**Tom Wall**

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Aubane responds to this aspect of Hart’s history by referring to Meda Ryan’s critique of his work contained in her biography of Tom Barry. There she argues that the IRA had good reason to believe that those targeted were informers.

She states that of those shot all the surnames were listed as "helpful citizens" in what she refers to as "the Dunmanway find". This refers to a diary – apparently written by an intelligence officer – and other documents left behind by the Auxiliaries when they evacuated Dunmanway workhouse in 1922. However, there is no documented evidence to support this. The diary was first brought to light in a series of articles in the Southern Star newspaper in 1971 written by Flor Crowley under the non de plume "Raymond". He had apparently been lent the diary by a former IRA activist in the area. It is largely made up of notes and descriptions of IRA men but also appears to contain the names of just four informants, one of whom was a young IRA volunteer. Just one is identified as a "loyalist".

Crowley expressed surprise that no "known" informers were listed and comments that "nobody, as far as I have ever heard, suspected in 1920 and 1921, or ever since" that any of the four listed were informants. This would rule out any use of the diary as a basis for a death list of informers at that time. However, Ryan alludes to "separate documents" allegedly containing the names of others. But it seems from the source notes that she did not have possession of these documents and relied on an interview with Dan Cahalane, a local IRA veteran and likely custodian of the diary, for information as to their contents. As, at the very least, he was a comrade of those involved in the Dunmanway killings, he cannot be regarded as disinterested.

It is not clear if these documents still exist or if any request was made to examine them. On the face of it, it seems unlikely that the Auxiliaries accidentally left behind a file of documents, as well as a diary, containing the names of informers. But if they did, and if the contents tend to exonerate or explain, at least in republican terms, the killings, why were they not given to a sympathetic historian like Meda Ryan or to the equally supportive Flor Crowley for his Southern Star articles? Ryan is a nationalist historian, noted for detailed research, but her apparent reluctance to ask these questions, and her defence of the killings – described by Dorothy McArdle as "... murders, violently in conflict with the traditions and principles of the Republican Army" – raise major question marks.