



## **The West Clare Brigade Papers**

**P45**

**The Special Collections and Archives Department  
Glucksman Library  
University of Limerick**

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**Reference Code:** IE 2135 P45  
**Title:** The West Clare Brigade Papers  
**Dates of Creation:** 1930  
**Level of Description:** Fonds  
**Extent and Medium:** 58 items (22 files)

**CONTEXT**

**Name of Creator:** Twomey, Maurice 'Moss' (1897-1978).

**Biographical History:** Maurice 'Moss' Twomey was born in Fermoy, County Cork, on 10 June in 1897. He was educated by the local Christian Brothers. He joined the Irish Volunteers on its formation in 1914 and proved to be an able recruit. He quickly rose to the rank of Battalion Adjutant Fermoy Battalion by 1918. By 1919, he had attained the rank of Brigade Adjutant to the Cork No. 2 Brigade of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). By 1920, Twomey was a staff officer on the general staff of the 1st Southern Division. He was heavily involved in operations during the War of Independence.

After the Anglo-Irish Treaty and during the Civil War, Twomey was a staff officer to General Liam Lynch. He was a member of the occupying force in the Four Courts in 1922, the action that precipitated the Civil War. He had however left the building before it was bombarded by the Free State Army.

Following the Civil War, Twomey was tasked with the entire root and branch reorganisation of the IRA, including the West Clare Brigade. Twomey succeeded Frank Aiken as Chief of Staff of the IRA in 1927, a post he would hold until 1936, when he was interned by the De Valera Government. While incarcerated in the Curragh Camp, Twomey argued with the IRA leadership concerning its policy of supporting Nazi Germany and resigned his position as Chief of Staff. Upon his release, Twomey left the IRA but remained sympathetic to the Republican cause. He subsequently opened a general confectioners and newsagents in Dublin, which became a centre for Republican activities. Maurice Twomey died in Dublin of a heart attack on 8 October 1978.

**Archival History:** This set of documents was originally part of a larger collection of papers discovered in a derelict shop in Dublin which had once been owned by Maurice Twomey. The collection, comprising in the main material collected by Twomey while acting as Chief of Staff of the Irish Republican Army, was broken up and put forward for auction in separate lots.

**Immediate Source of Acquisition:** Purchased by the Special Collections and Archives Department as a single lot at an auction held at Adam's Auction Room, St Stephen's Green, Dublin, on 20 April 2010.

## CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

**Scope and Content:** The collection consists of manuscript and typescript biographical accounts of Volunteers and civilians who died during the War of Independence and Civil War and who had links with the West Clare Brigade IRA. The accounts provide detailed information concerning the birth, early education and military career of each individual.

The collection illuminates a turbulent period in Irish history stretching from the later decades of the nineteenth century until the end of the Civil War in 1923. The inclusion of biographical details of Volunteers who were killed during the Civil War while fighting on the anti-Treaty side makes it historically significant, as information of this nature was rarely recorded.

**Appraisal, Destruction and Scheduling Information:** All records have been retained.

**Accruals:** No accruals are expected.

**System of Arrangement:** The documents have been arranged in alphabetical order by individual surnames.

## CONDITIONS OF ACCESS AND USE

**Conditions Governing Access:** Unrestricted access to all items.

**Conditions Governing Reproduction:** Standard copyright regulations apply to all items. For photocopying or reproducing material, please consult with the staff.

**Language/ Scripts of Material:** English.

**Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:** Paper documents in good condition.

**Finding Aids:** A hard copy of the descriptive catalogue is available at the Special Collections and Archives Department, Glucksman Library, University of Limerick.

## DESCRIPTION CONTROL

**Archivist's Note:** Papers arranged and described by John Harrington under the supervision of Anna-Maria Hajba.

**Rules or Conventions:** This description follows guidelines based on *Irish Guidelines for Archival Description*, 2009; *National Council on Archives: Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names*, 1997; and *EAP Guidance on Data Protection for Archive Services*, 2018.

**Date of Description:** July 2015. Revised in May 2021.

## Contents

1	CORRESPONDENCE AND LISTS (1930) .....	2
2	ROLL OF HONOUR (1930) .....	2

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**1 CORRESPONDENCE AND LISTS (1930)**

- 1/1 18 September 1930  
Letter from 'J' to an unidentified recipient enclosing a list of the names and ranks of 16 West Clare Brigade Volunteers, three civilians and one attached Volunteer who died during the War of Independence or the Civil War.  
2 items
- 1/2 [1930]  
Typed list of the fallen volunteers and civilians included in the Roll of Honour, omitting the name of Thomas Russell (for whom see P45/2/17).  
1 p.

**2 ROLL OF HONOUR (1930)**

- 2/1 [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Captain Sean Breen who was killed during the War of Independence.  
3 items
- 2/2 [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Commandant Padraig Burke who died at home of illness contracted following a hunger strike and ill treatment in Wandsworth Prison, London, between the War of Independence and the Civil War.  
3 items
- 2/3 [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Commandant Peadar Clancy Vice Officer Commanding Dublin Brigade, ending with his departure for Dublin in 1913.  
3 items
- 2/4 [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Section Commander Daniel Crawford who died shortly after the Civil War from severe ill health owing to his wartime experiences which included a period on the run, a period in Limerick prison and a three-day hunger strike.  
3 items

**P45/**

- 2/5 [1930]  
Brief biographical account of Thomas Curtin who was killed by the British Forces during the War of Independence.  
4 pp.
- 2/6 [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Volunteer Michael Darcy who drowned while fleeing the British Forces during the War of Independence.  
3 items
- 2/7 [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Captain Michael Francis Fahey who died from an accidental gun shot from his own weapon during the War of Independence.  
3 items
- 2/8 [1930]  
Brief biographical notes of Brigade Adjutant/ Sergeant Padraig Hassett who was killed by friendly fire during the War of Independence.  
3 items
- 2/9 [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Section Leader Michael Keane who died of illness during the Civil War.  
3 items
- 2/10 [1930]  
Brief biographical account of Volunteer Thomas Keane who died from an accidental gun shot from his own weapon during rifle practice prior to the 1916 Rising.  
3 pp.
- 2/11 [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Lieutenant Patrick Keating who was killed during the Civil War.  
3 items
- 2/12 [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Commandant Christopher McCarthy who was killed on active service during the War of Independence.  
3 items

**P45/**

- 2/13** [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Captain Michael McNamara who was killed by the British Forces during the War of Independence.  
3 items
- 2/14** [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Volunteer Sean McSweeney who was killed during the Civil War. Item **P45/2/14 (1)** lacks pages 2 and 3.  
3 items
- 2/15** [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Volunteer Padraig O'Dea who was killed during the Civil War.  
4 items
- 2/16** [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Volunteer Sean O'Gorman who was killed during the Civil War.  
3 items
- 2/17** [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Thomas Russell, an attached Volunteer from County Kerry, who was killed by the British Forces at a Sinn Féin meeting prior to the War of Independence.  
3 items
- 2/18** [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Commandant William Shanahan who was killed by the British Forces during the War of Independence.  
3 items
- 2/19** [1930]  
Brief biographical accounts of Thomas Shannon, Magistrate of the Republican Courts, who was killed by the British Forces during the War of Independence.  
3 items
- 2/20** [1930]  
Brief biographical account of Padraig Studdert who was killed by the British Forces during the War of Independence.  
2 pp.