

Some people have written lengthy stories about Mick Collins, his movements and escapes, but I have not yet seen any mention of the house in St. Mary's Road, Ballsbridge, (Andy Woods bought this house for Mick Collins in his (Andy Woods) own name) or the fact that he enjoyed an early morning drink and also that he depended on the public for his safety. Mick and many other important men had special protective guards, but he was the only one who succeeded from time to time in escaping from his guards. This caused a lot of trouble. Another man whom it was easier to protect was Kevin O'Higgins. He slept at times in Dundrum with a string tied to his toe and the guards were sitting on the railway bank ready to give the signal in case of danger. As a result of these guards a number of men were kept on long stretches of duty without any recognition for their services. On the morning of Mick Collins's escape in Mespil Road John McCluskey had his children waiting at points in case Mick came along. These children knew him well.

When I was on the run in 1920 and 1921 I often met Mick cycling along Mespil Road to Miss Hoey's house. At odd times he might stop for a moment, but one morning when I got to Baggot St. Bridge I found John McCluskey on guard in order to stop him in case he came along. I relieved McCluskey and he was able to go elsewhere. Mick was warned and did not arrive. The Auxiliaries were in occupation of the house waiting for him and by a clever move Miss Hoey was able to get word to McCluskey at the Land Bank. This was proof of the trust which he had in this man. How well this trust was repaid, and John McCluskey was a member of K. Company.