's WS 1560, 7 (BMH); Charles O'Donoghue's WS 1607, 6 (BMH); Daniel Canty's WS 1619, 23 (BMH); Michael Riordan's WS 1638, 19 (BMH); Barry (1949, 1989), 107-9; Fitzgerald (2012), 185-86; Ó Ruairc (2016), 119.

Note: Dwyer's body was found at Farranalough, about 4 miles north-west of Bandon. He had been executed, with two bullet holes in the head. 'Pinned on his clothes was a label bearing the words "Convicted Spy".' See *II*, 24 Jan. 1921. He was 23 years old, a resident of Castletown-Kinneigh, and an ex-soldier. He had been wounded while serving as a British soldier in the Great War and suffered from a withered arm, an affliction that aided the authorities in the identification of his body. See Military Inquests, WO 35/149A/70 (TNA).

An eyewitness account of the Dwyer's unmasking survives in the BMH witness statement of Denis Lordan, quartermaster of the Flying Column of the West Cork Brigade: 'At a point on the Bandon-Dunmanway Road near Pallas-Ann, the . . . [IRA] officers came on an individual who apparently was waiting on the roadside for someone. On seeing them, this man approached, and on being questioned by the officer commanding the column, it became evident that he mistook the party for British Auxiliaries, for whom he apparently had been waiting. He started to give information in connection with the movements of certain I.R.A. officers and of the times and places where they could be most easily captured, and promised further information and assistance in return for money. At this stage the Brigade Adjutant [Liam Deasy], who was known by sight to the individual, was brought over as if a prisoner, and as soon as the spy recognised him, he suggested that he, the Brigade Adjutant, should be shot at once. . . . At this stage the spy was informed that he was under arrest. On the following day he was courtmartialled, found guilty of espionage, and sentenced to be shot. A clergyman was procured to give spiritual aid to the spy before his execution. From previous occurrences it was evident that this [man], whose name was Denis Dwyer of Castletownkenna and who was a British ex-soldier, had been a source of much information to the British. After his execution certain districts in the Castletownkenna area, which had been previously subject to intensive raids whenever I.R.A. officers were in the vicinity, were rarely or ever visited by British forces.' See Denis Lordan's WS 470, 13 (BMH). In his IRA pension claim former Volunteer Daniel Hourihan of Gurlough claimed to have been involved in the execution of a spy at Ballineen—probably Dwyer. See MSPC/RO/56 (Military Archives).

Michael (or Denis) Dwyer was in 1911 the youngest of the three sons of the Castletown-Kinneigh agricultural labourer Patrick Dwyer and his wife Bridget. The Dwyers were Catholic. The name of Michael Dwyer appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 21 January 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £1,600 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**18. Civilian Daniel Lynch** (aged about 26) of Callatrim near Bandon (near Killeady quarry in Ballinhassig district)

Date of incident: 21 or 22 Jan. 1921 (executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: William Norris's WS 595, 4 (BMH); Tadhg O'Sullivan's WS 792, 5 (BMH); John O'Driscoll's WS 1250, 21 (BMH); William McCarthy's WS 1255, 1 (BMH); Seán Murphy's WS 1445, 10 (BMH); 1911 MCI, under John Lynch of Callatrim; Bielenberg, Borgonovo, and Ó Ruairc (2015), 176.

Note: Perhaps the youngest of the sons of John Lynch of Callatrim, Daniel Lynch was one of a series of suspected spies killed by the IRA in West Cork at about the same time. He was executed by the Timoleague Company of the First Battalion of the Cork No. 3 Brigade. He was secretly buried close to the quarry at Killeady. According to

oral reports circulating today, Lynch is said to have given information to British forces concerning the Brinny ambush of late August 1920, which had resulted in the first fatality (Volunteer Timothy Fitzgerald of Gaggan) among members of the Cork No. 3 Brigade. Tadhg O'Sullivan, quartermaster of the Bandon IRA Battalion and later of the Cork No. 3 Brigade, had the impression that Denis Dwyer (see previous entry) was the spy executed for having provided information after the Brinny ambush that led to the death of Volunteer Fitzgerald, but it appears that this impression was erroneous. See Tadhg O'Sullivan's WS 792, 5 (BMH).

Betraying information about the Brinny ambush seems not to have been Lynch's only sin in the eyes of Bandon Volunteers, to judge from the later remarks of Florry Begley (the 'Piper of Crossbarry') to Ernie O'Malley: 'Another spy, Lynch, was noticed going around, and we noticed that the people he talked to were bitter and, we suspected, active enemies of ours in Bandon. One day he came to a lad and he said he had heard there was to be a raid that night and not to sleep at home. The lad passed on the word, but the other fellows mentioned in Bandon did not change their houses that night and were captured in the raids. This young lad did not sleep at home and so escaped. That was enough for us. The spy was court-martialled and was shot. Why did he pass on the word [about the raids]? Maybe to make friends with this young lad, for he [Lynch] had been going around with younger Volunteers and had promised them revolvers, and he had been anxious to make contacts with young Volunteers.' See Bielenberg, Borgonovo, and Ó Ruairc (2015), 176.

Daniel Lynch was in 1911 one of the eleven living children (thirteen born) of the Callatrim agricultural labourer John Lynch and his wife Mary. Only five of their children (three daughters and two sons) were still residing at home in that year. Daniel Lynch (then aged 16) was among them. The Lynches were Catholic.

**19. Civilian Patrick George Ray** (aged 37) of Passage West (near Passage West)  
Date of incident: 22 Jan. 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; *CE*, 13 Jan. 1922; IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, A/0649, Military Archives); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); O'Mahony (1986), 104; Murphy (2010), 35, 41.

Note: Patrick Ray appeared on the list of 'missing persons' published in the *Irish Times* of 22 August 1921. The date of his kidnapping was given there as 22 January 1921. An ex-soldier (a sergeant with the Royal Munster Fusiliers), Ray had served in the British army during the Great War and earlier in India. He was suffering from shell shock in the war and retired from military service in 1920. He was executed—probably in late January 1921—as a suspected spy by the IRA. Ray had been observed occasionally going from Passage to the police headquarters in Cork city. Following orders received from headquarters of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, he was shot and buried in a field in the vicinity of Passage. See O'Mahony (1986), 104.

According to the *Cork Examiner*, Ray 'was an ex-soldier and employed as a labourer in Passage Docks, and on the 22nd January 1921, while on his way to the Post Office, he was kidnapped, and from that time till now he had [ sic] never been heard of.' See *CE*, 13 Jan. 1922.

Later, members of his family made further enquiries about his fate, and following investigations, it was disclosed in correspondence in late March 1923 that Ray had been 'executed on a charge of espionage by order of the then Brigade O/C, Cork No. 1'. It was also revealed that Ray had been 'attended by Father O'Donovan of Passage West on the morning of his execution'. See Collins Papers, A/0649 (Military Archives). Ray appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 22 January 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £2,000 was awarded to his family. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). The Rays were Catholic.

**20. Civilian Thomas Bradfield** (aged 65) of Carhoon West near Bandon (near Carhoon—about 3 miles from his residence)

Date of incident: 22 Jan. 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CC*, 25 Jan. 1921; *II*, 25, 26 Jan. 1921; *FJ*, 25 Jan. 1921; *SS*, 25 June 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/146A/26 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Jan. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Denis Lordan's WS 470, 14 (BMH); William Desmond's WS 832, 28-29 (BMH); Michael Coleman's WS 1254, 10-11 (BMH); William Foley's WS 1560, 7 (BMH); Charles O'Donoghue's WS 1607, 6 (BMH); Daniel Canty's WS 1619, 23-24 (BMH); Michael Riordan's WS 1638, 19 (BMH); Barry (1949, 1989), 109-10; Dolan (2011), 29; Fitzgerald (2012), 186; Bielenberg, Borgonovo, and Ó Ruairc (2015), 170-71, 176-77; Ó Ruairc (2016), 119.

Note: This was the first of two Thomas Bradfields to be executed by the IRA. He was found dead near his home at Carhue or Carhoon in the Bandon district (4 miles north of the town) on Sunday morning, 23 January 1921. 'There was a card attached to his clothing with the words "Convicted Spy".' See *II*, 25 Jan. 1921. He had been shot through the brain at about 10:30 p.m. on 22 January. See Daniel Canty's WS 1619, 23 (BMH). A report from Dublin Castle stated: 'A note was pinned to his clothing stating that he had been shot after conviction by a court martial held on the night of Jan. 23, for intending to inform the enemy of the presence and movements of republican troops.' See *II*, 26 Jan. 1921. As the resident of one of the houses where members of the Flying Column of the West Cork Brigade were billeted, Bradfield 'mistook the [IRA] party for British Auxiliaries and after a short conversation started to give very complete information as to the movements of local members of the I.R.A., even to the extent of a minute description of a "dug out" in the district in which some local men slept and kept their arms, and detailed instructions as to the best means and time of approaching the "dug out" so as to capture these men. He also arranged to give further information later on through his local clergyman [the

Rev. John C. Lord of Kilbrogan] and pressed very hard for the immediate capture and execution of certain local boys who were members of the I.R.A. This farmer was placed under arrest and later tried for espionage and found guilty. He was executed that night.' See Denis Lordan's WS 470, 14 (BMH).

Bradfield may also have been fooled by the Scottish accent of Flying Column member Peter Monahan, as suggested in the somewhat confused tale told years later by Florry Begley of Bandon to Ernie O'Malley: 'When Florrie O'Donoghue brought back the 2 children from England, he also brought back a lad from Glasgow who wanted to fight here. [The 'lad from Glasgow' was apparently the explosives expert Peter Monahan, a Scot who had deserted from the British army, though he did not come back to Ireland with O'Donoghue.] He [i.e., Monahan] was one of those who went with [John] Lordan to hold up a Protestant farmer by pretending they were Auxies, and when the farmer saw them, he thought they were Auxies, and only then, by a signal from the Scotsman whose accent would give the others significance, did the other IRA [men] understand that they had to play the part of Auxies. "It's time you came," the farmer said, "why didn't you shoot so and so and so and so", mentioning names of active men whom he wanted got rid of. The lads later dressed up, went to visit his brother [a mistake for a cousin], and he said, "What a fool my brother was to think that those fellows who visited him were Auxiliaries", and convinced they were Auxies [on this occasion], he gave away his information. And he was shot as well.' See Bielenberg, Borgonovo, and Ó Ruairc (2015), 176-77. The victim's cousin, Thomas Bradfield of Knockmacool House, was executed by the IRA on 1 February 1921. His body was found on 2 February about three miles from his house with 'a label bearing the words "Convicted Spy" attached to his corpse.' See SS, 25 June 1921.

At the time of the 1911 census Thomas Bradfield (then aged 55 and single) of Carhoon West in Kilbrogan parish lived with his sister Mary (aged 56 and also single) and a Catholic servant named Eliza Donovan (aged 26); he and his sister were adherents of the Church of Ireland. The name of Thomas Bradfield appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 23 January 1921, with the notation 'British supporter', and with a note that compensation of £5,000 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

That Thomas Bradfield of Carhoon carried tales of IRA activity or suspected activity to his local Protestant minister, Rev. John C. Lord, seems beyond question. And it appears almost certain that Rev. Lord, the rector of Kilbrogan, was in regular touch with British military intelligence in Bandon. Some light is thrown on these secret matters by what Florry Begley of Bandon later told Ernie O'Malley. According to Begley, the Cork No. 3 Brigade Commandant Charlie Hurley and a comrade had pressed a Protestant farmer identified as 'B' as to his links with the Essex Regiment, but 'B' was reluctant to talk: 'B . . . would not give any information, and all they got out of him was that at the meetings after the weekly service on Sundays the men

remained behind for a chat, and then they would swap stories or tell what had happened in their neighbourhood during the week in a gossipy way, but J . . . [another farmer suspected of spying] did not explain how [Major Edward] Percival [the Essex intelligence officer in Bandon] knew that the [Essex] rifles had been left in J's shed for a night. Next day J . . . was gone and we never heard of him again. His farm was confiscated [the normal IRA practice in the case of fleeing spies]. The minister from Bandon [the Rev. Lord] was evidently the local contact, and he would be next on the [IRA] list, so Percival sent word that if he was shot or a hair of his head touched, the P.P., a nephew (or a brother) of the bishop, would be shot. [Canon Jeremiah Cohalan, P.P. of Bandon, who was sympathetic to republicans, was the brother of Bishop Daniel Cohalan of Cork, whose hostility to republicans was legendary.] Even then, he [the Rev. Lord] was in danger, for one night he heard sounds in his house, and he started up to find men bending over him who were armed with revolvers.' See Bielenberg, Borgonovo, and Ó Ruairc (2015), 170-71.

**21. Civilian Thomas Bradfield** (aged 56) of Knockmacool House, Castlederry (near Ahiohill)

Date of incident: 1 Feb. 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 3 Feb., 18 June 1921; *FJ*, 3 Feb. 1921; *II*, 15 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 19 Feb., 19 March 1921; *SS*, 1 April, 25 June 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/146A/52 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Denis Lordan's WS 470, 14 (BMH); J. O'Mahony, D. Crowley, and J. Fitzgerald's WS 560 (BMH); Michael J. Crowley's WS 1603 (BMH); James 'Spud' Murphy's WS 1684, 12-13 (BMH); Murphy (2010), 73-76, 126, 188, 191, 236, 238, 240; Fitzgerald (2012), 191; Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: When Thomas Bradfield's body was found on the day after his kidnapping at a point about three miles from his house, a label bearing the words 'Convicted Spy' was attached to his remains. He too had been fooled into revealing his spying activities, as leading Volunteer James 'Spud' Murphy recalled in his BMH witness statement: 'Tom Barry approached the house and asked the maid whether Mr Bradfield was at home. She said that he was out in the fields. Dan Corcoran accompanied the maid to the field to call Bradfield and to inform him that the officer wanted him. We were all wearing Sam Browne belts outside our trench coats and Bradfield assumed that we were members of the British forces. When Bradfield came in, he welcomed us and invited us into the sitting-room where he gave us some refreshments. He sat down and began to talk to Tom Barry about the activities of the I.R.A. in the area, giving a number of names of prominent officers. At this stage I had taken up position at the front door and Dan Corcoran was likewise at the back door. When Bradfield had given sufficient information, Tom Barry disclosed his identity and Bradfield was certainly shocked. We immediately placed him under arrest and removed him on foot to Ahiohill area. He was tried that night, and when we were moving from Ahiohill to Burgatia House [in Rosscarbery] on the night of 1st Feb. 1921, Bradfield was executed.' See James 'Spud' Murphy's WS 1684, 12-13

(BMH). Bradfield had made himself odious to the Volunteers much earlier. When they raided his house near Ahiohill for arms in May 1918, Bradfield had seriously wounded Volunteer Michael J. Crowley of Kilbritten by shooting him in the chest at close range; Crowley needed three months to recover. See Michael J. Crowley's WS 1603, 2-3 (BMH).

Thomas Bradfield of Knockmacool, his wife Elizabeth, and their only child Elizabeth Mary Susan were Methodists. In 1911 they lived with a niece (aged 5) and a Catholic domestic servant in a 'first-class' house with as many as eleven rooms. The Bradfield farm had three smaller houses occupied by tenants and/or labourers. Before his murder Bradfield and his wife and daughter had been 'very prosperous': 'Their substantial and beautiful residence [near Desertserges railway station on the Cork-Bandon line] had a farm of about seventy acres attached to it. That farm would have been worth £3,500 if it could have been sold in the ordinary way.' As a result of the persecution to which they had been subjected, his wife and daughter tried to hold a public auction of the house and lands. When the day of the auction arrived (10 March 1921), their representative and the auctioneer found that 'no member of the public was in attendance', and that the auction could not be held. Instead, they discovered that notices had been posted up 'all over the place' to the following effect: 'Take notice, any person or persons having any dealings or communication with spies, or the relatives of spies, do so at their own risk.' The IRA seized almost everything: 'The stock was cleared off the farm, and furniture and other articles taken away—in fact, there was nothing left to sell. All the property had gone in that way.' The widow Elizabeth Bradfield had disappeared into hiding. 'After her departure the residence was left in the charge of servants, but those servants had been hunted out of the place, and all the moveable property was then taken away. The place was practically left derelict.' Cattle and effects to the value of £1,779 had been stolen. The judge at Clonakilty quarter sessions awarded Bradfield's widow £4,000 and his daughter £2,000 in compensation. See *CE*, 18 June 1921. The name of Thomas Bradfield appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 2 February 1921, with the notation 'British supporter', and with a note that £6,000 in compensation was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**22. Civilian/Private Michael Finbarr O'Sullivan** (aged about 23) of 121 High Street, Cork city (along Douglas River near Ballinlough)

Date of incident: ca. 1 Feb. 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 22, 23 Feb., 3 June 1921; *FJ*, 23 Feb. 1921; *Nenagh Guardian*, 26 Feb. 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/157A/51 (TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 37 (BMH); Jerome Coughlan's WS 1568, 10 (BMH); Laurence Neville's WS 1639, 8 (BMH); Robert C. Ahern's WS 1676, 8 (BMH); William Barry's WS 1708, 7 (BMH); Hart (1998), 298; Borgonovo (2007), 44, 57, 60, 76-77, 100 (note 71), 179; Murphy (2010), 41 Ó Ruairc (2016), 120;

<http://www.cairogang.com/soldiers-killed/o-sullivan/o-sullivan.html>;

<http://www.cairogang.com/soldiers-killed/list-1921.html> (accessed 1 Aug. 2014).

Note: A tailor and World War I veteran residing at 121 High Street in Cork city, O'Sullivan had links with the military, like numerous others (especially ex-soldiers) identified as suspected spies by the IRA. The O/C of the Second Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade issued an order for his arrest and execution. 'He was taken into custody by William ("Sailor") Barry, a member of "D" Company, and brought at night to my home in Ballinlough', recalled Volunteer captain Laurence Neville. 'He was then taken down to the riverside [the Douglas River] and shot by a revolver party comprising three men and myself.' The victim was 'well-known to me from boyhood', remarked Neville. See Laurence Neville's WS 1639, 8 (BMH).

The victim's father Jeremiah O'Sullivan clarified matters in testimony he provided to the military inquest (shortly before his own death). He stated: 'My son had told people that he was going to join the Black and Tans, but he changed his mind on Monday, 31st January 1921, and actually enlisted for the Royal Field Artillery and should have gone away [the] Tuesday following.' His son had been unemployed since leaving the army and before re-enlisting in the RFA. See Military Inquests, WO 35/157A/51 (TNA).

O'Sullivan's body was found on 20 February 1921 in a stream near Douglas with bullet wounds in the abdomen, neck, and elbow. He had been missing for three weeks. The conclusion was that his death was due to these wounds rather than to drowning. Two IRA men involved in his execution reported wrongly that he had been killed on 21 or 22 February. O'Sullivan had served with the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) during the Great War. He had been discharged from the RAMC in February 1919 as unfit for war service and suffering from shell shock, though he re-enlisted briefly before being discharged again in June 1919. According to a British War Office record, and as previously noted, he was at home on 31 January 1921, just prior to his abduction, having enlisted in the Royal Field Artillery (RFA). See Military Inquests, WO 35/157A/51 (TNA). Volunteer William Barry of D Company (Second Battalion), who had abducted the victim for questioning, also considered O'Sullivan 'a member of the British army home on leave', who had also been 'reported by our intelligence service to be joining the Black & Tans'. See William Barry's WS 1708, 7 (BMH).

Certain other significant details, sometimes conflicting, emerged when early in June 1921 O'Sullivan's mother Kate 'sought compensation for the death of her son Michael Finbar [sic] O'Sullivan on some date between 31st Jan. and 24th Feb. last. Evidence showed that applicant's son joined the army on the outbreak of the war in the R.A.M.C. and served in Egypt and France, and upon demobilisation got a disability pension. He went to London, where he obtained employment, allowing his mother to draw his disability pension of 24s. a week. At last Christmas he returned home on holidays. About 31st January [1921] he told his mother he was about to join the R.A.S.C. [Royal Army Service Corps]. He went out after dinner and was never

seen alive again, and his body was taken out of the Douglas River at the brickyard on 24th Feb. blindfolded. There was a compound wound in the thigh exposing the bone and a bullet wound in the hand. The father received such a shock at the son's fate that he died three days after the funeral. The Recorder awarded £2,000 [to Kate O'Sullivan] to be levied off the county at large.' See *CE*, 3 June 1921.

At the time of the 1911 census Kate or Catherine O'Sullivan and her husband Jeremiah (a tailor then aged 44) lived at house 121 in High Street in Cork city. She and her husband were then the parents of five living children (six born), all of whom co-resided with their parents. Michael Finbarr O'Sullivan (then aged 13) was the middle child, with two older brothers and two younger sisters. The eldest child Timothy (aged 17) was a tailor like his father Jeremiah. The discovery of his son Michael's body after his execution by the IRA precipitated Jeremiah O'Sullivan's death within days at the end of February 1921. He was then only about 54 years old.

The name of Michael O'Sullivan appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 20 February 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £2,000 was awarded. It was assumed that he been killed sometime between 30 January and 21 February 1921. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). Michael Finbarr O'Sullivan and all the members of his immediate family were Catholics.

**23. Civilian Alfred Kidney** (aged about 31) of Nile Street, Youghal (North Main Street, Youghal)

Date of incident: 4 Feb. 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by the IRA)  
Sources: *CE*, 5, 9 Feb. 1921; *CC*, 5, 7 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 12 Feb. 1921; RIC County Inspector's Report, Cork City and East Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Malicious Injury Claims, Box 16/78, Cork County Secretary Files (CCCA); Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: The *Cork Examiner* reported that at about 8 p.m. on the night of 4 February 1921, Alfred Kidney had been 'fired at and gravely wounded' in North Main Street in Youghal. 'Some time ago', according to this report, an attempt had been 'made to kidnap him'. See *CE*, 5 Feb. 1921. The victim died of his wounds very soon afterwards. A court of military inquiry into Kidney's death concluded that crown forces were not responsible. At this inquiry 'a police officer asked permission to make a few remarks as to the rumour circulated by some busybodies locally with regard to the crime. They said that it had been committed by a Black and Tan. He took that opportunity of giving the most emphatic contradiction to that lie. When the matter [of the shooting] was reported to him, he accounted for every single man under him but one, and that one was in Miss Fitzgerald's shop when the shots were fired. He had it from the lady herself that the constable in question had acted with the greatest humanity and promptitude on the occasion, and being a trained nurse

herself, she was in a position to speak.' See *CE*, 9 Feb. 1921. The reported attempt to kidnap Kidney on an earlier occasion might suggest that this was an IRA killing. In confirmation the RIC County Inspector's Report for February 1921 revealed that Kidney, an ex-soldier, had been seriously wounded on a public street in Youghal and had quickly succumbed; the report added that Kidney had been suspected of giving information about the IRA to the military. See RIC County Inspector's Report, Cork City and East Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA).

Alfred Kidney was one of the six children (seven born) of the cabinetmaker and widower William F. Kidney of 11 Nile Street in Youghal. Like his father, Alfred Kidney (aged 21 in 1911) was also a cabinetmaker; both father and son were unemployed in that year. The Kidneys were Catholic. The name of Alfred Kidney appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 4 February 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £750 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**24. Civilian Gilbert Fenton** (aged 77) of Gaggan near Bandon (Clonakilty Junction)  
Date of incident: 7 Feb. 1921 (shot as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CE*, 8 Feb. 1921; *CCE*, 12 Feb. 1921; *SS*, 25 June 1921; *Irish Times*, 22 Oct. 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Hart (2002), 28.

Note: A shopkeeper at Clonakilty Junction and a farmer, Gilbert Fenton and his son Frederick (aged about 54) were both wounded when the IRA attacked their house at about 2 a.m. on 7 February 1921. The attackers demanded that the Fentons open up their house in the name of the military. The Fentons refused to believe that it was the military and declined to open the door. Gilbert Fenton went to a window, 'cried out "murder"', and was shot through the lung. The son rushed at the attackers with a hatchet when they tried to enter through a window. He was struck in the groin. After the attack Frederick Fenton 'had to fly to England, and the place at Gaggan was closed up'. The Fentons 'were raided on previous occasions too'. The judge who heard their claim for compensation at the Clonakilty quarter sessions granted £3,500 to the son Frederick and £2,000 to the father Gilbert. See *SS*, 25 June 1921. Gilbert Fenton died at Bandon on 19 October 1921 at the age of 77; it is likely that his serious wounds on 7 February 1921 contributed to his death. See *Irish Times*, 22 Oct. 1921. The Fentons were Methodists. Gilbert Fenton was a native of County Leitrim, his wife Emily a native of County Tipperary. In 1911 they had nine living children (ten born), of whom their son Frederick may have been the eldest.

The fatal wounding of Fenton took place in February 1921 when the killing of suspected spies by the IRA in County Cork increased to peak levels. The section of *A Record of the Rebellion in Ireland, 1920-21*, dealing with military intelligence indicates that in this month (in the view of British army intelligence) the IRA was in

almost all cases killing people who had not supplied information. See Hart (2002), 28. The fact that in Fenton's case full liability was not accepted on the British side, and that instead a notation of 'agreed 50/50' was written over the notation 'L', suggests that he was one of the suspects who had not provided information. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**25. Civilian Alfred Charles Reilly, J.P.** (aged 58), of The Hill, Monfieldstown, Douglas (Douglas)

Date of incident: 9 Feb. 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 10 Feb., 29 March, 6 June 1921; *CC*, 11, 15 Feb., 30 March 1921; *CCE*, 12 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 19 Feb. 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/157B/15 (TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 36 (BMH); William Barry's WS 1708, 7 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 42-43, 49-52, 100 (note 71), 168; Murphy (2010), 41, 116-18; Ó Ruairc (2016), 88-90, 120.

Note: In a 'shocking murder' Alfred Reilly, managing director of a large bakery and restaurant business in Cork city (H. H. Thompson and Sons, Ltd.), was shot dead very near his home in the Cork suburb of Douglas. Pinned to his chest was an envelope on which the words 'Spies beware penalty for all, I.R.A.' had been written in pencil. See Military Inquests, WO 35/157B/15 (TNA). He had left his office in Cork city at about 5 p.m. on Wednesday, 9 February 1921, and had driven in a pony and trap towards his residence in Douglas. 'Some time later, the female lodge-keeper saw the empty trap standing outside the avenue gate, and she went along the road for some distance until she found Mr Reilly lying on the ground face downwards.' Reilly was 'well known in the commercial life of the South of Ireland'. Besides the position that he held at Thompson and Sons, he was managing director of Messrs Stewart in Limerick city and 'was connected with a number of other firms'. He was also a member of the Cork Chamber of Commerce and Shipping but 'was not connected with any political organisation'. See *CCE*, 12 Feb. 1921.

Aged 58 and a Methodist, Reilly was a member of the Cork business establishment. He had earlier organised a Methodist Church petition calling for the release of Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney when he was on hunger-strike. Reilly had Home Rule and Liberal political sympathies. Though he had been a J.P., he had not taken an active part in police-court work for about the last six years and had been fined for refusing to carry out jury duty early in 1920 when republicans were beginning to face British courts. See Military Inquests, WO 35/157B/15 (TNA). Nevertheless, he was suspected of being part of a civilian unionist intelligence group operating out of the Cork Y.M.C.A. He was also thought to be a Freemason. In fact, however, he was neither a Freemason nor a Y.M.C.A. member. See Borgonovo (2007), 42-43, 49-52, 100 (note 71), 168.

The killing was carried out in especially chilling fashion by three members of D

Company (Second Battalion, Cork No. 1 Brigade), including its captain William Barry, who recalled the deed: On the evening of 9 February, as Reilly 'was returning from work in King Street (now MacCurtain Street) in his pony and trap, four of us, armed with revolvers, got into the trap and drove him to his home at Rochestown. We shot him outside the gate of his house and affixed a card to the body with the words "Spies and Informers Beware" written on it.' See William Barry's WS 1708, 7 (BMH).

A widower aged 48 in 1911, Reilly resided at Monfieldstown in the Douglas suburb of Cork with his elderly mother (then aged 70) and his son Percival (aged 21). Father and son listed themselves as 'manufacturing confectioners' in the census. The family had three Catholic servants. Alfred Reilly later remarried and had a daughter with his second wife Agnes. She claimed compensation for the killing of her husband on 9 February 1921 near his residence—Hill House. The Recorder of Cork city awarded £4,500 to her and another £4,500 to their daughter. See *CE*, 6 June 1921. The name of Alfred Charles Reilly appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 9 February 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £9,000 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**26. Civilian William F. B. Johnston** (aged about 21) of Kilbritten (Kilbritten)

Date of incident: 9 Feb. 1921 (executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 10, 12 Feb. 1921; *FJ*, 10 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 19 Feb. 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Cork County Council Compensation Claims, Box 16/44 (CCCA); Hart (2002), 28; Fitzgerald (2012), 189; Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: A labourer and a Protestant, Johnston was found with a bullet in the back of his head and a note on his body designating him as a spy. He was shot dead by the IRA at his home. His father Edward Johnston of Kilbritten, who was deceased by 1921, had been a police sergeant; Edward and his wife Amelia were the parents in 1911 of six living children, including three daughters and two sons who resided with them. William Johnston was interred in Rathclarin burial ground near Kilbritten. The IRA raided the family home in October 1921. In the view of the RIC, this was done in order to intimidate Edward Johnston's wife into leaving the area; she and her four daughters moved to Bandon. The Johnstons belonged to the Church of Ireland. The name of William Johnston appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 9 February 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £2,000 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**27. Civilian Robert Eady** (aged 40) of Clogheen Cross near Clonakilty (near Clogheen Cross)

Date of incident: 11 Feb. 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 12 Feb. 1921; *CCE*, 12, 19 Feb. 1921; *CC*, 15 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 19 Feb. 1921;

RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Ted Hayes's WS 1575, 8 (BMH); Abbott (2000), 277-78; Fitzgerald (2012), 189; Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: The labourer Robert Eady was awakened by loud knocks on his door in Clonakilty at about 1 a.m. on 11 February 1921; his dead body was found later that day near the village of Clogheen with bullet wounds in the back and the head. 'A label was pinned to his back bearing the words, "Spies and informers beware".' See *CE*, 12 Feb. 1921. Eady had long been under suspicion of giving information to the RIC. His activities were closely monitored by the intelligence staff of the Clonakilty Battalion of Cork No. 3 Brigade (including Ted Hayes) in December 1920 and January 1921. When he was seen visiting the RIC barracks in Clonakilty 'dressed up as a woman in a hooded cloak', this only increased IRA suspicions. He was arrested, tried by court-martial, and executed as a spy. See Ted Hayes's WS 1575, 8 (BMH). Aged 40, Eady left a wife and three young children, the eldest of whom was just four years old.

But the IRA's intelligence may well have been mistaken. In a letter from RIC District Inspector Michael Keany of Clonakilty to Monsignor O'Leary, which was publicly read at Mass, it was revealed that Eady had gone to the police station seeking assistance to leave the country in order to support his wife and three children, since he had recently been discharged from his employment and required documentation and other help in getting to England. Beyond this approach, Inspector Keany insisted, there had never been any communications from Eady or his family with the RIC barracks. See *CCE*, 19 Feb. 1921; Fitzgerald (2012), 189. This evidence collectively suggests that Eady was an innocent victim. (District Inspector Keany was to be shot dead in Clonakilty on 11 February 1922. See Abbott [2000], 277-78.)

In addition, the section of *A Record of the Rebellion in Ireland, 1920-21*, dealing with military intelligence indicates that in February 1921 (in the view of British army intelligence) the IRA was in almost all cases killing people who had not supplied information. See Hart (2002), 28. As previously noted, Eady may have entered the RIC barracks for other reasons. Moreover, the fact that full liability was later not accepted on the British side, and that instead a notation of 'agreed 50/50' was entered in Eady's case, suggests that he had not provided information. Compensation of £2,000 was awarded to his widow Katie and others. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

In 1911 Robert Eady was one of the nine living children (twelve born) of the Knockaphonery farmer John Benjamin Eady and his wife Bridget. Robert Eady and his twin brother Patrick (aged 29) were the eldest of the five children who were

then still co-resident with their parents. The Eadys were Catholic.

**28. Civilian John O'Leary** (aged 33) of 30 Gerald Griffin Avenue, Cork city, (Peacocke Lane, Cork)

Date of incident: 12 Feb. 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 14 Feb. 1921; *CC*, 16 Feb. 1921; *Kerryman*, 19 Feb. 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/157A/24 (TNA); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 36 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 20-21, 43, 76, 100 (note 71); Murphy (2010), 41;

<http://www.cairogang.com/other-people/british/castle-intelligence/kelly/kelly.html> (accessed 28 Oct. 2015).

Note: An ex-soldier aged 33, O'Leary worked as 'a clerk' at Cork Military Barracks. The four Volunteers dressed in plainclothes who stopped him about a hundred yards from his house on 12 February 1921 asked for his documents and obtained his barracks pass. See Military Inquests, WO 35/157A/24 (TNA). According to city Volunteer leader Michael Murphy, O'Leary was 'a civilian employee in the office of the British military intelligence officer (Captain Kelly) in Cork Military Barracks. . . . He was known to be bringing information to the enemy.' See Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 36 (BMH). The IRA considered O'Leary a spy and shot him three times. He died of his wounds three days later in the North Infirmary. He had previously served for six years with the Leinster Regiment, been taken prisoner by the Germans, and been discharged with a disability. He had lost a leg in the Great War and had been fitted with an artificial limb. He left a wife and three children. See Military Inquests, WO 35/157A/24 (TNA). O'Leary was almost certainly Catholic.

O'Leary's employment under Captain Campbell Joseph O'Connor Kelly (OBE, MC, MM) was no doubt especially damning in the eyes of the city IRA. Mick Murphy, commander of the Second Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, recalled the liquidation of Kelly's associates: 'Captain Kelly was in charge of the British intelligence system here, and he had six intelligence officers on his staff, and each of them was wiped out one after the other. There were three caught at Waterfall outside the city by some lads from my battalion. . . . They pulled the three of them off a train on their way to Macroom and shot them.' See Borgonovo (2007), 20-21. Kelly and his intelligence colleagues at Victoria Barracks were held responsible for torturing IRA prisoners (Tom Hales among others), and city Volunteer leaders made several abortive attempts to assassinate Kelly. See <http://www.cairogang.com/other-people/british/castle-intelligence/kelly/kelly.html> (accessed 28 Oct. 2015).

**29. Civilian William Sullivan or O'Sullivan** (aged 35) of South Douglas Road, Cork city (Tory Top Lane, Cork)

Date of incident: 14 Feb. 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 15 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 19 Feb. 1921; *CCE*, 19 Feb. 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/159B/17 (TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 37 (BMH); Jerome

Coughlan's WS 1568, 9-10 (BMH); Laurence Neville's WS 1639, 8 (BMH); Robert C. Ahern's WS 1676, 8 (BMH); William Barry's WS 1708, 7 (BMH); Murphy (2010), 41; Borgonovo (2007), 43, 56-57, 60, 76, 100 (note 71), 179.

Note: An unemployed ex-soldier (aged 35) who had served in the British army and in the Royal Army Service Corps, Sullivan was picked up in a pub, taken by armed men to Tory Top Lane, 'a quiet locality off the main Kinsale road in the southern outskirts of the city'. There he was executed by members of D Company of the Second Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade; he was 'the first British spy' killed by this city company. Sullivan's brother was then a member of D Company. See Laurence Neville's WS 1639, 8 (BMH). Sullivan 'had been seen leaving the R.I.C. barracks at Empress Place, Cork, on several occasions after curfew. He had been told that if he continued his association with the enemy, the consequences for him would be serious. He ignored these warnings, and as a result, we were instructed by the Battalion O/C to pick him up and execute him. On 15th February 1921 [*sic*] we received information that the man for whom we were searching was in a publichouse on Sullivan's Quay, Cork. A party of six of us, with William Barry, company captain, in charge, picked him up in the publichouse and took him by car to a spot on the Curragh road, where he was shot.' See Jerome Coughlan's WS 1568, 9-10 (BMH). A note attached to Sullivan's body stated: 'A convicted spy. Penalty death. Let all spies and traitors beware.' See *CE*, 15 Feb. 1921.

Sullivan, 'who was about thirty-five years of age, served in the war with the Royal Munster Fusiliers. Previous to enlisting, he was employed in the Waterworks Department of the Cork Corporation. Since he left the army, he had not been in regular employment.' See *CCE*, 19 Feb. 1921. Sullivan's body was found about one hundred yards from where the body of the executed spy Timothy Quinlisk had been discovered about a year earlier.

The victim's brother Philip gave significant evidence at the subsequent military inquiry. He stated that William Sullivan was an ex-soldier who had left the British army in 1919 but had later re-enlisted in the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) for twelve months. He had then left the RASC six months before his death, was drawing a pension, and was unemployed (like so many ex-soldiers). 'My brother', stated Philip Sullivan, 'took no part in politics, as far as I know. He did not help the police at all. He was not friendly with any police. . . . I do not know any reason why anyone should want to hurt him. He used to drink all he could get. He would look after the home first. He was a good brother. What he had left he would spend on drink.' See Military Inquests, WO 35/159B/17 (TNA).

William Sullivan (or O'Sullivan) was interred in St Joseph's Cemetery on 17 February 1921 after funeral ceremonies in St Finbarr's Church (South Parish). His funeral was said to have been 'largely attended'. See *CE*, 18 Feb. 1921. William Sullivan was a Catholic, as his funeral Mass was celebrated in the oldest Catholic church in Cork city. His name appears in the Compensation Commission Register

under 14 February 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £2,050 in compensation was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

City Volunteers had a sophisticated system for tracking and identifying suspected spies; it was well (if only partly) described by Jeremiah Keating, the I/O of the Second Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade: 'I was employed in Phair's grocery and provision store at Phair's Cross, Bandon Road [Cork]. From this premises I transacted all my duties as 2nd Battalion intelligence officer and quartermaster. I had eight men from seven companies of the 2nd Battalion working for me. They brought their reports to Phair's and received instructions from me there. These men were engaged watching spy suspects, watching the homes of the anti-Sinn Féin crowd, following and reporting their movements to me, noting civilians entering and leaving military and police barracks and reporting on their movements. Barracks were watched for the movements of troops, the strength of enemy garrisons, and suchlike. I had men, employed in shops, hotel bars, and railways, who reported to me conversations they overheard or persons they had seen which might prove of value to us in locating spies or providing us with information of enemy movements. All such reports were brought to me at Phair's.' See Keating's WS 1657 (BMH).

**30. Civilian James Charles Beal** (aged about 53) of 7 Laurelhurst, College Road, Cork city (field opposite Wilton church near Dennehy's Cross, Cork)  
Date of the incident: 14 Feb. 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: Death Certificate, 14-15 Feb. 1921; *CE*, 16, 18 Feb. 1921; *CC*, 16 Feb. 1921; *II*, 16, 18 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 19 Feb., 26 March 1921; *FJ*, 19 Feb., 18 March 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/146B/4 (TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 37 (BMH); Jeremiah Keating's WS 1657, 8 (BMH); Patrick Collins's WS 1707, 7-8 (BMH); Hart (2002), 58; Borgonovo (2007), 43, 52-53, 92; Murphy (2010), 41, 120-21; Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: An Englishman and a Protestant who had come to Cork city about eleven years earlier, Beal was abducted by armed men and brought by car to Wilton (about 2 miles from Cork city), where he was executed. Married, but without children, Beal was the manager of the wine department of Messrs Woodford, Bourne, and Co., the well-known grocery and provisions store on Patrick Street in Cork city. He 'was last seen leaving his place of business at 7 p.m.' on Monday night, 14 February 1921. His remains 'bore several wounds, one in the head and others in different parts of the body'. The report of Beal's disappearance 'caused a tremendous sensation in the city. His wife was greatly distressed, more particularly because her father, Mr Jas. Blemens, horticultural instructor under the Dept. [of Agriculture] in Cork, and her brother, a clerk, were kidnapped two months ago. Nothing has been heard of them since, and they are believed to have been tried and executed.' See *II*, 16 Feb. 1921. (James Blemens and his son Frederick had been kidnapped by the IRA at the end of November 1920 and later executed.)

The funeral rites for James Charles Beal were held on 17 February at St Fin Barre's Cathedral in Cork, with the employees of Messrs Woodford, Bourne, and Co. in attendance; he was then interred in the 'New Cemetery' nearby. See *II*, 18 Feb. 1921. James C. Beal belonged to the Church of England. His name appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 14 February 1921, with the notation that liability was split 50/50, and with a note that £5,250 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

The IRA wrongly believed that Beal was a 'Y.M.C.A. senior secret service agent' and treated his dead body in the fashion usual for executed spies. 'Tied around the neck with a looped piece of ordinary twine was a piece of cardboard about one foot square on which were printed in ink, in capital letters roughly formed, the words: "Convicted spy. This is the penalty for all those who associate with the Auxiliaries, Black and Tans, and R.I.C.—I.R.A." "P.S.—Beware."' See *FJ*, 18 March 1921. Jeremiah Keating, the I/O of the Second Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, later declared, 'In my opinion the shooting of Beale broke the back of the anti-I.R.A. Sein Féin organisation in Cork city.' Keating and two other IRA men—Pat Collins and John Horgan—carried out the deed. See Jeremiah Keating's WS 1657, 8 (BMH).

Beal was not associated with the Cork Y.M.C.A., however. What may partly have gotten him into serious trouble with the Cork No. 1 Brigade was his friendship with a British army officer attached to the military police in Cork. Beal and his wife housed this officer for some time, and Beal corresponded with him after he returned to England. There is some evidence that in a raid on the mails correspondence between Beal and this officer was acquired and read by members of Cork No. 1 Brigade. See Borgonovo (2007), 52-53. Keating nevertheless maintained in his BMH witness statement that the killers of Beal had 'found in his possession papers giving valuable information relating to the spy organisation with which he was connected'. See Jeremiah Keating's WS 1657, 8 (BMH).

Keating's comrade Pat Collins, who also took part in the kidnapping and execution of Beal, likewise reported in his BMH witness statement the seizure of incriminating documents from the victim: 'In Beale's possession were found papers giving us valuable information about the spy organisation with which he was connected. As a result of disclosures which came to light in the papers found on Beale, members of his organisation were picked up by other I.R.A. companies in the city and suitably dealt with. This had a discouraging effect on the Anti-Sinn Féin League, which faded out, thus removing a serious threat to the Cork I.R.A.' See Patrick Collins's WS 1707, 7-8 (BMH). These recollections of former Volunteers demonstrate how deeply ingrained were the beliefs of Cork republican activists even though the facts as known today contradict such convictions, at least in part.

The Cork No. 1 Brigade may well have been mistaken in its assessment of Beal. Although the IRA highly suspected him of informing, there are circumstances that at

least raise doubts in this case, as he was killed in February 1921. The section of *A Record of the Rebellion in Ireland, 1920-21*, dealing with military intelligence indicates that in that month (in the view of British army intelligence) the IRA was in almost all cases killing people who had not supplied information. See Hart (2002), 28. The fact that in Beal's case full liability was not accepted on the British side, and that instead a notation of 'agreed 50/50' was entered, suggests that he was one of those who had not provided information. See Register of Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**31. Civilian Mrs Maria Georgina (Mary) Lindsay** (aged about 60) of Leemount House near Coachford (Rylane in Aghabulloge parish)

Date of incident: 17 Feb. 1921 (kidnapped and later killed as suspected spy and in reprisal by IRA)

Sources: *CCE*, 5 Feb. 1921; *CE*, 18 Feb., 19 March 1921; *Irish Times*, 18 Feb., 4, 15, 19 March, 5 April, 7 July, 30 July, 2, 5 Aug. 1921; *II*, 16 March 1921; Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/21 (UCDA); Record of the Activities of the Sixth Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, Florence O'Donoghue Papers, MS 31, 339 (NLI); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Pension Application of Frank Busteed, MSP34/REF4903 (Military Archives); Interview with Frank Busteed, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA); Denis Dwyer's WS 713, 5-10 (BMH); Daniel McCarthy's WS 1457, 6-8 (BMH); O'Donoghue (1954, 1986), 121; O'Callaghan (1974), 157; Pyne Clarke (1986), 50; Sheehan (1990), 175-76; O'Farrell (1997), 55; Borgonovo (2007), 88, 99 (note 62), 104; T. Sheehan (2008); Kautt (2010), 125-29; Ó hÉalaithe (2014), 156-60; <http://www.tameside.gov.uk/museumsgalleries/mom/objectfocus/razor> (accessed 17 Sept. 2015); <http://homepage.eircom.net/~corkcounty/Timeline/Dripsey.htm> (accessed 28 May 2016); Richard Murphy, 'Ambush at Dripsey, 28 January 1921', at [http://www.inniscarra.org/styled/page83/dripsey\\_ambush.html](http://www.inniscarra.org/styled/page83/dripsey_ambush.html) (accessed 29 May 2016).

Note: Maria Lindsay was kidnapped on 17 February 1921 and later killed, along with her chauffeur/butler James Clarke. Her status as an informer was a matter of certainty for Florrie O'Donoghue, the intelligence officer of Cork No. 1 Brigade: 'In her case the death sentence [passed by the IRA] followed a flagrant and deliberate action against the Army, that of conveying information to the occupation forces in regard to the Dripsey ambush. Even after sentence had been passed, an official letter from the Cork No. 1 Brigade to Major General Sir E. P. Strickland indicated that the sentence would not be carried out if the prisoners taken at Dripsey were treated as prisoners of war. The communication was ignored and Mrs Lindsay was shot.' See O'Donoghue (1954, 1986), 121.

Mrs Lindsay was executed by the IRA partly for having given information to the crown forces at Ballincollig Military Barracks (base of the 1st Manchester Regiment) that led to the capture of eight republicans (five wounded) in the abortive Dripsey ambush of 28 January 1921 and to the execution of five of them (plus a sixth

Volunteer from Tipperary town) at Victoria Barracks in Cork city on 28 February 1921. The ambush took place outside Dripsey, at or near Godfrey's Cross on the road to Coachford. In retaliation for the six executions on 28 February, the IRA shot twelve unarmed British soldiers (another source says ten, six fatally) in the streets of Cork city that night or the next day. Mrs Lindsay and James Clarke were executed by the IRA on 14 March 1921 at Flagmount in the Rylane district. See Sheehan (1990), 175-76; Borgonovo (2007), 88, 104; Record of the Activities of the Sixth Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, Florence O'Donoghue Papers, MS 31, 339 (NLI).

According to a reliable account of the Dripsey ambush and its immediate background, 'That morning [28 January 1921] Mrs Mary Lindsay of Leemount House, who held strong loyalist views, heard of the [impending] ambush during a visit to Coachford. She was on her way to Ballincollig for a newly-introduced military inspection of her car (a measure introduced by the British to cut down on the commandeering of cars by the IRA). When she told Mr Sheehan [a local grocer] of her plans, he advised her not to go through Dripsey and Inniscarra, and when she asked why, he told her of the intended ambush. She told the local priest, Father Ned Shinnick, what she had heard before returning home. From there her chauffeur James Clarke drove her to Ballincollig to warn the army authorities. Meanwhile, Father Shinnick informed the local IRA command to tell the ambushers that the British had been informed of their plans. Father Shinnick was known to be anti-IRA, and the leaders of the IRA ambush party decided that the warning was just a ruse on the part of the priest to get them to abandon their ambush.' See Richard Murphy, 'Ambush at Dripsey, 28 January 1921', at [http://www.inniscarra.org/styled/page83/dripsey\\_ambush.html](http://www.inniscarra.org/styled/page83/dripsey_ambush.html) (accessed 29 May 2016). Had the priest's warning been heeded, the disaster of the Dripsey ambush and all of its tragic consequences might have been avoided.

A detailed and painstaking account of this episode was provided by Timothy Sheehan in his book *Lady Hostage: Mrs Lindsay* (Dripsey, 1990), but there is also a succinct and reasonably complete account of the events surrounding the Dripsey ambush of 28 January 1921, the court-martials and executions of Volunteers, the IRA reprisals against off-duty soldiers in Cork city, and finally the IRA execution of Mrs Lindsay and her chauffeur James Clarke on the following website: <http://homepage.eircom.net/~corkcounty/Timeline/Dripsey.htm> (accessed 28 May 2016). This last source includes copies of the letters sent by Mrs Lindsay (pleading for her life) to British Major General Sir (Edward) Peter Strickland at Victoria Barracks, and by the IRA to Strickland indicating that if 'the five of our men taken at Dripsey' were executed as scheduled 'on Monday morning [28 February 1921]' by the military, the IRA would execute Mrs Lindsay and her chauffeur James Clarke, 'who have been convicted of spying and are under sentence of death'. Since the five Dripsey prisoners and one other condemned Volunteer were indeed executed on that day, followed by the trial and death sentence (later commuted) of Volunteer Denis Murphy on 9 March 1921, Mrs Lindsay and James Clarke were taken out and shot by the IRA on 14 March, as previously noted. Maria Lindsay and

James Clarke both appeared on the list of 'missing persons' published in the *Irish Times* of 22 August 1921. The date of their kidnapping is given there as 19 February 1921. This date is incorrect.

In 1911 Maria Georgina (Mary) Lindsay (then aged 50) and her husband John (aged 66) had been married for twenty-three years. They were childless. They resided at Leemount, a modest mansion with thirteen rooms, along with their butler (and later chauffeur) James Clarke, a housemaid, a cook, and a coachman. John Lindsay was a native of County Down, his wife a native of County Kildare. They were adherents of the Church of Ireland; they did employ two Catholic servants, one as their cook and the other as their coachman. Very shortly after the IRA executed Mrs Lindsay and James Clarke, a party of Volunteers burned down the Big House in which they had lived. The *Cork Examiner* of 19 March 1921 reported that 'the house of Mrs Lindsay was raided in the early morning [of 2 March?] by forty armed men, who gave the three women servants short notice to remove personal belongings. They then locked them in an outhouse and set fire to the dwelling-house, which was consumed with practically everything it contained.'

A somewhat different account of the circumstances surrounding Mrs Lindsay's kidnapping and the destruction of Leemount House appears in a document found in the Richard Mulcahy Papers. After noting that Lindsay and Clarke had been abducted at about 1 a.m. on 17 February 1921, the writer observed that a party of men with the same leader as had directed the abduction had come again to Leemount a fortnight later. This leader presented a note from Mrs Lindsay asking for some papers to be taken from her desk, a task that her housekeeper performed. When asked how Mrs Lindsay was faring, the leader replied that she was then 'fairly well and plucky'. Once the papers had been retrieved from Mrs Lindsay's desk, Leemount House was sprinkled with petrol and burned down. See Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/21 (UCDA). A contemporary IRA record notes that Leemount House was burned on 2 March 1921, and that Maria Lindsay and James Clarke were executed on 14 March. See Record of the Activities of the Sixth Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, Florence O'Donoghue Papers, MS 31, 339 (NLI).

The ill-fated IRA commander of the nearly seventy Volunteers gathered near Godfrey's Cross between Dripsey and Coachford on 28 January 1921 was Frank Busted, captain of the Blarney Company of the Sixth Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade. He was personally involved in the later kidnapping and execution of Mrs Lindsay and James Clarke as well as in the burning of Leemount House after their executions. See Pension Application of Frank Busted, MSP34/REF4903 (Military Archives).

Busted later confirmed to Ernie O'Malley key details of Maria Lindsay's involvement in the wrecking of the Dripsey ambush and added several other interesting pieces of information about what allegedly passed between her and two local priests: 'The priest in Coachford was involved, for it was he who gave Mrs Lindsay a lift. She was

told about this party of men [at the ambush site]. She took out her car with her chauffeur [and] went through Coachford, where she met the CC [Catholic curate] on a road in the village going to the PP's [Parish Priest's] house and she gave him a spin, and I think she mentioned to him what she was going to do. The PP [Father Edward Shinnick], who was opposed to us and who wanted the British [to prevail], is reported to have sent around that Mrs Lindsay was going to inform the military and that we were to withdraw, but we thought that he was putting on an act and that he wanted to save the British and make us withdraw from this, to us, false threat. . . . [After mentioning the circumstances ending in the execution of Mrs Lindsay and her chauffeur, Busted explained to O'Malley what in his mind justified the IRA's decision to carry out this deed.] Mrs Lindsay denied her bringing the information [to the British forces] up to the hilt. We could only use what information she had told the PP. She had told the PP that she was going in to Ballincollig Barracks to tell the British that there had [been] an ambush prepared for them. He [the PP] didn't tell us, for he didn't appear in person . . . , but he sent someone [to let IRA officers know of Mrs Lindsay's intention].'

According to Busted, even Michael Collins did not know that Busted and his comrades had executed Mrs Lindsay, and there is strong evidence that Collins and other IRA leaders in Dublin wanted to save her from this fate. Busted claimed that IRA Deputy Chief of Staff Eoin O'Duffy had sought her release and 'tried to blackguard me in Vaughan's [Hotel in Dublin—famous for meetings between Collins and local IRA commanders]. Collins wanted some information and he was upstairs. O'Duffy said that if I didn't go up, he'd blow the head off me, and Jim Grey was there. Both of us told O'Duffy what we would do with him.' Transportation officer of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, Grey was one of the most zealous Volunteers in Cork city. See Interview with Frank Busted, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA).

**32. Civilian James Clarke** (aged about 54) of Leemount House near Coachford (Rylane in Aghabulloge parish)

Date of incident: 17 Feb. 1921 (kidnapped and later killed as suspected spy and in reprisal by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 18 Feb. 1921; *Irish Times*, 18 Feb., 4, 15, 19 March, 5 April, 7 July, 30 July, 2, 5, 22 Aug. 1921; Record of the Activities of the Sixth Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, Florence O'Donoghue Papers, MS 31, 339 (NLI); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Pension Application of Frank Busted, MSP34/REF4903 (Military Archives); Interview with Frank Busted, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA); Denis Dwyer's WS 713, 5-10 (BMH); Daniel McCarthy's WS 1457, 6-8 (BMH); O'Donoghue (1954, 1986), 121; O'Callaghan (1974), 157; Pyne Clarke (1986), 50; Sheehan (1990), 175-76; O'Farrell (1997), 55; Borgonovo (2007), 88, 104; T. Sheehan (2008); Kautt (2010), 125-29; Ó hÉalaithe (2014), 156-60; <http://www.tameside.gov.uk/museumsgalleries/mom/objectfocus/razor> (17 Sept. 2015); <http://homepage.eircom.net/~corkcounty/Timeline/Dripsey.htm> (accessed 28 May 2016); Richard Murphy, 'Ambush at Dripsey, 28 January 1921', at

[http://www.inniscarra.org/styled/page83/dripsey\\_ambush.html](http://www.inniscarra.org/styled/page83/dripsey_ambush.html) (accessed 29 May 2016).

Note: Chauffeur/butler James Clarke and Mrs Mary Lindsay were kidnapped on 17 February 1921 as suspected spies; they were subsequently tried by the IRA and sentenced to death for passing vital information to British forces in connection with the abortive Dripsey ambush of 28 January 1921. This would-be ambush ended in disaster for the large IRA party (about seventy men) and its leader Volunteer Captain Frank Busted after Clarke's female employer Mrs Lindsay tipped off British officers of the 1st Manchester Regiment at Ballincollig Military Barracks. Mary Lindsay had been driven to Ballincollig barracks by her chauffeur Clarke. After holding Clarke and Mrs Lindsay as hostages for almost a month, the IRA executed them together at Flagmount in the Rylane district on 14 March 1921 and secretly buried their bodies. They were killed in reprisal for the executions (at Victoria Detention Barracks on 28 February) of five of the eight Volunteers captured at Dripsey and for the sentencing to death of a sixth Dripsey prisoner on 9 March.

Among her domestic employees, Mrs Lindsay had apparently dispensed with the services of her one-time coachman Daniel Sullivan at Leemount by 1921, and the butler Clarke was doubling as the family chauffeur. He was a native of County Down, like his male employer John Lindsay, and he was a Presbyterian. The name of James Clarke appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 5 March 1921, with the notation 'British supporter', and with a note that £200 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). It is unlikely that Clarke was a spy or informer; his execution was attributable primarily to his association with Mrs Lindsay at the time of her abduction and then to the knowledge that he must have acquired of the identities of her captors and the location of their hiding places.

**33. Civilian Michael ('Mickaroo') Walsh** (aged 43) of Kearney's Lane, Cork city (outside Cork Union Hospital, Cork city)

Date of incident: 18 Feb. 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 19, 21 Feb. 1921; *FJ*, 19 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 26 Feb. 1921; *CCE*, 26 Feb. 1921; Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Details of the Anglo-Irish Conflict, 1916-21, by Seán Collins Power, p. 5 (Collins Papers, Military Archives); Interview with Eamon Enright, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/103 (UCDA); Interview with Michael (Mick) Murphy, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA); Commandant P. J. Murphy's WS 869, 19, 25 (BMH); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 37 (BMH); Seán Healy's WS 1643, 22 (BMH); Edward Horgan's WS 1644, 10-11 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 43-44, 54-55, 76-78, 100 (note 71); Murphy (2010), 41; Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: Previously a foreman over workers at Ford's Tractor Works and a builder's labourer, Walsh was taken from the Cork Union Hospital by six armed and disguised men. His body was found outside the Union gate. A card pinned to his clothing read:

'Caught at last. Spies and informers beware. — I.R.A.' Aged 43, Walsh was a Boer war veteran and currently a jobless construction worker who was being treated in this hospital for a 'functional disorder'. The raiders literally carried him down the stairs from his ward, out the workhouse gate, and onto the road, where they riddled his body with bullets. See *CE*, 19 Feb. 1921.

Walsh had previously been prosecuted in a Sinn Féin court in Cork city; the court had ordered that he be evicted from one of the houses owned by the father of former city Volunteer P. J. Murphy at 63 Blarney Street. Murphy recalled this set of events many years later: 'After the trial he [Walsh] gave the names of the court and the local Volunteers to the police. He was rewarded with money for this information. His sister got the draft and went to cash it in the local shop, where it was reported to the local Volunteers. He was arrested by the Volunteers and sentenced to be deported. He left the country and went to Wales. After a few months he returned. We made two attempts to arrest him, and on each occasion he got away from us, on the first occasion by diving into a shop full of women and children, and the second time [by] throwing himself off a high wall. On each occasion he went to the military barracks and brought the military to our homes. While with the British in Cork [Military] Barracks, Walsh fell into bad health, and they transferred him to the Cork workhouse. One night in February 1921 he was brought out on a stretcher to the backgate of the workhouse and shot dead by the I.R.A.' See Commandant P. J. Murphy's WS 869, 19 (BMH).

According to city Volunteer leader Michael Murphy, 'Information about this spy was discovered by us in captured mails. He was also observed by some of our intelligence men going into police barracks.' See Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 37 (BMH). Murphy also told Ernie O'Malley that 'Mickaroo' Walsh 'was a definite spy and a low type. He was shot in Blarney Street [Cork], but he wasn't killed and he was removed to the South Infirmary [and] to the Union Hospital. He was suffering badly from venereal disease. Tom Crofts pulled him out and he was shot outside of the hospital. He [Walsh] knew who was who, and he had given information about prominent officers in the Irish Volunteers.' See Interview with Michael (Mick) Murphy, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA).

After Walsh's return from IRA-imposed exile and about a month before his death, while staying with his sister, fourteen shots were fired into their house, and a squad of IRA gunmen chased him into another house, in the process trampling on a child that his sister was nursing and mortally injuring the child. See *CE*, 21 Feb. 1921. In the 1911 census there was a illiterate builder's labourer named Michael Walsh (then aged 34) residing on Moore Street in Cork city. He and his wife Maryann, though married for ten years, were then childless. He was a Catholic. The name of Michael Walsh appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 18 February 1921, but the issue of liability was left unstated; compensation of £650 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**34. Civilian Mathew Sweetnam** (aged about 65) of Lissanoohig near Skibbereen (Lissanoohig)

Date of incident: 19 Feb. 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *II*, 19 Oct. 1920; *CE*, 21 Feb., 16 May 1921; *FJ*, 21 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 26 Feb., 21 May 1921; *CCE*, 26 Feb. 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/159A/49 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); 'Lest We Forget' (PRONI, D. 989/c/1/51); Patrick O'Sullivan's WS 1481, 8 (BMH); William Crowley's WS 1502, 9 (BMH); Fitzgerald (2012), 187-91.

Note: A well-known and extensive Protestant farmer, Sweetnam long resisted the payment of the levy for the West Cork Brigade Arms Fund. As early as October 1920 the *Irish Independent* reported that he had been 'removed to an unknown destination by Sinn Feiners. It is said he resisted the levying of an Arbitration Court fine and wounded one of the Volunteer police.' By early February 1921 the headquarters of the West Cork Brigade had issued orders for the execution of Sweetnam and another resisting Protestant farmer named William Connell; their alleged offence was that they 'had informed the British of the names of the men who had called on them to collect the Arms Fund levy'. See Patrick O'Sullivan's WS 1481, 8 (BMH). An RIC report for February 1921 took note of the 'murder of M. Sweetnam and W. Connell, two Protestant farmers, by rebels [on] 19/2/21 for having given evidence at a court martial'. Rather than having furnished information on a regular basis to the police or the military, Sweetnam and Connell appear to have been killed for what the IRA deemed a serious but singular offence that came on top of their general defiance of attempts by the IRA to impose its authority in that area. See RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA).

IRA veterans recalled decades later details of these killings and the British reprisals that followed. On the night of 19 February Sweetnam was taken from his house by six armed men, who shot him about 50 yards away. He ran back to his house and collapsed in the kitchen, where he was again followed by one of the armed men, who shot him in the neck. He expired with five bullet wounds in various parts of his body. The execution was carried out 'by selected members of the Lisheen Company' of the Schull Battalion of the West Cork Brigade. See William Crowley's WS 1502, 9 (BMH). Sweetnam's two farms and livestock were later seized by the IRA. On 14 May 1921 a large party of IRA men visited Sweetnam's farms and removed all the livestock from both of them. See *CE*, 16 May 1921. In a set of reprisals for the executions of Connell and Sweetnam, British forces burned the houses of the father of Patrick O'Sullivan (quartermaster, Skibbereen Battalion), Cornelius Connolly (O/C, Skibbereen Battalion), and John McCarthy of Mohanna, all active Volunteers. See Patrick O'Sullivan's WS 1481, 8 (BMH).

The Lissanoohig farmer Mathew Sweetnam and his wife Maria were the parents of

four living children (six born) in 1911. Two of those children were then co-resident with their parents. The Sweetnams were adherents of the Church of Ireland. Mathew Sweetnam had three Catholic tenants with houses on his land at Lissanoohig in 1911. The name of Mathew Sweetnam appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 19 February 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £5,000 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**35. Civilian William Connell** (aged about 59) of Lissanoohig near Skibbereen (Lissanoohig)

Date of incident: 19 Feb. 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 21 Feb. 1921; *FJ*, 21 Feb. 1921; *CWN*, 26 Feb. 1921; *CCE*, 9 April 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/148/11 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Application of Elizabeth Annie Connell to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/151/12); Patrick O'Sullivan's WS 1481, 8 (BMH); William Crowley's WS 1502, 9 (BMH).

Note: A well-to-do Protestant farmer aged about 59, Connell was shot on the night of 19 February 1921 at Lissanoohig, about 3 miles from Skibbereen, in the presence of his wife by a party of undisguised armed men. Connell had been in Skibbereen on business and had been home for only a few minutes when the gunmen entered his house and riddled him with revolver fire; eight bullet wounds were found on his body. This execution too was carried out 'by selected members of the Lisheen Company' of the Schull Battalion of the West Cork Brigade. See William Crowley's WS 1502, 9 (BMH). Like his neighbour Mathew Sweetnam, Connell was said to have given information to the authorities about collectors for the Brigade Arms Fund who had called on him for payment of the levy. In particular, Connell and Sweetnam were killed because they were thought to have given evidence against Florence McCarthy, a rural-district councilor, who had recently been sentenced to six months in jail for collecting money for the arms fund. See Patrick O'Sullivan's WS 1481, 8 (BMH).

A police report for February 1921 recorded that Connell and Sweetnam had been murdered 'for having given evidence at a court martial'. Rather than having furnished information on a regular basis to the RIC or the military, these two Protestant farmers seem to have been killed for what the IRA deemed a serious but singular offence that came on top of their general defiance of attempts by the IRA to impose its authority in that area. See RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA).

The Lissanoohig farmer William Connell and his wife Elizabeth had been married for fifteen years by 1911. They were childless. They had three Catholic servants, one listed as a 'general domestic servant' and the other two as farm servants. The Connells belonged to the Church of Ireland. Like the Sweetnams, the Connells lived

in a substantial farmhouse (with nine rooms, one more than the Sweetnams had). After William Connell's execution the IRA seized and occupied his farm of 84 acres. His wife Elizabeth tried to sell it to the Protestant farmer Francis Sweetnam in March 1921 for about £3,330, but the IRA visited him at night, pulled him out of bed, and 'forced [him] by threats to surrender the farm'. Subsequently, in August 1923, the farm was sold to Patrick Fitzgerald for £2,050, apparently without objection from the local IRA. In spite of her efforts to resell the farm in June, July, and August 1921, 'the prospective buyers told me and my solicitor they dared not buy and that no one would be allowed to buy then. So I had to keep the farm on my hands until I was able to dispose of it in 1923 at [a] reduced price.'

Mrs Connell 'could not live in Ireland in consequence of the shock received by the murder of my husband. I am living in lodgings at Brackley, Northants, on the interest on money received.' She told the Irish Grants Committee in March 1927: 'William Connell was murdered because he was a Protestant and loyalist, and Francis Sweetnam for similar reasons was not allowed to purchase the farm.' See Application of Elizabeth Annie Connell to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/151/12), March 1927.

The name of William Connell appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 19 February 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £5,000 in compensation was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**36. Civilian William Mohally** (aged 27) of 4 Farran Street, Cork city (Blackrock Road, Cork)

Date of incidents: 19-20 Feb. 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CE*, 21 Feb., 23 March 1921; *FJ*, 21 Feb. 1921; *CCE*, 26 Feb. 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/155B/15 (TNA); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 37 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 44, 53-54, 76-77, 100 (note 71), 179; Murphy (2010), 41.

Note: A night watchman, a ship steward, and an ex-soldier, Mohally was found unconscious on the afternoon of 19 February 1921 in Lower Glanmire Road with bullet wounds to the head; he was hospitalised in serious condition at the South Infirmary. He was removed from the hospital on Sunday, 20 February, and shot dead by the IRA on the Blackrock Road. The *Cork Examiner* of 23 March 1921 reported: 'There appeared to be no doubt that he was cruelly done to death because of his friendly associations with the police and military authorities.' His killers pushed into blankets over his body a notice that read, 'For a spy there is no escape. I.R.A.' See Military Inquests, WO 35/155B/15 (TNA).

There was only one William Mohally resident in Cork city or county at the time of the 1911 census. He was the eldest child (then aged 17) among the four living children (eight born) of the foreman carter Michael Mohally and his wife Nano of 97 Roches Buildings in Cork city. The victim had two younger brothers and a younger

sister. The Mohallys were Catholic.

**37. Civilian Alfred James Cotter** (aged 35) of Ballineen (Ballineen)

Date of incident: 25 Feb. 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 28 Feb. 1921; *II*, 28 Feb. 1921; *IT*, 28 Feb. 1921; *CCE*, 5 March 1921; *CWN*, 5 March 1921; *Nenagh Guardian*, 5 March 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/148/33 (TNA); 'Lest We Forget' (PRONI, D. 989/c/1/51); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, Feb. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Jack Hennessy's WS 1234, 1-2, 12 (BMH); Timothy Warren's WS 1275, 1-4 (BMH); Fitzgerald (2012), 187; Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: Alfred Cotter, aged 35, a master baker, was shot in the head and mortally wounded while standing outside his front door in Ballineen at about 9 p.m. on 25 February 1921. He died almost immediately. His killers escaped in the darkness. See *CCE*, 5 March 1921. The *Cork Examiner* of 28 February had at first reported that Cotter had been killed at his mother's house—Monchout in Ballineen. Cotter and his brother Frederick owned and operated a prosperous bakery business in Ballineen. They were the only local traders to refuse to obey a boycott of the local RIC imposed by the Ballineen Company of Volunteers, led by Timothy Warren and Jack Hennessy. In fact, besides violating the boycott, Alfred Cotter reportedly gave information about local Volunteers to the police and the military and even accompanied them when they conducted raids in search of IRA men on the run. Cotter was killed when the West Cork Brigade was 'cleaning up the British spy ring in West Cork'. See Jack Hennessy's WS 1234, 12 (BMH).

The name of Alfred Cotter appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 25 February 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £5,000 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). The bakery brothers Alfred James Cotter and Frederick Pierce Cotter of Ballineen were adherents of the Church of Ireland. In 1901 they were among the six children (five sons and one daughter) of the merchant Pierce Cotter and his wife Elizabeth (Lizzie) of house 2 in the townland of Lower Teadies near Ballineen.

**38. Civilian Thomas Cotter** (aged about 55) of Curraclough (Warrenscourt) near Macroom (Curraclough)

Date of incident: 1 March 1921 (executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 3 March 1921; *IT*, 3 March 1921; *FJ*, 3 March 1921; *CCE*, 5 March 1921; *CWN*, 26 March 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/147B/14 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, West Riding, March 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); Application of Richard C. Cotter (son of victim) to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/106/18); William Desmond's WS 832, 36 (BMH); Interview with Charlie Brown, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA).

Note: A Protestant farmer (aged about 55) in the Kilmurry district, Cotter was taken from his house by two armed and masked men (part of a group of about twenty) and shot dead. His body was found a short distance from the house with a card attached labeling him a 'convicted spy'. According to one report, the armed men were disguised as British soldiers: 'It is claimed that the murder was on account of the deceased's allegiance to the crown, as certain questions were put to him previous to his being shot.' Cotter was a fearless and outspoken loyalist; he had been boycotted earlier for helping another boycotted farmer named Kingston, and he had allowed a member of the RIC to be stationed on his premises. See Application of Richard C. Cotter (son of victim) to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/106/18). William Desmond, the captain of the Newcestown Volunteer Company, recalled the role of his unit in this case: Kilmurry Company 'in the 1st Brigade area asked us to help them with the interrogation of a spy they had caught. This was done, and the spy, after trial, was executed. The usual label was put on his chest, and he was left in the avenue leading to his house. He was a farmer named Cotter and lived at Curraclough.' See William Desmond's WS 832, 36 (BMH).

Macroom Volunteer leader Charlie Brown recalled the deception used to ensnare Cotter differently: 'Cotter in Kilmurry side was under suspicion. A party [of IRA men] was sent to him, one of them in chaplain's uniform, who went alone, and he [i.e., Cotter] gave information and was shot.' See Interview with Charlie Brown, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA).

Cotter and his wife Jane had been married for nine years at the time of the 1911 census. They had married late; both were then aged 45. They had one son, Richard Christopher Cotter (then aged 4); another child had apparently died in infancy. The Cotters belonged to the Church of Ireland.

**39. Civilian Bridget Noble (née Neill)**, (aged about 45) of Ardgroom Inward near Castletownbere (Eyeries district)

Date of incident: 4 March 1921 (abducted and presumed killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/26 (UCDA); Report for Cork No. 5 Brigade HQ, sent to IRA GHQ, Dublin, dated 21 Oct. 1921, IRA Executions in 1921 (Military Archives, A/0649); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); O'Halpin (2012), 154, 157 n. 30; Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: A resident of Kilcatherine parish in the Eyeries district, Noble was abducted and remained missing as of late August 1922. Her husband Alexander Noble of Grimsby (a cooper by trade) claimed compensation for her presumed death, which occurred under mysterious circumstances. Born in Scotland but settled by 1911 with his wife's farming family in far West Cork, he was a British supporter. In a letter sent to Eamon de Valera and dated 8 September 1921, Alexander Noble stated that his wife Bridget had been 'kidnapped between the village of Ardgroom and

Castletownbere on the 4th day of March last'. He pointed out that he had been obliged to go to England in order to support her, and he bitterly complained, 'It is not clean work to take away my lone defenceless wife.' See Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/26 (UCDA). Bridget Noble's disappearance caused embarrassment to the IRA GHQ in Dublin, as there was an unwritten but fairly rigid IRA rule against killing women. The reasons for her trial and execution by the IRA became clear only later.

In response to a request from IRA GHQ in Dublin, the leaders of Cork No. 5 Brigade drafted a report dated 21 October 1921. This report pointed out that Bridget Noble had been seen by some of the men of C Company of the Castletownbere Battalion going into the local police barracks on four or five occasions and had been seen in conversation with a police sergeant in a private house on two occasions. At one point, after she had returned from a hospital visit, her hair was 'bobbed' or cut very short as a punishment ordered by the local IRA battalion. Subsequently, her house was searched (after a military raid) by order of the captain of the Ardgroom Volunteer Company, and in this search part of a letter from the RIC head constable in Castletownbere was found, along with five half-torn letters from other RIC members and two photographs of RIC men. The IRA had also received information that she had told the RIC that Liam Dwyer and Patrick Crowley were the men who had shot and mortally wounded William Lehane (alias William Lyons) as a land grabber on the night of 7-8 May 1920. After Bridget Noble had suffered the indignity of the IRA's bobbing of her hair, she went with her complaint into the local police barracks with another girl, Nora Sullivan, who was later questioned by the IRA and revealed that Noble had submitted a letter to the local RIC head constable containing the names of seven Volunteers and stating that they had cut off her hair. On 4 March 1921, in another raid on her house, the IRA found a letter from the RIC head constable asking her to meet him in Castletownbere that evening. The IRA arrested her on the way to that meeting. The date of her arrest is given in the report as 4 March 1921; the date of her trial by the IRA as 13 March; and the date of her execution as 15 March. One of the men whose names had been revealed by Bridget Noble—Michael Sullivan—was arrested in May 1921 and interned by British forces. Another man, John Dwyer, who had been involved in bobbing Noble's hair, had been arrested on 4 March 1921 and was later sentenced to six months' imprisonment. According to the IRA report, Bridget Noble admitted that she was guilty of all charges; she was 'fortified' by the rites of the church before her execution. See Report for Cork No. 5 Brigade HQ, sent to IRA GHQ, Dublin, dated 21 Oct. 1921, IRA Executions in 1921 (Military Archives, A/0649).

Like her father (a farmer) and mother—John and Mary Neill of Ardgroom Inward (both aged 73 in 1911)—Bridget Noble was Catholic; so too was her husband Alexander. Bridget Noble and her husband may have inherited her father's farm by 1921. The name of Bridget Noble appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 4 March 1921, with the notation 'British supporter', and with a note that compensation of £1,500 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**40. Civilian John Sheehan** (about aged 26) of Greenane near Kanturk (near Kanturk)

Date of incident: ca. 5 March 1921 (abducted and later executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 22 March 1921; *FJ*, 22 March 1921; *II*, 22 March 1921; *CWN*, 26 March 1921; *Connaught Telegraph*, 26 March 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/159B/4 (TNA); WS 744 of Jeremiah Murphy, Michael Courtney, and Denis Mulchinock, 14 (BMH); Death Certificate for John Sheehan, died ca. 5 March 1921 (received from military inquiry held 24 March 1921).

Note: Armed men came knocking at John Sheehan's door at Greenane. Sheehan told a close relative (wrongly said to have been his sister) not to open it: 'It's the Sinn Feiners come for me.' British forces later found his body with a note declaring, 'Spies, traitors, informers in Kanturk associated with military, police, and Black and Tans, you are all listed. Beware, I.R.A.' At a subsequent military inquest, however, Lieutenant C. McKerren of the Machine Gun Corps stated that while Sheehan had been known in Kanturk as a 'bad character', he had never given information to the military. See Military Inquests, WO 35/159B/4 (TNA).

A butcher by trade, single, and aged about 26, Sheehan was abducted on about 5 March 1921 from his mother's house in or very near Kanturk by a number of armed men. His body, with a bullet hole in the forehead, was found in a field on the farm of the Archdeacons near Kanturk on 21 March 1921 by the military and police; it was in a badly decomposed state and was removed to the Kanturk workhouse. His death was officially registered on foot of a coroner's certificate received from the military court of inquiry held on 24 March. See *CE*, 22 March 1921; *CWN*, 26 March 1921.

This killing has the hallmarks of an IRA execution. Three former local Volunteers observed many years later: 'During March 1921 a spy was found guilty of giving information to the enemy and was executed by members of the Kanturk Battalion. In view of the fact that relatives of this man are still resident in the locality and will probably continue to live in the district for many years to come, it is not considered desirable to elaborate on the details of this shooting.' See WS 744 of Jeremiah Murphy, Michael Courtney, and Denis Mulchinock, 14 (BMH).

In 1911 John Sheehan (then aged 16) resided with his aunt Bridget Callaghan and his mother Kate Sheehan, Bridget's sister, at Lower Greenane near Kanturk. His aunt was a 'dealer in old clothing', while his mother was a 'dealer in confectionery'. Though Kate Sheehan indicated to the census enumerator that she had been married for sixteen years (with only one child), there was no sign of her husband. Bridget Callaghan, her nephew John Sheehan, and her sister Kate Sheehan shared a dwelling with only three rooms. All were Catholics.

**41. Civilian John Good** (aged 66) of Barry's Hall near Timoleague (Barry's Hall)

Date of incident: 10 March 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CE*, 12, 30 March, 18 June 1921; *CC*, 12 March 1921; *CCE*, 12, 19 March 1921; *FJ*, 12 March 1921; *IT*, 12 March 1921; *CWN*, 19 March 1921; *SS*, 25 June 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/149B/29 (TNA); 'Lest We Forget' (PRONI D. 989/c/1/51); RIC Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, April 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/30 (UCDA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Application of James Good to Irish Grants Committee, received 29 Oct. 1927 (CO 762/152/1); John O'Connell's *WS* 1250, 8 (BMH).

Note: An extensive and progressive Protestant farmer, John Good was shot and killed as a spy on 10 March 1921 by a party of masked and armed men belonging to the IRA. They knocked on his door, asked for him, and mortally wounded him when he appeared. A local medical doctor refused to come to his aid. His son William was to be killed on 26 March. The victim left a wife (Elizabeth) and five adult children, including a daughter and four sons. The Goods were adherents of the Church of Ireland. Local historians have suggested that the executions of the father and one of his sons by the IRA were in part reprisals for the killings of Volunteers Patrick Donovan and Denis Hegarty on 17 and 19 January 1921 respectively.

The correspondent of the *Cork County Eagle* connected the deaths of John Good and Hegarty in a suggestive way: 'Those who knew the late Mr John Good, Barry's Hall, Timoleague, heard with deep regret of his untimely end. A respectable farmer, of a retiring disposition, beyond the keen interest taken by him in agriculture and cattle breeding, he was little known in public life. The late Mr Hegarty, who was an employee of Mr Good's, was a young man of excellent disposition and character, and he was cruelly murdered a short time since, under somewhat similar circumstances.' See *CCE*, 19 March 1921. John Good was reportedly the fifth Protestant farmer in West Cork to be murdered within the past few weeks.

The case for the killing of John Good as an IRA reprisal seems rather strong. In a letter dated 24 October 1921 from the Divisional Adjutant at the headquarters of the First Southern Division of the IRA, the following account was recorded: 'Early in March [1921] information came to hand that the Good family of Barryshall were doing the work of enemy agents in the district of Timoleague. This was later confirmed when a local Volunteer whom Good employed was murdered in his bed in an outhouse of Good's by enemy police and military. As a result of investigation the O/C Cork No. 3 ordered the execution of John Good and his son James; in the former case the order was carried out, but the latter had left the district when looked for. Land, goods, etc., were confiscated in accordance with a brigade order previously made relative to spy property.' See Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/30 (UCDA).

This case came before the Clonakilty quarter sessions in June 1921. The widow and a surviving son of John Good sought compensation not only for the two murders but

also for property that had been stolen—‘the destruction and removal of property and stock’ on 25 April 1921, after the killings. The surviving Goods then fled for their lives: ‘Immediately after those terrible events, the widow of Mr John Good and the remaining members of the family had to fly out of the country, and had since been practically living in hiding. The family possessed a most valuable farm of about four hundred acres, and it was fully stocked, but in April it was found that the place had practically been wrecked and made derelict. Up to the 25th April, property and effects to the value of £3,040 had been taken away, and that state of things continued until the whole place had been practically made a desert.’ It was also mentioned in court that John Good was a brother-in-law of Thomas Bradfield and a relative of William Connell, ‘both of whom had also been shot dead’. Mrs Elizabeth Good and her surviving son James jointly claimed compensation of £10,000. See *CE*, 18 June 1921.

Although Good was described by his surviving and inheriting son in his claim to the Irish Grants Committee as ‘a sturdy supporter of the government’, there is no indication in this claim that he was an informer, which would have increased the case for compensation. Although this was among the larger awards (£7,000), the amount was probably more a reflection of John Good’s social standing, the extensive damages to his farm, and the killing by the IRA of one of his sons. The fact that in this case full liability was not accepted on the British side, and that instead a notation of ‘agreed 50/50’ was written over the notation ‘L’, would support the contention that he had not provided information. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Application of James Good to Irish Grants Committee, received 29 Oct. 1927 (CO 762/152/1).

The succession of Cork Protestants killed by the IRA was widely noted in mid-March: ‘The Chief Secretary [Sir Hamar Greenwood] said he regretted to state that no less than eight Protestant farmers had been murdered in the County of Cork during the last three months, and that according to information he had received, there appeared to be a general desire among Protestant farmers of that county to sell their farms in order that they might leave the country.’ See *CE*, 19 March 1921.

**42. Civilian David Nagle** of Waterfall near Cork city (near Allen’s Grove, Clashanure, Ovens)

Date of incident: 12 March 1921 (executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: Letter from HQ First Southern Division, 3 March 1921; IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0649); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Patrick Cronin’s WS 710, 1-2 (BMH); WS 810 of Timothy Herlihy et al., 31 (BMH); Michael O’Regan’s WS 1524, 5 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 169-70; Murphy (2010), 41; Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: An ex-RIC constable and a rural postman, Nagle was ‘arrested’ by the IRA on 12 March 1921, charged with espionage, promptly tried, and executed, apparently

on the same day. The background to the killing of Nagle and another spy was detailed in the following BMH witness statement by eight members of the Third Battalion (Ballincollig) of the Cork No. 1 Brigade: 'About the end of the summer 1920 a raid for mails was made at Waterfall which resulted in the capture of a letter from Nagle, a local postman, to a man by the name of O'Sullivan, an ex-British soldier. They arrested Nagle, who gave all information, also a photo of O'Sullivan and details of the place in Cork city where he was to meet with him. Leo [Murphy, O/C Third Battalion] and some others went there instead of Nagle and shot him dead. Later Nagle was also tried and also shot. Nagle had been in the R.I.C. and actually had a brother still in the force and stationed at Tuckey Street Barracks in Cork city.' [His name was John Nagle.] See WS 810 of Timothy Herlihy et al., 31 (BMH). According to John Desmond of Bandon, Nagle was buried in Allen's Grove, Clashanure, Ovens.

John Borgonovo mentions the possibility (as yet unproven) that 'the interrogation of Nagle the postman by the Ballincollig IRA set off a chain reaction culminating in the execution of the "anti-Sinn Féin Society" leadership in February 1921'. He also notes that the Ballincollig IRA men may have confused the alleged spy O'Sullivan with someone else, perhaps Seán O'Callaghan, abducted on 15 September 1920 and executed as a spy a few days later. See Borgonovo (2007), 169-70. The name of David Nagle appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 12 March 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £1,400 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). David Nagle and his brother, RIC Constable John Nagle, were Catholics.

**43. Civilian Cornelius Sheehan** (aged 54) of 198 Blarney Street, Cork city (Blarney Street)

Date of incident: 19 March 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *II*, 10 Jan. 1921; *CE*, 10 Jan., 21 March, 11 May 1921; *CCE*, 26 March 1921; *CWN*, 26 March 1921; *CC*, 1 June 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/159B/3 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Reports, Cork City and East Riding, Jan. and March 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA); 'Report on Operations', Cork No. 1 Brigade (March 1921), Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/38 (UCDA); Charles O'Connell's WS 566, 3 (BMH); P. J. Murphy's WS 869, 23-24 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 76, 100 (note 71); Murphy (2010), 41. (We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Theresa Ellis, granddaughter of Cornelius Sheehan, in correcting elements of an earlier version of this entry with information from various sources she had gathered.)

Note: A former asylum attendant at the Cork District Lunatic Asylum (he had worked there for twenty-two years), Cornelius Sheehan (known as 'Long Con' because he was 6 feet, 2 inches tall) had resigned following an attack on the night of 8 January 1921 on Blarney Street. Two IRA gunmen fired at him and an RIC constable, wounding both. This incident occurred as he was returning home from work at the asylum, when he stopped to talk with Constable Carroll (of the

Cornmarket Street RIC Station) near the Good Shepherd Convent. First came the order 'Hands up!' and then suddenly shots were fired at both of them by 'some civilians armed with revolvers'. Sheehan was wounded in the left shoulder, while Constable Carroll escaped with only a slight wound. See *II*, 10 Jan. 1921. The police later reported that Sheehan had been 'fired at and wounded owing to the fact that he kept company with a certain R.I.C. man in Cork. The constable was also wounded on this occasion.' The police report in January 1921 concluded that the motive for this shooting was to murder the constable and his friend Sheehan, who was suspected of supplying information. See RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, Jan. 1921 (CO 904/114, TNA). This encounter may have raised initial suspicions within the local IRA, more especially since Carroll was reputedly engaged in intelligence work. Sheehan and the policeman were subsequently awarded compensation of £125 for their injuries.

The *Cork County Eagle* of 26 March 1921 reported about a case heard in the Cork Police Court on 18 March, when in the course of the hearing Sheehan's daughter had complained about a neighbour's conduct; his daughter had indeed testified that her life and her father's had been threatened by this neighbour. The following day (19 March), while he was at home with his wife and other family members at about 8:30 p.m., gunmen pounded on the front door of his house and demanded admission, and a revolver appeared through a small hole in the door. His wife refused to open it. Suspecting the worst, Cornelius Sheehan ran out the back door, where another group of gunmen were waiting and shot him; he died almost instantaneously with his eldest son at his side. See *CC*, 21 March 1921; *CE*, 21 March 1921. A doctor at the military inquest testified to an older wound on Sheehan's shoulder and to two new bullet wounds that had caused his death. See Military Inquests, WO 35/159B/3 (TNA).

The *Cork Weekly News* of 28 March 1921 reported that Sheehan was suspected of having given information to the police on the Clogheen IRA arsenal at the back end of the asylum farm. Crown forces had earlier raided this IRA arms dump. It is apparent from the BMH witness statement of local Volunteer Charles O'Connell that 'on further information from the brigade another spy was shot. This happened in 'C' Company area, though the job was carried out by 'D' Company.' See Charles O'Connell's WS 566, 3 (BMH). Corroborating this statement is an operations report from the First Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, which recorded that a 'spy [had been] shot dead in Blarney St' by members of the First Battalion on 19 March 1921. Another report in the same file dated 22 February 1921 revealed that two men of the same battalion had earlier 'attacked [a] Black and Tan and [a] spy in Blarney Street. Both enemy seriously wounded; both our men escaped.' See Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/38 (UCDA).

It is unclear if Sheehan had passed information to crown forces on the Clogheen raid of 13 December 1920. See P. J. Murphy's WS 869, 23 (BMH). The Sheehan family has long argued that he was innocent and had been set up by his landlord. In testimony

given at the inquest into his death, his wife Abina Sheehan declared that ‘the only enemy my husband had was a woman—Mrs Abina Walsh of 196 Blarney Street—who had threatened to shoot my husband. The house [in which the Sheehans lived] was rented from her. She had declared in my presence that she would have him shot: “I will get him another bullet” [she had allegedly said].’ Some members of the party engaged in the killing had used the house of Abina Walsh (a few doors down from the Sheehans’ dwelling) to make good their escape after climbing over their backyard wall close to where the shooting had occurred. The evidence given by John Walsh (her husband) at the inquest revealed that he had seen three men at the door of his neighbour Cornelius Sheehan. The same three men had subsequently entered his kitchen [Walsh’s] from the backyard and then disappeared onto the street. They had goggles, similar to motor goggles, the glass of which was a dark colour. One ‘spoke with a rough country accent’. A daughter of the victim testified that she had seen about a dozen men then leaving the scene of the killing and that they had gone in the direction of Blarney. See *Military Inquests*, WO 35/159B/3 (TNA). The military and police from Shandon Street arrived shortly after the killing and moved the body to the house. Later, a military lorry arrived, and the body was taken to Cork Military Barracks. See *CE*, 21 March 1921; *CWN*, 26 March 1921.

It is possible that the landlord had set up Cornelius Sheehan with false allegations about informing, which played on IRA suspicions, more especially since Abina Walsh’s threat to have him killed was made the day before he was fatally shot. A high-ranking officer in the British army, in reacting to the inquest evidence, certainly felt that there were sufficient grounds to question Abina Walsh further on this episode. As a result of a subsequent case at the quarter sessions in which Abina Walsh sought to repossess the house, which had been condemned by medical doctors as unfit for habitation (she had been instructed to put it back in order by Cork Corporation), she argued that repairs could not be done until the Sheehans were ejected as they were using the woodwork as fuel, and maintained that she had not received rent since Sheehan had been killed. Mrs Sheehan and her children were now clearly in a very difficult situation and were dependent on the St Vincent de Paul Society. She claimed that the Walshes had never given her husband peace or rest until he was killed while they were trying to get the house back from him. A decree for possession was later granted to the Walshes without imposition of terms. See *CC*, 1 June 1921. Abina Sheehan returned with her family to Clondrohid and subsequently emigrated with them to London, where she ran a boarding house in Clapham.

Cornelius Sheehan’s murder prompted a claim for compensation from his wife and children. The court awarded £1,500 to his widow and £1,200 to the six children, who ranged in age from 2 months to 16 years. See *CE*, 11 May 1921. In 1911 the asylum attendant Cornelius Sheehan (then aged 44) and his wife Abina (aged 30) resided with three young children (aged 1 to 6) in house 5 in Knocknacullen West in the parish of St Mary’s Shandon in Cork city. The Sheehans were Catholic.

**44. Civilian John Cathcart** (aged 52) of Pearse's Square, Youghal (Pearse's Square)  
Date of incident: 25 March 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CE*, 24 May 1920, 26, 29 March 1921; *CC*, 26 March 1921; *FJ*, 28 March 1921; *CWN*, 2 April 1921; *II*, 5 July 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/147B/8 (TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Borgonovo (2007), 173, 179; Ó Ruairc (2016), 120.

Note: Cathcart was managing director of Paisley and Co., Ltd. He had been identified as the head of 'a ring of spies called Anti-Sinn Féin' by the headquarters staff of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, which issued an order to Volunteer Paddy O'Reilly of the Youghal Battalion to shoot Cathcart as the ringleader and to tell two of Cathcart's associates to leave the country. Armed IRA men went to his residence on Pearse's Square in Youghal on 25 March 1921, which was both Good Friday and Lady Day, forcibly entered it, and shot him several times at close range (four gunshot wounds in the back). Near the body they left an envelope with the words: 'Convicted spy.—Spies and informers, beware.—I.R.A.' That Cathcart was a spy seems likely: 'A few hours later [i.e., after the killing], Auxiliary cadets hung a board inscribed with the word "Revenge" on a tree in his garden to warn locals to expect reprisals for Cath[c]art's killing. A body of police dressed in mufti subsequently marched in his funeral procession. Both these acts indicate a police connection to Cath[c]art, which adds to suspicion that he was in fact a civilian spy.' See Borgonovo (2007), 173.

Originally from Glasgow and then County Tyrone, Cathcart was a Methodist; he had recently lost his wife and left behind three young children and an elderly mother (aged about 75). His funeral procession on Easter Sunday, 27 March 1921, 'was joined in by a large and representative gathering of the general public and all creeds and classes, including Catholic and Protestant clergymen, professional and business men, etc. . . .' His killing was 'strongly condemned' by priests at all the Masses in Youghal on Easter Sunday. See *CE*, 29 March 1921. The Recorder of Cork awarded £8,500 in July 1921 to 'the representatives' of the victim John Cathcart, whose wife was also deceased. This sum included £2,500 for each of his three orphaned children and another £1,000 for his elderly mother. See *II*, 5 July 1921. Cathcart's wife, Harriett Elizabeth Cathcart, had died prematurely at 1 Devonshire Square in Youghal on 22 May 1920, 'deeply regretted by her husband and children', but, it was said in her death notice, 'With Christ, which is far better'. See *CE*, 24 May 1920. The name of John Cathcart appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 25 March 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £8,500 in compensation was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**45. Civilian William Good** (aged 26) of Barry's Hall, Timoleague (Clooncalla Beg near Timoleague)

Date of incident: 26 March 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CE*, 30, 31 March, 18 June 1921; *CC*, 30 March 1921; *FJ*, 30 March 1921;

*CWN*, 2 April 1921; *CCE*, 2 April, 25 June 1921; *SS*, 25 June 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/149B/30 (TNA); 'Lest We Forget' (PRONI, D. 989/c/1/51); John O'Connell's WS 1250, 8, 13 (BMH); Dolan (2011), 27.

Note: Formerly a British army captain, William Good had returned home from Dublin, where he was an engineering student at Trinity College Dublin, to look after the interests of his persecuted family after his father John Good had been shot dead near Ballycatteen as a spy by the IRA on 10 March 1921. He went in a pony and trap to visit some friends from TCD in Bandon. He was waylaid and killed on his return journey on 26 March. See *CE*, 30, 31 March, 18 June 1921; *CC*, 30 March 1921. He died from two wounds according to the inquest evidence. In one wound a portion of his scalp had been punched out by a blunt instrument, but without penetrating the skull. The other wound consisted of a fissured fracture at the base of the skull, either from a fall on the back of the head or from a blow with a blunt instrument. See Military Inquests, WO 35/149B/30 (TNA).

Local historians suggest that Good was dispatched by a woman wielding a whittle-tree—the wood shaft that is attached to a plow for a horse to pull it. His body was found in a field at Clooncalla Beg in Rathclarin parish, about two miles from Timoleague. Near his body was found a notice proclaiming, 'Tried, convicted, and executed. Spies and informers beware.' His remains were taken to Bandon Military Barracks. See *CWN*, 2 April 1921; *CCE*, 2 April, 25 June 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/149B/30 (TNA); Dolan (2011), 27. William Good's death added to the rising toll of West Cork Protestant loyalists killed as spies by the IRA. His mother and brother were forced to flee their extensive farm, which was seized by the IRA and cleared of all its livestock.

William Good had volunteered for the British army on the outbreak of war in 1914 and had served with occupation forces on the Rhine for six months after the armistice. After being demobilised, he had resumed his studies at Trinity College. He was the third son of the executed John Good and his wife Elizabeth, who had reared a daughter and four sons at Barry's Hall. Captain William Good was buried on 30 March in the cemetery attached to the Protestant church at Clonakilty. See *CE*, 30, 31 March 1921. The Goods were adherents of the Church of Ireland. Elizabeth Good (wife of John Good) and her son James were jointly awarded compensation of £10,000 in June 1921 for the deaths of John Good and his son William Good on 10 and 26 March respectively. See *CCE*, 25 June 1921.

**46. Civilian Denis O'Donovan or Donovan** (aged 45) of Watergate Street, Bandon (Watergate Street)

Date of incident: 29 March 1921 (ex-sailor killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 31 March 1921; *FJ*, 31 March, 1 April 1921; *CCE*, 2 April 1921; *SS*, 25 June 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/149A/40 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, March 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA);

Application of Kate O'Donovan to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/78/13); Barry (1949, 1989), 140-41; Ó Ruairc (2016), 121.

Note: A British navy veteran, auxiliary postman, insurance agent, and shoemaker aged about 41, O'Donovan was shot at his own door on Watergate Street in Bandon by two IRA men who intimated that they wished to transact some insurance business with him. His wife Kate so informed him, but when he went to the door, he was shot twice and killed in the presence of his wife. He was a British naval pensioner with twenty-three years' service who had retired shortly after the end of the Great War. When notified of the shooting, the police and the military had O'Donovan's body removed to Bandon Military Barracks; his remains were later interred at Innishannon. See *CE*, 31 March 1921; *FJ*, 31 March, 1 April 1921; *CCE*, 2 April 1921; *SS*, 25 June 1921. The name of Denis Donovan appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 29 March 1921, with the notation 'British supporter', and with a note that compensation of £2,000 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

His wife acknowledged that her husband 'was suspected of assisting the authorities then in Bandon & district'. See Application of Kate O'Donovan to Irish Grants Committee, stamped received 31 Dec. 1926 (CO 762/78/13). Of this alleged spy, Tom Barry declared: 'The British held such a high opinion of this agent that they compulsorily closed all businesses in Bandon on the day of his funeral. Another reaction of theirs was to burn four republican farmhouses in the neighbourhood of the action.' See Barry (1949, 1989), 140-41.

But evidence given at the military inquest suggests that O'Donovan had not been a spy. Though it was admitted that he had been 'a very loyal subject', Captain Curtis informed those attending the inquest that O'Donovan 'took no part in politics and did not come in contact with the military or police'. Curtis also made the following claim: 'A determined attempt is being made to clear all the loyalists from the Bandon area.' While Curtis exaggerated the scope of IRA actions against Bandon-area loyalists, his testimony implies that O'Donovan was not providing information to the forces of the crown. See Military Inquests, WO 35/149A/40 (TNA).

The victim's widow Kate O'Donovan later claimed £7,000 for the loss of her husband; the court awarded £2,000, to be divided between the widow and her four young children, one of whom was born shortly after the murder. See *SS*, 25 June 1921. The O'Donovans were almost certainly all Catholic.

**47. Civilian Frederick Charles Stenning** (aged 57) of Innishannon (Innishannon)  
Date of incident: 31 March 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CC*, 1 April 1921; *IT*, 1 April, 27 June, 19 Oct. 1921; *CCE*, 2 April 1921; *CWN*, 9 April 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/159A/40 (TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Richard Russell's

WS 1591, 21 (BMH); James ‘Spud’ Murphy’s WS 1684, 21-22 (BMH); Malicious Injury Claims, Box 16/41, Cork County Secretary Files (CCCA); Fitzgerald (2012), 188; Donnelly (2012), 177-78; Ó Ruairc (2016), 121.

Note: Described as one of the ‘best-known residents’ of Innishannon, Stenning was gunned down at about 9:30 p.m. on Thursday night, 31 March, reportedly after he had answered a knock on the hall door of his mansion (details of this report were soon revised). See *CCE*, 2 April 1921. Stenning had become a target of the IRA because of his loyalist associations and also because he had been observed watching as members of the local Volunteer battalion took up ambush positions at Granure on the road from Bandon to Ballineen; he then cycled off to Innishannon, where the RIC were still entrenched in their barracks. A native of England, a member of the Church of Ireland, and the father of a British soldier killed in the Great War, Stenning was the sub-agent of the gentleman Moreton Frewen, the owner of the fair-sized mansion called Innishannon House and the proprietor of most of the houses and shops in the village. A staunch loyalist, Frewen was also the holder of fishing and shooting rights in the valley of the River Bandon. In his capacity as sub-agent, Stenning collected the rents of shop and house property in the village; he also served as Frewen’s gamekeeper and woodranger. See *CC*, 1 April 1921; *IT*, 1 April, 27 June, 19 Oct. 1921; *CWN*, 9 April 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/159A/40 (TNA). Given Stenning’s professional duties, he must have acquired quite a few local enemies, but it was not any overly aggressive performance of these duties that led to his demise.

Stenning had been identified by the IRA as a major loyalist informer—important enough that the IRA sent two Volunteers from the West Cork Brigade Flying Column to kill Stenning; he was at home when IRA men John Lordan and James ‘Spud’ Murphy approached the front door of his house in the village. Volunteer Richard Russell had been posted at the rear of the house to prevent Stenning’s escape. As Russell vividly remembered years later, Lordan and Murphy ‘knocked [at the front] and the door was partly opened by Stennings [*sic*], who tried to close it again but was prevented from doing so by John Lordan. Stennings then dashed along the hallway, pursued by Lordan and his companion. As Stennings dashed away, he drew a revolver and opened fire on his pursuers, who, replying to the fire, shot him dead. Following this incident, I joined the column in [the] Newcestown area with the party who had taken part in the execution of Stennings. The column had just returned from the attack on Rosscarbery R.I.C. barracks on 31st March 1921.’ See Richard Russell’s WS 1591, 21 (BMH). According to testimony given at the subsequent military inquest, Stenning was known as the staunchest loyalist in his neighbourhood, and according to this witness, that fact no doubt accounted for his murder. See Military Inquests, WO 35/159A/40 (TNA).

The surviving members of Stenning’s family (his wife Annie and three adult children) were forced to flee even before their fourteen-room house was burned down on 25 June 1921. The name of Frederick Stenning appears in the

Compensation Commission Register under 30 March 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £5,500 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). The Stennings belonged to the Church of Ireland.

**48. Civilian Denis Finbarr ('Din Din') Donovan** (aged about 24) of 9 Gouldings Terrace, Cork city (Ballygarvan near Ballinhassig)

Date of incident: 9 April 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and later killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 13, 14 April 1921; *CC*, 13, 14 April 1921; *FJ*, 14 April 1921; Death Certificate, 12 April 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Confidential Report, April 1921 (CO 104/115); Military Inquests, WO 35/149A/40 (TNA); Leo Buckley's *WS* 1714, 7, 12 (BMH); Harte (1998), 15; O'Callaghan (1972), 59-60, 63; Borgonovo (2007), 67, 100, 179; Murphy (2010), 35, 41, 67; Borgonovo, 'Dogs of War' (Summer 2012), fn. 6.

Note: An ex-soldier and labourer, Donovan was abducted on 9 April 1921 and shot dead on 12 April (bullet wound in the head). His body was found on the latter date with a rosary in his hands at Ballygarvan near Ballinhassig, some seven miles outside the city. Borgonovo regards him as the victim of an IRA assassination because he was considered a spy. But there was no obvious connection between Donovan and crown forces, and no explanation of his death was forthcoming from the IRA at the time. See Borgonovo (2007), 179. According to the RIC County Inspector's Monthly Confidential Report for April 1921 (CO 104/115), 'This man [Donovan] was a Sinn Féiner and was suspected by them of carrying out a robbery [on 8 April] at Rochestown on his own and without authority'. It was noted at the military inquest that Donovan had worked for a man named Jennings, identified as a Sinn Féin supporter, and that Donovan had the confidence of leading IRA figures in his area and was popular. See Military Inquests, WO 35/149A/40 (TNA).

Years later, however, Leo Buckley, staff officer for intelligence in the First Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, explained how and why Donovan of Barrack Street came under suspicion following the IRA killing of RIC Sergeant James O'Donoghue on 17 December and the reprisal shootings of Patrick Hanley and others (including a brother and brother-in-law of Volunteer Willie Joe O'Brien) in Cork city on the night of 17-18 December: 'When O'Brien, [Thomas] Healy, and myself met next night, we came to the conclusion that the R.I.C. had got information from some source in relation to the shooting of the R.I.C. sergeant. . . . We proceeded to worry out who the police spy could be. Only four people knew who participated in the shooting of the R.I.C. sergeant, viz., Healy, O'Brien, the company captain (Dick Murphy), and myself. At the time Dick Murphy was on very intimate terms with a man named Denis Donovan, Barrack St, Cork. . . . We had all got to know Donovan well, and we had a nickname on him—"Din Din"—for the reason that he was ever and always suggesting ways and means of shooting up the military and the R.I.C. I remember asking Dick Murphy whether he had mentioned the R.I.C. shooting to "Din Din". He

pooh-poohed any suggestion that anything was wrong with “Din Din”, and we allowed the matter to rest.’ By April 1921, however, Donovan had become a marked man. He ‘was shot as a spy on brigade instructions. He was shot in Ballygarvan on 14th April 1921 [incorrect date], and a label “spies and informers beware” placed on his chest.’ See Leo Buckley’s WS 1714, 7, 12 (BMH).

Donovan’s death certificate confirms his date of death as 12 April 1921 and gives the cause as ‘shock and haemorrhage caused by gunshot wounds homicidal’. See Death Certificate, 12 April 1921. Peter Harte appears to have confused ‘Din Din’ Riordan with ‘Din Din’ Donovan as the informer linked to British reprisals for the shooting of RIC Sergeant O’Donoghue. See Harte (1998), 15; Borgonovo, ‘Dogs of War’ (Summer 2012), fn. 6.

The account by Sean O’Callaghan published in 1972 refers to the shooting of ‘Din Din’ (but not Riordan, as in Hart), who had cashed a £10 note in Mrs Riordan’s pub or shop on Sheares Street (near where Woodford, Bourne, and Co. had their stores) shortly after the Auxiliaries’ revenge killings close to Sheares Street for the shooting of Sergeant O’Donoghue in November 1920. This account alleged that ‘Din Din’ had gotten this payment from Mr Nicholson of Messrs Woodford, Bourne, and Co., the Cork city wine and spirits and provision merchants. The account subsequently describes the killing of Nicholson, of which there is no record in other sources, and which is most likely an error. See O’Callaghan (1972), 59-60, 63. This link to Woodford, Bourne, and Co. and the claim of Nicholson’s killing are more likely related to the fate of James Charles Beal, a manager in that firm whom the IRA had killed as a suspected spy a few months earlier, on 14 February 1921. (O’Callaghan’s account refers by mistake to ‘Harrison Beal’, who was allegedly shot at a later date.) Some days before his execution on 12 April, Donovan was travelling on a van belonging to Woodford, Bourne, and Co. that was held up and robbed by two armed men. At the inquest on Donovan held on 14 April, there was some discussion as to whether he might possibly have been shot by those involved in the robbery six days earlier, as he would otherwise have given the robbers away because of his knowledge of and associations with the IRA, but this was mere speculation. His continued links with Woodford, Bourne, and Co. appear to have been the most significant detail here. See Military Inquests, WO 35/149A/40 (TNA).

Moreover, the RIC believed that it was Donovan who had taken the money from the van. It seems apparent from O’Callaghan’s account in *Execution* that when his killers picked him up in a public house in Barrack Street between the robbery and his death, ‘Din Din’ had cash at hand, as he was ‘swaying at the counter’ and clearly drunk, following a recognisable pattern. Both Hart and subsequently Murphy, who reads Hart uncritically (see Murphy [2010], 35, 41, 67), believed that ‘Din Din’ Riordan had disappeared, but in fact he never actually disappeared because a man of this name never existed in the first place. Our interpretation of the sources here squares reasonably well with the testimony in Leo Buckley’s BMH witness statement, which itself aligns reasonably well with the O’Callaghan account and

Donovan's death certificate.

Denis Finbarr Donovan was one of the six children (four sons and two daughters) of the Cork city van driver William Donovan of 10 Gouldings Terrace. In 1911 William Donovan (aged 43) was already a widower, so 'Din Din' had lost his mother at a young age. The elder brothers William Jr and Jeremiah worked as a shop porter and a messenger boy respectively. Denis Finbarr (then aged 14) was still at school. He was the third of the four sons. The Donovans were all Catholic.

**49. Civilian Michael O'Brien (alias Ahern)** of 16 Reeds Avenue, Cork city (in or near Cork city)

Date of incident: 11 April 1921 (ex-soldier executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0649); Murphy (2010), 41.

Note: An ex-soldier whom the IRA found to be guilty of espionage, O'Brien was executed on 11 April 1921. His name—Michael O'Brien (alias Ahern), Cork city—appears under the date of 11 April on a list of executions carried out by the IRA in 1921. O'Brien had joined the Royal Irish Regiment during the Great War in 1917, had deserted, and then had re-enlisted in the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) under his mother's maiden name. He was discharged from the RASC on 14 January 1921. His mother Mrs B. O'Brien of 16 Reeds Avenue (off Barrack Street) in Cork city later wrote to the Free State Minister of Defence asking for information about the fate of her son. She stated that her son Michael had had in his possession at the time of his disappearance his 'Pensions Ring Paper' and his unemployment card. She indicated that he had been a private in the RASC, with the Regimental Number m/35.0212. She described him as about 5 feet, 6 inches in height, with fair hair and blue eyes, and wearing a Martin Henry suit, black lace boots, and a light cap. Responding to her enquiry on 14 March 1922, an official of the Defence Ministry revealed that 'records go to show that your son was arrested on a charge of espionage, court-martialled by a duly authorised authority, found guilty, and executed on the 11th April 1921'. The IRA seems to have secretly buried O'Brien's body. See IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0649).

British military records indicate that Michael O'Brien first enlisted at the age of 18 with the Royal Munster Fusiliers (RMF) by attestation at Cork on 6 June 1914. He had been living with his mother Bridget O'Brien at 16 Reeds Avenue, Bandon Road, Cork. He gave his occupation as that of a carter earning 24 shillings a week and reported that he was unmarried. He subsequently engaged in various kinds of misconduct noted in his records, including 'creating a disturbance' and 'breaking out of hospital when a patient'. On 18 June 1917 he transferred from the RMF (3rd Battalion) to the Royal Irish Regiment (4th Battalion). After this transfer he was branded as a deserter on 21 December 1917. Earlier, his record contained several notations about absence without leave. As previously noted, his last period of British military service was as a private in the RASC ending on 14 January 1921. His records

indicate that he was a Catholic. See British Army World War I Service Records, 1914-20 (Microfilm Publication WO 363, TNA).

**50. Civilian Stephen O'Callaghan** (aged 28) of Rutland Street, Cork city (Anderson's Quay, Cork)

Date of incident: 29 April 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CC*, 30 April 1921; *CE*, 2, 4, 5 May 1921; *FJ*, 30 April, 2 May 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/156/51 (TNA); Civil Registration of Deaths Index, 1864-1958, Cork District, vol. 5, p. 90 (FHL Film Number 0101608); British Army World War I Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-20 (Ancestry.com); Borgonovo (2007), 67-68, 76, 100 (note 71); Murphy (2010), 41.

Note: An ex-soldier, Stephen O'Callaghan was shot and fatally wounded on Anderson's Quay on Friday night, 29 April 1921, and died from shock and haemorrhage at the South Infirmary. See *CE*, 5 May 1921. One of the numerous ex-soldiers executed as a spy by the IRA, O'Callaghan (aged 28) does not appear to have had a known association with the police or the military. In August 1918 he had completed some years' service with the Royal Munster Fusiliers, of which four were spent on active duty. He was an unemployed dock labourer drawing a military disability pension of £1 weekly. Just before his death he had played a street card game and was in the company of a prostitute when he was shot. She screamed for help. One of the witnesses at a subsequent military inquiry described her as both drunk and a member of 'the unfortunate class'. See *CE*, 4 May 1921. Another witness described O'Callaghan as 'a loyal man'. See Military Inquests, WO 35/156/51 (TNA). For O'Callaghan's death at age 28 (he had been born in about 1893), see Civil Registration of Deaths Index, 1864-1958, Cork District, vol. 5, p. 90 (FHL Film Number 0101608).

During the Great War, O'Callaghan had served with the Worcestershire Regiment and with the Royal Munster Fusiliers (1st, 2nd, and 7th Battalions) in Western Europe and perhaps at Gallipoli. He was a recipient of the British Army Service Medal and the Victory Medal. See British Army World War I Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-20 (Ancestry.com). At the time of the 1901 census Stephen O'Callaghan appears to have been one of the four co-resident children (two daughters and two sons) of the Cork city shopkeeper and vintner Ellen O'Callaghan (a widow aged only 31) residing at house 39 in Bandon Road. Her younger son Stephen was then aged 9. The O'Callaghans were Catholic.

**51. Civilian Michael O'Keefe** (aged about 35) of Main Street, Carrigtwohill (Carrigtwohill)

Date of incident: 30 April 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 2, 3 May 1921; *FJ*, 2 May 1921; *II*, 2 May 1921; *CWN*, 7 May 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/157B/5 (TNA); Executions by the IRA (Archives, A/0535); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Michael J. Burke's WS 1424, 28-29 (BMH); Francis Healy's WS 1694,

17- 21 (BMH); Seámus Fitzgerald Papers, PR/6/32 (2), (UCC); *Rebel Cork's FS*, 195; O'Neill (1975), 68; Hart (1998), 299; Sheehan (2011), 76; Ó Ruairc (2016), 121.

Note: O'Keefe was a labourer and an ex-soldier in receipt of a British army disability pension. He was married, with one child. He was taken about 200 yards from his house on Main Street in Carrigtwohill and shot dead at about 6 a.m. on 30 April 1921. A label was attached to his body declaring, 'Spies and informers beware, I.R.A.'. See *CE*, 2, 3 May 1921; Executions by the IRA (Military Archives, A/0535). It was noted in evidence at a later military inquest that O'Keefe was 'a very loyal man'. See Military Inquests, WO 35/157B/5 (TNA). Thomas Cotter, a lieutenant in the Carrigtwohill Company of the IRA, later claimed that he had killed O'Keefe in April 1921 and another spy in the following June. See Sheehan (2011), 76. Cotter named his associates in executing O'Keefe as Volunteers J. Ahearne (or Aherne) of Ballyrichard (Carrigtwohill); M. Murnane of Carrigane (Carrigtwohill); and T. O'Shea, O/C, Engineers, 4th Battalion, Cork No. 1 Brigade. See Seámus Fitzgerald Papers, PR/6/32 (2), (UCC). The name of Michael O'Keefe appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 1 May 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £950 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). Michael O'Keefe was almost certainly Catholic.

The IRA men who carried out the execution of Michael O'Keefe, remembered former Carrigtwohill Volunteer Francis Healy, 'called to my place of residence about 20 minutes prior to carrying out of the death sentence. Needless to remark, there was intense police and military activities as a result of the shooting, but no evidence was forthcoming to establish the identity of the parties responsible, so the enemy [members of the Cameron Highlanders] went on the policy of an eye for an eye, etc.' What Healy and his IRA comrades considered a 'murder gang' of Cameron Highlanders proceeded to kill five local Volunteers or civilians, including William Bransfield, Michael Aherne, John Ryan, Richard Barry, and Richard Flynn—'A total of five Irishmen shot dead by British forces during a period of eight days!' See Francis Healy's WS 1694, 17- 21 (BMH).

Michael Burke, captain of the Cobh Volunteer Company, also recalled how he had become aware in May 1921 that 'a specially selected number of Cameron Highlanders were formed into a murder gang which operated in the 4th Battalion area of East Cork'. See Michael J. Burke's WS 1424, 28-29 (BMH). The involvement of Volunteer Joseph Aherne (among others) in the execution of Michael O'Keefe may explain why Aherne's household was subsequently targeted by the Cameron Highlanders in their reprisal killings and why his brother Michael Aherne was shot dead by them.

**52. Civilian Arthur J. Harrison** (aged 29) from Lancashire (Coachford)

Date of incident: 30 April 1921 (ex-RIC constable kidnapped and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 14 May 1921; British Forces Missing (Military Archives, A/0909); IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0649); Abbott (2000), 312-13.

Note: Harrison was travelling from Carrigadrohid to Coachford railway station in a motor bread van. He was on his way home since he had completed his service. He was kidnapped near Coachford railway station on the evening of 30 April 1921 and later killed. See British Forces Missing (Military Archives, A/0909); IRA Executions in 1921 (Military Archives, A/0649). Owing to his wife's ill health, he 'had resigned on the day that he was kidnapped'. He had reportedly been responsible for a large number of arrests of suspected Volunteers in the district and was shot outside Coachford village. Prior to his brief service with the RIC (he had joined only on 24 September 1920), ex-Constable Harrison had been a soldier and a labourer. See Abbott (2000), 312-13. Harrison was probably a Protestant.

**53. Civilian Thomas (Michael) Sullivan** (aged about 80) of Gneevgullia, Co. Kerry (near Rathmore, Co. Kerry)

Date of incident: 4 May 1921 (ex-soldier abducted and later killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 5, 6 May 1921; *II*, 5, 6 May 1921; *FJ*, 6 May 1920; *CCE*, 7 May 1921; John Jones's WS 759, 11 (BMH); Patrick O'Brien's WS 764, 48 (BMH); Daniel Browne's WS 785, 9-11 (BMH); James J. Riordan's WS 1172, 14-17 (BMH); O'Donoghue (1954, 1986), 168; Riordan (1973), 69-70, 77, 84; Abbott (2000), 230-31; O'Malley and Horgan (2012), 173-74, 277.

Note: Aged about 80, Sullivan was an ex-soldier and an itinerant ballad singer. Two deserters from the British forces who had been arrested in the Knocknagree district by Volunteers of the Knocknagree Company in late April 1921 told their IRA interrogators that 'the British H.Q. in Tralee was visited each week by a "travelling man" who usually spent a lot of time in the office there. Each gave a description of the individual concerned and both appeared to tally. The locals then compared notes and eventually decided that the man concerned was . . . Tom Sullivan. He usually travelled round the district collecting and singing songs. Having arrived at this decision, enquiries were set on foot to discover Sullivan's whereabouts, and he was traced to Farrankeal [in Nohavaldaly parish], near Knocknagree, where he was arrested. He was taken before Seán Moylan, the officers of the Knocknagree Company, and myself [i.e., James Riordan, second lieutenant of the Kiskeam Company and later quartermaster of the Newmarket Battalion.] He was closely questioned but did not give any information. When the deserters were taken in to see him individually, each of them identified him as the man who had been visiting British H.Q. in Tralee. At this stage Seán Moylan decided that as the man's activities were mainly confined to the Kerry Brigade area, he would hand him over to the Kerry men for trial. This was done, and the deserters were similarly handed over, although we felt that they were *only* deserters.' Sullivan was soon executed in the Rathmore vicinity by members of the Rathmore Company of the Kerry No. 2

Brigade. See James J. Riordan's WS 1172, 14-17 (BMH). According to one report, Sullivan of Gneevgullia, Co. Kerry, was a veteran of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, and two of his sons had served in the Great War (one of them had been killed). Reputedly a native of Cork city, 'he lived by singing ballads and occasionally acting a cattle drover'. See *II*, 6 May 1921. He was almost certainly Catholic.

Sullivan had been kidnapped from the fair held at Knocknagree on 28 April 1921, and nothing was heard of him until his body (with a label declaring him 'a spy and informer') was found on 4 May on the Bog Road between Millstreet and Killarney, about a half-mile west of the village of Rathmore, Co. Kerry. The body was used by the IRA to lure a party of police from Rathmore into a bloody ambush on 4 May in which as many as five members of the RIC were killed outright and three more died of their wounds shortly thereafter. The ambush was carried out by a large combined force of the Cork No. 2 and Kerry No. 2 Brigades. According to Patrick O'Brien, Vice O/C of the Charleville Battalion, 'extensive reprisals were carried out by the enemy that night [4-5 May], as the local creamery and several shops and houses were sent up in flames'. See Patrick O'Brien's WS 764, 48 (BMH).

The two British deserters captured in or near Knocknagree were allowed to work in Kerry on the farms of various members of the East Kerry Volunteer Brigade, but when the British launched a roundup in the area before the Truce, there was no question of holding them as prisoners any longer, and because they were considered to know too much about the killing of Thomas Sullivan and other matters, they were regretfully executed even though deemed to be completely innocent. See Riordan (1973), 84.

**54. Civilian James Lynch** (aged about 50) of Whitegate, Midleton (Whitegate)  
Date of incident: 5 May 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Source: Death Certificate, night of 5-6 May 1921 (Midleton District, Union of Midleton); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Military Inquests, WO 35/153B/8 (TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

Note: Lynch was taken from his house at Whitegate in the Midleton district just before midnight on 5 May 1921 and killed about 200 yards away. According to a British military record, Lynch 'had been friendly with a family now under military protection'. His wife stated that two men had said to him about seven weeks before his death that 'it was known that a lot of information was going to the military out of his house', though her husband had denied this charge. The attackers asserted that they would not give Lynch another warning. He was shot in the chest and the head. His body was found the next morning in a nearby field by a neighbouring farmer. See Military Inquests, WO 35/153B/8 (TNA).

In 1911 the tailor James Lynch (then aged 40) and his wife Bridget (aged 45) resided in Whitegate town. Though they had been married for twelve years, they

were childless. She was awarded compensation of £725 in relation to the killing of her husband. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). The Lynches were Catholic.

**55. Civilian James Saunders** (aged about 23) of 3 Broom Lane, Mallow (at or near Boherard in Dunbolloge parish)

Date of incident: 5 May 1921 (executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: 'Statement by Spy Saunders', in I/O First Southern Division F, Florence O'Donoghue's Report to Chief of Staff Richard Mulcahy, 24 June 1921 (Mulcahy Papers, P7A/20, UCD); Richard Willis's and John Bolster's WS 808, 5 (BMH); Timothy Sexton's WS 1565, 6-7 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 69, 98 (note 30); Murphy (2010), 41.

Note: A Catholic ex-soldier from Mallow whose brother John was a local Volunteer, Saunders was recruited as a British spy by the notorious Daniel Shiels (or Shields). Saunders engaged a Volunteer near Carrignavar in conversation on a public road about the possibility of his finding employment with local farmers. He was sent to the Volunteer intelligence officer and shoemaker Timothy Sexton, who observed that Saunders was wearing British army boots and an army-issued shirt. He was soon arrested by three Volunteers (James McKeown, Tim Ownes, and Denis Leahy) and taken to John Murphy's of Bohard [i.e., Boherard in Dunbolloge parish]. One or two days later, Saunders was courtmartailed by members of the brigade staff. He reportedly confessed to having dealt with the British military, to having informed the enemy of the Mourne Abbey ambush, and to having been responsible for the arrest of several Volunteers at Killeens. Saunders was 'sentenced to death, executed, and buried in a nearby bog. The body was subsequently disinterred and buried elsewhere.' See Timothy Sexton's WS 1565, 6-7 (BMH).

Saunders also operated as an informer in Cork city and identified spy Daniel Shiels as his controller there. Saunders's riveting confession survives, providing some insight into the gathering of intelligence by the British military at this point. Saunders made an inferior spy and was overly impressed by all things military, to the extent that he wore some military clothing, which ultimately raised suspicions about him. He made the following statement on 5 May 1921: 'I gave information to an English officer in Mallow Barracks of the raid on Mallow Barracks about six months ago [on 28 September 1920]. I said my brother was in [a] motor with other men, and these were the men who raided the barracks. The officer asked me what these men were doing, and I said taking arms. I said that those men's names were Jack Saunders (my brother), John Daly, and Morgan. The officer gave me fifty pounds and told me to continue getting things. I put this money in the bank after keeping one pound. . . . I met Michael Shiels, who lives in the town of Buttevant. Shiels is an ex-soldier of about forty years. He is 6 ft. high, a smart looking man, sometimes dresses in khaki, and when in ordinary clothes, wears a soft hat, collar, and tie [and] sometimes wears glasses to disguise himself. I knew nothing about the Mallow raid; it was Shiels who told me about it, and he told me to go and tell the officer. Shiels

and I were keeping in touch with each other to give the game away on the Sinn Feiners. After this I came to work for T. Donovan, Farran. I worked there two days and two nights. I got information from a farm labourer named Mike Sullivan, who works for Donovan. This Sullivan is a tall, stout man with a heavy black moustache, and he lives in Mourne Abbey but works for Donovan. Sullivan told me an ambush was to come off on the following day near Buckley's Quarry. Next day I walked to Mallow where I met Shiels. We went to the barracks, and I told Captain Friskey what I heard. I told him there were going to be about forty men take part in the ambush. He (the officer) asked me who told me this and I said Sullivan. The officer said I was a good boy and gave me ten pounds. . . .'

'Shiels and I slept in the barracks that night. We came out with eight lorries next morning, and we were dressed in khaki, the same as the rest of the soldiers. We ran into the ambush at the quarry and the soldiers opened fire. I did too. We killed two men. I killed one of those; he wore black clothes, gaiters, grey cap, and a green scarf. They took the two dead men and three prisoners in the lorries to Mallow. The names of the three men (prisoners) were—Ronayne, Mulcahy, and Barrett. Shiels and I went around Mallow town next day. Shiels asked me to go to Cork with him and we went in a military lorry. We came straight to Cork. We remained about a fortnight in khaki knocking about Cork. We were told to knock about the city and go into the country now and then. We were to stay in Salvation [Army] House in the nights while we were in the city. We were told to be on the lookout for Tad[h]g Sullivan. We were told to go up Blarney St., and we got the names of four men wanted. Mrs. O'Brien of 9 Blarney St. told him [Shiels] where those men lived. The officer told me to go around Carrignavar seeing if any strangers [were] knocking about.' See 'Statement by Spy Saunders', in I/O First Southern Division F, Florence O'Donoghue's Report to Chief of Staff Richard Mulcahy, 24 June 1921 (Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/20, UCD); Borgonovo (2007), 98, note 30.

Clearly, Intelligence Officer Florrie O'Donoghue of the IRA's First Southern Division fully credited the information supplied by Saunders: 'Attached is a copy of a statement made by a spy [Saunders] who has been executed. As you see from it, he was responsible with Shields for the Mourne Abbey business. Every effort has been made to get Shields, who is now in Buttevant Military Barracks. This Saunders also gave the name [*sic*] of two others who, when arrested, admitted being on the same work. One of them admitted being the man who gave information which lead [*sic*] to [the] Clonmult disaster. A copy of this Saunders statement either has been or will be sent on to the Director of Publicity by Cork No. 2 Brigade in connection with the Mallow trials. With regard to this matter of spies, I think [IRA] G.H.Q. has somehow got the idea that in the Cork brigades, and especially in Cork No. 1, men are being shot as spies more or less on suspicion. Instead of this, as I am aware myself, the greatest care is taken in every instance to have the case fully proved and beyond all doubt. As a matter of fact, the men shot have in most cases admitted their guilt before being executed. We are seriously considering whether instead of shooting any more of them, we will no [rest of sentence redacted by archivists under official

order].’ See Florence O’Donoghue’s Report to Chief of Staff Richard Mulcahy, 24 June 1921 (Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/20, UCD)

In 1911 the ‘general labourer’ James Saunders (aged 44) and his wife Annie (aged 47) resided at 17 Mill Street in Mallow with their three sons John (15), James (13), and Charles (12). The family was Catholic and poor, living in only the three rooms of a ‘third-class’ house. The middle son James later became a spy for the British. The oldest son John became a Volunteer officer; at the time of the Truce on 11 July 1921 he was serving as first lieutenant of G Company of the Fifth (Mallow) Battalion of the Cork No. 4 Brigade. See Richard Willis’s and John Bolster’s WS 808, 5 (BMH).

**56. Civilian William B. (also James) Purcell** (aged about 35) of 7 Charlotte Quay, Cork (Turner’s Cross, near Tory Top Lane, Cork)

Date of incident: 6 May 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 9, 10 May 1921; *CWN*, 14 May 1921; RIC County Inspector’s Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Military Inquests, WO 35/157A/78 and WO 35/162 (TNA); Michael Murphy’s WS 1547, 42 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 68, 76, 78; Murphy (2010), 41.

Note: Purcell was abducted on 6 May and his dead body was found the next day in a field near Turner’s Cross, not far from Tory Top Lane, where other IRA executions had taken place. His face ‘was disfigured—he had been shot through the head’. See *CE*, 9 May 1921. He was an ex-soldier who had served with the Royal Munster Fusiliers. He had worked as a cattle trader, but he had been jobless for several weeks at the time of his death. He had recently been living in a lodging house at 7 Charlotte Quay while seeking work; he had stayed at that address ‘from time to time for the last five years’. He had previously resided at Holy Cross in County Tipperary and at Dromcolliher in County Limerick. According to Michael Murphy, O/C of the Second Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, Purcell ‘was shot for spying. He was traced through letters captured by our lads in the mails.’ See Michael Murphy’s WS 1547, 42 (BMH). Testimony given at the inquest indicated that it was believed that Purcell was suspected of having provided information against the IRA. See Military Inquests, WO 35/162 (TNA).

The Purcells were well-known cattle dealers living in 1901 and 1911 in Cashel, Co. Tipperary. In 1901 the cattle dealer James Purcell and his wife Johanna resided with four children at house 30 on Boherclogh Street in Cashel. Their eldest son James (aged 12 in 1901) was still in school but, like other members of this extended family, may have later followed the father’s profession. No doubt closely related to this Purcell family was the household of cattle dealer James Purcell and his wife Ellen at house 12 in Boherclough Street in 1901; their three co-resident sons (then aged 22, 19, and 17) were all described as cattle dealers. In 1911 James and Ellen Purcell appeared as the parents of twelve children, only four of whom were co-resident. Sons Richard, Patrick, and John were again listed as cattle dealers like their father James Purcell. It is likely that the suspected spy William B. or James Purcell came

from one or the other of these two families of Cashel cattle dealers. Both Purcell families were entirely Catholics.

**57. Civilian Thomas Collins** (aged 25) of Water Lane, Youghal (Green's Quay, Youghal)

Date of incident: 7 May 1921 (ex-soldier shot as collaborator by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 9, 11, 13 May 1921; *CCE*, 14 May 1921; *CWN*, 14 May 1921; *FJ*, 3 June 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/147A/92 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Malicious Injury Claims, Box 16/78, Cork County Secretary Files (CCCA); Applications of Frances and Esther Sheehan to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/90/2/1472-73); Hart (1998), 298-99; 'The Irish Rebellion in the 6th Division Area', *Irish Sword*, 27 (Spring 2010), 147.

Note: Three ex-British soldiers and two young girls were fired on by masked IRA men while returning from a dance at the British military barracks at Youghal in the early morning hours of 7 May. The Catholic ex-soldier Collins died, and three others, sisters Esther and Frances Sheehan and Patrick Lynass, were wounded. Collins, who had part of his leg blown away, was mortally wounded at Green's Quay; he had lived at Water Lane. A former private in the Cheshire Regiment, he left a widow and three young children. Tensions were high between British troops in Youghal and local republicans at the time. On the afternoon of 7 May the military had ordered all strangers out of town and all shops closed. Some residents of Green's Quay had left their homes for fear of possible military reprisals, which were not long in coming. 'The military were active raiding and searching in the evening.' A party of 'unknown men' began smashing windows of houses and shops. Much looting followed. 'There appeared to be no discrimination regarding the houses attacked, [with] only a very few escaping, including the post office. Many Unionist houses suffered heavily. . . . The town presented a pitiable appearance this morning [Saturday, 7 May], with hardly a pane of glass intact from end to end in its main thoroughfare. The flagway and road were strewn with broken bottles, glass, and wrappings of looted goods, and droppings of blood were also visible.' See *CE*, 9 May 1921. It was later claimed that 'the only motive . . . was to murder these ex-service men for attending a military dance. All three were carrying their drums at the time of the attack and were unarmed.' See *CE*, 13 May 1921. Collins was described as a 'loyal man' in the inquest evidence. See Military Inquests, WO 35/147A/92 (TNA).

The name of Thomas Collins appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 7 May 1921, with the notation that liability was split 50/50, and with a note that £2,250 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

Given the nature of the attack on the entire party, it seems likely that Collins was not being singled out from the rest. Moreover, the fact that the compensation evidence

indicates that the British did not accept full liability in this particular instance implies that Collins is unlikely to have been a spy or informer. He was probably killed for closely associating with the forces of the crown.

The funeral of Thomas Collins on Monday, 9 May, 'was a remarkably large and representative demonstration. It was headed by a party of the Cameron Highlanders, after whom came the police and coastguards. Immediately preceding the coffin were the officiating clergymen, Rev. Fathers Aherne, Roche, Fox, and Duane. The remains were draped with the Union Jack, in which was the drum he [Collins], as one of the Comrades Band, played at the dance on the night previous to his death. . . . The sad procession was brought up by one of the largest gatherings of the general public ever seen at a local funeral. The longest route to the North Abbey Cemetery was selected, and the coffin was borne all the way on the shoulders of his fellow comrades. Passing through the wrecked Main Street, rain fell heavily, but all remained in the ranks till the cemetery was reached.' See *CE*, 11 May 1921. Thomas Collins was Catholic.

There appears to have been more destruction, however, following the funeral: 'The state of terror prevailing amongst the people [of Youghal] while the destruction was going on baffles description. At the north end of the town especially, it being their second night of it, the cries of women and children could be heard mingled with the crashing and breaking of glass and the shouting and cheering of the wreckers.' The reporter also stated: 'Between shops and private houses some 153 must have sustained broken windows.' See *CE*, 13 May 1921.

**58. Civilian David Walsh** of Shanagarry (Doon near Glenville)

Date of incident: 16 May 1921 (ex-soldier executed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0649); Letter to O/C, 4th Battalion, Cork No. 1 Brigade, 21 May 1921 (Florence O'Donoghue Papers, MS 31,207 [2], NLI); William Buckley's WS 1009, 21 (BMH); James Coss's WS 1065, 11 (BMH); John P. O'Connell's WS 1444, 13-14 (BMH); O'Neill (1975), 68, 99; Peter Hart (2002), 49 (quotation), 91, 102 (n. 27); 'The Irish Rebellion in the 6th Division Area', *Irish Sword*, 27 (Spring 2010), 84; Sheehan (2011), 76; O'Halpin (2013), 326.

Note: Described in an IRA document as a Shanagarry tramp or homeless man, Walsh was an ex-soldier suspected of having given information that led to the Clonmult disaster for the IRA. He was arrested by the Glenville Volunteer Company and detained. He allegedly admitted to having been paid £1 a week as a British spy, and gave the names of other spies. He was tried by members of the Fermoy Battalion staff, found guilty, and sentenced to death—a sentence confirmed by the Cork No. 2 Brigade staff. He was executed on 16 May 1921 at Doon near Glenville. See William Buckley's WS 1009, 21 (BMH). Sheehan argues that it is unlikely that Walsh possessed information that could have led to the destruction of the IRA column at Clonmult, or that he had any connection with British forces.

The British and the IRA sources point in different directions as to whether Walsh was a key informer. The IRA evidence supporting his identity as the spy (or one of the spies) responsible for the Clonmult disaster appears strong. James Coss (Seamus MacCos), successively the intelligence officer of the Fermoy Company and Battalion of the Cork No. 2 Brigade, regularly exploited sources inside Fermoy Military Barracks: 'Amongst the information received by me from my intelligence officers in the military barracks was a copy of a file which gave particulars of the individual who gave the information to the enemy forces which led to the massacre of a number of I.R.A. men—they were, I think, Midleton Battalion column—at Clonmult near Midleton in February 1921. Within 24 hours of receiving the information, the spy in question had been arrested, tried, and executed. His name was David Walsh.' See James Coss's WS 1065, 11 (BMH).

Buttressing this account is that of John P. O'Connell, the captain of the Cobh Volunteer Company, who seems to have been one of the IRA leaders who interrogated Walsh before his execution: 'About a month after the fight at Clonmult, the means by which the British were able to come on the column 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 [known as Garrylaurence]—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.' See John P. O'Connell's WS 1444, 13-14 (BMH).

A letter found on the body of IRA leader Diarmuid O'Hurley (Dermot Hurley) when British forces killed him near Midleton on 28 May 1921 confirmed that David Walsh had confessed to having provided crucial information leading to the IRA disaster at Clonmult, but only after IRA interrogators had enticed Walsh's confession by showing him a grave that had been dug for him and falsely promising him a free passage to Australia if he made a clean breast of things in relation to his alleged role in what had led to the Clonmult catastrophe. See Florence O'Donoghue (Cork No. 1 Brigade Adjutant) to O/C, Fourth (Midleton) Battalion, [unknown date] 1921 (Florence O'Donoghue Papers, NLI 31,207 [2]).

On the other hand, the British military seem to have been active in collecting intelligence in advance of Clonmult: 'For some days in the middle of February a good deal of valuable information regarding the movements and personnel of a Flying Column in the Clonmult area was being obtained by the Intelligence Officer of the 2nd Battalion Hampshire Regiment. On February 20th detailed information

regarding the position of this column was obtained and promptly acted upon. An engagement between a Flying Column and a small party of troops followed, and in the course of this engagement severe casualties were inflicted on the rebels.' See 'The Irish Rebellion in the 6th Division Area', *Irish Sword*, 27 (Spring 2010), 84. The British Intelligence Officer mentioned here was based in Cork city, but the details he gathered were probably grounded on local knowledge, even if the information was passed on to Cork city. In a letter dated 21 February 1921, the British officer in command of the 2nd Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment stated: 'I allowed these operations to be carried out by the troops in the Cork area in order to save time and because the information on which they were based was obtained in Cork.' See O'Neill (1975), 99.

Several British intelligence and military sources later specifically denied that David Walsh had been the informer who had given away the presence of the Midleton Battalion Column of the IRA at the Garrylaurence farmhouse near Clonmult. Foremost among them was the author or authors of 'A Record of the Rebellion in Ireland in 1920-21, and the Part Played by the Army in Dealing with It (Intelligence).' (Peter Hart, editor of this document, stated that it had probably originated from the Dublin intelligence branch of the British army.) The author or authors presented the following account of how David Walsh had come to confess to the IRA: 'In country districts any stranger was looked on with suspicion, and in one instance an unknown tramp was told that he would be shot unless he confessed, in which case he would be allowed to leave the country. In the hope of saving his life the unfortunate man invented a wholly fictitious story about how he had given information to the troops, foolishly selecting an occasion when the I.R.A. had suffered particularly heavy losses. He was thereon court-martialed and shot. The whole of this incident was recounted in a letter which was captured subsequently on the dead body of the man who had ordered the court-martial and "execution."' Ormonde Winter's account provided further corroboration in 'A Report on the Intelligence Branch of the Chief of Police, Dublin Castle, from May 1920 to July 1921'. See Hart (2002), 49 (quotation), 91, 102 (n. 27).

Lastly, there is clear documentation that Walsh, a victim of shell shock and gas poisoning as a British soldier in the Great War, returned home from a hospital stay in March 1921 and thus was still suffering from his war-service injuries for some time after the Clonmult disaster of the previous February. See O'Halpin (2013), 326. On balance the available evidence strongly suggests that Walsh was an innocent victim.

**59. Civilian Francis McMahon** of St. Luke's district, Cork city (near Cork city)  
Date of incident: 19 May 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 21 May 1921; *CE*, 5 Nov 1921; *CCE*, 21 May 1921; *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; Daniel Healy's WS 1656, 14 (BMH); Matthew O'Callaghan's WS 561, 2 (BMH); Hart (1998), 298; Borgonovo (2007), 65, 68, 84, 100, 148, 179; Murphy (2010), 41, 282,

315, 348; England and Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations, 1858-1966), 1925, p. 268; 1935, p. 330 (ancestry.co.uk).

Note: McMahon was one of four men abducted by city Volunteers at this time in and around the city. A Mrs Mary McMahon, giving an address at 6 Woodland View, Western Road, later applied for £3,000 in compensation for the loss of her husband, who was kidnapped on 19 May 1921. He was an ex-soldier and a clerk in the War Pensions Office. While proceeding to work on the morning of 19 May, he had been held up at the Queens Street corner of the South Mall by three men who forced him into a covered car and took him away. About three weeks later, Mrs McMahon received word that her husband had been court-martialled and executed. The Recorder of Cork awarded her £2,000. See *CE*, 5 Nov 1921. Orders had passed from the headquarters of the Cork No. 1 Brigade to Daniel Healy, the O/C of the Cork city Active Service Unit who carried out the execution together with other members of the ASU, according to his BMH witness statement. They picked McMahon up, 'took him out to the country in a two-wheeled cab', and shot him dead. See Daniel Healy's WS 1656, 14 (BMH).

Gerard Murphy contends in his book *The Year of Disappearances* (see pp. 282, 315) that the McMahon in question was a Freemason. But the records of the Irish Freemasons (now available online at ancestry.co.uk) reveal that the Freemason in Cork city (an accountant) with a similar name was Francis V. McMahon, who was most probably the person listed in the 1911 census as Francis Victor U. McMahon living at 6 Victoria Terrace (St Luke's) along with his father Francis and his mother Mary (all members of the Church of England). Probate records reveal that his father subsequently died at Preston in Lancashire in 1925; his mother passed away in 1935 at the same address, and her son Francis Victor Ullathorne McMahon was the beneficiary of her will. See England and Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations, 1858-1966), 1925, p. 268; 1935, p. 330 (ancestry.co.uk). These facts rule out both the father and son in this household as potential victims in this case. It has not yet been possible to identify the confessional status of the victim.

**60. Civilian Edward Hawkins** (aged 29) of 6 Broad Street, Cork city (Mountdesert Quarry, Lee Road, Cork)

Date of incident: 20 May 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 21, 25 May 1921; *CCE*, 21 May 1921; *FJ*, 21, 25 May 1921; *II*, 21, 25 May 1921; *CWN*, 28 May 1921; *SS*, 28 May 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); 'Lest We Forget' (PRONI, D. 989/c//1/52); Matthew O'Callaghan's WS 561, 2 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 65, 68, 76-77, 100, 179; Murphy (2010), 41; Sheehan (2011), 157.

Note: An ex-soldier, Hawkins was one of four men kidnapped by Cork city

Volunteers on 19 or 20 May; they added a fifth on 26 May. Hawkins was abducted on 20 May while on his way to the Bandon railway station to assist in the loading of military stores. His father Daniel (aged 52) and another man named John Sherlock (aged 35) were kidnapped at the same time. They survived their wounds but Edward Hawkins did not. He was taken to the Mardyke opposite St Joseph's School, where he was searched. He had in his possession British-army discharge papers and a barracks pass, one sign of the fact that he worked at Victoria Barracks. He was shot eight times at Mountdesert Quarry on the Lee Road and died within thirty minutes of his admission to hospital. He was one of five ex-soldiers shot by the IRA who worked at Victoria Barracks. He was 'employed at labouring work by the military'; Sherlock had a 'similar occupation, being employed as a lorry driver'. See *CE*, 21 May 1921. The name of Edward Hawkins appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 20 May 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £3,500 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). Edward Hawkins's father had the narrowest escape from death, as he explained to a subsequent military court of inquiry into the fate of his executed son: [The] witness, with an arm of a chair he was carrying—he was a chairmaker—protected his head and was wounded in the arm and ear. He fell forward and the shooting party thought he was dead. He remained motionless until the party left the quarry. Then he went and telephoned for an ambulance.' See *II*, 25 May 1921.

The victim Edward Hawkins was one of the five children (nine born) of the Cork city chairmaker Daniel Hawkins and his wife Jane of Broad Street; all five children (three sons and two daughters) co-resided with their parents in 1911. Edward Hawkins was the oldest child (then aged 19) and was listed as a sawmill labourer in the 1911 census. He left a wife and three children at his death in May 1921. The family was Catholic.

**61. Civilian Christopher William O'Sullivan** (aged 22) of 132 Blarney Street, Cork city (Model Farm Road near Dennehy's Cross, Cork)

Date of incident: 26 May 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: Death Certificate, 27 May 1921; *CE*, 28, 30 May, 1 June 1921; *CWN*, 4 June 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Military Inquests, WO 35/163 (TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Laurence Neville's WS 1639, 12-13 (BMH); Hart (1998), 295; Borgonovo (2007), 65, 68, 77, 100; Murphy (2010), 41; Ó Ruairc (2016), 121.

Note: A Catholic ex-soldier aged 22, O'Sullivan was kidnapped from his house by 'two strong, tall, young men. He was dragged down River Lane, put into a motor car, and driven off.' See *CE*, 1 June 1921. He was shot dead in a field adjoining the Model Farm Road near Dennehy's Cross on 26 May 1921. The doctor at the inquest reported finding bullet wounds in the left ear and the forehead. A note or document

found on the body stated, 'Dear [wife], I am going to my God.' Buried in St Joseph's Cemetery in Cork city after a funeral Mass in St Patrick's Church, he left behind 'broken-hearted parents, wife, brothers, and sisters'. He was one of the sons of Daniel and Kate O'Sullivan. See *CE*, 30 May 1921. He had worked as a motor mechanic in Victoria Barracks but had lost that job some six weeks earlier. Borgonovo lists him as one of the numerous ex-soldiers and Victoria Barracks employees whom the IRA considered as spies and executed. See Laurence Neville's WS 1639, 12-13 (BMH). O'Sullivan was described as a loyalist in the inquest evidence. See Military Inquests, WO 35/163 (TNA).

The name of Christopher O'Sullivan appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 27 May 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £1,850 in compensation was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). Christopher O'Sullivan was Catholic.

**62. Civilian Daniel McCarthy** (aged about 40) of Bantry (Ovens near Ballincollig)  
Date of incident: 28 May 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CCE*, 4 June, 2, 9 July 1921; *CE*, 5 July 1921; *CC*, 5 July 1921; *CWN*, 9 July 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Military Inquests, WO 35/162 (TNA); WS 810 of Timothy Herlihy et al., 32-33 (BMH).

Note: McCarthy's dead body was found on the roadside 'within a short distance of the Ovens Post Office' and near Ballincollig Military Barracks on 28 May with seven bullet wounds in the chest (one of them in the heart) and two in the face. On his body was pinned a label declaring, 'Spies and informers beware, I.R.A.' See *CCE*, 9 July 1921. The sources described him as aged about 40 and 'weak-minded' or 'half-witted'. Apparently homeless or a tramp from Bantry, he had been observed entering the military camp at Ballincollig. He was detained there 'for some time' and then discharged. See Military Inquests, WO 35/162 (TNA). According to the BMH witness statement of Timothy Herlihy and other Volunteers, however, McCarthy had come under suspicion when he was placed 'with the I.R.A. prisoners in Ballincollig barracks. He was there about three weeks when we heard from a prisoner to look out for him. We reported the matter to Leo Murphy, who said to arrest him.' After he was captured near the Lee Cinema in Patrick Street in Cork, 'we took the spy in a horse and trap to Kilumney and handed him over to Leo Murphy and others, and in a few weeks after, he was shot by Leo Murphy, Dick Murphy (1st Battalion), and others and was afterwards taken to Ballincollig barracks and was buried at Carr's Hole, Douglas Road, Cork city. He never spoke a word while a prisoner.' See WS 810 of Timothy Herlihy et al., 32-33 (BMH). Carr's Hole had been the main cemetery in and around Cork city for victims of the Great Famine; it later served as a paupers' graveyard. It is virtually certain that Daniel McCarthy was Catholic.

**63. Civilian Thomas Fitzgerald** (aged about 31) of Ballyshehan near Mallow (near Killavullen, about 6 miles east of Mallow)

Date of incident: 28 May 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *FJ*, 30 May 1921; *CE*, 31 May, 17 June 1921; *CCE*, 4 June 19021; *II*, 7 Oct. 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Thomas Barry's WS 430, 27, 33 (BMH).

Note: A railway gatekeeper, Thomas Fitzgerald and his brother Henry were killed as spies by the IRA, according to Irish Chief Secretary Sir Hamar Greenwood speaking in the House of Commons: 'Before his death Henry Fitzgerald stated that he and his brother were called out at one a.m. by eight or nine men armed with revolvers and told they were to do their share in cutting some trenches. When some distance away from their home, they were told they were spies and were ordered to halt and face the ditch. Their hands were tied behind them, and the murderers then fired into their backs.' See *CE*, 17 June 1921. Fitzgerald was the gatekeeper at a level crossing of the Great Southern and Western Railway at Ballyshehan between Mallow and Killavullen. In this incident on 28 May 1921 Thomas Fitzgerald was killed outright. Thomas and Henry Fitzgerald appear to have been the suspected informers mentioned in his BMH witness statement by Thomas Barry (O/C, Castletownroche Battalion) when he called attention to 'two spies executed near Kilavullen [*sic*], suspected of informing on Tom Hunter. He was lucky to escape when the raid took place [in May 1921].' Hunter was a member of the Castletownroche Volunteer Company. See Thomas Barry's WS 430, 27, 33 (BMH).

The Recorder of Cork, sitting at Mallow in October 1921, awarded £1,000 to Mrs Anne Fitzgerald, the widow of Thomas Fitzgerald, a gatekeeper on the Great Southern and Western Railway between Mallow and Killavullen, 'who with his brother Henry, a demobilised soldier, was taken out and shot dead on the night of 28 May [1921]'. In addition, the Recorder granted £600 to each of the widow's three children and £350 to the mother of the two executed men. Shortly before his death, said a solicitor for the plaintiff to the Recorder, 'the government gave Henry [Fitzgerald] £75 to buy a horse and car, and that might be the cause of his death'. See *II*, 7 Oct. 1921. The IRA, if it knew about this payment, might well have regarded it as one given for informing on the Volunteers. The name of Thomas Fitzgerald appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 28 May 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £2,800 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

In reporting the IRA's killing of Thomas Fitzgerald and fatal wounding of his brother Henry as suspected spies, the RIC concluded, 'So far no light can be thrown on the affair.' This comment implies that the two brothers had not been passing information to the police at least. See RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA).

Thomas Fitzgerald and his brother Henry were two of the eight children of the railway gateman Edmund Fitzgerald (aged 76 in 1911) and his wife Bridget (aged 55) of Lissanisky (Carrig) in the Mallow district. Only two of the eight children still co-resided with their parents in 1911; one of them was Thomas (then aged 21). His brother Henry was living elsewhere. The Fitzgeralds were Catholic.

**64. Civilian Henry Fitzgerald** of Ballyshehan near Mallow (near Killavullen, about 6 miles east of Mallow)

Date of incident: 28 May 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *FJ*, 30 May 1921; *CE*, 31 May, 17 June 1921; *CCE*, 4 June 1921; *II*, 7 Oct. 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Thomas Barry's WS 430, 27, 33 (BMH).

Note: An ex-soldier, Henry Fitzgerald was badly wounded in the IRA's effort to execute his brother Thomas and himself. He survived only long enough to provide certain details of the attack before succumbing to his wounds. The Fitzgeralds were Catholic. The name of Henry Fitzgerald appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 28 May 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £350 was awarded (to his mother). See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). A police report on the deaths of Henry and Thomas Fitzgerald as suspected spies implies that they had not been providing information to the RIC at least. See RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, May 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA).

**65. Civilian William McCarthy** (aged about 52) of 17 Bridge Street, Mallow (near Mallow)

Date of incident: 29 May 1921 (ex-soldier executed as suspected spy by IRA on that date)

Sources: *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; *CE*, 14 Jan. 1922; *FJ*, 14 Jan. 1922; IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0649); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Interview with Ned Murphy, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/111 (UCDA).

Note: McCarthy had earlier retired with the rank of colour sergeant from the British army's Royal Irish Regiment. On 23 May 1921 he left his home in Mallow to go to Mourne Abbey in order to shoot rabbits. He was never seen again. In response to an appeal after the Truce of 11 July 1921, his widow received a letter from the Adjutant's Department at the headquarters of the Cork No. 4 Brigade (dated 12 September 1921), stating that her husband had been tried by court-martial on 23 May, found guilty of espionage, and sentenced to death. The letter noted that the sentence had been carried out on 29 May. Subsequently, efforts were made to recover his body but without success. He left not only his wife Bridget but four

children as well. See Bridget McCarthy's affidavit in *CE*, 14 Jan. 1922. See also IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0649). McCarthy's name appeared on the list of 'missing persons' published in the *Irish Times* of 22 August 1921. The date of his kidnapping was given incorrectly there as 21 May 1921. As previously noted, he was last seen on 23 May.

At the time of the 1911 census McCarthy (then aged 42) was already living as a British army pensioner with his Wexford-born and much younger wife Bridget (aged 24) and two small children in house 11.3 in the Ballyvoloon section of Queenstown/Cobh. The McCarthys were Catholic. The name of William McCarthy appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 29 May 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £2,600 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**66. Civilian John Sullivan-Lynch** (aged 'about 40') of Castle Cottages, Carrigrohane (Dennehy's Cross, Cork city)

Date of incident: 29 May 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and later killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: UK World War I Service Medal and Award Rolls (WO 329/1700, TNA); *CWN*, 4 June 1921; *CCE*, 2 July 1921; *CE*, 14 Jan. 1922; *II*, 18 Feb. 1922; IRA Executions in 1921 (Collins Papers, Military Archives, A/0649); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); WS 810 of Timothy Herlihy et al., 32 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 68; Murphy (2010), 41.

Note: An ex-soldier and a railway parcel clerk, Lynch came under suspicion as 'an Englishman' living in the same house on the Carrigrohane road as city Volunteer Patrick O'Sullivan. Two other city Volunteers 'watched his movements and saw him entering the Orderly Room of the [Ballincollig] Military Barracks on several occasions and [so] reported to Leo Murphy, who informed the brigade. He was arrested shortly afterwards and shot by "H" Company, 1st Battalion, whose area he was living in. He was buried about 20 yards from the Republican Plot [in St Finbarr's Cemetery].' See WS 810 of Timothy Herlihy et al., 32 (BMH). Lynch was kidnapped on 29 May by two armed IRA men and executed on 5 June. His body was found in a field at Dennehy's Cross, about a hundred yards from the public road. It was taken to the city morgue. The victim was described as about 40 years old and as wearing a brown wig. He had several bullet wounds in the head and had left a note bidding farewell to his relatives. His address was given as Blarney Street in Cork city. See *CWN*, 4 June 1921. The name of John Sullivan-Lynch appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 29 May 1921, with the notation that liability was split 50/50, and with a note that £2,650 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

His wife Julia Sullivan-Lynch was ordered to leave County Cork on 9 June 1921,

never to return, and she fled. She was later informed by the Free State Department of Defence that it was fairly definite that her husband had been tried and executed for spying, and that there was no longer any objection to her returning to Cork. In February 1922, while still living near Belturbet, Co. Cavan (no doubt for her safety), Mrs Sullivan-Lynch 'was awarded [compensation of] £2,650 by the Recorder of Cork for her husband, an ex-soldier and railway employee, who disappeared near Carrigrohane on May 29' of the previous year. See *II*, 18 Feb. 1922.

British military records indicate that John Sullivan Lynch had served with a series of British regiments, including the Connaught Rangers, also known as 'The Devil's Own' (2nd and 6th Battalions), the Leinster Regiment (2nd Battalion), and the Prince of Wales Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians). He was discharged from the last-named regiment as 'surplus' on 5 March 1919. He was a recipient of the British War Service Medal and the Victory Medal. See UK World War I Service Medal and Award Rolls (WO 329/1700, TNA). Sullivan Lynch was probably a Catholic, but his religious affiliation cannot be confirmed.

**67. Civilian Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Warren John Richard Peacocke, D.S.O.** (aged 32), of Skevanish House, Innishannon (Innishannon)

Date of incident: 31 May 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 2, 3, 6 June 1921; *FJ*, 2 June 1921; *CCE*, 4, 11 June, 1 Oct. 1921; *Leinster Express*, 4 June 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/157A/60 (TNA); 'Lest We Forget' (PRONI, D. 989/c/1/52); Frank Neville's WS 443, 15-16 (BMH); Richard Russell's WS 1591, 22-23, 25-27 (BMH); Barry (1949, 1989), 110-11; Leonard (1990), 124, 126; 'The Irish Rebellion in the 6th Division Area', *Irish Sword*, 27 (Spring 2010), 148; Donnelly (2012), 177-78; Bielenberg and Borgonovo, with Donnelly (2014), 12-13.

Note: Peacocke was shot as a major spy outside his mansion (Skevanish House) at Innishannon. Peacocke 'was engaged cutting wood in a workshop near his house when two undisguised men entered and fired several shots, two of which took effect in the stomach'. Peacocke was able to run into his residence about 30 yards away and declare that he had been shot, but his wounds were fatal and he died shortly thereafter. See *CE*, 2, 3, 6 June 1921.

Peacocke's offences in the eyes of the IRA were unpardonable and long persistent. As former Volunteer Richard Russell of the Innishannon Company recalled, Peacocke 'had been operating in the area as an intelligence agent and had guided raiding parties of military in the area. His identity had been established some time prior to Xmas 1920, when during the course of a raid the mask which he always wore on such occasions slipped. From the date of this incident Peacocke lived in Bandon Military Barracks and only visited his home in Innishannon on odd occasions. Information was received on May 31st (I think) that he had been seen at his home. Tom Kelleher and Jim Ryan—two members of the column—were sent to Innishannon to shoot Peacocke. They were scouted by Jack Murphy, M[ichael]

McCarthy, and Tom O'Sullivan of the local company (Innishannon). The men detailed to carry out the shooting (Tom Kelleher and Jim Ryan) hid in the laurels outside the house, and when Peacocke came to the hall door, he was approached by them. He attempted to draw his gun but was shot by our men, who were fired on by Peacocke's guard of Black and Tans. Our men, including scouts, withdrew without casualties and returned to their H.Q. in [the] Crosspound area.' Two weeks later, on the night of 14-15 June 1921, Liam Deasy (O/C, Cork No. 3 Brigade) issued the order that sent seven members of the Bandon Volunteer Battalion (including Richard Russell), with three others acting as scouts, to burn down Peacocke's mansion, Skevanish House, 'immediately', as its occupation by the Black and Tans was feared to be imminent. 'We gained entry to the house', Russell recalled, 'and collected all available material which could be ignited with the minimum of difficulty in the centre of each room. We sprinkled all rooms with paraffin and then set the lot on fire. The house was completely burned out.' The destruction of five other Innishannon Big Houses followed soon thereafter 'as reprisals for the burning of the houses of I.R.A. men and their supporters by the British military and police'. See Richard Russell's WS 1591, 25-27 (BMH).

The IRA had made several previous but unsuccessful attempts to execute Peacocke. He was identified by Volunteer intelligence as one of the leaders in West Cork of the loyalist Anti-Sinn Féin Society. See Bielenberg and Borgonovo, with Donnelly (2014), 12-13. His killing gave rise to questions in the House of Commons. Irish Chief Secretary Hamar Greenwood was asked whether Peacocke 'was known ever to have given any information to the government as to any action of the Sinn Féin party'. His answer was: 'None. . . . He had no connection whatever with the government or any public office or any political movement in the country in which he lived.' Greenwood had earlier and more correctly noted about Peacocke that he was 32 years old at the time of the murder; that he was an ex-officer of both the Grenadier Guards and the Inniskilling Fusiliers (second lieutenant in the latter and ultimately the commander of his regiment); that he had earned both the D.S.O. and the Croix de Guerre; that he had been living alone with his widowed mother; that two armed and masked men had shot him in the stomach on the night of 31 May; and that he died on 1 June 1921 'after great agony'. See *CE*, 3 June 1921. Unlike those of most other suspected informers killed by the IRA, Peacocke's death was noted in the 'The Irish Rebellion in the 6th Division Area', *Irish Sword*, 27 (Spring 2010), 148. He appears to have had RIC Auxiliaries guarding him when he was fatally shot and earlier as well.

On Saturday, 4 June 1921, Col. Peacocke was buried in 'the new Protestant burial ground which was presented by [the] deceased to the [Protestant] parishioners of Innishannon in memory of his deceased father. All shops were closed and blinds drawn as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased, and the funeral was large and representative of the local gentry and the people of Innishannon.' The chief mourners were his mother Ethel Helen Peacocke and his brother M. Peacocke. See *CE*, 6 June 1921. Soon afterwards all the livestock and other property were

seized by republican forces. Even before the mansion was destroyed, his mother and the rest of the family had fled to England.

**68. Civilian Eugene Swanton** (aged about 32) of Ballynacorra near Midleton (Knockraha)

Date of incident: 5 June 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, June 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Military Reports, WO 35/89 (TNA); WO 329/1765 (TNA); *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; Interview with Edmond Desmond, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA); O'Halpin (2013), 332.

Note: Eugene Swanton was abducted on 5 June 1921 by the IRA from the house of Patrick Gleeson at Ballynacorra near Midleton and subsequently killed. His remains were never found. The British military reported that Swanton had been kidnapped from his home [Gleeson's dwelling] at about 1 a.m. on 5 June by rebels claiming to be members of the crown forces, and that he had never been seen again. See Military Reports, WO 35/89 (TNA). Former Volunteer Edmond Desmond later told Ernie O'Malley that some IRA men dressed in British military uniforms, a few of whom were ex-officers of the British army, had approached Swanton for information about the Volunteers, and that he had given it to them; he had then been taken to the old graveyard at Kilquaine and had been executed near there—probably at Knockraha. See Interview with Edmond Desmond, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/112 (UCDA).

A labourer and an ex-soldier, Swanton had served first with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers (RDF) and then with the Machine Gun Corps in Western Europe and at Gallipoli. Born in about 1889, he had enlisted in the RDF in 1915 at the age of 26. In one of his attestations for the British army he listed his trade or calling as that of general labourer, though in another and later attestation he called himself a chauffeur. His name appears on the Service Medal and Award Rolls of the British War Office and Air Ministry for 1914-20. He was a recipient of the British War Service Medal and the Victory Medal. See WO 329/1765 (TNA). After the Great War had ended in 1918 and he was demobilised, he postponed his planned emigration to Canada with an 'assisted passage' owing to malaria contracted during military service in the Middle East; he was in regular correspondence with the British War Office. See O'Halpin (2013), 332.

At the time of the 1901 census the grandsons Michael, John, and Charles Swanton lived with their grandparents, the farmers John and Kate Gleeson of Ballynacorra. The senior Gleesons' unmarried son Patrick (aged 35 in 1901) and unmarried daughters Eleanor (Lena) and Hannah also co-resided with them. Patrick Gleeson appeared in the 1901 census as a 'car driver' and in the 1911 census as an 'agricultural labourer', but his father John Gleeson listed himself in that year as a farmer. Patrick Gleeson appears to have been Eugene Swanton's uncle, as Lena

Gleeson was certainly Swanton's aunt. The Swantons and the Gleesons were all Catholics. Eugene Swanton's intention to emigrate to Canada before his death intervened was entirely understandable. His mother Margaret Swanton, according to her son Eugene's Descriptive Report upon Enlistment in 1915, was already a resident of Charlestown, Massachusetts, having emigrated from Ireland to that northeastern state near the Canadian border.

**69. Civilian David Fitzgibbon** (aged about 45) of Liscarroll (Killinane crossroads near Liscarroll)

Date of incident: 6 June 1921 (killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 13 June 1921; *CCE*, 18 June 1921; *CWN*, 9 July 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/150/30 and WO 35/163 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, West Riding, June 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); 'IRA Intelligence Reports on Civilians Accused of Giving Information to and Associating with British Forces during War of Independence in Counties Cork, Kerry, Waterford, and Limerick', ca. 1921, CP/4/40 (Military Archives); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Hart (1998), 299; Ó Ruairc (2016), 122.

Note: A shoemaker, Fitzgibbon was abducted from his Liscarroll workplace by a party of armed and masked men on 6 June 1921 and later executed by the IRA. His body was found on 9 June near Killinane crossroads, about a half-mile outside Liscarroll. 'On the body was pinned a card bearing the words, "Shot by the I.R.A. Spies beware. This body is not to be moved."' Nevertheless, the reporter for the *Cork Examiner* remarked without much sense, 'No clue or motive has been discovered for the tragedy.' See *CE*, 13 June 1921. At a military inquest held on 14 June it was revealed that Fitzgibbon had been shot on 6 June, and that his body had been taken by neighbours and buried the next day in the churchyard at Liscarroll. On 10 June the police went to Liscarroll (where the military were also making inquiries), and the body was exhumed on 14 June so that a medical investigation could be carried out. This showed two bullet wounds—one through the right temple and another through the centre of the right cheek. See Military Inquests, WO 35/150/30 (TNA).

The police report on the incident acknowledged that Fitzgibbon had been suspected of giving information to the RIC. See RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, West Riding, June 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA). But at the military inquest Lieutenant F. C. Sherwood, intelligence officer for the Kerry Brigade of the British army, advanced the view that David Fitzgibbon was the only member of the family who had nothing to do with the IRA, and that the label placed on his dead body was engineered propaganda, as he had never been a spy. 'It is a favourite thing for the I.R.A. at present to murder innocent people', declared Sherwood, 'so as to advertise their intelligence. This is done to cover their inability to locate spies.' See Military Inquests, WO 35/150/30 (TNA).

Suggesting a different view was the presence of the victim's sister-in-law Bridget Tucker, who resided with David Fitzgibbon at the time of the 1911 census, on the

'suspect list' of the 1st Southern Division of the IRA. See 'IRA Intelligence Reports on Civilians Accused of Giving Information to and Associating with British Forces during War of Independence in Counties Cork, Kerry, Waterford, and Limerick', ca. 1921, CP/4/40 (Military Archives). But Peter Hart was probably correct to give greater weight to the testimony furnished by the aforementioned British military officer who insisted at the inquest that David Fitzgibbon had not been an informer. See Hart (1998), 299.

The name of David Fitzgibbon appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 9 June 1921, with the issue of liability left unstated, and with a note that £2,000 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). In 1911 the bootmaker and shoemaker David Fitzgibbon (then aged 35) had lived with his wife Hannah, two very young children (aged 2 and 1), his mother-in-law Ellen Tucker, and three of his wife's younger sisters (aged 18, 20, and 21) in a small house with only three rooms in Lisscarroll. By the time of his death in June 1921 David Fitzgibbon was a widower with five young children. The Fitzgibbons and the Tuckers were all Catholics.

**70. Civilian John Joseph Walsh** (aged about 31) of Midleton (Ballyvodock near Midleton)

Date of incident: 7-8 June 1921 (ex-soldier abducted and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/23 (UCDA); *CE*, 17, 18, 19 Oct. 1927; *Western Morning News*, 18 Oct. 1927; Application of Patrick Walsh to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/155/3), 23 Feb. 1928; <http://www.cairogang.com/soldiers-killed/walsh-j/walsh.html> (accessed 11 Aug. 2014).

Note: In mid-October 1927 workmen engaged in the draining of boggy land at Ahanesk [*sic*] near Midleton reportedly dug up the decomposed remains of a man who had been secretly buried. According to a report appearing in the *Western Morning News* of 18 October 1927, 'The blue clothes which he had worn were in tatters, but his boots, of strong pattern and tightly laced, were in perfect condition. Rosary beads and a .45 revolver bullet case were also found.' This report indicated that relatives had 'identified the remains as those of John J. Walsh, a British army man shot by the I.R.A. in June 1920'. See <http://www.cairogang.com/soldiers-killed/walsh-j/walsh.html> (accessed 11 Aug. 2014). This source, however, contained some inaccuracies and left important parts of the story untold.

The *Cork Examiner* reported that Walsh's badly decomposed body had been found on Saturday, 15 October 1927, in a bog at Ahanesk. Two days later, 'a woman named Mrs Morrison of Midleton identified the belt and boots as the property of her nephew John J. Walsh, who disappeared in June 1920 [*recte* 1921]. Portion of the clothing attached to the body having been washed, Mrs [Bridget] Morrison declared

that it corresponded with the suit worn by her nephew at the time of his disappearance. Walsh had been a member of the British army and in 1920 was on the reserve strength. He lived in Midleton and was 35 years of age. Since he disappeared, no information whatever had been received by his relatives as to his movements or his fate.' See *CE*, 18 Oct. 1927.

Testimony given at the coroner's inquest held at the Midleton courthouse on 18 October indicated that on 15 October a farm labourer named John Sinclair, who had been opening a drain at Ballyvodock near Midleton, had found a human skull above ground and then other human bones. He and the owner of the land initially covered up the bones, but on Sunday morning, 16 October, they reported their discovery to the Civic Guard, who quickly exhumed the remains and 'found portions of clothing in a rotting condition. They also found a rosary beads attached to the clothes, the case of a revolver bullet, a comb, [and] a pair of boots, out of which the bones were protruding.' The victim's brother Timothy Walsh of Dickinson's Lane, Midleton, also identified the clothing, belt, and boots (with rubber heels) as those of his brother John Joseph Walsh (a labourer aged 'about 30' at death), whom he had last seen (he said) on 7 or 8 June 1921, when his brother had disappeared from the Midleton house of his aunt Bridget Morrison. [Bridget Morrison and her husband Patrick resided at 3 Dickinson's Lane in Midleton in 1911.] The coroner's jury accepted the evidence of Timothy Walsh as accurate in identifying the deceased as John Joseph Walsh. See *CE*, 19 Oct. 1927.

An IRA source at the time (in June 1921) had noted the execution of Walsh and a second suspected spy. In the *Diary of Activities of the Fourth (Midleton) Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade for June 1921*, there appeared the following notation about B and D Companies of that battalion: '2 enemy spies, J. J. Walsh, Midleton, and M[ichael] Callaghan, Carrigtwohill, shot. Latter believed to be of importance.' See Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/23 (UCDA).

John Joseph Walsh (aged 21 in 1911) was one of the seven children and the oldest of the five sons of the labourer Richard Walsh and his deceased wife Mary of 78 Chapel Road in Midleton. They also had two daughters. By 1911 Richard Walsh had remarried Fanny (Kirby) Walsh. Living with them in 1911 were not only the seven children of Richard's first marriage but also two stepsons and three stepdaughters named Kirby—twelve children altogether. Fanny (Kirby) Walsh had been married to Richard Walsh for only two years, and so the five 'stepchildren' were hers by a previous marriage. The combined families resided in a house with five rooms. All the Walshes and Kirbys were Catholics.

In his application for financial relief to the Irish Grants Committee (IGC) in February 1928, Patrick Walsh (aged 24), of Dickinson's Lane, Midleton, a brother of the victim, stated that John J. Walsh had 'supported applicant and two [other] brothers who are not yet in employment [and] also an aunt [Bridget Morrison] who was living in the house [from which John J. Walsh had been abducted]. The aunt's

husband [Patrick Morrison] gets six months work in the year as corn store keeper in season at £2 a week; he is idle for remaining moiety. The deceased earned £3 a week as mal[s]ter in the local distillery, also 1/- [one shilling] a day [British military] reserve pay. He was residing with & supporting the [Morrison/Walsh] family.' Patrick Walsh sought £250 from the IGC in relation to the killing of John J. Walsh in June 1921. See Application of Patrick Walsh to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/155/3), 23 Feb. 1928.

**71. Civilian Daniel O'Callaghan** (aged 36) of Carrigtwohill (Carrigtwohill)

Date of incident: 21 June 1921 (ex-sailor killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: Death Certificate, 21 June 1921; *CE*, 23 June 1921; *CC*, 23 June 1921; *FJ*, 23 June 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, June 1921 (CO 904/115, TNA); Military Inquests, WO 35/156/49 (TNA); Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/23 (UCDA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Seamus Fitzgerald Papers, PR/6/32 (2), (UCC); O'Neill (1975), 68; Fitzgerald (2009), 115-16; Murphy (2010), 41; Sheehan (2011), 76.

Note: An ex-sailor and Royal Navy Reserve pensioner, O'Callaghan was pulled from his house in Carrigtwohill 'by two men who shot him just outside' at about 9 p.m. on 21 June 1921. He was taken to Queenstown/Cobh Hospital but died there on the following day. Unmarried and aged 36, he resided with his mother and had worked at a Haulbowline dockyard. See *CE*, 23 June 1921. A witness at a subsequent military inquest stated that O'Callaghan had told him that 'he was being [counted?] as a spy and that he was intending to seek protection from the military'. O'Callaghan was described at this inquest as a loyalist. See Military Inquests, WO 35/156/49 (TNA). In the Diary of Activities of the Fourth (Midleton) Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade for June 1921, there appeared the following notation about B and D Companies of that battalion: '2 enemy spies, J. J. Walsh, Midleton, and M[ichael] Callaghan, Carrigtwohill, shot. Latter believed to be of importance.' See Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/23 (UCDA).

Thomas Cotter, a lieutenant in the Carrigtwohill IRA Company, later claimed responsibility for executing O'Callaghan as a spy. See Sheehan (2011), 76. Cotter named his associates in executing O'Callaghan as Volunteers Harry O'Brien of the IRA First Southern Division Engineers unit; M. McCarthy of E Company (Knockraha) of the 4th Battalion; and P. Mahony of Anngrove (Carrigtwohill). See Seamus Fitzgerald Papers, PR/6/32 (2), (UCC).

A local-history account based on oral testimony from Knockraha provides more detail. Though incorrectly dating the episode to the summer of 1920, this account notes that Volunteer Michael McCarthy of Brooklodge, a member of E Company of the Fourth Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, and Harry O'Brien, a Volunteer on the run around Knockraha, were assigned to capture or shoot a spy based in Cobh whose mother lived in Carrigtwohill, and whom he was known to be visiting. This

spy was being used by the British to identify IRA men or republicans as the crown forces travelled around the area by motorised patrols. The two Volunteers set out in a horse and trap from Knockraha for Carrigtwohill; they located and captured the alleged spy at the back of his mother's house, near Geary's public house. They placed him in the trap, but he struggled free and ran down a passageway leading from the centre of Carrigtwohill towards the castle at Barryscourt, where they shot him. According to this account, he died on the spot, but this detail is not borne out by other, conclusive evidence. See Fitzgerald (2009), 115-16. In 1911

The name of Daniel O'Callaghan appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 21 June 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £600 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). Daniel O'Callaghan was one of the five co-resident children of the Carrigtwohill fowl dealer and widower Mary O'Callaghan. One of her six children lived away from home. Her son Daniel (then aged 26), the oldest of her children living at home, described himself to the census-taker as a labourer and a 'Royal Fleet Reserve Pensioner'. The O'Callaghans were Catholic.

**72. Civilian John Sullivan or O'Sullivan** (aged about 18) of Charleville (Coolasmuttane near Charleville)

Date of incident: 29 June 1921 (executed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 30 June, 1 July 1921; *CCE*, 2 July 1921; *CC*, 5 July 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/163 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, June 1921 (CO 904/115/942, TNA); Michael Geary and Richard Smith's WS 754, 25-27 (BMH); John D. Crimmins's WS 1039, 9-10 (BMH); Timothy D. Crimmins's WS 1051, 10-11 (BMH); Maurice Noonan's WS 1098, 8-9 (BMH); Application of Mary O'Sullivan to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/100/1/1685); Hart (1998), 300.

Note: The dead bodies of John Sullivan and Patrick John Sheehan were found 'on the roadside a short distance outside the town' of Charleville on Wednesday, 29 June 1921. Sullivan had been 'kidnapped about two weeks earlier by armed men near the town while engaged [in] carting sand in connection with the building of ex-servicemen's houses'. The IRA executed him and Sheehan as suspected spies. The execution scene on the roadside at Coolasmuttane was gruesome: '[A] portion of Sullivan's brains were exuding from the head. The hands of each were clasped across the breast.' It was also said of the two dead men: 'The deceased were blindfolded, and around the neck of each was a card bearing the words: "Convicted spy. Beware. I.R.A."' See *CE*, 30 June 1921. Sullivan was aged about 18 and was a Charleville native. Vouching for the British allegiance of her son, his mother later told the Irish Grants Committee that the son's first cousin 'was operating on the side of the British government in Ireland'. See Application of Mary O'Sullivan to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/100/1).

Further evidence comes from BMH witness statements. John Crimmins of the

Milford (County Limerick) Company of Volunteers, who passed as a British prisoner through Buttevant Military Barracks on his way to Spike Island Internment Camp in April 1921, recalled: 'While in Buttevant Military Barracks, we saw a man named Sullivan [*sic*] from Charleville associating with the enemy. We sent word to the battalion intelligence officer (Eugene McCarthy) by a prisoner from Mallow who was being released that Sullivan was apparently in touch with the enemy. Sullivan was later taken prisoner by the I.R.A. and was held, I understand, in the Milford area until his execution with his fellow conspirator Patrick J. Sheehan as spies sometime in June 1921, I think.' See John Crimmins's WS 1039, 9-10 (BMH).

Yet there is a strong possibility that Sullivan and Sheehan were innocent. An RIC official observed after the killings, 'The outrage was the work of the I.R.A. because they believed these men were giving information to the police, which was not a fact.' See RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, June 1921 (CO 904/115/942, TNA). See also Hart (1998), 300.

John Sullivan was in 1911 one of the six children of the 'plucker and skinner' Larence [*sic*] Sullivan and his wife Mary of 1 Knowles Lane in Charleville. Five of the six children (one son and four daughters) co-resided with their parents in that year, including John Sullivan (then aged 8), the younger of their two sons. His mother Mary O'Sullivan (aged 53 in 1927) described herself as 'destitute' when appealing in January of that year to the Irish Grants Committee for £800 in compensation for the death of her son John, whose employment had provided £2 a week towards her 'support and maintenance'. See Application of Mary O'Sullivan to Irish Grants Committee, 24 Jan. 1927 (762/100/1). The Sullivans or O'Sullivans were Catholic.

**73. Civilian Patrick John Sheehan** (aged about 31) of Main Street, Charleville (Coolasmuttane near Charleville)

Date of incident: 29 June 1921 (ex-soldier executed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CE*, 30 June, 1 July 1921; *CCE*, 2 July 1921; *CC*, 5 July 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/163 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, June 1921 (CO 904/115/942, TNA); Michael Geary and Richard Smith's WS 754, 25-27 (BMH); Maurice Noonan's WS 1098, 8-9 (BMH); John D. Crimmins's WS 1039, 9-10 (BMH); Timothy D. Crimmins's WS 1051, 10-11 (BMH); Application of Mary Sheehan to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/127/2); Hart (1998), 300.

Note: Sheehan 'was kidnapped last evening [28 June 1921] by a party of armed men at Clonmore while carting goods to Ballygran Creamery. His horse and car were found this evening [29 June] in a field near the scene of the tragedy.' The IRA executed him as a suspected spy along with John Sullivan. Sheehan 'was apparently shot at close range as the hair was singed near the temple'. Aged about 31, Sheehan too was a native of Charleville. See *CE*, 30 June 1921. His mother Mary Sheehan explained to the Irish Grants Committee that her dead son was alleged to have given information 'to the British military as to the movements of the Republican Army then operating in the vicinity of this town'. She added that 'my late son always took

the part of the British. Also, all my sons and male relations served with the British army during the Great War.' See Application of Mary Sheehan to Irish Grants Committee (CO 762/127/2).

Patrick John Sheehan was in 1911 one of the eight living children (ten born) of the shopkeeper and widow Mary Sheehan (then aged 60) of 112 Main Street in Charleville. Four of her eight children (three sons and a daughter) co-resided with her in that year. Patrick (then aged 21) was probably the youngest of her children and was certainly the youngest still living at home. He was employed as a carter. The Sheehans were Catholic.

The IRA's evidence against Sheehan and O'Sullivan was detailed in the joint BMH witness statement of Michael Geary and Richard Smith: 'Sometime about May 1921 two locals named Patrick J. Sheehan and John O'Sullivan (nicknamed "Slag") came under grave suspicion of giving information to the enemy and were acting as spies, and had been used by the enemy as "stool-pigeons" by being placed in with I.R.A. prisoners in Tipperary town and Kildorney [Kildorrery?]. The first information we obtained concerning them was from a Johnny White (since dead), who was catching a pony one night in a field at the rear of the R.I.C. barracks and saw Sheehan and Sullivan getting out very furtively over the barrack wall. The following day a Corporal Pepper, who was one of the [British] garrison intelligence staff and who was practically always dressed in "civvies", warned White to keep his mouth shut regarding Sheehan and Sullivan [*sic*] coming from the barracks. Subsequently, when the R.I.C. shifted quarters to another part of the town, a Volunteer named Joe Nagle, who had a harness shop near the barracks, saw the two boyos coming from the barracks. On another occasion Mick Geary and a Johnny Higgins saw them coming from the barracks. Confirmation was also obtained about them being used as "stool-pigeons", and in fact information was obtained from one of our lads working on the railway that Sheehan actually travelled from Charleville to Tipperary on an enemy rail warrant. Furthermore, in one of our raids on the mails a money order . . . was caught addressed to a Mrs Murphy in town, and we were satisfied that this was for Sheehan, as he was a frequent visitor to her house.' The Charleville IRA arrested O'Sullivan in 'about mid June' and Sheehan within the next fortnight. 'They were both tried by courtmartial, at which the Battalion O.C. (Jim Brislane) presided, and the Brigade O.C. (Liam Lynch), who happened to be in our area at the time, was present at the trial. Mick Geary and Tom Lyons of Buttevant gave evidence at the trial, and both the accused were sentenced to death, which sentence was duly carried out on June 29th, 1921. They were attended by a priest immediately prior to the execution.' See Michael Geary and Richard Smith's WS 754, 25-27 (BMH). Geary was captain of the Charleville Company, while Smith was assistant adjutant of the Third Battalion of the Cork No. 2 (later 4) Brigade.

There is a strong possibility, however, that the two Charleville victims were innocent. RIC officials understood that the IRA had killed Sheehan and Sullivan because they were giving information to the police, but the police reported that such

was not the case. See RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, June 1921 (CO 904/115/942, TNA); Hart (1998), 300.

**74. Civilian Francis (Frank) Sullivan** (aged 38) of Rosscarbery (near Rosscarbery)  
Date of incident: 1 July 1921 (abducted and executed as suspected spy by IRA)  
Sources: *CCE*, 2, 9 July 1921; *CE*, 4 July 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/159B/15 (TNA); RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork West Riding, July 1921 (CO 904/116); 'IRA Intelligence Reports on Civilians Accused of Giving Information to and Associating with British Forces during War of Independence in Counties Cork, Kerry, Waterford, and Limerick', ca. 1921, CP/4/40 (Military Archives); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); James 'Spud' Murphy's WS 1684, 24-25 (BMH); Hart (1998), 299; Donnelly (2012), 176-77.

Note: Frank Sullivan was found dead early on Saturday morning, 2 July 1921, 'by the roadside at Rosscarbery with a bullet wound in the head'. For many years he had served as the steward of Emily and Beatrice Whitley, daughters of a former Church of Ireland rector of Rosscarbery. Their residence (Merton House), immediately adjacent to the Rosscarbery RIC barracks, had recently been burned by the IRA. There is evidence that the IRA considered at least one of the Whitley sisters to be either an informer or closely associated with the crown forces. See 'IRA Intelligence Reports on Civilians Accused of Giving Information to and Associating with British Forces during War of Independence in Counties Cork, Kerry, Waterford, and Limerick', ca. 1921, CP/4/40 (Military Archives).

Sullivan fell into the same category of suspected spies. 'From information received', wrote the correspondent of the *Cork County Eagle*, 'it appears that about 10:30 on Friday night' [1 July], just as Sullivan was about to retire for the night, 'two strange men called to his house and asked him to come to Miss Whitley's house with them as they wished to get out some band instruments. The deceased went with them and he was never again seen alive. Since 'the burning of the hall' at Merton House, Sullivan had kept the band instruments 'in a portion' of Merton House that had not been destroyed by the fire. The shooting of Sullivan was generally regarded as 'rather mysterious, as he appears to have been on the best of terms with everyone'. Indeed, Sullivan, 'who was getting on to middle age, was a great favourite in Ross, of which town he was a native. He was president of the Ross Band and occupied the same position in the [local branch of the] Irish Transport Union. He was a very active member of the Irish Land and Labour Association.' See *CCE*, 9 July 1921.

The historian Peter Hart once memorably described the Rosscarbery branch of the Irish Land and Labour Association as 'stubbornly anti-republican', hinting that Sullivan's prominent connection with it had something to do with his murder. See Hart (1998), 299. But according to the BMH witness statement of West Cork Brigade column veteran James 'Spud' Murphy, Sullivan had admitted 'after a severe cross-examination' that 'he had informed the enemy of the whereabouts of Jim Lane

and myself. . . . We procured a priest to hear his confession and then executed him.’ See James ‘Spud’ Murphy’s WS 1684, 24-25 (BMH). Sullivan clearly was Catholic. To Sullivan’s body the IRA gunmen attached a notice declaring that anyone giving information to the Auxiliaries or the regular police would meet the same fate. The British military authorities believed that Sullivan had been shot dead just before the stroke of midnight on 1 July 1921. A witness named Patrick Keohane expressed his certainty at the military inquest that Frank Sullivan had never taken part in politics; Keohane did note that Sullivan had been serving as secretary of the local branch of the Irish Transport and General Workers’ Union. See Military Inquests, WO 35/159B/15 (TNA).

In 1901 Francis Sullivan was one of the four co-resident children of John J. and Hanora Sullivan of house 1 in Downeen townland (parish of Ross) in the Rosscarbery district. Francis Sullivan (then aged 12) was the oldest of the children (two sons and two daughters), who ranged in age from 8 to 12. His father John J. Sullivan (then aged 47) was a British officer, serving as a Commissioned Boatman (abbreviated as ‘Comd Btman’ or ‘Comd Bn’ in the census) with Her Majesty’s Coastguard, then an adjunct of the Royal Navy and under the control of the British Admiralty. When John J. Sullivan was recorded again in the 1911 census, he was living with his wife Hanora and his two daughters in Gillabbey, part of the south-western Cork suburb of Bishopstown. He appears to have lost his son Ignatius to an early death and was then employed as a ‘club steward’. The name of Frank Sullivan appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 1 July 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £600 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

**75. Civilian William Alexander Macpherson** (aged about 44) of Bridge Street, Mallow (Knockpogue near Mallow)

Date of incident: 7 July 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 9 July 1921; *IT*, 9 July 1921; *CWN*, 16 July 1921; *II*, 7 Oct. 1921; Military Inquests, WO 35/153B/14 (TNA); RIC County Inspector’s Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, July 1921 (CO 904/116); Diary of Activities for July 1921 Compiled by Headquarters of Cork No. 4 Brigade, Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/23 (UCDA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Leo O’Callaghan’s WS 978, 25 (BMH); Joseph P. Morgan’s WS 1097, 18 (BMH); Cornelius O’Regan’s WS 1200, 14 (BMH); Ó Ruairc (2016), 122.

Note: Formerly a sergeant major in the British army (as revealed by captured mail), Macpherson was bundled into a car or a pony and trap on 7 July 1921 and taken a short distance outside Mallow. After two days of detention at Gleanndine, he was shifted to Patrick O’Connor’s house at Pendency’s Cross, Dromahane, where he was tried by brigade officers, found guilty, and sentenced to death. ‘He was removed later the same night to a spot about one mile from Mallow on the mountain road,

where he was executed by members of the column.’ See Leo O’Callaghan’s WS 978, 25 (BMH). His body was found at Knockpogue with a bullet in the chest (through the heart) and with a label declaring, ‘Convicted spy, spies and informers in Mallow beware, we are on your track, I.R.A.’ Soldiers and police in lorries visited the Knockpogue location and removed the body to Mallow Military Barracks. See *II*, 7 Oct. 1921.

Macpherson had held the rank of ‘colour sergeant’ with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and lived in Mallow with his wife (a native of the district) and four children. Macpherson had been a target of the IRA since at least mid-June 1921, after one of his transactions in a Mallow shop brought him under suspicion. As Joseph P. Morgan of the Mallow Battalion Flying Column later recorded, ‘While other members of the column moved off towards Millstreet area to take part in the Rathcoole ambush, I was ordered to make arrangements to proceed to Mallow to execute a spy—McPherson [*sic*], an ex-British army sergeant major—who was supposed to be seen on Mallow Bridge each morning at 7 a.m. I think that his activities as a spy were discovered when he cashed some cheques, made payable to him by the British, in some shop in town (Mallow). I visited Mallow on two mornings, but there was no trace of McPherson, so other arrangements were made at a later date, when he was captured and executed early in July 1921.’ See Joseph P. Morgan’s WS 1097, 18 (BMH).

RIC District Inspector Patrick Wall stated at a subsequent military inquest that Macpherson ‘did not take part in the present rebellion. He was not a member of any political organisation. He was a law abiding and loyal subject.’ See Military Inquests, WO 35/153B/14 (TNA).

The Recorder of Cork, sitting at Mallow in October 1921, awarded £900 in compensation to the victim’s widow, Mrs Margaret Macpherson, and an additional £400 to each of her four children, ‘for the death of her husband, an army pensioner, who was taken away in a trap by three men, and next morning his body was found 2 miles from Mallow, with the label, “Convicted spy”’. See *II*, 7 Oct. 1921. The name of William Alexander Macpherson appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 8 July 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that £2,500 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

In 1911 William Macpherson (then aged 34) and his wife Margaret resided with her widowed mother Ellen Lyne (a farmer aged 61) at Lower Lavally (Rahan) near Mallow. At that point the Macphersons had only one child (a infant son aged six months), but three others were born later. Ellen Lyne’s adult son Thomas (aged 40) and his wife Norah probably took the principal role in managing the farm. William Macpherson was an Anglican.

**76. Civilian Major George Bernard O’Connor, J.P.** (aged 67) of Illane Row, Hop

Island in Rochestown district (near Rochestown railway station)

Date of incident: 10 July 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 12, 13 July 1921; *II*, 12 July 1921; *CC*, 13 July 1921; *CCE*, 16 July 1921; Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Interview with Florrie O'Donoghue, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/96 (UCDA); Michael Murphy's WS 1547, 36 (BMH); Walker (1978), 344; O'Mahony (1986), 104; Borgonovo (2007), 69, 83-84, 88, 97-98 (note 27), 104, 148, 179; Murphy (2010), 41, 89-90; O'Mahony (2011), 379; Ó Ruairc (2016), 88-90, 122.

Note: A retired British army officer, a magistrate, and a Protestant who was originally a unionist, O'Connor was taken from his house 'about midnight' on Sunday, 10 July 1921, by the IRA. He was found by his wife early the next morning lying 'on the public road midway between his house and the railway station at Rochestown'. He had been shot in the head and near the heart. He was a well-known politician. He had 'figured for many years [as a J.P.] at Douglas sessions'. He had run unsuccessfully as a unionist candidate for the Dublin (College Green) constituency in the general election of January 1910, losing badly to the nationalist candidate J. P. Nannetti, and he had been nominated for a Cork city parliamentary seat in the 1918 election but did not go forward to the poll. He had been a recruiting officer during the First World War, but his political views had shifted somewhat since 1910, and at the time of his death he was prominently identified with Sir Horace Plunkett's Dominion Home Rule League. See *CE*, 12 July 1921.

According to a Dublin Castle report, 'A label was attached to the body bearing the words—"Convicted spy"'. See *CE*, 13 July 1921. Two months earlier, he had given evidence against the prisoners taken into custody after the IRA's Clonmult disaster. See Borgonovo (2007), 88. But that was not his only offence from the republican perspective. O'Connor was strongly anti-republican in word and deed. After a series of Volunteer mail raids on trains at Rochestown earlier in 1921, in one of which a horse and trap commandeered from him was used to steal British military supplies, O'Connor had trenchantly criticised his own side for failing to sufficiently guard the rail system. In February of that year he had been travelling through Cork city in a pony and trap with his fellow magistrate Alfred Reilly when Volunteers from the Cork No. 1 Brigade got into the trap, forced Reilly to drive to his Rochestown home, and shot him dead outside his own gate; they pinned a label to his coat declaring him a spy. City IRA leaders considered Reilly to be part of a unionist spy ring connected to the Cork city Y.M.C.A., and O'Connor possibly suffered by his past association with the executed Reilly. More significantly, O'Connor was under IRA surveillance for some time, and his spying activities were confirmed, most notably the fact that he had furnished information shortly before the Truce to the military authorities about the hideout of one or more city Volunteer officers—a group that included Florrie O'Donoghue. See Murphy (2010), 89; Ó Ruairc (2016), 88-90. This last act—apparently detected by Josephine (McCoy Brown) O'Donoghue, Florrie's wife, who spied for the IRA in Victoria Barracks—probably sealed

O'Connor's fate. See Interview with Florrie O'Donoghue, Ernie O'Malley Notebooks, P17b/96 (UCDA); Ó Ruairc (2016), 90.

Gerard Murphy has drawn attention to Florrie O'Donoghue's claim that 'O'Connor was one of only two spies for whom documentary proof of their activities was available (his letter had been smuggled out from Victoria Barracks by Josephine Marchmont Brown, copied, and put back by the time the military authorities realised it)'. See Murphy (2010), 89. O'Connor's was therefore one of the more clear-cut cases of passing information.

Major O'Connor and his wife Elizabeth Anna (aged 57 and 54 respectively in 1911) then occupied a large house of fourteen rooms, with a groom, a cook, and a third servant (all three Catholic), at 1 Hop Island (Douglas) in the district of Passage West and parish of Carrigaline, where they had lived for twenty years. The O'Connors were childless. He noted for the 1911 census that he was retired from the Sixth Dragoons (a British regiment), and that he was a political and historical writer besides serving as a J.P. The O'Connors were adherents of the Church of Ireland. He was buried in the graveyard in front of St Luke's Church of Ireland in Douglas. The name of George B. O'Connor appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 10 July 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £5,000 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA). This sum was granted to his wife at the Cork quarter sessions on 14 October 1921. See O Mahony (2011), 379.

**77. Civilian John H. N. Begley** (aged 24) of 1 Rock Cottages, North Mall, Cork (near Douglas)

Date of incident: 11 July 1921 (ex-soldier kidnapped and killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/23 (UCDA); Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA); Seán O'Connell's WS 1706, 9 (BMH); William Barry's WS 1708, 11 (BMH); Borgonovo (2007), 69; Murphy (2010), 41; Ó Ruairc (2016), 81, 93-95, 122.

Note: Begley was kidnapped as an informer by the Cork city IRA on the very day of the Truce (five minutes before it came into effect, according to one recent account) and executed almost immediately thereafter. See Ó Ruairc (2016), 81. Led by their captain Seán O'Connell, members of G Company of the First Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade 'received instructions to arrest another ex-British soldier [Begley] who was alleged to be an enemy agent. We watched for him and at about noon one day, Tad[h]g Twohig and I [O'Connell] tracked him up Patrick Street. We were "covered" by four or five men from "G" Company, all of whom were armed with revolvers. We arrested Begley and took him out of the city. He was detained for a day or so in a house and on instructions from the brigade he was executed by shooting.' See Seán O'Connell's WS 1706, 9 (BMH).

Caught by the IRA outside Douglas, Begley had been interrogated closely. According to leading city Volunteer Connie Neenan, Begley broke down and confessed that 'it was Shields who got him into this mess'. Daniel Shields (or Shiels) was 'a former North Cork Volunteer who had given information that almost resulted in the capture of Cork No. 2 Brigade flying columns at Mourne Abbey and Nadd. After becoming a British informer, Shields apparently recruited other spies for service in Cork [city]', one of whom was Begley. See Borgonovo (2007), 69. Begley appeared on the list of 'missing persons' published in the *Irish Times* of 22 August 1921. There the date of his kidnapping was given as 11 July 1921.

It was apparently Begley to whom city Volunteer leader William Barry of D Company referred when he recalled that in mid-June 1921 Connie Neenan, O/C of the Second Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade, had instructed him 'to capture a civilian who worked in the Douglas district'. (Barry could not remember this civilian's name in 1957.) This man 'was alleged to have given information to the enemy in connection with the Mourne Abbey ambush, North Cork, in which a number of I.R.A. men were killed in action'. Barry 'contacted' and interrogated the suspected spy, who conceded that 'a friend of his named Sanders [Saunders] had given information to the military as to the whereabouts of the I.R.A. party at Mourne Abbey'. Barry and his comrades were nevertheless convinced 'as a result of our questioning' that the suspected spy 'was one of the guilty ones. He was shot on instructions of the brigade and buried in the Douglas district, Cork.' See William Barry's WS 1708, 11 (BMH). Begley's death occurred shortly after the Truce. According to the report of the captain of G Company of the Cork No. 1 Brigade for July 1921, the IRA had captured Begley at 11:55 a.m. on 11 July and had executed him as a suspected spy on 16 July. See Richard Mulcahy Papers, P7/A/23 (UCDA).

His name appears in the Compensation Commission Register under 11 July 1921, with the notation that British liability was accepted, and with a note that compensation of £1,500 was awarded. See Register of Compensation Commission (Ireland) Cases of Private Persons (CO 905/15, TNA).

John Begley was the only person belonging to a family with that surname, and residing in Cork city or its suburbs, recorded in the 1911 census. He was then 14 years old and was one of the four surviving children (two daughters and two sons) of the carter Thomas Begley and his wife Hannah of house 7.4 in Emmet Place. His mother (aged 47) had been married for twenty-seven years and had given birth to thirteen children, of whom only four had apparently survived infancy. In 1911 John Begley (the second living child and older son) was employed as a shop messenger. The Begleys were Catholic.

**78. Civilian William J. Nolan** (aged about 17) of Annmount, Friar's Walk, Cork (Cork city)

Date of incident: 11 July 1921 (ex-soldier killed as suspected spy by IRA)

Sources: *CE*, 14 July 1921; *IT*, 22 Aug. 1921; RIC County Inspector's Monthly Report, Cork City and East Riding, July 1921 (CO 904/116); Weekly Summary of Outrages against the Police (CO 904/150, TNA); Borgonovo (2007), 69, 100 (note 71), 76-77; Murphy (2010), 41, 154-55; Ó Ruairc (2016), 81, 92-93.

Note: Nolan was an ex-soldier and the son of a retired RIC constable who had recently 'presented himself as a candidate' for the RIC. His police links were certainly known to the IRA. He appeared on the list of 'missing persons' published in the *Irish Times* of 22 August 1921. According to the *Cork Examiner* of 14 July 1921, 'A boy of about 17 years named Willie Nolan of Annmount, Friar's Walk, Cork, has been missing since about 11:30 a.m. on Monday [11 July], at which time he left his residence to post a letter. Nothing has since been heard of him. His father was formerly a member of the R.I.C. and a brother of his is at present serving with that force.' Nolan was abducted by members of E Company (based in Friar's Walk) of the Second Battalion of the Cork No. 1 Brigade. See Murphy (2010), 154-55.

As Ó Ruairc has recently noted, it is uncertain whether the IRA abducted and executed Nolan because of the connections of his father and older brother with the RIC and his own application to join the force, or because the IRA suspected him of spying. Both motives may have been involved. Nolan may have sought to join the RIC himself as a means of gaining protection against an assumption of his jeopardy. The Cork city IRA had earlier warned "prospective recruits that they join the R.I.C. at their own peril. All nations are agreed as to the fate of traitors." The IRA secretly buried Nolan's body. See Ó Ruairc (2016), 81. Nolan's death occurred shortly after the Truce. He was almost certainly Catholic.