

ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

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BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY, 1913-21.

STATEMENT BY WITNESS.

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Witness

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Dublin.

Identity.

Adjutant, East Limerick Brigade;
Member of East Limerick Flying Column.

Subject.

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East Limerick, 1900-1921.

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Statement of Lieut-Colonel J.M. MacCarthy.

CONTENTS.

	Pages
1. Family background and the national orientation in Kilfinnane in the early years of the century.	1 - 4
2. Schooldays - Clongowes & St. Colman's, Fermoy.	5 - 6
3. The Volunteer movement in Kilfinnane from 1914 to the Redmondite Split.	6 - 12
4. The Irish Volunteers re-organised after the Split with the assistance of Ernest Blythe as the G.H.Q. organiser. The formation of the Galtee Battalion.	12 - 14
5. Galtee training camp under Ginger O'Connell in summer of 1915 - subsequent camp at Kilkee.	14 - 15
6. The 1915 Whit parade in Limerick.	15 - 16
7. Proposal to arm Volunteers with pikes.	17
8. Easter Week 1916.	18 - 23
9. The re-organisation and the Manahan-Hannigan Split and the enquiry.	25 - 28
10. Seán Wall as the Brigade Commander in East Limerick - his death in 1921.	28 - 30
11. The Conscription crises period	30 - 32
12. The officers of the re-organised 5th (Galtee) Battn.	32 - 34
13. The 1918 elections - My induction into the I.R.B.	34 - 35
14. Reference to the rescue of Seán Hogan at Knocklong Station.	35 - 37
15. Reference to the Limerick railway strike and billeting of "refugees" dealt with in appendices.	37 - 39
16. Acquisition of a service rifle - intimidation of intending R.I.C. recruits.	40
17. Peace conference appeal - Dáil Loan. Arrival of Tomás Malone (Seán Ford) in the Brigade area. Ballylanders barrack attack.	41 - 42
18. Comment on the claim of Seán T. O'Riordan to have organised and commanded the Ballylanders attack.	43
19. Further comment upon other Volunteer officers present at Ballylanders.	43 - 45

	Pages
20. The attack on Kilmallock Barracks.	46 - 50
21. The organisation of the East Limerick Brigade - destruction of evacuated R.I.C. barracks.	50 - 52
22. Ernie O'Malley appears in East Limerick as a G.H.Q. organiser.	52 - 53
23. The organisation of the first of the Flying Columns June, 1920.	53 - 55
24. The escape from I.R.A. custody of General Lucas.	55
25. A military raid on our house during which I evade arrest by escaping through the cordon.	56 - 62
26. Visits to Kilrush and Limerick City while on the run.	62 - 65
27. Rejoining the Flying Column in December 1920, I am appointed to the position of Brigade Adjutant.	65 - 68
28. The Glenacurrane ambush.	66 - 68
29. Christmas break for the Column - death of David Tobin and Thos. Murphy.	68
30. Consultation meeting foreshadowing the divisioned organisation between six Brigades of Cork, Limerick and Tipperary at Glanworth, 6th January, 1921. Re-assembly of East Limerick Column on same date.	68 - 69
31. Reference to a dispatch from G.H.Q. regarding the selection of suitable men to undertake the execution of the British Prime Minister.	69 - 70
32. The movements of the re-assembled Column.	70 - 73
33. Intelligence situation - capture of I.R.A. arms dump.	73 - 75
34. Outline of the general conditions under which the Column operated - discipline, administration, training and local intelligence service.	75
35. Drumkeen ambush.	80 - 81
36. The shooting down of a British aeroplane in the Martinstown area.	82 - 87
37. The Column evades large scale efforts to round it up.	87 - 88
38. I leave the Column at Bruree to give my full time to the duties of my appointment as Brigade Adjutant.	88 - 89
39. The Brigade Headquarters dug-out at Uregare, Bruff.	89 - 90
40. Column losses at Ballyhahill, Sraharla & Lackelly.	90 - 91
41. Capture of British "Intelligence Summary".	91 - 92
42. General comment on I.R.A. situation at the time of the Truce.	93 - 95.

APPENDICES.

- A.1. Printed Manifesto dated 15th July 1915.
- A.2. Original letter ref. Personnel of Vol. Defence Committee.
- B.1. Drawing of Pikehead (original).
- B.2. An Cosantóir proof of article on Sean Wall.
- C.1. Typescript copy of correspondence of April 1919 re Limerick Strike and billeting proposal.
- C.2. Original printed copy of G.H.Q. instruction on formation of Intelligence Service dated 1st Nov. 1919.
- D. Single proof copy of article on Ballylanders Bk. attack.
- E. Single proof copy of article on Kilmallock Bk. attack.
- F.1. Typescript copy of G.H.Q. instruction dated 4.10.20. on organisation of Flying Column.
- F.2. Single original copies in mimeo of G.H.Q. Orders 1 to 6, and No. 10 (19.5.20 to 19.6.20).
- G. Typescript copy of minutes of (Glanworth) meeting 6.1.21.
- H. Typescript copies ~~of copies~~ of Report of Vice-Brigadier E. Limerick to O/C. Brig. for transmission to G.H.Q. dated 12.1.21.
- I. Typescript copy of letter of C/S to O/C East Link. Brigade dated 19.1.21 concerning selection of men for special mission.
- J. Typescript copy of Intelligence reports to O/C. E.L. Brig. from O/C. 4th Bn. Cork II Brig. and 5th Bns. E.L.
- K. Single copy of portion of $\frac{1}{4}$ " map showing route of column.
- L. Single copy of proof of article on Drumkeen Ambush with sketch map.
- M. Typescript copy of letter of Pilot Officer Mackay, R.A.F. to his captors.
- N. Single original copy of captured British Intelligence Summary.
- O. Typescript copy of Orders (5 pages) from E. O'Malley O/C. 2nd Div.
- P. Typescript copy of Orders to Liaison Officers from Chief Liaison Officer dated 12th July 1921.
- Q. Typescript copy of summary of actions in which E.L. Brigade was involved.

ORIGINAL

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No. W.S.

STATEMENT OF LIEUT.-COLONEL JOHN MAURICE MacCARTHY
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To a degree depending on his branch of historical research, the historian recording his findings of cause and effect in Irish politics of the years, 1913 to 1921, will seek to delineate the type and characteristics of the individual men and women who played a part, great or small, in the events of that period. Whether his delineation be merely a composite picture, a visualisation to be kept in the mind's eye as events and motives are assessed, or a scientific classification in some specialised study of the many and varied personalities involved, no mere chronicle of purely political or military matters will suffice as material for such a picture or study.

It is with those considerations in mind that I think it proper to preface this account with an outline of my early years, associations and environment.

I am a native of the County of Limerick, where I was born at Sycamore Lodge, Kilfinane, on 8th November, 1896. My father, who had been educated at The Monastery School, Clondalkin, Dublin, with a view to a professional career, eventually took over control of the family's commercial interests, a wholesale, retail and distributing business in Kilfinane, and also developed my birthplace into a well-known stud farm, the Sycamore Lodge Stud. In politics he was a Nationalist but opposed to the Irish Parliamentary Party, being an

adherent of William O'Brien. As such he was closely associated with T. Westropp Bennett (later to become Chairman of the Senate) who usually was the O'Brienite candidate opposing the Irish Party nominee at Parliamentary elections in East Limerick. As will later appear, the existence of this sub-division of nationalist opinion was not without influence in the subsequent developments within the Irish Volunteer organisation, not alone in County Limerick but especially in Cork, Kerry and Tipperary where the O'Brienite nationalists had their principal strongholds. This, however, was all in the future, but accounts for my elaboration of what might otherwise seem unimportant.

In the meanwhile, Bennett, as standard-bearer for the O'Brienite Nationalists, usually gave the Irish Party candidate a close contest for the East Limerick seat, but generally the Redmondite machinery of the United Irish League and the Ancient Order of Hibernians organisations were supreme in the constituency. This was definitely so in the Kilfinane area where the O'Brienite supporters, though fairly numerous, were clearly in a minority. So much was this the case that with party feeling running high, as it was apt to do at election times, opposition to the Irish Parliamentary Party could be very harmful to a business man. In my father's case this certainly would have been the effect were it not that his minority political views were offset by his fairly large employment and generous treatment of labour, and his sporting associations. These included patronage of a notable hurling team with many claims to a unique record. This team, Kilfinane, won the All-Ireland Championship at Jones' Road, Dublin, in 1897 when club teams, not county

selections, were the units of the competition and it was subsequently County Champion Team for many years. The locality as a whole has in fact a remarkable record for such a circumscribed area in the field of sport and athletics, having produced many record holders, including World (Olympic) Champions.

Altogether it was a very virile community. Nowadays, as a sign of changing times and a falling population, its once famous hurling team is graded junior, its two bands reduced to one and its claims to champion status confined to its Chess Club being the first in Ireland to win some trophy or other.

It was also a community with an underlying Fenian tradition. The site of O'Neill-Crowley's last stand is nearby in Kilclooney Wood, marked by a monument, while, also nearby, in Kilmallock, a memorial to "The Unknown Fenian" commemorates the 1867 attack on the local police barracks (which we were to attack again and destroy in 1920). This militant spirit came to the surface in another form about 1910 when a dispute arose between a section of the town tenants and their landlord, a man named Vandeleur of British stock, who resided abroad. This dispute developed to the point of the town being garrisoned for a period by large reinforcements of police, and a series of violent conflicts and baton charges arose. Evictions were also attempted and it was the practice for tenants to resist by pouring boiling water from top windows upon the bailiffs and police. A general boycott of the latter was in force and practically all their foodstuffs had to be obtained from a distance. At the time, these incidents and agitation attracted country-wide

attention and got banner headlines in the newspapers. For a period they were indeed the chief feature of the news - "Another Riot In Kilfinane" being an item frequently brought to my notice away at college where I was the object of banter as a representative of the "wild men of Kilfinane", as they were dubbed.

Politically, however, only one avowed holder of advanced nationalist views was known to me in the Kilfinane area at this period around 1909. He was my first cousin, a medical student at University College, Cork. He was then a supporter of Sinn Féin but, surprisingly, when the European War broke out in 1914 he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps of the British Army. Emphasising his changed outlook since his student days, he rejoined the R.A.M.C. after his war engagement had terminated and remained in that service until his death in Cairo some years ago. This relative, being, in effect, a ward of my father, his uncle, resided with us during his school holidays and subsequent army leaves. His then political views had, however, no influence on my eventual political outlook. I was, of course, much too young to have any point of contact with him or interest in such matters at that period. Disrespect for the Redmondite Party and some vague interest in William O'Brien's "All-For-Ireland League", formed about this time, would sum up my schoolboy approach to politics when I left home and entered Clongowes Wood College, Co. Kildare, in 1909. Previously I had attended the local school in the ordinary way and in addition had been receiving private tuition from its Principal, Mr. Edmond Hayes, M.A., a brother of Father Michael Hayes and Dr. Richard Hayes, both of whom were to figure so prominently in the national movement of later years.

Clongowes, where I first took a definite political stand, could be described as a school with a very conservative outlook. Many would indeed term it "shoneen" or West British in tone. It was not, however, anti-national - inter-national would more nearly describe its characteristic approach to lay matters. It took pride in the many distinguished figures who had passed through it to notable careers in not only Irish life, but in British military, colonial and other services. The President of the Past Pupils' Union (The Clongowes Union) during my period was Lord Chief Justice (or Chief Baron) Palles (the last to bear that particular designation) and it had been John Redmond's old school. But so, too, had it been the old school of Thomas Francis Meagher ("Meagher of the Sword") and all were equally honoured by a place in the school's extensive gallery of portraits.

My political gesture, such as it was, occurred when King Edward of England died in 1910. The event being announced to the assembled school, all present, some 300 in number, were told to rise and stand as a token of respect. This request, or rather command, was, as I now judge, largely a formality, typical of the school's status in civil life and without much, if any, specific "loyalist" significance. However, it did not strike me that way at the time and while the great majority present more or less automatically obeyed, a minority, including myself, resisted the instinctive urge to follow suit and remained seated. From this small incident I date my growth of interest in advanced nationalist views.

In the following year, owing to a brief illness, a break occurred in my stay at Clongowes and instead of

returning there after my recovery, I was sent to a school much nearer my home - St. Colman's College, Fermoy, Co. Cork. This, by contrast with Clongowes, could be described as an "Irish-Ireland" school in its general atmosphere. My time there was, however, cut short early in 1913 by my father's death at a comparatively early age and, being the eldest of the family, it was decided that I should take charge of affairs at home. For this task I was rather immature and in any case lacked interest in it, leaving control almost wholly in the hands of an old and competent employee who managed them well and honestly. These circumstances left me free to follow my own bent, with the result that the Volunteer movement attracted me from the outset when it was initiated late in 1913, and it became my primary and practically whole-time occupation from the date of the formation of the first Volunteer unit in Kilfinane. This would have been at the end of 1913 or in the opening months of 1914.

From then until the Volunteer "split" towards the end of 1914 the activities of the local unit followed a pattern which no doubt differed not at all from that common to the movement as a whole at that time. Such local control as existed rested in the hands of a committee of elderly local politicians, principally supporters of the Redmondite Party. There was no formal chain of military command in the unit at this time, so far as I can remember, that is to say, there were no Company officers. Executive command was exercised by ex British Army N.C.O's (some time-expired, others still on the British Army Reserve) who acted as drill instructors and took charge of the parades. These were invariably well-attended, practically all the adult male population of

the locality having joined the organisation. Instruction was confined to close-order and extended-order drill, some signalling instruction, arms drill (with wooden "guns"), route marches and one - perhaps two - ineffective attempts at a very minor form of tactical exercise. By military standards it was all very futile, even silly, but there was no lack of earnestness or enthusiasm. For the great bulk of the members it was just a mass movement in which they were caught up without any clear idea of what was afoot. But it expressed the basic nationalism of Redmondite, O'Brienite and, where he existed, Sinn Féiner alike, in terms made fashionable by the chief anti-nationalist, Carson. Thus it gave sufficient gloss to obscure the rather aimless and futile aspects of much of the Volunteer activity of this period. Of course, the movement also had its place in the march of events, one that played a role in conditioning the mind of the people to eventual acceptance of a physical force policy.

With the outbreak of the European War in the summer of 1914, some of our drill instructors who were British reservists left us, being called up for service. I remember one particularly decent and popular Munster Fusilier reservist, named Barrett, being escorted by the unit and band marching with him the five-mile route to Kilmallock Railway Station when he left to catch the train for his depot. This was purely a personal tribute and was no indication of the political views or attitude to the war issues of the Volunteers participating. Indeed, at the station when the train drew in and was seen to contain large numbers of khaki-clad soldiers, there was a fair amount of shouting at them from the Volunteers drawn up on the platform. "Down with the Scottish Borderers" was one cry I remember being used on the occasion, in

allusion to the then recent shooting at Bachelor's Walk, Dublin, after the Howth gun-running episode.

The reservist concerned in this send-off saw little of the war as matters turned out, being captured with many of the Munsters at the Battle of Mons and spending the rest of the war a prisoner in Germany. A brother of this man, Edmond Barrett, later proved a very tough and useful member of our I.R.A. unit and Active Service Column. He more or less attached himself to me throughout the conflict, in some undefined capacity of his own devising - a combination of bodyguard, aide and "trigger-man", which proved extremely helpful to me in the circumstances that developed in our area.

A little later after this send-off of Reservist Barrett, there was a reverse ceremony - a welcome-home for a wounded Irish Guardsman. On this occasion only the band participated, however, as the man in question had not been connected with the Volunteers, and the band, although then and for a long time subsequently wholly Redmondite in its outlook, participated largely as a neighbourly gesture. In much the same spirit there were widespread rejoicings in the area - bonfires and so on - when news arrived of the safety as a prisoner of Lieutenant John Ryan until then reported missing in France. Ryan served either in the South Irish Horse or Munsters and was a member of the family who ran the Scarteen Foxhounds (the Black and Tans, a name they bore long before their human namesakes appeared on the scene). This celebration also was without political significance. It reflected the extent to which sporting interests, especially horses and hurling, cut across class and Party feelings in normal times in the locality.

At this stage a classification of the Volunteers in the area would, I estimate, have shown approximately the following shades of political thought:-

	%
Redmondite (U.I.L. and A.O.H. and general supporters of the Irish Party) ...	60
O'Brienite ...	35
Advanced Nationalists ...	5

The open support given by Redmond for British Army recruiting about this time would have marked the first changes in the political complexion of the locality. A cooling of support for the Irish Party at once became evident, all the more so when one or two public recruiting meetings were held in the town of Kilfinane. At these one of the local leading lights of the U.I.L., Dr. Lee, who was the Dispensary Doctor and a Justice of the Peace, either presided or was otherwise prominent on the platform. Apart from that person, I do not remember any other local man forming part of the platform party. These few recruiting meetings were not taken seriously and could hardly be said to have an audience at all beyond the usual crowd of idle people who gather round on such occasions. Indeed, the meetings, while resented by very many, were an amusement more than anything else, especially when on one occasion the Parish Priest of an adjoining country parish, Glenroe, decided to intervene. This priest, Father Ambrose, a well-known "character" and very popular with all classes, was not by any means the holder of advanced political views, but he strongly opposed recruiting for the British Army. On the occasion that he decided to make a

public protest, he drove to town in his trap drawn by the high-stepping trotting pony for which he was noted. When the meeting began in the town square, Fr. Ambrose mounted his trap, flourished his whip, put the very speedy pony at full trot and drove right through the gathering round the platform. Repeating the performance a few times, the meeting as such ceased to exist and I think it was the last one of its kind in the area.

A fair "sprinkling" of recruits were obtained for the British Army in the locality around this period, but neither recruiting meetings, politics nor propaganda had anything to do with it. In a few cases the spirit of adventure operated, but, in the main, the motivating cause was economic. Practically all were decent lads, but poor, and needing financial help for themselves or their families. They made good soldiers, the type which gave the Munster Fusiliers a high reputation in the British Army, and later when the war ended and the Black and Tan conflict became acute, some of them gave extremely good service in the I.R.A. In fact, one of them, John Riordan (of Thomastown, Kilfinane), much decorated and promoted to Company Sergeant Major for bravery with his British unit in France, was killed in a skirmish as a member of our I.R.A. Active Service Unit early in 1921.

With the coming of the Volunteer "split" in the autumn, 1914, the members of the Kilfinane unit divided their allegiance between the two opposing Volunteer organisations which resulted, the National or Redmondite Volunteers and the Irish Volunteers, who followed Eoin MacNeill's leadership. The sub-division conformed closely to the percentage classification of prevailing political opinion set out above. In other words, the

majority adhered to the Redmondite organisation, while a minority - in actual numbers about 25 or 30 - who were, in the main, members of O'Brienite families, or, in a few cases, like my own, already adherents of advanced nationalism, supported the Irish Volunteers. In effect, however, the Redmondite section ceased to exist almost immediately after the "split". I can recollect that section only parading once afterwards. This was the occasion of the Manchester Martyrs' Commemoration, an annual event in Kilfinane in the month of November. In this ceremony we (the Irish Volunteer section) were determined to participate as a distinct organisation, but, if possible, in friendly co-operation with other bodies. Foreseeing the possibility of co-operation not being forthcoming, we were under the necessity of being able to stage our own commemoration. For this we needed a band, as the local brass and reed band was under Redmondite control. Luckily, a quantity of instruments of the second local band, a fife and drum band - which had O'Brienite associations - were still in the neighbourhood though the band itself had ceased to function as such some years before. These instruments were made available, and in the space of a month or so, by dint of concentrated practice of one tune - Adeste Fideles - the bandsmen, of whom the majority had no previous knowledge of music, were welded into a combination capable of rendering a satisfactory accompaniment for a "Slow March". Thus equipped, the Irish Volunteer section marched to the starting point of the general parade, forming up in rear of the Redmondite marchers and their band, then about to begin the ceremonial march. The arrival of the Irish Volunteer formation was evidently unwelcome and, after

reluctantly starting the parade and traversing about half the planned route, the Redmondite section halted and would not continue in company with the Irish Volunteer formation. The latter then proceeded independently with its own parade, but only after a number of its participants had been induced to refrain from a physical clash with the Redmondites, tempers on both sides having become strained at this stage.

While this incident made for greater hostility to the Irish Volunteer section, this was largely among the older Irish Party adherents, and perhaps a little more than half the young adult people of the locality were either members of the Irish Volunteer unit or more or less in sympathy with it. Counting heads in terms of the franchise, we would still, however, be very much in a minority at this period and so continued until after the 1916 Insurrection.

For the remainder of 1914 and the early months of 1915 the Kilfinane unit of Irish Volunteers continued to be loosely organised body of about thirty (30) members. The drill instructor exercised executive command at periodic drill parades, as had previously been the practice, and officers were not formally appointed until about mid-1915. Ernest Blythe then visited the area as an organiser and held meetings for the election of officers. At one such meeting or parade, I was elected Captain of Kilfinane Company, Justin MacCarthy 1st Lieutenant and Patrick O'Dea (the drill instructor hitherto) 2nd Lieutenant. Years later there came into my possession the Barrack Diary of the Hospital, Co. Limerick, station of the Royal Irish Constabulary (now deposited with the Bureau of Military History) which

gave details of how Blythe was shadowed by the R.I.C. throughout this tour of his in County Limerick. This diary also contained copies of notes found on Blythe when he was arrested on completion of his tour. These notes listed names and addresses of the officers appointed in the various units he visited, including my own unit. Beyond affording the police an outline of our organisation in handy form, the capture by them of this information was of no consequence, however, as there was little or no secrecy about our parades then, and the police could easily ascertain by observation who was in charge of the various formations.

It was about this period - mid-1915 - that Volunteer Companies in adjoining localities of the area began to have contact with one another, so far at least as informal discussions among the leaders were concerned. Perhaps as a result of these contacts the Galtee Battalion (sometimes titled Galtee Brigade) came into existence. All I can say is that it evolved, and I have a recollection of a secondary teacher named Seán O'Dea, a member of the staff at the Christian Brothers School in Charleville (Co. Cork) being regarded, in the initial stage, as having some ill-defined position of authority. Similarly, about this time, an officer of the Mitchelstown (Co. Cork) Company - Walsh, I think, was his name - seemed to figure - also in an ill-defined capacity - as some kind of senior officer of the battalion, which then embraced those two Co. Cork areas in addition to the South Limerick region of Galbally, Anglesboro', Ballylanders, Kilfinane, Ardpatrick and Kilmallock.

Neither O'Dea nor Walsh, however, really functioned as Battalion Commander, and W.P. Manahan (a

native of Ballylanders, then residing at Ardpatrick, where he was a Manager of a Creamery) was the first real holder of such a post from about the summer of 1915. Whether he was formally elected, appointed "from above", or just assumed the office, I do not now remember. In any case, he was fully accepted as in command, and was in fact the most suitable man at that time, being a good organiser, an effective speaker and very enthusiastic. He was also of mature age - thirty or so - while the great bulk of the Volunteer membership would have been in the 18-22 age group at this period.

In the course of the summer of 1915, the battalion area was the centre for a training camp under the auspices of Volunteer Headquarters, Dublin, "Ginger" O'Connell (the late Colonel J.J. O'Connell) being in charge, with J.J. Burke of Dublin as Camp Quartermaster. The selection of the Galtee area for this camp arose, I think, partly from the fact that the area and its Volunteer unit was by now well-known to Dublin Headquarters, and partly from some theory of "Ginger" O'Connell's as to the potential significance of the Galtees in guerilla warfare strategy.

This camp consisted of some half-dozen army-type bell-tents which were moved by farm carts from site to site, a few days being usually spent in each company area. I cannot speak with first-hand knowledge of the training routine carried out, as, beyond getting a site for the camp when it came to the Kilfinane area, I had no connection with it. My First Lieutenant, Justin MacCarthy, did attend for a week or so, the bulk of the attendance being drawn from other companies of the

battalion, with, I think, a few Dublin Volunteers. I do know, however, that those attending were kept fully occupied by various types of tactical exercises, lectures and arms drill, the tactical exercises being sometimes linked up with the many moves of the camp from site to site.

There was another training camp held at this period which I did attend. This was one organised by the Limerick City Volunteers and sited at Kilkee, Co. Clare. My First Lieutenant also came with me. This camp was really only a holiday camp, no serious training of any kind being carried out, beyond one or two perfunctory parades. There were some "Mauser" type rifles in the camp and some personally owned revolvers. These arms were openly carried without interference by the police. The camp - bell-tents and a marquee - was located in the G.A.A. Sports Field on George's Head, Kilkee. Those attending - not more than a dozen when I was there - paid a fixed scale of charges for board and accommodation. There was a custom at this camp of escorting departing members to the railway station and of firing a volley in the air from the station platform as the train drew out. Apart from being silly, this was a dangerous practice - ball ammunition being used - and it is surprising that the police never interfered.

In this year also a big parade was organised in Limerick City - on Whit Monday or Sunday, as far as I remember. Large numbers of Volunteers from Dublin attended, as well as contingents from the various units in the Co. Limerick, Limerick City and Mitchelstown, Co. Cork. P.H. Pearse and Captain Monteith were among those present. While the parade was quite an imposing one, with some of

the units fully armed with rifles, it was noted chiefly for the very hostile reception the Volunteers received as they marched through some of the streets - Parnell Street adjoining the railway station principally - where large numbers of dependants of those serving in the British Army - "separation women", as they were called - had congregated to hurl abuse and missiles of various kinds at the marching Volunteers. Many of these missiles were thrown from top story windows and it is surprising that no serious injuries occurred. At that period many of these ignorant people actually believed the Volunteers were in receipt of "German gold", as the catch-cry then current had it. Despite these incidents, and still fiercer ones as the Volunteers entered the railway that evening, the parade was a big success as far as the greater part of the city was concerned. The evening scenes developed through the departing Volunteers having to force their way through a hostile crowd of men and women gathered around the station entrance. The section of the parade where I and my contingent marched got through without difficulty, but sections in rear of us met with physical opposition. Only the intervention of a priest saved the situation from becoming one involving probable loss of life, as some of the Volunteers had been so aggravated that they were about to fire on the crowd.

A copy of a "Manifesto" issued by the Volunteer Executive at this time is among my papers. I attach it to this narrative (see Appendix A.). The deportations to which it refers are those of Blythe, McCullough, Pim and Mellows.

For the remainder of 1915 and the opening months of

1916 nothing remarkable took place in our area. We held our weekly parades and now and then a route march on Sundays. Such training as was done on these occasions never went beyond "extended order" drill and, more usually, was confined to "close order" foot drill. In that, at least, my unit and indeed all the other adjoining companies were quite proficient. It would be about this period too that we overcame the custom of relying on ex-British Army men for drill instruction, the officers appointed in each company being now the instructors in matters they had studied in drill books and manuals of minor tactics. Locally, my recollection is that Tadhg Crowley of Ballylanders was the first to break with the existing custom and his taking over the drilling of his company was, I distinctly remember, a subject of much comment at the time.

In the matter of arms and equipment we were poorly circumstanced. It may be during this period that we toyed with the idea of using pikes as weapons. I know we did get a local blacksmith to make a single sample of that weapon and I had it in my possession for many years, more or less as a curio. Higher authority also seems to have given some thought to the question of pikes because I have found among my papers a design for a pikehead (Appendix B.1.) which has all the appearance of having reached me through official Volunteer channels about this time. My company had also acquired two small calibre revolvers, two single barrelled shot guns and a small quantity of ammunition for these. We had, in addition, stored a small amount of quarry explosive and fuse. These articles, added to each individual Volunteer's haversack and belt, completed our stock of warlike equipment. We had, long before this, discarded the

wooden "guns" which for a time had been such a feature of our equipment. They had served a purpose and quite usefully too. That we had discarded them signified a definite stage in the development of the organisation and the outlook of its members. This outlook was founded on taking ourselves seriously as a military organisation, earnestness in submitting to orders and discipline and a belief, very vague but definitely present, that we could accomplish something by military action.

While this was so, no concrete plans for action were laid or even discussed, so far at least as I, in my capacity as a Company Commander, was aware. Any orders from higher authority, such as those relating to general policy or special parades, reached me through the Battalion Commander, W.P. Manahan. He had some contact with the Limerick City unit ("regiment" was its title at the time) though whether he was actually subordinate to the City commander I am not certain. I think it was rather an undefined relationship, one of co-operation between the Galtee Battalion and the City Regiment, rather than subordination of one to the other.

This was the general situation about the spring of 1916. Without having any definite information of impending plans, or action, I had an idea that the General Mobilisation ordered for Easter Sunday was of somewhat more than usual importance. This impression was, of course, heightened by the news of exciting events on the coast of Co. Kerry. This news centred on landings of strangers and their arrest and reached us, in common with the general public, at the end of the week preceding Easter Sunday. In our case, however, the news also suggested some connection with our projected Easter

Sunday mobilisation and so gave added interest to that project.

The mobilisation point for the Battalion had been fixed for Galbally, which meant a 10-miles march for my Company. On Easter Sunday morning my recollection is that I saw the notice published in the Dublin newspapers cancelling the mobilisation. In any event, I went ahead with the arranged parade of my unit that morning. I may possibly have received some note to carry on with the original arrangements from the Battalion Commander, but of this I cannot now be certain. The probability is that I did get such a note as I have a distinct memory of being warned to be on the watch for some further message which might reach me before my unit moved off.

No further message did arrive and our Company, some 30 strong, moved off, as originally arranged, about 11 a.m., being "inspected" before doing so by one of the local R.I.C. Sergeants who had made it his business to pass by, as if accidentally, the rather secluded point where our parade was assembling. Arriving in Ballylanders, six miles away, on our route to Galbally, in the early afternoon, we rested in the local Gaelic League Hall and from there I sent a cyclist the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ miles to Galbally reporting our location and seeking any further orders. I expected to be asked to continue on to Galbally, but, to my surprise, the reply from the Battalion Commander instructed us to return home and to be ready to act, at short notice, on further orders.

Obeying these instructions we marched back to Kilfinane where, in dismissing the unit, I gave orders for a further parade to be held either the next, or second-

next, evening. At that parade I remember going into great detail about being alert and fully prepared to mobilise when the expected "further orders" arrived. These eventually reached me between 2 and 3 a.m. on the Thursday of Easter Week and indicated Thomastown Wood, a mile south of Kilfinane, as my Company's mobilisation point, where we were instructed to await the arrival of Ardpatrik Company. These orders were in writing and signed by the Battalion Commander, then located near Ballylanders, and were brought to me by a cyclist. Their time of arrival could not have been at a more difficult hour for effecting mobilisation, especially in a small town boasting an R.I.C. Barracks. However, that was a small matter when related to the known situation - we were then aware, of course, that fighting had started in Dublin. In all the circumstances, it was a solemn moment and I remember bidding good-bye to members of my family in the expectation of fateful events ensuing.

After personally calling out four of the nearest members of the unit, including the 2nd Lieutenant, Patrick O'Dea, I left the latter to complete the calling-out and proceeded to the assembly point with the three others, Bernard O'Flynn, Thomas Barry and D.P. MacCarthy. It was dawn when we reached the place and, expecting the arrival of the Ardpatrik Company, I remained on the spot with my companions for over an hour - possibly two hours. There being no sign of the Ardpatrik unit, I returned to the town to see how the mobilisation of my own unit was proceeding and there found another despatch rider bearing a message from the Battalion Commander cancelling his earlier orders. Thus ended our efforts in the Kilfinane locality to play a part in the Rising.

What part we - and the Galtee Battalion as a

whole - were intended to play was in fact never precisely planned. The original plan, such as it was, related to the expected landing of arms in Kerry and their conveyance by train to the west. My recollection is that the Galtee Battalion, after mobilisation on Easter Sunday, was to proceed to Limerick Junction which it was to seize with the object of facilitating the passage of the train conveying the arms from Kerry. I have since seen it stated, on good authority, that Charleville Junction, not Limerick Junction, was to be our objective for this purpose. The rail route from Kerry would certainly suggest Charleville Junction as the more likely of the two and my recollection may well be at fault. But, if so, it is surprising that the mobilisation of the Battalion on Easter Sunday was planned for Galbally, the most distant point in the Battalion area from Charleville, but conveniently located for a move on Limerick Junction.

As regards our second mobilisation - that on the Thursday of Easter Week - there could not have been a clear-cut plan of operations. Some of the companies may have been slightly better off than my company for arms and equipment, but, if so, it was not to an extent that would have permitted them to engage in any worth-while action. The underlying idea of this second mobilisation seems to have been just to do something to co-operate with our fellow-Volunteers in Dublin. Even during the remainder of that week, I must have had some vague idea that we would yet be called on for some effort or other because I remember distinctly that one of my written messages to the Battalion Commander a day or two after his cancellation of our second mobilisation requested the choice of a less awkward time for mobilising than between midnight and dawn. This very sensible message was

afterwards mentioned by the Battalion Commander at an enquiry held in 1918 in relation to a local dispute in which he figured as a principal - the Manahan-O'Hannigan dispute to which I shall refer later. As I was on the anti-Manahan side in that dispute, his (Manahan's) mention of my message was - as is the way in such disputes - designed to score a point - no matter how far-fetched - against the opposition by suggesting it was a naive or childish request to make. Taken from its context, which assumed a choice of mobilisation hour might lie with the Battalion Commander, the message could, of course, be given almost any interpretation if one were prepared to ignore the extreme difficulty - in fact, the impossibility - of quietly calling out a unit in a police garrisoned small town at 2 a.m. This episode, of no importance in itself, is mentioned only to confirm my recollection that we still had some vague idea that we might be again called out even after our second mobilisation had been cancelled.

However, no further orders reached me and the next event of any significance was that, a few days after the surrender in Dublin became known, one of the local R.I.C. Sergeants visited me to request surrender of my arms and any held by the unit. As he knew I possessed a revolver, having seen me carry it on parades many times, it is surprising that no subsequent action was taken against me when I failed to comply with his demand. No arms or equipment were surrendered by the Volunteers in my company area, though, I think, a local sympathiser with the movement, but who was not a Volunteer, did hand in a small pistol. In a few company areas of the Battalion some arms may have been surrendered in response to a demand similar to the one made on me, and I have a distinct recollection of seeing a car arriving in Kilfinane - the

police headquarters for the locality - escorted by police from Galbally and containing, I was assured, arms surrendered there by the Volunteers. This incident caused us much heart-burning, being seized on for derogatory comment by some local critics of the Volunteers who had always been opposed to us.

In a short time, however, we could hardly be said to have an opponent in the locality as, with the executions of the 1916 leaders, the great bulk of the people hitherto in opposition became, if not active supporters, at least sympathetic to what the Volunteers represented. This disposition of the people grew still more pronounced in the course of time until, at the height of the guerilla warfare period 1920-1921, the Volunteers were assured of sympathy and - what was then of critical importance - shelter and food - in practically every household in the county. In practice, of course, certain townlands and households came to be selected time after time for billeting the Active Service Column. While "new ground" was broken and "strange" houses availed of on occasion, the frequency with which particular families were called on to extend hospitality to the Column must have involved them in considerable financial strain, not to speak of the risks incurred. Yet there was never a hint of complaint. One of the regrettable consequences of the subsequent Civil War was that these families were never adequately thanked for their magnificent services. There is no question but that they, and the civil population in general in active military operational areas, were the true heroes of the War of Independence.

Some months after the Rising we began to re-organise and as, peculiarly enough, no post-Rising arrests had been

made in our area, this re-organising was not a difficult task. I remember, however, that it had to be done secretly and that we were inclined to be very selective on the matter of enrolling not only new members, but those who had been in the organisation already. This activity continued into 1917. That year was marked chiefly by political rather than military developments. A branch of Sinn Féin was formed in Kilfinane. All the local Volunteers, of course, became members of, or closely associated with, this branch which quickly developed to be a truly representative cross-section of the people of the parish. At some date in this year a contingent of Volunteers from Kilfinane and adjoining localities attended at Bruree to welcome Eamon de Valera, then visiting his uncle and school-days home after his release from internment. He made a short speech and was very enthusiastically received by a large audience.

In the first half of 1917 there occurred the arrests of a number of prominent Volunteers. These included our Battalion Commandant, W.P. Manahan, who, with the others arrested, was required to reside in England - at Wetherby, Yorkshire, in his case. This development had repercussions for us in the Galtee Battalion area.

From his place of enforced residence in England, Manahan wrote a long letter adverting to recent Irish bye-elections and indicating his desire to stand as Sinn Féin candidate for East Limerick when the opportunity offered. The letter was written, I think, to either Ed. Tobin of Ballinlacken, Ballylanders, or to myself. In any case I remember reading it and discussing its contents with Tobin, Tadgy Crowley of Ballylanders and others. We were

unfavourably impressed by the letter, not that we had any objection to the political ambitions of the writer, but because we saw that Manahan's interests were now concentrated on the political rather than the military side of the movement. Our primary interests lay with building up the Volunteer organisation, so we began to look around for a suitable successor to take over the Battalion, leaving Manahan free to pursue his political ambitions. These would have had our support as there was never any question in our minds as to Manahan's sincerity and general merits. He was, in fact, a good organiser and business man, very energetic and with a record of good pioneering work in the Volunteers. However, we were convinced that he was not quite the man to fill the post of military leadership. To succeed him, Donncaadh O'Hannigan, a native of Anglesboro' near Ballylanders, was suggested and I think Tadg Crowley was principally responsible for sponsoring him initially. O'Hannigan had not previously been associated with the battalion, having resided outside the area for many years in the course of his work as a horticulturist. About this year he had come to Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, (from which his native place was only a few miles distant) and had opened a horticultural and auctioneering business there. Much older than the average Volunteer - he would have been about 35 at the time - his age gave him a degree of respect combined as it was with energy, enthusiasm and a long association with advanced nationalism - he was a long-standing member of the I.R.B., and Irish speaker, and one of his brothers, Donal O'Hannigan, had participated prominently in the Rising.

The dispute that now developed as O'Hannigan took

control and Manahan returned from England spread to most units of the battalion. In essentials it was a conflict between the I.R.B. and Manahan. The general body of the Volunteers, to whom the very existence of the I.R.B. was, of course, unknown, did not realise this and as it was, in the circumstances, impossible to put the real issues before them, they took sides largely on the basis of personal loyalties and preferences. As is the way in such cases, a lot of false issues and personal animosity was engendered by persons entirely ignorant of the basic facts. In a way, Manahan himself contributed to aggravating the dispute on these lines by choosing to treat matters as if his personal character, sincerity and trustworthiness had been impugned. This was never the case, though there may have been just enough gossip-mongering among persons outside the movement to justify Manahan taking the line he did.

If I treat of this matter at apparently more length than it merits, it is because of its I.R.B. associations. I became a member of that organisation, but not until some time after this dispute had developed. Accordingly, while it is conjecture on my part, it is a surmise with great probability of being accurate when I say that the putting forward of O'Hannigan to take control was in its origin a decision of the I.R.B. That organisation was strong in Ballylanders district and Tadg Crowley was one of a number of Centres there. In any event, the dispute as it developed was, at its core, a fight between the I.R.B. and Manahan. The effects of the dispute would not have been so widespread if company units as a whole took one side or other. This was the case in Kilfinane where the local company except for one, or possibly two, neutrals,

followed my lead. In other units, however, there were divided allegiances with deplorable consequences of open disunity and squabbles. Generally speaking, it would be correct to say that the more militant and determined members of the battalion supported O'Hannigan - I only know of two Volunteers on the opposing side who later, when the dispute was healed and forgotten, took any active part in the military measures of subsequent years. Indeed, the events of those years were to be irrefutable testimony to the merits of the I.R.B., or the O'Hannigan, side in the dispute. With the initiation of the Active Service Column - now accepted as the first of its kind - to its credit, and the organisation of a series of important operations under its leadership, the standard of which, by common consent of all, whether "neutrals" or former disputants, eventually gave it the formal as well as the actual leadership of the Brigade it had for long exercised.

In the meantime, however, G.H.Q. had decided on holding an enquiry into the dispute and sent down M.W. O'Reilly to conduct it. The enquiry convened in May, 1918, on the premises of Mr. D. Maloney, Bridge House, Knocklong. It was a prolonged affair, lasting all night, and marked by much irrelevancy and trivial charges and counter-charges on the part of various individuals on one side or other. Here I should add that O'Hannigan had shown great reluctance long before any enquiry was mooted to being regarded as a principal in what one side persisted in treating as mere rivalry between two contending leaders. It was only by great urging on the part of the I.R.B. element that he was prevailed on to maintain his connection with the affair. In the outcome,

whatever report O'Reilly made was never communicated to either side beyond an announcement some days later that G.H.Q. had decided to appoint Seán Wall of Bruff as Brigade Commandant and to have elections of officers held in component units of the Brigade. I am of opinion - in fact, certain - that this decision to appoint Wall was "cut and dried" at G.H.Q. long before the enquiry. However that may be, the nomination of Wall, who had no association with the dispute, was well received. At least, it was well received by the I.R.B. and "neutrals". As Manahan had been fighting the issue on a personal basis it was probably a disappointment to him. In any case he took no further part in Volunteer activities. In contrast, O'Hannigan, similarly out of office, carried on as an ordinary Volunteer and by sheer force of leadership after initiating the Column idea, filled the post of Column Commander, later attaining office as Brigade Commander and finished with a record of active service unsurpassed by any I.R.A. officer.

Wall was in every way a suitable selection in the existing circumstances. Strictly his appointment was irregular. G.H.Q. had no authority to make it at that period, a formal election by vote of the battalion officers being the correct procedure. But no one bothered to raise an objection, a fact that indicated that the primary aim of those who might have done so successfully - the I.R.B. element in the dispute - was the good of the organisation and not mere factionism.

It is possible, even likely, that Wall was a member of the I.R.B. at this time, though this aspect in no way inspired the readiness with which his appointment was accepted. Whether he was in the I.R.B. or not, he had

not been involved in the dispute, residing as he did in an area outside that which was affected by it. More of an administrator than a military man, Wall was a first-class organiser. As such he did extremely creditable work later as Chairman of the Limerick County Council. He was also largely responsible for organising what turned out to be the biggest amount collected for the Dáil Loan in any constituency. Like the case of O'Hannigan, he was much older than the average Volunteer officer of the time. While he took part in the preliminary planning of Ballylanders Barrack attack, the similar operation at Kilmallock was the only one of the Brigade's engagements at which he was present in person. This was in no way to his discredit; it arose from the combination of his aptitude as an administrator and the obvious fact that O'Hannigan was well suited to the task of serving as the executive or field commander of the Brigade. Wall's detachment from the combat side of affairs is illustrated by the circumstances in which he met his death, an event to which this characteristic of his contributed as the principal, and possibly direct, cause. On his way in May, 1921, to a Divisional Council meeting in County Tipperary, Wall, accompanied by O'Hannigan and an armed escort, travelled - typically for him - unarmed. The party was surprised en route in their billets by the arrival of a Black and Tan patrol. To escape, the party had to open fire on the patrol and Wall was proffered a revolver when this became necessary. He refused the weapon and during the subsequent exchange of fire blundered into the patrol. He was taken prisoner and killed there and then on the roadside by one of the policemen who used a shot-gun for the purpose. At the time his identity was unknown to the police and only

became known to them when his relatives later claimed his remains. Possibly it had been his intention to bluff his way through the police, but had he reacted as did the rest of the party there is no doubt that, like its other members, he would have got away safely. I have written a fairly detailed study elsewhere^{*} of Sean Wall and his work.

The year 1918, with its heightening of the threat of Conscription, had brought new interest in the Volunteers on the part of many young people not previously associated with it. In this our experience tallied with that elsewhere throughout the country, and, as the crisis developed numerous new members were accepted into the organisation. Many of these new members proved good soldiers; some of them later attained officer's rank; others were not quite so satisfactory and I recently discovered among my papers a duplicate despatch book used by me at this period and in which there are a number of messages and reports of mine somewhat critical of some of these "Conscription members". (I have deposited this despatch book with the Bureau of Military History.) While there was some depletion in numbers due to the eventual disappearance of the threat of conscription and consequent loss of interest by some in the Volunteer organisation, I do not think the numerical reduction due to this cause reached high proportions in our area. At a very rough estimate, I put the average figures for the Galtee Battalion units as an initial increase of 50%, the falling away of some 15% to 20% of that new enrolment, leaving a nett increase of some 30% as the movement entered on its more critical years of military effort.

* "An Cosantoir", issue of July, 1945. (Vol.V, No.7). A reprint of the article is appended at Appendix "B.2".

During the greater part of this year the Galtee Battalion operated more or less as a component unit of Limerick City Brigade or Regiment. It was some kind of informal arrangement, the origin of which I do not recollect, but I do remember that, while our battalion continued as a separate and independent entity, I was in communication with, and made reports to, the Limerick City commander, de Lacy, at this time. (See the duplicate despatch book referred to above.) By succession, rather than by any formal appointment that I can recall, I seem to have acted as O/C, Galtee Battalion, at this period following Manahan's arrest.

Another relic of this time has turned up among my papers. It is a protest in writing on behalf of the Volunteers in connection with the composition of the local Defence Committee, or Anti-Conscription Committee, such as were then being set up in every parish. The presence on this Committee of a few individuals previously associated with British Army recruiting meetings was keenly resented by the Volunteers. Objection was directed especially to one individual of some local prominence who carefully had kept his own sons at home while brazenly - murderously would be a more fitting word - inducing others to enlist for service in France. I include this document (Appendix A.2.) in this account, not that its subject matter is of any importance, but for its interest as an original document reflecting feelings and atmosphere of a particular period. The composition and the signature (in Irish) are mine, the handwriting of the text being that of one of the younger members of my family whom I got to transcribe the draft in clear school script. Whether this document was actually presented or read to

those concerned I do not now remember, but I know we did make our objections known on the lines of its contents. What the outcome was I also cannot recall. Of course, we realised that the Committee was a mere figurehead and that the Volunteers were the dominant element and ultimately the only effective anti-conscription weapon. Our protest was really on principle and to demonstrate our contempt for the "recruiters".

In the summer or autumn of 1918 the elections of officers (ordered by G.H.Q. arising from the Enquiry already mentioned) took place. It was more or less accepted that, in the main, "neutrals" in relation to the recent dispute would be elected, especially as so many new members were participating following the influx of "Conscription recruits". In general this was what occurred, but to my surprise I found myself elected Vice-Commandant of the 5th (Galtee) Battalion. I had not even attended the election meeting as we (the I.R.B. element) were quite content to carry on under any properly appointed officers. No doubt we were encouraged in this attitude by the belief that, if more effective leadership was called for, the I.R.B. would inevitably provide it - a belief borne out by events.

The Commandant elected for the 5th Battalion was Sean T. O'Riordan of Kilmallock and the Adjutant was Patrick O'Carroll of Kilfinane. I do not recollect a Quartermaster being appointed at this stage. The advent of these two newly appointed officers posed a problem for me. Like most of the "neutrals" in the recent dispute they had an entirely false conception of the issues it involved. I knew they assumed my activities would be motivated by personal loyalties and be directed to

agitating on those lines. I had to disabuse their minds of this mistaken idea and succeeded so well that they openly expressed to me their realisation that their conception of the situation and of my attitude was entirely groundless. But they also constituted another problem in their respective personalities. O'Riordan was sincere and hardworking, but very impractical in the military sphere. In every respect he was a square peg in a round hole and his proper role was on the political side. As a solicitor's clerk he had facilities for getting typewriting and duplicating done and his services in that direction were much in demand and had helped to make him well-known locally in both the Sinn Féin and Volunteer organisations. His own unit (Kilmallock) had a poor reputation among the other Galtee Battalion units and had not, previous to this period, been included in the Battalion organisation. The other new officer, O'Carroll, the Adjutant, amounted to an acute problem. Of poor, but respectable, parents he had got a secondary education in a small local school and was rather clever. Unfortunately, his character did not keep pace with his intellectual attainments. He drank excessively, ceased to practice his religion and professed socialistic ideas. The local parish priest, a saintly man and a good and useful friend of the Volunteers, had publicly made some general, but pointed, comments on the matter by referring to the unreliability of "bad Catholics" in national affairs - comments that in this case, anyhow, were to be amply justified. The fact that O'Carroll was at this time Secretary of the local Branch of a Workers' Union (I.T. & G.W. Union, I think) also made for difficulties. At one moment I would have dealings with him as between an

employer and the representative of the employees; the next, our respective roles would be those of Battalion Vice-Commandant consulting with, or giving instructions to, the Battalion Adjutant. In all, it was a difficult situation.

Elections figured largely in our activities in this year of 1918 as, following the elections in the military sphere, there came the General Election of that year. Dr. Richard Hayes was selected as the Sinn Féin candidate for our constituency, East Limerick, and was successful by an overwhelming majority over Thomas Lundon, the Irish Party candidate. The Volunteers practically controlled the polling-booths to the extent of police duties therein. The R.I.C. were also on duty, but, in Kilfinane at least, they stood by idly and allowed the Volunteers to assume full control. Special measures were taken to safeguard the ballot-boxes when the poll closed. In addition to the R.I.C. escort, a party of Volunteers accompanied the boxes in transit to the County Courthouse in Limerick. There a special all-night guard was set up side by side with the R.I.C. guard who made no objection and the Volunteers on duty had full access to all parts of the courthouse building. For convenience of the Volunteers thus engaged, the Brigade Commandant had provided one of his contractor's living vans. This was parked outside the Courthouse entrance and used by the Volunteer guard for cooking and sleeping.

At some date in 1918 I became a member of the I.R.B., being sworn in by D. O'Hannigan. Peculiarly enough, I can only recall specifically to memory my attendance at one of what must have been numerous meetings of my I.R.B. Circle attended by me. This was a meeting - probably

in 1919 - at which Sean Ó Muirhuile was present in the course of some organising and inspecting tour in I.R.B. interests. All I remember of the business at that meeting is that it dealt with the I.R.B. organisation generally and its status in the Volunteers. The reason I cannot recall details of I.R.B. meetings is due, I think, to the fact that it is so difficult to segregate my numerous conferences in those years with D. O'Hannigan, Tadg Crowley and Edmond Tobin as between what was an I.R.B. and what was a Volunteer Battalion Council meeting, the same personnel being involved in both and many such meetings switching, imperceptibly and informally, from one to the other category.

The chief event in our locality in 1919 was the operation in May of that year at Knocklong Railway Station in the course of which Sean Hogan was rescued from his R.I.C. escort. This was a Tipperary Brigade action principally but a few Galtee Battalion Volunteers were participants. These were the O'Briens and Scanlans of Galbally Company, a unit having links with the Tipperary formations, situated as it was on the inter-county border. The action itself took place in our area. Initially this did not involve me, but the aftermath of the engagement did do so. Around 3 o'clock in the morning following the action I was aroused at my home to receive an urgent message. Its bearer turned out to be Ed. Tobin of Ballinlackin, Ballylanders. He had been admitted at an outer gate of our premises by a cousin of mine then on leave from the R.A.M.C. My cousin wore his khaki uniform when going to admit Tobin who was considerably put out to be thus confronted by the British uniform at such a time and place. Tobin's mission was to tell me of the events at Knocklong and to enlist my help arising from the fact that Breen

and Treacy, two of the rescuers, were badly wounded and, in company with Seumas Robinson, another of the rescuing party, were now lying up two miles away in Clancy's house at Cush.

Tobin having told me that plans were being made to have the three men removed to a safer refuge (Clancy's house was within four miles of the scene of the action), my most urgent task was to get medical attention for the wounded men. My cousin who had admitted Tobin would normally have been ideal for the purpose, but I refrained from enlisting his aid. This was just as well, because, while his assistance would have been forthcoming and his trustworthiness could have been relied upon, his co-operation would hardly have been of an enthusiastic nature. Indeed, later in the day, when he heard of the rescue at Knocklong and of the connection with it of Tobin's visit to me, he remarked: "Why, that was murder" - a comment that came very strangely from one who, as I have mentioned, had been the first known adherent of Sinn Féin in the locality.

For the needed medical aid I turned instead to another cousin, Dr. Maurice Fitzgerald, who resided a mile away at Mortelstown. He, as expected, readily responded and as quickly as possible made his way to Clancy's house at Cush by an indirect route and, ostensibly, on a visit to one of his regular patients. Dr. Fitzgerald was later to attend many of our sick and wounded and to act, in effect, if not by formal appointment, as Medical Officer of East Limerick Brigade.

The arrangements for moving the wounded men to a more secure refuge were completed (either on the night following their arrival at Clancy's or on the second next night) when a motor car conveyed them, without incident,

to a destination in West Limerick. All I can recollect of my participation in these arrangements is getting word that the car, after its arrival at Clancy's, was found to be short of petrol. To procure a supply we had as a matter of urgency to break into a garage in Kilfinane. In doing so, a door opening outwards, and not normally in use, was forced, causing the collapse into the roadway of a big pile of empty petrol tins which had been stacked against it inside. The resulting noise should have brought the local R.I.C. to the scene post-haste as they had been very much on the alert following the events at Knocklong. For some reason, however, they did not put in an appearance and we got the required petrol. The transfer of the petrol to Clancy's having been completed, the car got away safely en route to West Limerick and my connection with these events ended.

In the preceding month of this year - as my documentary records of the period (See Appendix "C") now recall to my memory - there occurred a strike of Limerick City workers who refused to apply for the permits required by a Proclamation which imposed severe restrictions on the city area and its population. As the documents show, very wide repercussions were anticipated and plans put in train to cope with them. In the outcome, the occasion to give effect to these arrangements did not arise. Why this was so I do not remember precisely, but it must have been due to either a withdrawal or modification of the restrictions as I know that the workers and other people concerned did not submit to the original terms of the Proclamation. As a sidelight on this matter it will be of some interest to recount our reactions to the appeals and instructions contained in the appended papers. The contents of the circular, dated April 18th, 1919, from Comhairle Ceanntair

Sinn Féin seeking gifts of foodstuffs, seemed reasonable and to merit a favourable response; those of the two military "orders", dated April 22nd and 26th, 1919, got quite a different reception in our minds. It was the single occasion of any consequence where I wilfully disobeyed a military order - if these two letters merit that description. For this reaction of mine there were many reasons. In the first place, these verbose documents in their planning for billeting "refugees" proposed something that, in the circumstances then prevailing, was an innovation of a startling kind, one that would present the utmost difficulty in convincing people of its necessity, especially the class of people needed to implement the plan. I just could not visualise myself approaching such people - or commissioning others to do so in my name - knowing that, to the persons who would have to be so approached, the scheme would appear revolutionary, fantastic and unrelated to the needs of the actual situation. In brief, these two documents seemed to us to reflect more than an undertone of hysteria and to be exaggerated and impractical. This attitude has, of course, to be viewed against the background of the stage then reached in the military and political struggle. Had occasion for such action as proposed arisen at a later stage, the changed circumstances would probably have justified it. As it was, I "stalled" from the outset in relation to these instructions, an attitude which I think - but cannot vouch for - was also that of most officers of other battalions and companies. Reading between the lines of the second of the two communications, that dated April 26th, it is a fair inference that such was the position. Then there was also my underlying conviction that there would in fact be no "refugees" and that the situation was most unlikely to develop on the

lines suggested in these documents - a viewpoint confirmed by events. Further, the circumstance that Carroll - whose characteristics I have already sketched - was still Battalion Adjutant, complicated matters considerably. In his capacity as Secretary of the local Labour Union branch he was doubly interested in the scheme. Indeed, I would say his interest in it was primarily a sectional one in its potentiality as Labour Party ^{Propaganda} and even in the colouring of socialistic doctrine and class war that could be shaded into it. Had I allowed him to implement the instructions, as he pressed me to do, the consequences would, I am certain, have been deplorable. Carroll, as previously narrated, was already in bad odour with the clergy. This fact and Carroll's Labour affiliations would have conditioned the reactions of the householders approached for co-operation in the scheme. For most of them it would have spelled Larkinism and carried echoes of Larkin's scheme during the strike in 1913 in Dublin when it was planned to send "refugee" children of strikers to England - a scheme that was abandoned largely because of its condemnation by the clergy.

It will be noticed that the two documents in question freely invoke the authority of the Brigade Commander. Despite this I was of opinion at the time - and am so still - that he (Wall) was not a party to the scheme in all its details. No doubt he gave some general direction to O'Riordan, who proceeded to execute it in his own fashion. However, I have no proof that this was the situation and all I can say with certainty is that the orders are too much "out of character" to be attributed - in detail anyway - to Wall, who was a level-headed and practical man.

At some date in the course of this year the local unit (Kilfinane) acquired its first Service rifle, a Lee-Enfield .303, for which I paid £5 to a soldier of the Australian Forces who was spending his leave of absence with relatives in the neighbourhood. The weapon was handed over completely "stripped down" to its smallest component. In due course I succeeded in "assembling" it correctly and I used it for instructing selected members of the local unit in its mechanism, aiming and handling - the first opportunity they had of getting such experience. Subsequently this weapon formed part of our armament in the Ballylanders and Kilmallock Barrack attacks of the following Spring.

A printed circular reached us from General Headquarters towards the end of this year and as it is of interest in relation to the development of the Intelligence system of the Volunteers, I attach (Appendix "C.2") a copy which happens to have survived among my documentary records.

The only other local events of 1919 that come to my mind are activities in connection with the appeal for a hearing of Irish representatives at the Peace Conference which followed the European War, organising in relation to the Dáil (National or Republican) Loan and a "raid" to intimidate two local men who were reputed to be intending recruits for the R.I.C. This was carried out by a few Volunteers from Ballylanders at my request so as to avoid the raiders being identified. They were successful in getting the potential recruits to abandon their intentions, no violent measures being necessary. As to the nature of the Peace Conference appeal, this now escapes my memory - it may have related to the principle of national self-determination by small nations rather than to that of

admittance to the Peace Conference - but I do recollect that it was compiled in the form of a small cardboard-covered booklet, the first page or two of which contained the text of the "appeal" in print followed by numerous blank pages for signatures by members of the general public. These booklets were issued in large quantities to Sinn Féin clubs, either by the Sinn Féin Executive or by the secretariat of Dáil Eireann, and the collection of signatures was undertaken in every parish where a Sinn Féin club existed. The booklets, filled with signatures, were later returned to Dublin, but whether the "appeal" as a whole was ever submitted to anyone, I do not know. It must have contained millions of signatures, the obtaining of which from the vast majority of the people presented no difficulty. My cousin, Justin MacCarthy, as secretary of the local Sinn Féin club was principally concerned in this matter in our locality, but the Volunteers also co-operated, either in their capacity as such or as members of Sinn Féin. This also applied to the work connected with the Dáil Loan. An immense sum - believed to be the largest from any constituency - was eventually collected for that fund in East Limerick. For a small fraction (£843½) of it, I hold a receipt in the handwriting of, and signed by, Michael Collins, a photostat copy of which has been lodged with the Bureau of Military History.

This Loan project was the medium through which Tomás Malone - or, as he was then known, Seán Forde - came to be associated with East Limerick. He was sent down by Michael Collins to help in organising the Loan collection, but also seems to have been instructed to interest himself in Volunteer matters. About this time - the end of 1919 or early in 1920 - consideration was being given to staging

attacks on R.I.C. barracks. Eventually, after discussions presided over by Wall, the Brigade Commander, Ballylanders R.I.C. Barracks was selected for the initial attack. I have described the circumstances connected with this operation, and the attack itself, in a published article.* A proof copy of this article is attached (Appendix D.), so I shall confine my remarks here to matters connected with the operation which were omitted or not fully narrated in the published article.

To a notable extent this attack in April, 1920, and its planning reflected the anomolous situation affecting the leadership of the Volunteers in the area at this period. For one thing it demonstrated that the system of appointing officers by election did not always ensure suitable leaders being selected. At the same time it must be said that, in the Volunteer organisation generally, the system did produce good leadership and that it was, in any case, the only practicable procedure under prevailing conditions of organisation and service. Also, in our area, there were exceptional circumstances to be allowed for in passing judgment on the results of the system at this period. I have already referred to these local conditions - the aftermath of the Hannigan-Manahan dispute - and their effect on the selection of officers. The remarkable feature of the planning and execution of the attack at Ballylanders was that no account was taken of a particular individual's official status when it came to the point of the actual exercise of command on the occasion. Still more remarkable, this was an arrangement tacitly arrived at - it seemed to have been taken for granted that particular men were the obvious persons for particular tasks, irrespective

* Published in "With The I.R.A. In The Fight Freedom"
(Kerryman Ltd. - Publishers)

of whether they were officers in all due form. For example, the Battalion Commander at this time - O'Riordan - should normally and automatically have been in command of what was a Battalion effort. Yet no one, least of all himself, gave a moment's consideration to his exercising any command. He did attend some of the planning conferences, and was also present in the vicinity of Ballylanders village during the course of the attack - at some point on the outskirts of the village where he had no function to perform other than the passive one of spectator. No one thought any the worse of O'Riordan because of that at the time, nor would they to this day had he left well enough alone. A few years ago, however, an article by "S.R." - presumably O'Riordan - appeared in "Limerick's Fighting Story", a booklet published by The Kerryman Ltd., Tralee, in the course of which there occurred a number of inaccuracies concerning the Ballylanders episode. In the main, these would have been of little consequence had they not included the ludicrous claim that O'Riordan was in command on the occasion. It was entirely as a result of the ridicule with which that assertion was received that I was asked to write the true version - the one now appended.

With the possible exception of Sean Lynch of Galbally Company, who may have been the Captain of that unit at the time, it happened that I (as Vice-Commandant of the Battalion) was the only duly appointed officer - certainly the only officer of senior rank - filling any post as an officer in the attack. Even Malone (Forde) was not, strictly speaking, an officer at this period, while Tadg Crowley, Edmond Tobin and D. O'Hannigan were out of office since the elections which followed the enquiry into

the Manahan-Hannigan dispute. Malone must be credited with being in command of the operation as a whole, though he was not formally assigned to that post. Here, again, it was a tacit arrangement arising more or less from individuals taking responsibility for particular posts or tasks as these evolved in the plan. The fact that Malone was newly arrived in the area, and so entirely divorced from the recently concluded squabble, may also have contributed to the role he filled, but over and above such considerations there was no question but that he possessed great qualities as a fighting man. Moreover, the nature of the task he was assigned to perform at the gable-end of the barracks, required that whoever was in charge of it should exercise a degree of a general control.

In addition to its general clarification of the leadership situation, the Ballylanders operation solved difficulties arising from the elections having imposed on us an unsuitable Battalion Adjutant. He, Carroll, attended at Ballylanders on the night of the attack and in much the same capacity as O'Riordan, the nominal Battalion Commandant - being present ex officio, as it were, but with no duties or function to perform. Located at a point well to the rear of the barracks and on the outskirts of the village, where there was no exchange of fire and which could be termed a mere observation post, he was completely out of the danger zone. Nevertheless, his nerves went to pieces with the crash of the opening volley of rifle fire - the combined effects of excessive drinking and a bad conscience, no doubt. Losing all control, he gave a disgusting exhibition of cowardice - grovelling on the ground, praying, crying, like one demented. With the ending of the attack, however, he recovered sufficiently,

to come into the village and to accompany us on our inspection of the now ruined barracks after the surrendered garrison had been removed as prisoners. I recall having to order him to put back a policeman's watch which, typically for him, he was the only one to bother to take from the nail on which it was hanging on the wall of the barracks "day-room".

Obviously Carroll's conduct during the assault on the barracks called for drastic action as it was evident now to all that he was unfitted to hold any office in the organisation. For a time it was a question of formally subjecting him to trial by courtmartial. However - realising in all probability the poor figure he had cut at Ballylanders - he made no attempt to resume duty. This gave me the clue to the best and most charitable solution in the circumstances, namely, to leave matters in the position that the Adjutant had ceased to function and was in effect and by his own choice, no longer in the Volunteers. Apparently he gladly accepted this situation and there was no open breach or enmity displayed, and his ordinary social contacts with Volunteers remained unaffected. Ironically, like many others - on both sides, Treaty and anti-Treaty, let it be said - he availed of the Civil War to stage a return to "the tented field" and to engage in a masquerade of military prowess which had been so notably lacking when most needed. The sum total of his achievements in this second campaign was, however, almost as inglorious as in the earlier conflict, consisting - apart from anti-Treaty agitation and nominal military ~~device~~ ^{SERVICE} - merely of the wanton burning of the former R.I.C. Barracks in Kilfinane after that post had been evacuated by a small temporary garrison of pro-Treaty forces.

On our way home after the capture of Ballylanders

Barracks, we - the Kilfinane contingent - narrowly avoided an unlooked for clash with a party of R.I.C. Rounding a bend in the road on the outskirts of Kilfinane, we found ourselves unexpectedly in close proximity to some half-dozen policemen proceeding in single file through back gardens towards the rear of houses in the town's main street. It was just after dawn and they, as it turned out, were on their way to raid a house for a Volunteer who had got into some local brawl of little or no political significance. They were ignorant of the night's events at Ballylanders as the intervening hills and the distance (5 miles) prevented their seeing the Verey lights signals or hearing the explosions. Our approach having been at right angles to their direction of movement we had just time to avoid detection - and identification - by halting in our tracks and when they had passed by, making a detour to our homes. At that period any other action by us would have been contrary to the current Volunteer policy and tactics. Curiously enough, I had a somewhat similar experience returning from the attack on Kilmallock Barracks a month later, and the police party figuring in it were from the same garrison - Kilfinane - and possibly even the very same individuals.

The general decision to stage an assault on the Kilmallock Barracks had been taken by us at the time the details of the attack on the post at Ballylanders were being planned. Even so, it was quite a feat to bring off the venture within a space of four weeks after the operation at Ballylanders, than which it was a much tougher problem needing a vast amount of organising, having regard to the conditions under which we had to arrange the innumerable details involved. I have also described this event in a

published article ^x, a proof copy of which is appended (Appendix E).

This attack at Kilmallock marked another stage in the evolution of the leadership situation in East Limerick. It signalled the return to officer status of D. O'Hannigan by virtue of the fact that he was given charge of one of the attacking posts, whereas at Ballylanders he had been merely a member of my small garrison - and an uninvited, though very welcome, member at that.

I believe two or three members of Brigades outside our area joined our attacking party at Kilmallock. The only one in that category of whose participation I was personally aware, however, was Michael Brennan of Co. Clare. He was under some form of suspension from his appointment as Brigade Commander at this time. How he came to be present at Kilmallock I do not know, but when we were assembling to open the attack he was on the spot and I was asked to include him in my section with which I was to occupy Herlihy's house opposite the barracks. I treated him as an ordinary Volunteer, to which unaccustomed role he readily adapted himself, apart from a tendency to be prolific in suggesting alternative courses of action. This irritated me - perhaps unduly so - to the point of stubborn adherence to my way of doing things and the delivery of a sharp reminder as to who was in command. Actually, he was fully co-operative and held on manfully through the long engagement at the post to which I assigned him. This was at a window next to the one where I was posted. Both these windows faced the front of the barracks across the street and so shared with those of our

^x Published in "With The I.R.A. In The Fight For Freedom" (Kerryman Ltd. - Publishers).

two adjoining posts - the bank building and Clery's Hotel - the full volume of the police defensive fire.

This fire, as well as shattering the windows, brought down in the course of the night a massive curtain pole which fell on my head. I happened to be wearing a British army type steel helmet and so escaped ~~being~~^{ed} knocked out by the blow. I had worn this headgear more by way of an article of uniform than with any thought for its protective uses. It was to figure in a few more incidents before the night was out. Still wearing it, I was leading my party on to the main street from a side street in process of assembling prior to terminating the action. The turn into the main street brought me into view of the Volunteers assembling about 100 yards away at the side of the barracks. Attired as I was not only in the helmet but a trench-coat type of waterproof coat, these Volunteers took me to be the spearhead of the British military reinforcements - then expected to arrive at any moment. I could see from the sudden movements of the Volunteers near the barracks that something out of the ordinary was taking place without realising that my appearance was the cause. Luckily, my party was not far in rear and its advent on the scene quickly established our identity.

Later, cycling home with some three or four Volunteers from the Kilfinane area, we were approaching the half-way point in our five-mile journey, when a party of R.I.C. coming from Kilfinane, and also cycling, suddenly appeared 150 yards in front of us around a right-angled corner (the Cross of Black is its local name). We were unarmed having "dumped" our arms and other equipment with the single exception of my precious steel helmet which hung on the handlebars of my bicycle. Even if we had been armed our

reaction in what was an encounter of mutual surprise would have been no different as the practice in force at that stage of our activities required us to make good our escape and hide our identity. We abandoned our bicycles without delay, climbed the road fence and ran for the next fence across the field. We thought there was little chance of our reaching cover before being fired on and followed up by the police. However, to our surprise, nothing happened, and we made our way home across country at leisure. Not only that, but towards evening I got a message that the police party had continued to Kilmallock, passing our bicycles strewn on the roadside as if they - and my steel helmet - were invisible. A local resident collected all this property and restored it to us in due course. The inaction of the police on the occasion was inexplicable. The only explanation I could think of was that they were intent on establishing something in the nature of an alibi. Throughout the night the explosions in Kilmallock were audible to them in Kilfinane and even the flames of the burning barracks were visible there. Moreover, the police party in question had to surmount numerous barricades erected that night on the route to Kilmallock, so there was no question of their taking us for an innocent cycling group apart altogether from our precipitate flight. Most of these barricades had been manned by local Volunteers throughout the night, but these men had completed their period of duty and had withdrawn by the time of our encounter with the police party - between 7 and 8 a.m.

Whether or not the police recognised me on this occasion, they could not but be aware of at least the general nature of my activities at this period.

Accordingly, it was a natural development when about a

month or so after the Kilmallock operation two members of the local police garrison paid me a very threatening visit. I had been expecting something of the kind or actual arrest for some time and usually slept away from home at nights. Normally I was at home in daytime and, while taking some precautions against surprise, I relied principally on the probability that any raid would be at night. As it turned out, the visit in question took place around mid-day and, through a combination of circumstances, the two policemen were in my presence without warning. They had their revolvers drawn and after accusing me of being concerned in the two recent barrack attacks, threatened to shoot me there and then. Somehow I was convinced from the outset that they were merely uttering empty threats and so was not unduly put out. I did not even expect they would take me into custody. This may have been because of their failure to search me or to ask me any questions. In any case, after their display of truculence they departed without arresting me or laying a hand on me in any way.

It would be a little before this incident that the Battalion Commandant, O'Riordan, was arrested - before the attack on Kilmallock Barracks, I think. He was charged with being in command of the attack at Ballylanders and got a sentence which kept him in jail until the Truce. Perhaps this accusation and sentence had something to do with O'Riordan's subsequent pretensions to which I have already adverted. Obviously the police had made this charge against him solely on the basis of their knowledge that he held office as a Battalion Commander.

Around this period also we had decided that the battalion and its area were too big to function effectively as such. It was in actual size equal to that of some

brigades and indeed at one time had been known as the Galtee Brigade. It was in consequence reorganised into three battalions, 5th (Kilfinane), of which I was appointed Commandant, 6th (Galbally) and 4th (Kilmallock). The other battalions of East Limerick Brigade were also now numbered as 1st (Doon), 2nd (Kilteely), 3rd (Bruff). This numbering was not based on any factor of seniority or relative prestige, being fixed solely on the order in which the battalion areas lay from North to South within the Brigade boundary. A peculiar feature of our Brigade organisation at this period was that no Brigade Staff, apart from the Brigadier, existed. It was not until late in 1920, or perhaps very early in 1921, that this staff formally came into existence by the appointment of D. O'Hannigan as Brigade Vice-Commandant and of myself as Brigade Adjutant. I doubt if a Quartermaster was also appointed at the same time, but much later in 1921 Liam Hayes filled that post. On this reorganising of the component units of the Brigade, i.e., early in 1920, the chain of command read as follows:

<u>Brigade Commandant</u>	- Seán Wall.
<u>Brigade Staff</u>	- None.
<u>Battalion Commandants</u>	
1st (Doon)	- D. Allis.
2nd (Kilteely)	- L. Hayes (later, Owen O'Keefe).
3rd (Bruff)	- J. O'Connor (later, G.O'Dwyer).
4th (Kilmallock)	- J. O'Riordan (later, M. Scanlan).
5th (Galtee) (Kilfinane)	- Self (later, Justin MacCarthy)
6th (Galtee) (Galbally)	- Sean Lynch.

In between the two barrack attacks - in April, 1920, I think - we took part in the destruction of recently evacuated police barracks in accordance with a general order applicable to the whole country. In my area (5th

(Galtee) Battalion) the only such barracks was that at Elton, near Knocklong. We destroyed this by burning without any difficulty or interference. There was another former R.I.C. barracks in the area - at Glenosheen, Ardpatrick - but as it had not been used as such for a very long time and had been in civilian occupation for years, it was not regarded as coming under the order, though some members of the local company did, I think, attempt some partial demolishing of the structure.

Beginning in May of this year a series of General Orders began to issue from Dublin. Copies of these in the actual form in which they were received are among my papers and Numbers 1 to 6 inclusive and Number 10 will be found appended (Appendix F.2).

Affairs now were mounting to a crisis. A British military garrison had been installed in Kilfinane in a large detached house near the R.I.C. Barracks. It was of platoon strength under command of a Lieutenant Rolfe. This garrison arrived about June, 1920. In that month I had my first meeting with Ernie O'Malley. He was on an organising tour and I met him by arrangement at a point on the Kilfinane-Kilmallock road. He was travelling alone and on foot. At first sight I took him to be a tramp, his appearance being such due both to his dilapidated clothing and the state of his features. It seems his face had been burned and clothing damaged in some mishap with petrol in an attack on a police post in Co. Tipperary a short time previously. I conveyed him to the accommodation I had arranged for him - at Kearney's of Martinstown, Kilfinane, a house that was later to become one of the principal billeting houses for the Flying Column. O'Malley remained there for a week or two, holding conferences and

training discussions both at that location and in adjoining company areas. Then and afterwards O'Malley showed he possessed a keen mind, great energy and determination. If he had a fault as an organiser it was one of expecting too high a standard of achievement from the average Volunteer.

The month of June, 1920, also saw the advent of a crucial development in our military technique - the formation of the first Flying Column. This was organised in my Battalion on the initiative of D. O'Hannigan. He has given a detailed and precisely factual account of this development in articles published in "An Cosantoir" (the Army journal) and in the book "Limerick's Fighting Story" (published by Kerryman Ltd.)^{*} The Flying Columns later became such a commonplace feature of the I.R.A. organisation that it is difficult to appreciate that their advent was in fact a revolutionary idea and anything but an obvious development. It is only against the background of the period and the I.R.A. methods then current that the innovation can be assessed in true perspective. Until the idea was given shape, operations had been carried out by assembling selected Volunteers for a particular task, arming them (usually from a central "dump"), dispersing them to their homes once the task had been fulfilled, and again "dumping" their main armament and equipment. The great majority of the Volunteers pursued their ordinary civil occupations concurrently with engaging in these intermittent military activities. This even applied to many of those then "on the run", the fairly general practice being for such "wanted" men to avoid arrest by sleeping away from home at night, resuming their normal civil routine in daytime while taking such precautions

* "An Cosantoir", Vol. VI., No. 12 (Dec. 1946).

"Limerick's Fighting Story" (pp. 85-90).

as they could against being surprised by a raid during that period. If the idea of forming a unit for whole-time service sounded strange in a situation so circumstanced, the aspect of the proposal which appeared utterly fantastic in the prevailing conditions was that the unit would not only be continually under arms, but would move through the country at all times as an armed and formed body. This latter feature was the direct opposite to the technique hitherto pursued and seemed incapable of achievement as also did the solving of the problem of food and accommodation.

By persistence in translating his scheme into fact and by actual demonstration of its feasibility, principally in my Battalion area, D. O'Hannigan, however, gradually built up the unit from a small nucleus. One of the difficulties to be overcome in the early days was to secure the goodwill and co-operation of the various Battalion Commanders. These were virtually supreme in their own areas and naturally enough viewed with dislike the idea of an independent unit - one which, moreover, was not officered at this stage by duly appointed officers - entering and operating in their territory. This obstacle, too, was overcome and in a few months the unit had a number of successful engagements to its credit. At this early period its formal designation was "Active Service Unit", but it was generally referred to as "The Circus" in allusion to its mobility and, to some extent, by way of comment on its novelty. It was a little later that the title "Flying Column" came into use.

By October, 1920, the unit had fought four separate actions - Ballinahinch, Bruree, Emly and Kildorrery^x,

x See "Limerick's Fighting Story" for descriptions of these actions.

two of which were engagements of considerable intensity, especially that at Emly where the opposition was a strong detachment of British military of the Lincolnshire Regiment. It was not a little ironical, therefore, that we should receive a circular instruction from G.H.Q. dated 4th October, 1920, directing the formation of Flying Columns. By that date our Column had been in the field for four months and G.H.Q. was fully aware of this. However, it would, perhaps, have been expecting too much to have looked for some reference to or acknowledgement of that situation in the G.H.Q. circular which, like all such instructions in every Army, had to maintain the appearance of omniscience at all costs. I have preserved the actual circular we received. A copy of this will be found at Appendix F.

Meanwhile, in July, 1920, I had made arrangements to accept custody of General Lucas, the British officer in command at Fermoy, Co. Cork, who had been captured near there ~~some~~ ^{some} weeks previously. Lucas was being moved from one locality to another, but the night before he was to reach my area he escaped. This, in fact, was welcome news to us as we saw that no advantage was being gained by keeping him a prisoner at the cost of great inconvenience in guarding and suitably accommodating him. This, too, seemed to be the attitude of those in charge on the occasion of his escape as I am absolutely certain that the escape was a permitted one. The persons in charge of Lucas on that occasion were Michael O'Hehir and the Brennan brothers, all of Co. Clare, from whence Lucas had just been moved. The place of intended detention I had arranged was in a large residence occupied by Mr. David Condon at Ballinanima, Kilfinane. Mr. Condon, a close friend of mine, and an extensive landowner had no political interests.

He could, in general terms, be described as a nationalist and his co-operative attitude in this instance was the forerunner of the wonderful collaboration which all classes, rich and poor, extended to us in East Limerick as the struggle reached its climax.

In my own case this climax began to unfold in the following month. In August, 1920, I had been the target for another raid. Like the earlier one, it took place in daytime and I was again taken by surprise. This time, however, the raid was clearly one planned to get results. The first I knew of it was to find myself covered by a revolver held by Lieutenant Rolfe, of the local British military post, as I looked up from a desk in the office where I was writing. He confronted me at the other side of a glass partition beside the door through which he had entered after placing, as I could see, a cordon of troops around the area. The only reaction possible for me as he moved quickly around the glass partition to my side was to flick to the floor the sheet of paper on which I was writing and to put my foot on it. This action of mine was due to the fact that, as luck would have it, what I was writing, and had addressed and more than half completed, was a despatch intended for the Active Service Unit (the Flying Column). I saw that my very slight movement in getting rid of the document had passed unnoticed by Rolfe and I was further assured when his first step on reaching my side was to go through my pockets and later to begin an examination of the office in course of which he emptied a waste paper basket on the floor, merely glancing at the contents and spilling them close to the document I had discarded and which by moving my foot I succeeded in mixing up with the scattered scraps of paper. I was now confident -

falsely, as it turned out - that my incriminating despatch was safe.

If I continue, as I propose to do, to describe this raid in minute fashion, it is not with any idea that such detail can be of much interest to the general run of readers of this record, but solely for two other reasons - to correct inaccurate reports published in the press at the time concerning the circumstances in which I made my escape from this raid and to recall events for the benefit of those members of my own family for whom interest arises through their intimate acquaintance with the persons and locations involved.

In his search of my person Rolfe found in my pocket book a telegram I had received about an hour previously. In itself the message it conveyed was in no way incriminating being merely information as time of arrival of a funeral in Kilfinane. However, the funeral was that of Commandant Patrick Clancy, I.R.A., who had been killed attempting to escape from a raid in the Kanturk, Co. Cork area. Clancy, a native of Cush, near Kilfinane, was very active in the movement and a first-class Volunteer officer. He had close associations with my Battalion and was in fact one of the originators of the scheme from which grew the East Limerick Flying Column. He had also served for a short time with that unit on its initiation and had then taken up an appointment as Creamery Manager near Newmarket, Co. Cork. He held office there as Battalion Commandant and had just been selected to command the North Cork Flying Column then in process of being organised - when he met his death.

Rolfe retained the telegram, probably because its mention of the name "Clancy" apprised him of its association with the occurrence in Co. Cork. He then turned his

attention to a safe, asked to have it opened and called me and my mother - who had now appeared on the scene - to witness his handling of the safe's contents. Finding nothing to interest him, he replaced the contents as he found them. This display of rectitude did not, however, prevent the looting of articles of jewellery by either him or some of his troops as they continued their search in other rooms. The search of the office was now drawing to an end and I was confident that my discarded despatch would escape detection. However, Rolfe, to my surprise began to go through the papers emptied previously from the waste paper basket. He took them up scrap by scrap and, of course, finally came to my uncompleted despatch. I knew now that my arrest, already probable, was now a foregone conclusion as what I had written was addressed to the Active Service Unit giving the Clancy funeral arrangements and detailing how a firing party was to be provided by the Unit.

Rolfe retained this document without remark and left the office to search other rooms, leaving me where I was but obviously in charge of a police constable who had entered the office just before Rolfe made his discovery of the despatch. With my wits sharpened by a settled intention to escape arrest at almost any risk, I had noticed that Rolfe had not given any formal order or instruction to the police constable. Further, this policeman (Constable O'Connor) was well-known to me as an easy-going type who quite clearly for years past had been intent on just serving out time to his pension with the minimum of trouble. It struck me that these circumstances might be turned to advantage - to the extent anyhow of my getting out of the office to other parts of the premises. This would give me a little scope to devise some way of

getting out of the house and through the cordon.

Accordingly, I began a discussion with the manager of our business, Mr. Leahy, who had come into the office while the search there had been in progress. My discussion, in the hearing of the policemen, related to the difficulties Rolfe would have in opening locked drawers and presses and the damage he might do. Working up my pretended agitation as to the extent of this damage, I suddenly said that it would be better for me to take my keys to Rolfe and so avoid the damage. With the keys in my hand I moved to the door giving access to the inner part of the premises. As hoped for, the policeman made no move to stop me. I was now free to move about the ground floor rooms, Rolfe being upstairs on the first storey. A quick survey showed no avenue of escape here and I noted an armed sentry posted at a side door in a glass portico giving on to the yard. Going up to the first storey which Rolfe had now left for the upper part of the house, I saw that the situation called for another ruse and I decided to try one again.

Leaning out of a window directly over the head of the sentry at the side door, I called one of the passing yardsmen. This was Tom Brazzil, generally known by the name of "Goatie" Brazzil and famed locally as the full-forward of the Kilfinane Club Hurling Team which had won the All-Ireland.

For the benefit of the sentry I loudly accused Brazzil of forgetting to do something or other. After the sentry's first upward glance, I was able, unseed by him, to make signs to Brazzil while continuing a tirade of abuse. The signs consisted simply of the motions of turning a key and pointing towards a door in a side wall at the other side of the yard. This door had the appearance of giving

access to store buildings like a number of others on either side, but in fact it opened on to gardens at the rear of other houses. I had decided to attempt to reach it despite having to pass the sentry first.

Brazzil was quick to appreciate the situation. When I saw he was in the act of unlocking the door I moved downstairs into full sight of the sentry and, still shouting at Brazzil, walked quickly towards the glass portico as if to meet Brazzil. My hope that the sentry had been fooled into thinking he was witnessing an incident in the ordinary routine of the premises was fully justified. He actually moved his rifle and bayonet aside to give me room to pass. I still had some thirty yards to go in view of the sentry on my way towards the door in the wall. Restraining the impulse to make a rush for it, I reached it without challenge from the sentry who was probably more interested in my abuse of Brazzil than in where I was going.

Once through the door I was outside the cordon, but my best route to complete the escape would bring me within view of it again. To take this route I entered the rear door of a house some fifty yards away. This house was occupied by a postman, an ex-British soldier named Clear. He was not a native of the locality and took no part in politics, but I knew him to be a very upright and industrious man whom I could trust on an occasion like this. He gave me a civilian cap which I put on as a partial disguise as he left me through his front door to the roadway. This brought me in sight of the cordon to which I came within a few yards as I walked across the road to another house. Passing through this house (Hennessy's) and through a window into the adjoining graveyard I made my

way to the nearby Presbytery where my good friend, Fr. (later Canon) John Lee, P.P., accommodated me until the following day.

Rolfe on his return downstairs was, of course, astounded not to find me waiting him in the office. To have his enquiry for me answered blandly and in all innocence by the policeman: "Wasn't he with you, Sir, with his keys" did nothing to improve his temper. After accusing all and sundry on the premises of complicity and issuing dire threats unless my whereabouts were disclosed, he began a search of the stores and stables in the enclosed yard. Some of these buildings were very extensive, three-storey high, with numerous potential hiding places. After an exhausting search he had to give up while still under the impression that I must be somewhere on the premises. The only person likely to have enlightened him was the sentry, who probably realised his error by then, but remained dumb in self-protection.

O'Connor, the policeman, had to stand a series of disciplinary charges preferred against him by Rolfe a few weeks later. The charges, in the nature of a court-martial, took days to dispose of, O'Connor being defended by Mr. John Power, Solicitor of Kilmallock. Power, who subsequently became State Solicitor on the setting up of Saorstát Éireann, gave me all the details of the trial which resulted in victory for his client and added some further bitterness to Lieut. Rolfe's discomfiture. O'Connor managed to hold on in the R.I.C. until disbandment of that Force and then continued to reside in Kilfinane with his wife and family, a circumstance that indicates his local reputation.

After settling by means of messengers some urgent

personal affairs and getting such supplies as needed in the way of clothing and so on, I left the Presbytery in the morning following the raid and made my way to Martinstown a few miles distant, to meet the Active Service Unit and attend Commandant Clancy's burial in that townland. I had sent a message in substitution for my seized despatch and the Firing Party was in readiness in the vicinity of the burial ground. Although the British military and the police had full details of our intentions from the papers taken from me in the raid, and the funeral cortege actually passed through the town of Kilfinane, they did not make any appearance at the cemetery and the full military funeral ceremonial was carried out free from interference.

Now that I was "on the run", I had to make some arrangement for command of the battalion. At this period when few Volunteers were so situated, it would have been considered unusual, if not impossible, to continue in the post while necessarily being so much on the move from place to place. At a later stage, of course, the position was reversed and most Volunteer officers of Brigade and Battalion rank were in "on the run" category. Additionally, in my case, there were some family matters to be adjusted consequent on my enforced absence from home. Accordingly, it was arranged that my cousin, Justin MacCarthy, would take over the battalion.

Until this was effected I remained in the area, principally at Kearney's of Martinstown, Kilfinane, and Sheehy's and Carroll's of Ballingaddy near Kilmallock. I was able to move about more or less at will by taking ordinary precautions and in fact made some trips, principally on personal business, to Cork, Limerick and

Kilrush, Co. Clare. In the latter case I initially contacted Austin Brennan of Meelick and he arranged facilities which permitted me to travel free on the West Clare Railway to Kilrush and to contact there the local Volunteer officer who provided me with suitable accommodation. On the second day of my stay in Kilrush I unexpectedly encountered in Williams' Hotel a daughter of a retired policeman who resided in Kilfinane with his family. This member of the family was employed in the hotel. At first I was taken aback by the encounter, but I had reason to be grateful for it the following day. She was then able to tell me that the local police had noted me as a stranger and intended to bring me to the barracks for interrogation. With this information I was able to keep under cover and to take steps to terminate my visit. Mainly through her agency, a passage was arranged for me that night on one of the cargo steamers sailing from Kilrush to Limerick. She also provided food for the journey - and all-night one - and took great pains to guide me safely to the boat. This lady was Miss McCreery who later became the wife of Conor Whelan (Lt.-Col. Whelan).

Arriving at Limerick Docks in the early hours of the morning and forgetting that curfew was in force there, I walked into a patrol of military. Luckily, the patrol was returning to barracks just on the stroke of the hour at which curfew ended each morning and I was allowed to pass by. That evening long before curfew hour while looking into a shop window in O'Connell Street I had a demonstration of the extent to which the police dominated that city. A passing civilian - a complete stranger to me - came to my side and whispered: "Get out of it; they are coming". He moved off at once and I followed his example. It seems that no one, even the most innocent bystander, was safe at

that time from assault by the police patrols whose actions were designed to harass and harrÿ the civil population to the maximum extent. The police were able to pursue these tactics with impunity largely because of almost complete inactivity on the part of the Volunteers in Limerick City. Apart from two or three incidents of no great magnitude, this situation persisted up to the Truce. While I cannot speak from first-hand knowledge of the local circumstances, I know that the cause of the poor show made by the Volunteers in the City area had its origin in a section of the Volunteers resenting the failure of those in command in Limerick in 1916 to participate in the Rising. From this there came into being two City battalions, the 1st Battalion more or less controlled by the officers of 1916 vintage, and the 2nd Battalion comprising both newcomers to the organisation and those Volunteers who had lost confidence in the local leaders after 1916. Between these two units relations were such that any concerted action by the Volunteers in the City was next to impossible. Later, in the final phase of the struggle, some improvement was effected when Mid-Limerick Brigade, comprising the City and adjoining rural areas, came under the control of such officers as Dick O'Connell of Cahirconlish and Sean O'Carroll of Castleconnel.

After returning to my own area from the journey to Kilrush, I moved into Co. Cork to stay with my cousins, the Barry's at Ballylegan, Glanworth. This family had been connected with advanced nationalist thought over a long period. One of the family, Dr. David Barry, then Dispensary Medical Officer nearby at Kilworth, had been prominent in I.R.B. circles with Dr. Mark Ryan in London in the early years of the century, as had his brother Thomas Barry. Despite these associations, the Barry

residence at Ballylegan was a safe refuge such as I needed for a few months while putting family business matters in order. In connection with those matters I wanted the police to be under the impression that I had left the country and to that end wrote a number of letters in that strain in the expectation that the police would see them. Whether my efforts to deceive succeeded or not, I cannot be certain, but it is significant that no raids or searches for me took place subsequent to the raid from which my escape was made.

Early in December, 1920, my personal affairs had been put in order and I arranged to rejoin the East Limerick Column then near the Cork-Limerick county boundary some six miles away in the vicinity of Kilbehenney. The Column was preparing to stage an operation in which members of the Castletownroche, Co. Cork, battalion would also participate. In addition, it had been arranged that the Hotchkiss machine gun captured some time previously in the seizure of Mallow Military Barracks by the North Cork Brigade would be made available. The route by which this gun and its team of two Volunteers was moving to join the East Limerick Column passed through Ballylegan. There I joined in and travelled with the gun and its two gunners on the last leg of the journey to Kilbehenney, Co. Limerick. I assume the two gunners were Willis and Bolster who had been prominent in the Mallow episode and had been given charge of the gun in the use of which they became the acknowledged experts. I knew their names, of course, at the time but have since forgotten them. I only name them here by deduction from knowledge acquired as to the noted association of these two men with the weapon in question.

Shortly after rejoining the East Limerick Column - within a few days, I think - I assumed office as Column Adjutant and either at the same time, or, at the most, a few weeks later, I was also appointed Adjutant of the Brigade. The staff position then (December, 1920) was:

Brigade Commandant	- Seán Wall.
Brigade Vice-Commandant and O/C Column	- D. O'Hannigan.
Brigade Adjutant and Column Adjutant	- Self.

In an undefined capacity, but acting more or less as an assistant to the Column Commander, or what would now be called "Operations Officer", there was also Sean Forde (Malone) to be listed as one of the staff.

On 17th December the Column moved to Glenacurrane where it was joined by a section of the Castletownroche, Co. Cork, battalion under Commandant Tom Barry (Glanworth). The ambush location, some few miles from Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, on the route to Tipperary, was an ideal site for an ambush. As the name indicates, its features were those of a glen or ravine, the sloping sides of which completely dominated the roadway over a distance of about a quarter of a mile. Both sides of the glen were manned by riflemen, the Hotchkiss gun sited to enfilade the roadway and a tree felled as a road-block. As the plan had been cut-and-dried before my advent, I was content to take over a post on the western slope and was not, as far as I can remember, concerned with the details of how the whole ambush position was to be occupied. In any case, I cannot now pin-point the actual siting of the various posts other than my own. This post, nearly a hundred yards up the slope from the

road, gave complete cover from view, the slope being thickly covered with bracken and shrubs. This feature applied to the position as a whole.

It had been expected that a large convoy would probably be encountered, but in the event only two lorries containing British troops entered the ambush position around mid-day. The lorries, each carrying about 10 men, halted on reaching the felled tree and the occupants of the leading one were, I believe, called on to surrender. From my post, I could not see or hear what exactly transpired near the barricade, but the sudden sound of firing was sufficient intimation that the action had begun and my post at once opened fire on the second lorry halted just below us and about 50 yards in rear of the leading vehicle. I do not think there was any return fire from either lorry, but I cannot be certain. A few minutes after the first shots had been fired there was no sign of resistance and it was only a matter of taking physical possession of the lorries and their contents. It was found that the majority of the convoy personnel were wounded, some three or four fatally. The wounded were taken to a nearby house, given such attention as was available and left in charge of their unwounded comrades. A quantity of mails and, of course, the rifles - a dozen or so - found in the lorries were removed and the Column began to move off after releasing a number of civilians who had been detained when they passed through the ambush position prior to the arrival of the lorries. When some distance away I looked back and noticed that the two vehicles had not been set on fire. Returning with a few men who volunteered to accompany me, we proceeded to set the lorries alight and it was then that I made a fortunate discovery of a number of boxes of

grenades previously overlooked - a very welcome addition to our armament. The seized mails contained a quantity of British military documents, a selection from which I have deposited with the Bureau of Military History. These documents had been retained by us after we had censored and re-despatched the ordinary correspondence.

As it was now nearing Christmas, the Column dispersed for a few weeks. Practically all the members of the unit being "on the run", this in effect merely meant that they broke up into parties of two or three and departed to localities of their choice, usually their own neighbourhoods. In my own case I decided on risking a few hours at home on Christmas Day and this was safely effected. It was a lucky decision. Otherwise I would have been at Tobin's of Glenbrohane near Ballylanders where I had intended to remain over the holiday period and which I left only on changing my plans on Christmas Eve. That house was raided on New Year's Day in circumstances which made escape impossible and David Tobin and Thomas Murphy, local Volunteer officers, in whose company I would have been, were shot down and killed in their bid to avoid capture.

Early in January, 1921, an important consultation took place between representatives of the six most active brigades in Cork, Tipperary and Limerick. This meeting, the first of its kind and one that foreshadowed the development of a divisional organisation, was held at my cousin's house at Ballylegan, Glanworth, Co. Cork, where I had sheltered during the preceding months. From the minutes^x of meeting which I possess, I note that the

x See Appendix "G"

precise date of this conference was 6th January. These minutes are significant as reflecting the situation at that juncture over a great part of the South, the needs of that situation as seen by those bearing the brunt of the conflict in that area and the lines on which it was proposed to intensify the struggle. Our Brigade was represented at the meeting by D. O'Hannigan, the Vice-Commandant. He was accompanied by Seamus Forde (Malone) more or less as a companion for the journey and not, as the minutes incorrectly indicate, as Brigade Adjutant.

The Column was re-assembling about this date and this probably had some connection with my absence from the conference. By the 12th January the re-assembling must have been completed because my documentary records contain the original in manuscript of a report and a memorandum bearing this date and which I had drafted for signature by the Vice-Brigadier. Signed by him, it was transmitted to the Brigadier and by him to G.H.Q. and duly acknowledged.^{x(1)} The report and memorandum reflect from the viewpoint of our Brigade some of the matters which had engaged the attention of the inter-brigade conference in their wider aspects and in particular show our anxiety at the difficulties arising for us from lack of operational activity by the Volunteers in the other parts of County Limerick.

My records also yield a despatch from G.H.Q. dated for this period. As it relates to a project of considerable magnitude a copy of this communication is appended.^{x(2)} The project in question was that of certain selected men proceeding to London with a view to executing the British Prime Minister. At the time, so far as I

x(1) See Appendix "H" for a copy of these communications.

x(2) Appendix "I".

can recall, the precise nature of the scheme was not made known, the information given to the select number approached on subject being that they had the option of volunteering for an operation directed against members of the Cabinet in London and with little prospect of survival by those engaged in it. They were given a day in which to decide and to convey their decision by means of a postcard addressed to the Brigadier in commonplace terms as pre-arranged to indicate willingness or otherwise. How many volunteered I do not now remember, but that a number did so is evident from the wording of the G.H.Q. despatch.

After re-assembling in a locality which as far as I can recollect was either that of Knockadea, on the Cork-Limerick boundary, or that of Martinstown, near Kilfinane, the Column, some 20 to 30 strong, resumed its movement through the Brigade territory. The extent and direction of such movement were governed by one of three factors, and frequently by a combination of all three, viz. -

- (a) Intelligence reports which indicated potential opportunities for action by the Column in a particular area.
- (b) Intelligence reports calling for avoiding action by the Column or a move on the general principle of preventing its precise location being pin-pointed by hostile intelligence.
- (c) Billeting requirements and the desirability of distributing the burden of accommodating the Column over as many households and localities as possible.

Two examples of reports coming within the second category have survived among my papers and a copy is appended. ^{⌘(1)}

Another documentary survival is a map on which I made a practice at the time of tracing from day to day the routes followed by the Column and indicating where the unit billeted. Because of its interest as a contemporary record and as an illustration of the mobile nature of the Column's activities, an exact replica is attached. ^{⌘(2)} The inked orange coloured line on the map indicates the routes followed and the inked crosses denote where the unit found billeting accommodation. Such accommodation might be availed merely for an overnight stay, sometimes for a day or two and only rarely for as long as three or four days. The period to which this particular record relates would have been the greater part of the months of January, February and March, 1921. While the route as marked indicates, in general, a continuous movement in, roughly, an anti-clockwise direction, some sections of the route would have been traversed more than once. This would have arisen through the Column retracing its steps now and then and later returning by the same route. Something like this must have occurred in the case of that portion of the route leading to Dromkeen in the vicinity of which the map shows the Column to have been billeted. As we did not occupy billets so close to that place at the time of the ambush there, these indications on the map must relate to another and earlier visit of which I have now no recollection.

The normal routine attending moving and billeting was that the local Volunteer officer in charge at the place of destination was contacted either beforehand or on arrival of the unit. This officer would then allot billets,

⌘(1) Appendix "J".

⌘(2) Appendix "K".

impart local military intelligence likely to interest the Column and provide sentries during the resting periods of the unit and later guides for route-finding if necessary. On occasion, in localities with which it was familiar, the Column might make its own arrangements for accommodation, but at some stage the local officer in charge would be made aware of the unit's presence and a consultation would usually be held with him or his representative.

While the Column's movements were frequently effected under cover of darkness, using both bye-roads and cross-country routes, they were just as frequently made by daylight, but in such cases were normally cross-country marches. Advance and rear guards covered all marches, flank guards being used rarely, if at all. The protection afforded by sentries detailed by local units had its principal value in ensuring sufficient rest for the Column personnel rather than in the degree of actual security it provided. In favourable circumstances the most that these sentries could do would have been to give warning based on hearing suspicious noises such as movement of lorries or seeing moving lights at night. It would have been too much to expect the sentries actually to hold up a hostile raiding party, even when they were armed, which was not always the case. At the time, of course, we did not analyse the situation in that way, being quite content to trust in these arrangements and an element of luck. Our luck was, in fact, phenomenal until, at ^Rlast, the last month or so of the conflict. There were a number of occasions when the Column found itself just on the outer side of the cordons drawn by overwhelming numbers of British troops and police staging a "sweep" or round-up of a locality. On those occasions the time-lag between the noting of our presence in an area, delivery of this information to the

hostile intelligence and the actual hostile reaction was usually, in conjunction with our frequent moves, the cause of our escape. As time went on, however, it was noticeable that this time-lag grew progressively shorter, denoting either a gradual improvement in the opposing intelligence service or speed of reaction or both.

It is not to be inferred that the hostile intelligence was a highly developed organisation in our area once the police had to abandon their normal patrol system and were cut off from their one-time free intercourse with the people. In my view most of such information as reached the British units in our area was indirect and unintentional, that is, as a result of gossip and careless talk on the part of members of the general public. Generally, the people had been schooled to carefulness in this respect, but in the nature of things some indiscreet remarks were bound to arise from time to time and to reach hostile ears in one way or another. Indeed, in the circumstances and allowing for the rather restricted area in which we operated, it is surprising that, until the final phase of hostilities, the British were not more successful in pin-pointing our location from day to day. Now and then some information of the Column's movements may have been deliberately conveyed to a British garrison either by one of their very few local supporters or an actual intelligence agent of theirs. We only had one case of a man accused of spying and another in which it is certain that the location of an arms-dump was deliberately disclosed. The accusation of spying was made against a man named O'Gorman from, I think, the Emly area. It was dealt with under the auspices of the local Battalion, and perhaps because of this, I do not now recollect the detailed circumstances or merits of the case, but a sentence of execution was imposed which

resulted in the man being shot. He was not fatally injured, however, and after being left for dead made his escape out of the country. The case of the arms-dump was one where its discovery must have been caused by treachery of one of only five or six persons who knew of its location. This was beneath the floor of stables in the farmyard of relatives of mine at Thomastown, Kilfinane, who lived elsewhere, the place being in charge of a man who was a reliable member of the I.R.A. With his co-operation, I arranged for a tradesman, also an I.R.A. man and trustworthy, to construct the dump. When completed it was a solidly-constructed chamber, brick-lined. Access was by means of a small trap-door flush with the ground level, the whole being covered by a deep layer of litter.

One day in May, 1921, the farmyard was visited by a number of police. This party at once began to clear out the floors of all the stables in the stable-block, ignoring all other buildings. Eventually they uncovered the trap-door, and removed the contents of the dump. These contents included explosives, fuses, some shot-guns, and a German Maxim machine-gun. This latter item had been seized by us in the house of an ex-British officer during the preceding year. For a time, the Column retained this weapon, more for the sake of its impressive appearance than for its utility. Apart from its heavy weight making for difficulty in transporting it, there was some defect in its mechanism which permitted it to fire only one round at a time. These circumstances and the fact that only one member of the Column - Maurice Meade, a former soldier of Casement's Irish Brigade in Germany - had any knowledge of it, soon led to the weapon being "dumped". We had this gun with the Column at the time of the Glenacurrane action in December, 1920, but I am now uncertain if it ^{was} ~~is~~ actually

set up in the ambush position on that occasion.

It was generally accepted - and I subscribe to the assumption - that a particular individual had been the source of the information on which the police had acted. This man, an ex-British soldier of low-grade intelligence but otherwise well-behaved, had been allowed, rather reluctantly, to join the Column for a short period. He was not invited to re-join, however, when the unit re-assembled after a brief disbandment. Resentment of this is believed to have caused him to betray the dump's location which had come to his knowledge through being sent there from the Column on one occasion to help in moving equipment. It was not a matter that could easily be brought home to the alleged culprit and no action against him resulted. Some years later he committed suicide. The discovery of this dump is related in detail in a captured British Intelligence document to which I shall again refer and which will be found in its original form among the appendices.^x

As I have here interposed some remarks on the general conditions under which the Flying Column existed, some comments are called for on its basic operational method - namely the ambush technique. Much misconception exists on this question, especially in civilian minds misled by propaganda and ignorant of military history and the principles of war. At the time, it suited the British to propagate the idea that there was something underhand, even cowardly and murderous, in the ambush tactic. To refute that allegation is easy and by no means a question of relying, as some do, on that outworn - and untrue - tag, "All is fair in love and war". Instead, complete

^x Appendix "N".

refutation is to be found in one of the age-old, universal and fundamental Principles of War - the Principle of Surprise - in the application of which the ambush tactic is one of numerous recognised techniques employed by every warring nation since the earliest times. Innumerable writers of repute could be quoted on this point, but it suffices, and will be more appropriate, to refute the British out of their own mouth, as it were, by citing one of their foremost military historians. Writing in his well-known work, "Small Wars", the author, General Callwell, has this to say:

"The question of forming ambushes in small wars is one which has hardly received the attention which it deserves. Stratagems of this kind have hardly been so often attempted by regular troops in operations of this class as they might have been, considering that the terrain and the conditions are often favourable to their successful execution."

And again:

"The forming of an ambush requires skill and eye for country. The great object to bear in mind of course is that the enemy shall not become aware of its presence till the concealed party is actually in a position to strike."

Before finishing with this basic background to the Column's activities a few comments will not be out of place on other basic matters - discipline, sources of intelligence and training. Under the head of discipline a very high standard prevailed. That this was so derived mainly from the fact that the members of the unit were selected men, willingly and enthusiastically submitting

themselves to all that membership of the Column involved and holding a passionate conviction in the justice of their cause. Normally, a great danger to be feared would have been over-indulgence in drink. It was remarkable, however, that this hazard was avoided. While the majority of the Column were teetotallers, those who were not practically became so for their period of service with the unit and loyally obeyed the strict "no drinking" rule. This was all the more notable in view of the conditions under which the Column operated. The members of the unit got no cash payment whatever (a ration of cigarettes and, where needed, articles of clothing were provided), but this factor had no connection with the abstention from drink as the opportunities for obtaining it were numerous either by way of gifts or seizures. We only had one case calling for disciplinary action.

This arose through a few Volunteers temporarily with the Column gaining access to the cellars of a place known as Galtee Castle. In their explorations of the cellars they sampled the contents of a variety of bottled drinks and became somewhat intoxicated - more from the variety of the liquor consumed than the quantity. In the outcome when making their way back to their nearby billets, a rifle was accidentally discharged and one of the party was shot in the foot. We court-martialled the culprits and imposed penalties the details of which I forget. I remember, however, that a very minute record of the charges and the proceedings of the court was made by me. This record shortly afterwards fell into hostile hands through seizure of my haversack when a horse and trap in which I had been travelling was held up and searched by police. I had purposely left the haversack in the trap to be carried to my next stopping place while I made a detour across

country. No harm was done by this record being discovered as its contents could not disclose any information dangerous to us, and, as far as I remember, even the driver of the trap avoided arrest in some way. Indeed the capture of this record was all to the good as it was calculated to impress the opposing forces that our organisation was highly developed and well disciplined. I happened to be familiar with military law procedure and the court-martial charges were phrased and the proceedings conducted and recorded precisely according to the British practice.

The capture of another document on the same occasion had, however, more serious consequences. This document was also in my haversack and was a copy of an R.I.C. coded telegram passed to me from the Kilfinane Post Office where the assistant, Miss May Bourke, regularly transmitted all such police messages through our local Battalion Intelligence Officer, my cousin, Mr. D.P. MacCarthy. In consequence of this seizure Miss Bourke was arrested and received a long term of imprisonment which she served in Mountjoy Gaol until after the Truce. Later, I am glad to say, we were able to repay her services by obtaining for her an appointment in the Civil Service. This access to police telegrams was one of our channels of intelligence, though, as far as my recollection goes, it did not yield much data of great consequence to us locally. But the material thus obtained had its uses as it was transmitted to the Director of Intelligence in Dublin and he was in a position to decode it. I cannot recall whether he provided us with the key to the code as I believe was done in the case of some other Brigades. I think the procedure in our case was that he would send back the

decoded version of any message likely to be of any local value. In any event the volume of these messages secured by us was not large and I am almost certain that the Kilfinane Post Office was the only source of them in the Brigade area.

Much more valuable to us was intelligence secured by less spectacular means - that of close observation of the British movements and routine by our Company, Battalion and Brigade Intelligence personnel. The value of this was enhanced by the extent to which the British maintained movements at particular times, and by specific routes, a situation that existed until the Spring of 1921. From about that time the hostile movements became somewhat more difficult to predict and they tended to be less of a pattern. In effect, of course, almost every member of the public was an intelligence agent of ours and made it their business to pass on to us warnings or other information likely to be helpful. We had no agent serving in the hostile forces in our area nor any other direct source of information from within the hostile camp. One member of the Black and Tans in the Kilfinane Police garrison did, however, contact us through the local Parish Priest and after some negotiation we arranged to give him asylum when he deserted. He did desert and we got him away safely after sheltering him locally for a week or two. I had a conference with him after his desertion, but there was little or nothing that he could give us in the way of useful information. To the best of my memory his name was Reynolds. Many years afterwards he was recognised and spoken to near Dublin by my cousin, D.P. MacCarthy, who had been Battalion Intelligence Officer when the desertion was arranged. Reynolds was much put out by this encounter and indicated that he did not want to be

recognised. I do not think that this attitude threw any doubt on the bona-fides of his desertion. We were satisfied at the time that it was a genuine case, though probably not inspired by any motives of patriotism.

As regards the matter of training in the Column, the position was that the members came to the unit already well grounded in essentials - ability to use their weapons, a rough-and-ready knowledge of field signals, good march discipline and, above all, a willing submission to orders. Given those qualities, nothing was called for in the way of actual training within the Column. It would in fact have been a mistake, one calculated to blunt the spirit of initiative and individual self-reliance required of guerilla fighters. We did do a very small amount of arms and foot drill, but beyond that there was no formal instruction, and the drill in question was undertaken in quiet periods now and then and more for the sake of keeping the men employed than for any reason of its practical utility.

To return to a chronological sequence - the middle of January, 1921, found the re-assembled Column, as I have stated, beginning a resumption of its movement through the Brigade area. This movement began in the southern section of the area and proceeded in a north and north-east direction, the route being that traced by the eastward section of the line marked on the map given at Appendix "K". At a few places along this route, especially in the neighbourhood of Cullen, we occupied positions in the expectation of engaging parties of the hostile forces, but none of these expectations materialised until 3rd February when the action at Dromkeen took place. We had been planning this engagement for some time and most of our

movements in the latter half of January were in the nature of manoeuvring so as to be near at hand when the opportune occasion arose. I have described this action and its background circumstances in three published articles, of one of which a proof copy (with a sketch map) will be found in the appendices.^{*(1)} Of the other two articles, one, with somewhat less detail, appeared in the book, "Limerick's Fighting Story" (Kerryman Ltd.), and the other, a detailed military study, was published in the Army journal, "An Cosantóir" in its issue of December, 1943. The only addition now called for to these narratives is to record that two of the Black and Tan members of the police convoy were executed immediately after the action. They were discovered hiding on the roadside and taken into custody. After questioning, their execution was ordered by the Column Commander acting, as he stated, in accordance with the terms of a G.H.Q. General Order or Proclamation then in force as a reply to a similar British proclamation ordering the shooting on the spot of any of our troops captured with arms. I do not myself recall that G.H.Q. formally issued such an order, but it is noteworthy that its issue was specifically called for at the conference of Southern Brigades held a month previously and that this request is recorded in the minutes of that conference.^{*(2)} What I have termed "questioning" of these two prisoners may well have been a drumhead courtmartial - I do not know. I had been at the other end of the ambush position at the time and I came on the scene only when the whole matter had been settled.

* (1) Appendix "L". Published in "With The I.R.A. In The Fight For Freedom" (Kerryman Ltd.)

* (2) Appendix "G", Paragraph 2.

In moving away from Dromkeen we took the route to the southward towards the Bruff locality as indicated on the map (Appendix "K"). On February 10th we were billeted in the Martinstown area north of Kilfinane. Here occurred the capture of a British aeroplane in circumstances which are correctly described in a short article (ascribed to "Volunteer Officer") in the book, "Limerick's Fighting Story". Because of its accuracy, I reproduce most of this article here. Its author is not known to me, although some of its details suggest to me that I must have been the source, directly or indirectly, of much of its contents at some time or other.

"It was carried out by a section of the Flying Column numbering about half-a-dozen men, under the command of Sean McCarthy, Adjutant of both the East Limerick Flying Column and the East Limerick Brigade, and now Lieut.-Colonel attached to the Army General Staff. McCarthy and his men were billeted in a district which lay between Kilfinane, Martinstown and Cush, when they observed, flying low, an aeroplane which, it transpired later, was flying from Oranmore in Galway to Fermoy, County Cork. As it was apparent that the pilot was in difficulty the Column Commander decided that they should make an attempt to bring the aeroplane down. Accordingly, as it flew low over the position which they occupied they opened rapid fire upon it, and in a few moments were thrilled to see it land about half-a-mile from the spot from which the attack was made. It was never learned whether the 'plane came down directly as a result of the I.R.A. fire. The attackers immediately rushed towards the spot

where the 'plane, a British military type, had landed, and around which a number of local people had already congregated. Shots fired into the air by the approaching I.R.A. men prompted the pilot to comment, "these are our men"; but the people answered back, "no, they are ours". The assembled civilians immediately dispersed and the I.R.A. called upon the pilot to surrender, but he refused to do so. He took up a position in a hollow in the field, but, as he appeared to be unarmed the I.R.A. did not wish to injure him. However, they immediately proceeded to set the 'plane on fire, having first removed the pilot's equipment and a number of military documents. Having achieved their objective by the destruction of the 'plane the I.R.A. withdrew without delay, taking the pilot with them. His observer had got away before they reached the scene of the crash, and as British reinforcements were expected at any moment, there was no point in the members of the Column unnecessarily delaying their departure. It was not intended to hold prisoner for an indefinite period the pilot whose name was Flight Lieutenant Mackey; rather it was intended to keep him merely for as long a period as the safety of the Column dictated.

Following the destruction of the aeroplane and the capture of the pilot, an ultimatum from the British military forces to the people of the town of Kilfinane was conveyed by the Black-and-Tans stationed there. The ultimatum threatened that the town would be bombed from the air unless the pilot was released within a specified time. Upon receipt of the ultimatum the I.R.A. decided that they would

not release the pilot until such time as it pleased themselves to do so and, consequently, he was brought about with them from billet to billet, for a number of days. Flight Lieutenant Mackey turned out to be a decent fellow, and many humorous stories recall the period during which he was a prisoner of the I.R.A. He was treated with every consideration during captivity, and could not understand why the I.R.A. should be operating in flat country, as it had been his belief that all "Shinners" confined themselves to the mountains. He was amazed, too, to find a number of ex-British soldiers in the Flying Column, and considered their's the "grossest disloyalty". Ultimately when told of his release, he asked Sean McCarthy for a letter to his Commanding Officer in Fermoy, indicating that he had been held against his will. That was given him and, in turn, he gave Sean McCarthy, as Officer in charge of the Column, a letter thanking him for the favourable treatment he had been given by his captors, and because of which he promised to do them no harm when he re-joined his Unit. In that respect he kept his word because, subsequently the Fermoy Black-and-Tans brought him on tour of the area to discover the location of his captivity and, if possible to identify his captors. Brought to a stud farm where he had been held a prisoner, he saw in the diningroom racing trophies which he had admired a short time previously. When asked by the Black-and-Tans if he had been previously in that house, he answered "no".

Prior to the release of the pilot the Black-and-Tans did everything possible to terrify the people of

Kilfinane by every means at their disposal. Their efforts were augmented by a squadron of aeroplanes which appeared over the town and dropped what appeared to be bombs. Loud explosions followed, but no material damage was done as apparently only smoke bombs had been used. All the while the local I.R.A. Company in Kilfinane was mobilised and in readiness to protect the town from further hooliganism by British forces."

I still have the letter given me by Lieutenant Mackey. A photostat copy has been lodged with the Bureau of Military History and a typescript copy is included here in the appendices^x. The propellor of this plane was the only part unaffected by the fire we set going, and it was removed later by the British to the police barracks at Kilfinane. There we took it over with the barracks after the Truce and eventually presented it to the National Museum where it is now displayed.

Our next movement was in the nature of a forced cross-country march to evade the expected reactions of the hostile forces. The route taken was northward from Martinstown to vicinity of Sheerin's Cross on the Kilmallock-Bruff main road and thence westward to Athlacca (see map). Our prisoner was ill-equipped for this journey as he was wearing light shoes and silk socks and our route traversed considerable tracts of wet and marshy ground. However, he was quite cheerful and made no complaints. In the course of the march we had occasion now and then to take cover as alarms of one kind or another were signalled back to us by our advanced party, especially at places

^x Appendix "M".

where a roadway had to be crossed. This gave us the idea of "putting on an act" to impress our prisoner who we knew would eventually be making a report to his superiors. Accordingly, at frequent intervals the Column Commander sounded his whistle and gave a number of field signals by hand. Whether or not these signals conveyed anything intelligible, they were acted on as if they did and all sections of the unit went through a seemingly purposeful series of tactical evolutions, transmission of fire orders and an interchange of further hand signals between the various sections. In all, our prisoner must have received impressions calculated to make him assess our capabilities at a higher standard than they warranted in fact.

At our billeting area near Athlacca I had a visit from my Parish Priest, Canon John Lee, who cycled from Kilfinane to see me with a view to getting our prisoner released and thereby save his parishioners from the threatened reprisals. This put me in a very awkward predicament. Apart from my own interests and those of my family being involved, there was the almost insuperable difficulty of refusing a request from this saintly man, who, moreover, had proved a very good friend to me. However, more as a way out of the difficulty than as a statement of fact, I pleaded that the decision did not rest with me and that I had to obey orders. Canon Lee accepted this with good grace. Indeed; as it transpired later, he treated my attitude as praiseworthy to an extent beyond its merits. This sequel arose in connection with my Military Service Pension claim. Subject to appeal, my initial application had been rejected. This was an astonishing ruling on a claim which was fully documented and proved down to its

final comma. A partial rejection would have had some semblance of a judicial award, but for the rejection in toto the only explanation that occurs to me - and if it is the true one it implies a very low standard of probity on the part of the Pensions Board - is that the Board at this period was rejecting applications arbitrarily, and in the hope that some of the claimants would not go to the trouble of appealing. If that seems incredible, how else explain the fact that, on appeal, the Board made an award to the maximum of my entitlement although the only additional evidence submitted was my own affidavit and a letter from Canon Lee? This letter adverted to the incident concerning the prisoner, Mackey, and drew conclusions therefrom which, however flattering they might be to me, could hardly have justified turning the scales so completely in favour of the claim.

By the time the British ultimatum concerning our prisoner had expired, the Column had moved southwards from Athlacca and eastwards to vicinity of Kilfinane (see map). From a point near our billeting area there we had a clear view of the town and saw the British 'planes arrive at "zero hour". They circled over the town and began dropping what at first sight appeared to be high-explosives, but it soon became obvious that they were using smoke-bombs set to explode before reaching the ground. No action being called for, the Column moved northward through Mount Coote and Bulgaden (see map) and our prisoner was then taken at night-time to a wayside station and released by being put on a train. This would have been 13th February, as dated by the letter given me by the prisoner (Appendix "M") though it is just possible that the actual release did not take place until the following date.

Another change of direction was now made in the vicinity of Sheerin's Cross and the Column turned to the east traversing in the opposite direction the route previously followed after the capture of the aeroplane. Veering south through Elton (see map) the unit continued towards the Co. Cork boundary, billeting at various places en route. It was, I think, at this juncture that we narrowly escaped an extensive "round-up" in the foothills of the Galtees. Given the alarm at dawn one morning by our sentries, we rose to find the roadway a few hundred yards distant lined with military lorries from which the occupants were beginning to dismount. As we looked on, they began to climb the mountain side in a long line moving in a direction away from our billets. We therefore had no difficulty in moving out of the danger zone.

Thenceforth, until end of March or early in April, the Column was continually in movement through the Brigade area. Most of the routes marked on the map must have been traversed many times and in different directions, though I do not now recollect the sequence of the various moves during this period. In any event at the end of March or very early in April the Column was in the vicinity of Bruree with the intention of entering the West Limerick Brigade area. It had been decided that something should be done to induce that Brigade to adopt a more aggressive policy and so take some of the pressure off our area. Another decision also taken at this stage was that circumstances required my setting up a fixed Brigade Headquarters as the effort on my part to fulfil the dual appointment of Brigade Adjutant and Column Adjutant became progressively more difficult. In a sense such a headquarters already existed at the Brigade Commander's

dug-out shelter at Uregate^R, Bruff, but he had become more and more involved in political and Local Government affairs. As Chairman of the County Council, his duties in that capacity in the prevailing circumstances engaged his attention almost whole-time and, as I have already mentioned, it was a sphere for which he had great aptitude and in which he gave magnificent service.

To choose a suitable site for the new headquarters I left the Column in the Bruree area and moved to Cush, near Kilfinane, where I stayed a few nights in a dug-out maintained by the local Company and made various day-time journeys seeking a good location for the headquarters. It had been decided that this, too, should take the form of a dug-out rather than use a house for the purpose. Eventually, a site was selected on Lynch's farm at Stephenstown, Elton. There in a wide "double-ditch" (actually a double-bank or fence. In Co. Limerick the usual name for a fence is "ditch".) an excavation was made to take a sectional wooden hut which had been donated by the Kilfinane Creamery through the agency of my cousin D.P. MacCarthy (local Battalion I.O.) Carted to the site in sections by one of the O'Donnell family of Cush, it was re-erected in the excavation, covered over with grass sods level with the surface of the rest of the bank. Access was by a trap-door, also sodded, ^{and} light was provided by a window hidden by a deep clump of briars. In its finished state it could not be detected visually by a stranger walking at the sides or even on top of the bank. In this refuge we were able to provide four bunks, sufficient space for office work and cooking facilities. Two or three members of the O'Donnell family of Cush, assisted by Edmond Barrett, who had attached himself to me from the

time I went "on the run", and a local Volunteer, Jack Howard, were responsible for all the work of constructing this dug-out. The regular occupants were Barrett, P. O'Donnell (O/C, Cush Company) and myself. Howard was given accommodation there now and then, and at a later stage the District Court Registrar, Fogarty, became one of the permanent occupants so as to facilitate co-operation between the civil and military sides, a very necessary link seeing that all the ordinary "law and order" affairs of the area were now in our control. I remained at this headquarters until the Truce, except for one or two brief absences, one of which was caused by a false alarm that its location had been betrayed. In fact only a severely restricted number of persons knew its precise site. Even the carriers of the large number of messages and despatches of all kinds which we dealt with daily did not know its location as they made deliveries to a hidden roadside "post-box" we maintained at a point half-a-mile away.

The Column, meanwhile, had made its entry into West Limerick and shortly after doing so and making contact with the Brigadier there, they were involved in an action early in April at Ballyhahill in the course of which he (Brigadier Finn) was killed. This was but a prelude to a series of disasters in the next of which our own Brigadier was killed in the course of the following month in circumstances to which I have already adverted in the early pages of this record. Then, later in the same month, there occurred the actions at Sraharla and Lackelly in both of which we had heavy losses. In these two actions the Column were on the defensive having been subjected to surprise attacks. The second of the two actions, that at Lackelly, was notable for the manner in which our men fought back after the

initial reverse, recovered the bodies of those killed, released prisoners and captured the bicycles on which the attackers had arrived on the scene.

O'Hannigan now became Brigadier in succession to Wall and it was probably at this period that Seán Forde (Malone) became Vice-Commandant of the Brigade. He had been in British custody since his arrest at the beginning of the year during a visit he made to Cork City and had now escaped from Spike Island.

This month of May, 1921, also featured our capture of copies of the "Weekly Intelligence Summary", a secret document issued by General Strickland, the British Divisional Commander in Cork, who was in charge of all the British military operating in Munster. One of the four original copies is appended* and is complete except for two missing pages. These two pages are, however, represented in the appended copy by inserted pages marked 2(a), 2(b), 2(c), 2(d) and 2(e) reproduced from the other copies in my possession. In binding this appended copy at some time or other the loose pages were not inserted in proper sequence. To avoid damage they are left in that state, but the correct sequence is indicated by the figures inserted in ink on the top right hand corner of each page.

The precise manner in which we got possession of these papers escapes my memory, but it had some connection with an incident in the Kiltteely locality. In any event, this document proved of special value to the I.R.A. counter-espionage as the Anglo-Irish War reached its climax in the Summer of 1921. Immediately after its capture I circulated extracts to the I.R.A. Brigades affected in the

* Appendix "N".

Southern Divisions, and to the Director of Intelligence at General Headquarters, Dublin.

Its contents, while wildly inaccurate in some instances and highly coloured by propaganda in others, were factual in general, and were a notable sidelight on the operational background in the South in 1921. In particular they afforded some evidence of the two important developments which were in progress about this time:

(i) A slight but definite recovery in the British intelligence system previously rendered almost harmless by the effect of I.R.A. action against its eyes and ears, the R.I.C.

(ii) An improvement - largely as a result of the foregoing degree of recovery - in British operational methods against the I.R.A. Flying Columns. With better information, the British were beginning to operate increasingly across country, and to stage more and more "round-ups" better timed and located in relation to the movements and billeting areas of the I.R.A. As an example in this connection, the entries relating to East Limerick Brigade were in the main accurate statements of events in that area on the dates concerned. (It also includes particulars of the discovery of our dump at Thomastown, Kilfinane, to which I have already referred.)

The interesting feature of these two developments is that they were bound to transform the character of the I.R.A. organisation and tactics then in vogue in the South had not the Truce intervened before they had been in

progress long enough to produce full effect. As it was - again taking East Limerick as an example - the overwhelming numbers frequently concentrated against the Brigade Flying Column in "sweeps" and "round-ups" from mid-1921 onwards were ~~successfully~~ ^{successively} growing more difficult to counter, based, as they obviously were, on a constantly improving flow of information.

Already at this time we were in fact in process of making organisational changes which would have led in turn to a fundamental change in our methods of tactical operation. The Column was sub-divided into two sections and a further sub-division into Battalion Columns was under way when the Truce intervened. The advent of the Truce was announced and our attitude defined by two Divisional Orders, the originals of which are in my possession* and the terms of the Truce were notified to us in a circular entitled "Instructions to Liaison Officers" issued by G.H.Q. The original of this circular is also among my papers and a copy is attached ("Appendix "P").

The contents of the two Divisional Orders clearly echo the assumption that hostilities would be resumed. Opinion among the Volunteers was also generally in accord with this view at the time. But as the negotiations continued it became more and more obvious - at least to many whose position of authority led them to make a critical assessment of the situation - that any reversion to military conflict would have to adjust itself to an entirely changed set of circumstances. Already, as I have shown, for some months prior to the Truce an alteration in our operational methods was being forced on us. Now, if hostilities re-opened, a really radical

* Copies at Appendix "O".

transformation of tactics would be called for due to the fact that the former whole-hearted co-operation of the mass of the people could not be re-captured. As the experiences of some of our Northern brigades had shown, and as the events of the subsequent Civil War were to emphasise still more, any worthwhile guerilla war against a numerically superior and undefeated enemy cannot be pursued for long in the absence of support, active or passive, by the great bulk of the general population in the area of operations.

That, plainly, was the military situation as the terms of the proposed Treaty became known. It was a situation which was bound to influence reactions of many of us to the terms of the proposed settlement. It did not necessarily mean that the actual Treaty terms could not or should not be rejected by us; what it did imply was that some degree of compromise - though possibly a very slight one - was called for by the logic of the circumstances. Moreover, the mere acceptance of a Truce on our part implied our adoption of that attitude and entering on negotiations emphasised it still further.

The question of whether the Treaty was a good or bad settlement is outside the scope of this record. What I underline is the inescapable fact that, the military situation being what it was and the effect on the people capable of being easily foreseen, no one in authority on our side should have been a party to acceptance of a Truce unless he was ready to accept some modification, however small, of our political claims. Otherwise the Truce had no logical justification and could only operate greatly to our military disadvantage by forcing

Appendix A. 1.

THE PRESENT CRISIS.

MANIFESTO

Issued by the Executive Committee of the Irish
Volunteers, 15th July, 1915.

The British Government has ordered four Irishmen to leave Ireland. No charge has been brought against them, no fault has been imputed to them, they have not been summoned to defend themselves before any tribunal, no explanation has been given. They have received peremptory written orders to leave Ireland, their own country, within seven days. They have received these orders from a British authority established by force in Ireland, and not from any Irish authority.

The men who have received this arbitrary sentence of banishment from Ireland, without trial of any kind, without any cause stated, complaint made, or warning given, are **organising instructors and prominent officers of the Irish Volunteers**. Three of them are Ulstermen, one of whom is a well-known business man in Belfast.

The order for banishment, like previous deportation orders, is nominally given, under the Defence of the Realm Act by General Friend, on behalf of the military authorities. General Friend is, in these acts of hostility to the Irish Volunteers, required to act as the **political agent of the Government**. The orders of deportation and banishment directed to members of the Irish Volunteer organisation are, in fact, the continuation, under Mr. Birrell's direction, of the "Curragh revolt" under General Gough, the Clontarf centenary expedition under Mr. Harrel, now reinstated in the Government service, and the shooting down of unarmed citizens at Bachelot's Walk.

General Friend, in giving these orders, acts entirely at the instance of Mr. Birrell's subordinate officers. For a long time before the banishment orders were issued on the twelfth of July, Mr. Birrell's officers were instructed to keep a constant watch both by day and night on the organisers now sentenced to banishment, and to note and report all their words and movements. It was known to the members of the Irish Volunteer Council, before any action was taken by the military authorities, that the political authorities of Dublin Castle had decided to proceed against the men now ordered into exile.

The fact that Mr. Birrell's department had kept up the strictest surveillance over these men for several months past, shows that Mr. Birrell desired to obtain some evidence that might enable him to act against them by process of law, civil or martial. He failed to obtain any such evidence, and, having failed, he resorted to the purely arbitrary powers exercised nominally by the military authority. It is evident that, by this policy, Mr. Birrell's Government hopes either to in-

timidate the Irish Volunteers or to provoke them into acts of unconsidered resistance. The Government will not succeed in either respect. The Irish Volunteers will continue training and strengthening their organisation to the maximum of efficiency, and making themselves more and more worthy of the confidence and support of the Irish Nation.

In the case of previous acts of hostility to the Irish Volunteers, Mr. Birrell has partly attempted to escape from responsibility by a form of words, and to place responsibility on the military authorities; he has partly endeavoured to justify his actions on the ground that the attitude of the Irish Volunteers "in the present crisis" is not in accord with the sort of "loyalty" that he expects from the people of Ireland. By the present crisis Mr. Birrell means the present war. The hostility of Mr. Birrell's Government to the Irish Volunteers began openly with the Arms Proclamation of December, 1913, immediately after the first enrolment of Irish Volunteers in Dublin, and was continuous from that time until the outbreak of the war. If Mr. Birrell's pretence is true, his Government was engaged in special preparations for "the present crisis" in the year before the war.

The war crisis has not mitigated the condition of affairs in Ireland that made the Irish Volunteer organisation necessary for the safety of Ireland. It has in no way altered the policy and objects of the Irish Volunteer organisation. Now, more than in 1913, it is manifest that Ireland requires self-protection against "the menace of armed force" from whatsoever quarter. The future prosperity, perhaps the very existence, of the Irish Nation, may depend on the country being in a position to offer effective resistance to the imposition of a ruinous burden of taxation for Imperial purposes.

On behalf of the Irish Volunteers, we reaffirm the original pledge "to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people of Ireland." This pledge implies the attainment of a National Government, free from external political interference. It implies resistance to any partition or dismemberment of Ireland which would exclude a part of the people of Ireland from the benefits of National autonomy. It implies resistance to any scheme of compulsory military service under any authority except a free National Government. It implies resistance to any scheme of taxation which may be imposed without the consent of the people of Ireland, and which may defeat all their hopes of National prosperity and complete the economic ruin consequent on the Legislative Union.

Appendix "A" 2.

The local company of the Irish Volunteers wish to remove any false impression that may have been created, and to make clear their attitude towards this Defence Committee. We are always ready to work hand in hand with men of different political views when the common interest requires it and the Volunteers as an organization have always proved themselves tolerant in these matters. But, in a critical time like the present when our lives and liberties may at any moment be in danger, we cannot agree to have placed in positions of trust men who have shown themselves regardless of the lives of others, a fact which would be justified if they believed in the justice of the cause which they directly or indirectly sent men to fight and die for, and proved that belief by sending their own sons, and acting honourably by those men who fought for the cause they championed. In a serious matter like this we cannot allow words and fine sentiments which these men may express to prove the opposite to what their past actions have proved. Accordingly, we object

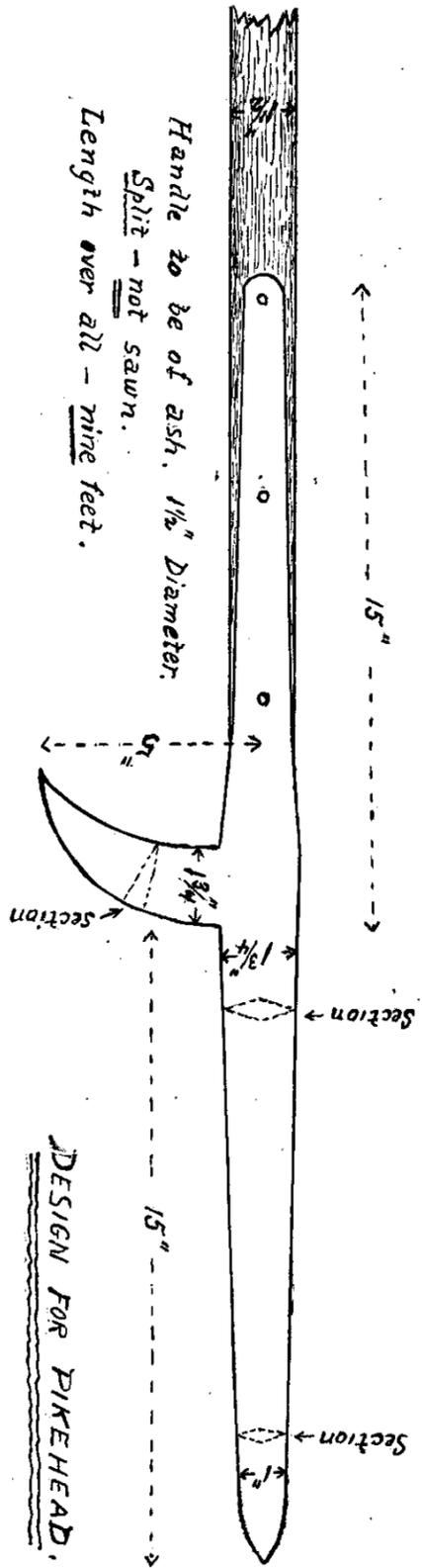
strongly to any local member of the British Recruiting Committee being represented on the working committee, and we once more state that it is not on account of any political opinions they hold, that we object, but for the reasons stated above. Their political opinions can be represented by other men whom we can trust, and work with.

After all, we are the people most directly concerned by this danger, representing as we do 90 per cent of the young men of the parish, if not all, as far as our attitude towards this affair is concerned and, as we have some regard for our safety, a fact which some people seem not to believe, our views should be given the proper consideration.

It is our opinion that the men of greatest danger at the present time, are those of proved inconsistency, and those who are not members of any disciplined body.

On behalf of
"B" Coy
Recruiting Committee
Nise
Recruiting Committee

Appendix "B.1."



Appendix "B.1."

Appendix "B.2" ✓

*Irish Leaders of Our Time:***6.—Sean Wall**

by

Major J. M. MacCARTHY.

IT has been said that Irishmen, with their highly developed sense of individuality and independence, besides making difficult subjects to command successfully, tend to produce more than the normal quota of leaders and aspirants to leadership. If this saying be true—and our history, as well as the record of Irish units in other armies, appears to support it—a standard of leadership above the ordinary is necessary if Irishmen are to give their best as soldiers. So it was, at any rate, on the eve of the Black and Tan campaign in East Limerick in 1918, as the then loosely linked Irish Volunteer organisation in that area strove to weld its component parts into a compact and unified brigade formation in preparation for the coming conflict.

The obstacle in the way of achieving this closely knit organisation was not a lack of leaders. On the contrary, it largely consisted of a multiplicity of talent and candidates for leadership. At this time the Volunteer movement in East Limerick was composed of a number of independent battalions. All of these could reasonably aspire to provide the leader of the proposed brigade in the person of their own commandants, nearly all of whom were of proved capacity with strong claims for selection. Indeed, more than one candidate was forthcoming, or in prospect, from some units. One battalion in particular was a prolific source of potential leaders. This was the Galtee Battalion, a unit which calls for special mention here, not only on the grounds of its relevance to the story, but

The Author.

This article, from the pen of Sean Wall's intimate friend and Brigade Adjutant, is written out of the experience of close personal contact with this well-known East Limerick leader, and the events of his active career in the I.R.A.

Major MacCarthy was associated with the Volunteer organisation from its inception, and was one of the original organisers, and at a critical period O/C. of the famous Galtee Battalion. Later he became vice-O/C. and Adjutant of the East Limerick Brigade, and as an Officer of the Brigade's Active Service Unit took a prominent part in the many actions in which the unit was engaged. His previous contributions to AN COSANTOIR include a valuable account of the ambush at Dromkeen, and other articles.

When the 4th Southern Division was formed Major MacCarthy was appointed Deputy Divisional Commander and Divisional Adjutant. He has filled many important posts in the Army, and graduated with distinction from the Command and Staff School.

because it held a unique place in the Irish Volunteer and I.R.A. Organisations. Incidentally, the territorial title of this Battalion has been perpetuated with justifiable local pride in its associations, on the part of its present-day successors, being now borne by the Galtee District of the L.D.F.

Originally embracing that corner of Limerick County between the Tipperary and Cork borders (Galbally, Ballylanders, Kilfinane, Knocklong, Ardpatrick and adjoining townlands), the unit was one of the earliest and most active formations in the movement. Because of its status and strength, its area was selected in 1915

as the location for one of the first Volunteer training camps organised by G.H.Q., and in charge of the late Colonel J. J. O'Connell. But its proudest claim to fame rests on having originated¹ the idea of the Flying Column or Active Service Unit, the Galtee Battalion Flying Column composed of Volunteers giving whole-time service as a unit, having been the first of its kind in the I.R.A. organisation. As is now so well known, the Active Service Unit system, once it became widespread, was the spearhead of the I.R.A. operations, and the chief medium of the military successes of the Volunteers from 1918 to 1921.

It was the affairs of the Galtee Battalion that gave rise to the circumstances leading to the formal establishment of the East Limerick Brigade, and the appointment of its first brigadier in the early summer of 1918. Deciding to investigate questions arising out of a conflict of personalities within the battalion, G.H.Q. detailed a staff officer² to visit the area, and to examine the situation on the spot. The G.H.Q. representative, after preliminary investigations, ordered a formal Court of Enquiry at which he presided. With Lord French's Proclamation, issued just then—purporting to outlaw the Irish Volunteers—to give a little added solemnity to the proceedings, this Court held protracted sittings at Knocklong. As the outcome, the G.H.Q. delegate decided upon the unprecedented step of selecting and, in effect, appointing a brigade commander. This step was not, of course, in conformity with the procedure then governing such appointments, these normally being made by election. That the assembled unit commanders did not seek to have this election system adopted—the right to which they were perfectly aware they could enforce under the Constitution of the Irish Volunteers—was of itself evidence of their *bona-fides*, and of the genuineness of their difficulties in choosing a leader in the circumstances already mentioned. This attitude, by the way, tends to refute the charges of mere factionism to which are sometimes ascribed

the features of the Irish character exhibiting a lack of the sheep-like quality of being easily led and which in reality, as previously suggested, arise from a deeply seated sense of individuality and independence.

The choice of the G.H.Q. representative had fallen on Sean Wall, an officer of the Bruff Battalion, or as it subsequently became in the brigaded organisation, the 3rd Battalion, East Limerick Brigade. It is of interest to record the general reasons for the selection of this officer—until then acting as a company commander—in the G.H.Q. delegate's own words:—

"From all the investigations I had made I was satisfied that I was justified in taking this action and subsequent events fully confirmed the stability of his character, strength of purpose and determination and qualities of leadership which Sean Wall possessed, and in a higher degree than might be ordinarily required. He not alone possessed those qualities but he also exercised them in the handling of that very delicate situation which existed before my arrival in the area, and perhaps to a greater extent immediately afterwards. He had been as it were planted in authority and others had been dispossessed of even the right to attain that authority, and yet despite these obvious disadvantages, Sean Wall rose above them all and had his Brigade one of the best fighting units in the Volunteer Organisation up to the time of his heroic death in action."

Born in 1888, near Bruff, of farmer stock, the newly-appointed brigadier was of more mature age than the great majority of those he was now to command. For long a prominent and very energetic worker in the Sinn Féin, Gaelic League and Volunteer movements, and coming of

¹ For a tribute in this connection see Ernie O'Malley's book *On another Man's Wound*. Page 188.

² M. W. O'Reilly, F.C.I.I., the present Managing Director, Irish National Insurance Company, whose help in recalling relevant facts is acknowledged.

a family closely identified with the national cause, he was well known either personally or by repute throughout the county. His brother, Fr. Tom Wall,³ was one of the two curates of the Limerick diocese round whom had centred in 1917 the famous controversy between the then Bishop of Limerick (The late Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer) and General Maxwell, the British C-in-C. The latter had thought to induce the Bishop to intervene against the two priests in connection with their national outlook and activities, especially their encouragement of, and association with, the Volunteers.

Dr. O'Dwyer's stand, in face of this demand, his rejection of General Maxwell's proposals, and his comments on the foreign, political and military regime, were so caustic and uncompromising as to receive nation-wide—



From a painting by Gertrude O'Flynn.

one might say world-wide—publicity. Coming from such an eminent, respected, and for many, an unexpected source, the support thus given was invaluable to the national cause at a time when the Volunteer organisation was but slowly recovering from the aftermath of the Easter Week Rising, and when the people in general were but beginning to feel the fresh surge in the nation's life-blood which followed the insurrection.

From an early age Sean Wall had given evidence of possessing resource, determination and self-confidence—characteristics which figure prominently among the basic qualities required for leadership. The death of his father and mother within a few months of each other had terminated his secondary education at St. Munchins

College, Limerick, leaving him at the age of sixteen to assume his parents place in charge of the family affairs. Developing the means at his disposal, he quickly launched out into many fields of activity, displaying an inventive and progressive outlook in all he undertook. He became an expert building contractor, founding the firm of Wall and Forde which extended his contracting business throughout the County of Limerick; and was responsible for the erection of some of the principal creameries in that home of the dairying industry. The name of this

firm, by the way, was to prove a stumbling block for the hostile Intelligence at the height of the Black and Tan struggle. By then a "much-wanted" man in the Limerick area was Tomás Malone, whose *nom-de-guerre* was Sean Forde. For long the latter was believed by the opposition to be the firm's junior partner who had no actual connection with the revolutionary movement. The many false trails thus followed, and the waste of time and effort involved, amounted to a "dispersal of force" by no means to be

despised in the circumstances then prevailing.

On the inventive side, Sean Wall devised new cheese-making machinery in co-operation with a young engineer from the same locality, Nicholas O'Dwyer, who has since attained eminence in his pro-

³ Now the Very Rev. T. Canon Wall, P.P., Ballingarry, Co. Limerick, to whom the author acknowledges his indebtedness for kindly assistance in compiling material for this article. For similar help the author is also thankful to Senator T. Crowley, N. O'Dwyer, B.E., M.I.C.E.I., P. J. O'Rourke, W. T. Purcell and Denis Conway.

fession. Another project of this combine was the manufacture of milk-powder, concerning which they entered into negotiations with the authorities in Dublin. As a further instance of his progressive mind and his receptiveness of new ideas—both very desirable attributes in a leader—it may be recalled that he acquired a large steam threshing-mill in the early days of its development, and shortly after he was to be found advocating and demonstrating the value of the newly-designed mechanical milking apparatus, being responsible for the introduction of this machinery to Co. Limerick. While thus busily occupied with many-sided activities, the things of the mind were not neglected. He was an enthusiastic member of the Gaelic League, the organiser of the local Feis and regular attendant at the local Irish language classes where his mentor, was George Clancy, who later as Alderman Clancy and Mayor of Limerick was to be one of the two murdered holders of the Limerick's Mayoralty. In his spare time, which was little, nothing pleased him more than trips on his motor-cycle, to visit places associated with the patriot dead, such as the scene of O'Neill-Crowley's last stand at Kilclooney Wood, and the grave of Father Nicholas Sheehy at Clogheen.

Like so many others of his generation who gave the Volunteer movement allegiance and devoted service, his national outlook was largely fashioned by a life-long adherence to the Fenian tradition. A maternal uncle of his had taken part in the attack on Kilmallock Barracks in the Rising of '67, being instrumental in recovering on that occasion the body of the single fatal Fenian casualty—a mysterious stranger whose identity was never fully established, and to whose memory as "The Unknown Fenian" a stately monument now stands in Sheares Street, Kilmallock.

With this background and trend of mind, Sean Wall's membership of the Volunteers from their inception in 1913 could be taken for granted. So too could

be assumed his subsequent refusal to take the false turning into which so many of the Volunteers were diverted temporarily in the following year by the then dominant political party through its policy of enticing Ireland's manhood to action in the "far foreign fields" of the First World War.

Thenceforth, despite the claims of a now greatly expanded business, much of his time was given to political organising in the interests of Sinn Fein, and on the military side, his efforts were directed towards repairing the damage done by "The Split" in the ranks of the Volunteers. He gradually revived the Bruff Volunteer Company of which he became commander, though, as in most areas, this revival, as well as the propagation of the Sinn Fein policy, was uphill work until the nation's reaction to the 1916 Rising, followed by the Conscription Crisis of 1918, came to the aid of the faithful few, and began to convert the bulk of the people to an uncompromising national policy.

The occasion of the Roscommon and Waterford bye-elections in 1917 found him specially active in raising funds in aid of the Sinn Fein candidates, and in despatching to the election areas parties of Volunteers to act as election workers. And with the advent of the General Election in 1918 he became one of the leading organisers who ensured that his own constituency of East Limerick shared in the general triumph of Sinn Fein by returning Dr. Richard Hayes with an overwhelming majority.

That year also saw Sean Wall appointed Brigadier in the circumstances already set out. Setting himself to the task of equipping and developing the organisation of his new command he soon had its five battalions—previously of so independent and self-sufficient an outlook—functioning in full co-operation, and imbued with a strong pride of unit as brigade components. It would be tedious to list here the wide range of military engagements and activities to the credit of that brigade. It suffices to say that by

common consent the record has entitled it rank among the premier fighting units of the I.R.A. One operation in which Sean Wall personally participated and organised may, however, be singled out for mention as possessing some points of general interest, and as an event which had a special appeal for him because of historical and family associations. This was the attack on Kilmallock R.I.C. Barracks in May, 1920.

In that attack the Volunteers were attempting a task bristling with difficulties that seem insurmountable, but they had the satisfaction of successfully concluding an effort which had proved too much for their predecessors in 1867. As in the '67 Rising, the attackers on this occasion also suffered one fatal casualty. Curiously enough, the parallel was further continued in that the Volunteer killed, Liam Scully, like "The Unknown Fenian" of '67, was a stranger in the locality, being a native of Co. Kerry who, but a short time previously, had taken up a Gaelic League teachership in the neighbourhood, and was but little known locally.

Looking over old papers dealing with the Rising of '67, another notable circumstance comes to light. The roll of the participants in the Kilmallock attack in '67, who were tried and sentenced to transportation or imprisoned for—as the charge had it—"most wickedly, maliciously and traitorously making open war against our said Lady the Queen," was repeated almost name for name, and, in many cases, in blood relationship, by the attackers of 1920.

New expedients, some of which had their origin in the inventive mind of the Brigadier were used by the Volunteers to overcome the difficult obstacles in the way of this attack. One was the improvisation of what would now be called Molotov Cocktails, and to these missiles the destruction of the barracks was largely due. Their use ensured that a fire started by an incendiary bomb in a wing of the building was steadily expanded to embrace the whole barracks and defeat all

efforts by the garrison to extinguish the blaze.

If Sean Wall had nothing else to his credit as a commander, his ready appreciation of the value of the idea of a whole-time active service unit when this was initiated by the Galtee Battalion, and the official backing he gave the unit's first C.O., Donnacadh O'Hannigan (now Lands Officer at the Department of Defence) would alone entitle him to a place among the outstanding leaders of the Volunteers. If his attitude on this matter now appears merely as the acceptance and support of an obvious and logical development of the Volunteers' operational system, it should be realised that at the time the new scheme was a revolutionary proposal cutting across the accepted framework and lines of action of the organisation. Indeed, when first formed, the active service unit—then somewhat derisively known as "The Circus,"—had to contend against such obstacles arising from the existing system of control, especially the sole responsibility of the local commander for operations in his own area, that it could have made no headway had these difficulties not been smoothed out by the tact, authority, and zeal of the Brigade Commander.

The latter was soon called on to add another office to that of his military command. Elected unopposed to the County Council he was appointed Chairman of that body. It is here worthy of remark how, without any formal policy or pre-determined design to unite military and civic functions in one individual, such unification did in fact take place in very many counties and boroughs at this period. It was an early instance of the now fully demonstrated fact that the successful waging of a war, big or little, requires not only effective military action, but the close and efficient co-operation of the economic and administrative machinery of a nation.

As Chairman of Limerick's first Republican County Council he found a fresh outlet for his organising abilities and progressive mind, as well as further scope

for his abundant energy and determination. The newly-elected Council, in common with most other such bodies throughout the country, declared its allegiance to Dail Eireann. This entailed a complete upheaval in local administration and brought to a head a very critical phase of the national struggle. It is sometimes overlooked that the 1918-21 fight for independence was conducted chiefly by three agencies—military combat, secret service and local administration—and that the latter was by no means the least important of these. Indeed, the fight on the administrative plane is an aspect to which justice has not been done, and which merits to be fully chronicled if the events of the period are to be seen in their proper perspective. The revenues of local bodies were subjected to such severe demands under British legislation—specially enacted at the time—coupled with the withdrawing of grants and power to seize rate monies, that chaos in local administration would have resulted if special steps had not been devised to meet the situation. Had this chaos eventuated, or had the people in general succumbed to the very strong temptation not to pay their rates to what were virtually illegal bodies, the whole political position would have been undermined and even the military fight would have been faithfully compromised. It was in this sphere more than any other—except only that of the shelter freely given the members of the various active service units—that the loyal support of the general public made the 1918-21 struggle a really national one, and imparted to it the stamina which brought eventual success.

Under the Chairman's guidance and driving force, Limerick County Council was second to none in the way the serious threat to the national policy of a paralysed local administration was countered, much needed reforms introduced, and the civic tasks assigned by the Dail authorities effectively executed. Here the tact of the Chairman, and his pleasing personality were particularly

valuable in securing the willing co-operation of those executive and administrative officials of the Council whose services might otherwise have only reluctantly, or not at all, been forthcoming; under the new regime, co-operation with which for many of them carried numerous risks, financial as well as physical. Among the projects undertaken by the new Council at the Chairman's instance was a survey of the Shannon, and the taking of levels of the river, thus anticipating by some years the preliminary work of the Shannon Scheme.

To add still further to his many-sided activities, Sean Wall was intimately associated with the organisation and working of the Dail Courts and in the drive for the Republican Loan. It was in no small measure due to his energy in the latter connection that a record subscription to the Loan, some £30,000, was credited to the East Limerick Constituency. His work for the Loan had its lighter aspects which also displayed his painstaking and tactful methods. In suitable cases, it was his wont to follow the strategy of indirect approach when soliciting subscriptions. Giving his visit the appearance of an ordinary social call he would in due course entertain the household to a song or two, a favourite being "The Bold Fenian Men." Then, having softened the heart and awakened possible dormant patriotism, the assault on the pocket began as by an afterthought—and he rarely departed empty-handed.

Glancing back over this outlined study of a leader's lifework one notes the extent to which inborn, as distinct from artificially cultivated, qualities contribute to fitness for leadership. Also, one sees the degree to which the everyday problems and trials of life and livelihood, if manfully and realistically faced, can shape those inherent characteristics to the point where they are of military usefulness, and may indeed develop many other attributes of leadership where these have not been already implanted by nature and have to be acquired.

Sean Wall was naturally endowed with many of these qualities, some of which have always been essential, others desirable, characteristics of a leader. His resource, energy, self-confidence and determination, so early displayed, enabled him to build up a thriving business from scratch, and were invaluable assets in the exercise of military command and the duties of his administrative office; his deep patriotism prompted him to turn aside from a lucrative occupation to give whole-time and single-minded political and military service to his country; his tact, engaging personality and integrity of character were prime factors in securing the ready co-operation of subordinates and colleagues.

Perhaps the outstanding feature of his actual exercise of authority was decentralisation. It may be said that anyone can decentralise. So he can, but only the commander who is himself efficient, is a good judge of men, and has the confidence and respect of these under him can do so without harmful, and probably disastrous results. If he is inefficient, those to whom he delegates tasks will be encouraged to make the decisions which properly lie within the province of the commander; if he is a poor judge of men, he may select inefficient or weak deputies, while if he lacks the confidence and respect of subordinates, the conclusion will be reached—with consequences fatal to the discipline and efficiency of his command—that he is shirking responsibility, work, or danger as the case may be. Totally devoid of these

defects, Sean Wall could take full advantage of the principle of decentralisation as the important factor it is in securing good organisation, planning and execution, not to speak of the greatly expanded scope it gives to a commander's vision and capacity for work.

Had Sean Wall been spared he possessed all the attributes necessary to have brought him far in a military career; though his gifts as an administrator might well have called him to other fields of endeavour and confirmed him in high office and responsibilities. But his allotted span was short. It drew to a close in May, 1921. On the sixth of that month, while on the way to a Divisional Council Meeting, he and his staff were attacked by a police raiding party in a house near Annacarty, Co. Tipperary. In the ensuing fight along the approaches to the house he was cut off from his companions, his dead body being subsequently found on the roadside beside that of one of the raiding party. The exact circumstances of his death were never known, beyond the fact that the fatal wound appeared to have been inflicted by a shot-gun fired at close quarters. His remains were removed to St. John's Cathedral, Limerick, for a requiem and a civic funeral attended by the Bishop of Limerick and a great concourse of people, being interred in The Republican Plot in St. Lawrence's Cemetery. There they rest midst a goodly number of Limerick's patriot dead.

Beannacht Dé le na-n-anamna go léir.

COPY.

APPENDIX "C" 1.
(Three pages) I.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-2
BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 883

COMHAIRLE CEANNTAIR SINN FEIN.

Limerick, April 18th 1919.

A Chara,

We have been approached by the Strike Committee of Limerick, and asked to help them in their struggle against the tyrannical action of the English Government who proclaimed Limerick City, in such a way as to prevent the workers from going to or from their work, without military permits, and their wives and children from procuring or carrying food unless by permission of the same autocratic power.

The hardships thus inflicted on the citizens are particularly severe, especially for the poorer classes, who now find it difficult to procure ordinary food.

We, therefore, confidently appeal to you for assistance of any kind, particularly food such as butter, milk, eggs, potatoes, vegetables, etc. which will be gratefully received and paid for at prices agreed on by the Strike Committee.

P.S. - Communications re above to be addressed to me at Catholic Club, Barrington Street, so that supplies may be apportioned to the suitable depots.

Is mise le meas mór,

(Sgd.) D. McNamara.

II.

OGLAIGH NA hÉIREANN,

Kilmallock,

April 22nd 1919.

The following important orders have been received, which I give you for your information, guidance and immediate attention just as I received them. You will yourself observe the urgency of them and carry out the work in your district at once so as to have the First Schedule completed in my hands by Saturday morning next at latest.

THR COMMANDANT.

LIMERICK STRIKE.

April 19th, 1919

Issued April 22nd 1919.

It would appear that in order to bring the Limerick Workers to subjection the English Government is preparing to starve out the city. In this event there must soon be a large number of refugees leaving the city under press of food scarcity, and this number must increase rapidly once refugees begin to leave the City at all.

In view of the national aspect of the principle at stake, it is certain that a great national effort must be made to win the fight, either (1) by putting the whole resources of the nation behind the workers of Limerick, or (2) by extending the area of the struggle.

With a view to providing for refugees leaving the city, it is proposed to use the Irish Volunteer Organisation to ascertain the billeting accommodation in the various Brigade areas and you will throw all your energies into the work of organising immediately this relief.

The information should be collected by Company Districts and furnished by the Company Officer in the form indicated on the attached Schedule. WHAT IS REQUIRED AT PRESENT IS THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PERSONS WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO HOUSE AND FEED a certain number of refugees for, say, a fortnight or a month.

The Battalion Officers should be instructed to see personally that their Company Officers use the whole of their Company resources thoroughly to cover their whole Company area in their inquiries and that the information is made available at once. The Schedule should come through you and a preliminary report from each Company Officer should be in your hand by Saturday next, April 26th 1919. This Schedule should be forwarded by you without delay to the Brigade Commandant, Limerick, c/o.....

A further weekly report from each Company Officer should be in your hands on each succeeding Saturday submitting a Schedule of the additional billets secured during the week and you should see that these reports are regularly made weekly pending further instructions or developments. These additional reports should be forwarded by you similarly to the original ones.

The Company Officer should keep a copy of each Schedule for his own information. The system which probably will be adopted for passing on refugees is, that they will be provided with a Card and directed to the Company Officer who will arrange to billet them according to his Schedules.

Your communications should be attended to and toned up where necessary. This matter is one of immediate urgency and may become grave shortly.

COMMANDANT.

III.

OGLAIGH NA hÉIREANN

H.Q.
1st Galtee Batt.,
Apr. 26th '19.

To the Officers
of the Battalion.

A Chairde,

As may be supposed the Billeting Order with reference to the Limerick Strike has not been revoked and all the work required by same must be carried out as set out in the Order, copy of which I now enclose you. On last night I had a chat with the Brigadier who informed me that his orders were still the same. I trust that before this reaches you I will have received from you the first urgent list of Billets in your Company area completed. A further weekly list must be sent in each week, to reach me at latest on each Saturday and for this purpose I enclose you further Forms. Every single householder in your District must be approached without fail so that it will be necessary for you to get all your Company at work at this at once. I understand that in the Districts where an unsatisfactory return is received from each week, an inquiry will be made to ascertain if the Officers have performed the duties assigned to them to the best of their ability.

Kindly therefore attend to the work immediately and continue same until further instructions are received. The matter is so very urgent that to save delay in the sending of Dispatches containing returns to me, the ordinary postal facilities may be availed of and you may safely address your envelopes to me at Kilmallock.

(Sgd.) SEAN T. RIORDAN.

Appendix "C"

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

DURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S. 883

ÓSLAÍŠ NA h-ÉIREANN.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,

DUBLIN,

1st November, 1919.

TO BRIGADE COMMANDANT,

In order better to organise and supervise the getting of all information, Brigade Commandants will have appointed at once a Brigade Captain of Intelligence, and Battalion Lieutenants of Intelligence, for each of his Battalions, and Company Captains will appoint a Volunteer to co-ordinate the Company information for him.

Forms Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 (..... Copies of each), are sent you herewith. Their use will standardise the form of record of information which at present in different Brigade Areas is kept in different forms. Together with a copy of this instruction, they should be placed without delay in the hands of all your Company Captains, and of your Outpost men in such Parishes or Church Areas in which a Company has not yet been formed (Vide instructions of 30/9/'19).

Company Captains and Outpost men should be made responsible for the complete compilation, without delay, of the information in their own Area, and Brigade Commandants will be responsible that the compilation is complete for their whole Brigade Areas.

Forms 1, 2, 3 and 4 should be prepared by Captains and Outpost men in triplicate, and the copies should be filed by the Brigade and Battalion Commandant, who should make proper arrangements for having their records kept up to date and summarised.

Form 1 is intended to indicate a comparison between the available material of Military Age; the Volunteers; and the Enemy Forces.

Form 2 is intended to indicate in a simple way full particulars of the Military Forces.

Form 3, ditto for Police Force.

N.B.—Where such is not done already, one good man should be allocated to each Barracks or Station, and his duty should be to get plans of the Barracks, etc., and details of its whole internal life.

Form 4 is intended to indicate those persons other than the Military and Police who go to form the actual machinery of oppression in the country, i.e., R.M.'s, J.P.'s, Crown Solicitors, and all Agents and spies of the English Government, Official or Unofficial, active or inactive.

Form 5 indicates the form of a record which should be kept in respect of (1) every policeman; and (2) every person classed as Hostile or Aggressive in *Form 4*. The Record should be kept in *Book Form*, loose leaf if possible, ruled as indicated in the form. This record should be made retrospective.

Company Captains and Outpost men should make a complete review of the population in their Area, and note and record all persons capable of helping them in any way. In this connection it is remarked that all young men are potential Volunteers, and any of them who have influence, or ability, or qualification likely to make them useful to us, should be specially kept under notice. Reference should be made to the "Voters Lists" in this connection.

The standardising of information records has been unduly delayed and this instruction should be given effect to *at once*.

By Order,

Deputy Chief of Staff.

Additional Copies of the enclosed forms will not be available. When required, foolscap size paper should be ruled as indicated in the forms.

Appendix D ✓
(Two Pages) I
(converted into three pages) 100

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 883

BALLYLANDERS—East Limerick Brigade, April 27, 1920.

By LT.-COLONEL J. M. MacCARTHY

HIGH INTO the night sky, there to outshine the bright moonlight and bathe the ground below in sun-like radiance, the Verey light signals rose and fell. These fingers of flame, sent skyward as symbols of alarm and calls for aid by the police garrison of Ballylanders R.I.C. barrack, marked the opening of the I.R.A. attack on that post on April 27th, 1920. It was probably the first time that these firework signals, originally designed for the trench combats in the European war, had illuminated the County Limerick countryside; it was also the first barrack attack by the I.R.A. in that county, and the initiating move in a campaign that was to unfold in widening scope and intensity over the succeeding months.

As befitted such an occasion, one designed to be their baptism of fire, the operation had been carefully planned by the I.R.A. leaders in East Limerick. But first of all, the decision to undertake it had, of course, to be made. Necessarily, this had to be made at brigade level, as no single battalion or company unit at that time would have sufficient arms at its disposal for the purpose. Neither would it have been in a position to ensure the very essential co-operation of adjoining units in the way of erecting road blocks and so on, to impede hostile reinforcements.

Thus, while the attack was primarily an operation conducted by the Galtee Battalion, the oldest and principal battalion unit of the Brigade, it was carried out under the auspices of, and with the co-operation of, Brigade Headquarters. Indeed, it might also be said to have been under the auspices of G.H.Q. in Dublin. This came about through the presence in the area of Tomás Malone, then known under the name of "Sean Forde." He had been sent to County Limerick nominally as an organiser of the Republican Loan campaign, but actually in practice his duties assumed an increasingly military character. Nor was this to be wondered at, for apart from his inherent military aptitude, his final instructions, as received from Michael Collins, were: "Get those Limerick men into the fight!"

It was not that the Limerick men needed much urging. In fact, the Irish Republican Brotherhood members of the Galtee Battalion had for some time been working for a more pronounced and enterprising military policy in their area. As elsewhere, the I.R.B. members were a small select body in the Volunteers and the spearhead of the organisation at that period. With this policy as the real issue, there had arisen a local dispute among the Volunteers, causing not inconsiderable disorganisation. This was largely because, for the great bulk of the Volunteers, the dispute appeared to be a mere conflict of personalities and they took sides or remained neutral on that basis and in ignorance of the real point at stake.

In the outcome, the decision to attack Ballylanders R.I.C. barrack vindicated the I.R.B. standpoint twice over. For not only was the decision largely inspired by the I.R.B., but it was planned and led almost entirely by its principal local members, and that notwithstanding the fact that not all of them then ranked as Volunteer officers. The decision having been taken and approved by the Brigade Commander, Sean Wall of Bruff, who attended some of the initial meetings of the planners, these then resolved themselves into a small staff for the detailed planning and execution of the operation.

This small planning staff comprised Tomás Malone ("Forde"), Tadhg Crowley of Ballylanders; Edmond Tobin of Glenbrohane, and Jack MacCarthy of Kilfinane, who was also Vice-Commandant of the Battalion at this period. Others attending the staff conferences from time to time included Sean Meade, members of the Crowley family (brothers of Tadhg Crowley), and Thomas Murphy, all of Ballylanders. As occasion required, other Volunteers from the locality were called in for consultation or assignment of tasks.

Most of the conferences to plan the attack were held at Edmond Tobin's house at Glenbrohane, near Ballylanders. The post to be assaulted was a strong stone structure, steel-shuttered, dominating the village street from its site at the corner of a crossroads. But it had one weakness, unrealised, in all probability, by the police garrison. That was the semi-detached character of the building, a second house of a similar type being alongside, gable-to-gable. On the other side, the gable of the barrack was an open one abutting on the road to Kilfinane. The front of the building faced the fairly wide open space of the Square and the long village street. At the rear little or no field of fire existed for the defence, and it only required to be kept under observation by an attacker.

The defenders' weak point—the second building in the block, which served as the local dispensary—was made the pivot on which centred the whole scheme of attack. This scheme was one which the police could hardly have anticipated at that period at any rate, as it employed what was then a new technique in barrack attacks. This was to break through the roof of the second house from inside, and through the opening thus made to break through the roof of the barrack. The bombing and igniting of the barrack top floor would then follow.

Tomás Malone took charge of this critical task and of the assault as a whole. At the other gable—the open one—the firing position fixed upon was O'Grady's house, with J. MacCarthy, the Battalion Vice-Commandant, in charge. From O'Grady's premises, which was separated from the barrack by some fifteen yards of roadway, a semi-circle of other firing points was selected to cover the front of the barrack, these positions being located in Upton's, Burke's, Condon's and Crowley's premises, with Tadhg Crowley, Sean Lynch and Pat Hanmigan supervising in this sector. The main framework of the assault plan being thus settled, there remained innumerable lesser, but essential details to be perfected, such as timing of occupation of positions, the hour of attack, collection of equipment, erection of barricades, arrangements about the signals, and so on.

In due course these matters, and the awkward problems some of them presented, were satisfactorily settled. The details arranged extended even to the provision of a stretcher, a first-aid station manned by the local Cumann na mBan girls and—further afield—the co-operation of neighbouring brigades was secured in the way of impeding road traffic from Fermoy, Buttevant and Tipperary, the British military centres whence reinforcements might be despatched to Ballylanders. An inner ring of road blocks, at a mile or so on all sides of the village, was also established and manned. Counting the parties on these inner road blocks, at a small observation post set up in stables at the rear of the barrack, and those manning the main firing points, the number of Volunteers participating numbered sixty, being comprised—apart from the Ballylanders Company—of parties from Galbally, Kilfinane, Bruff and Kilmallock. The Kilmallock contingent included the then Battalion O/C, Sean O'Riordan. The number in the actual attack, that is those manning the firing positions, was, of course, much smaller, amounting to some twenty-five, each of the firing posts having an average strength of four Volunteers.

In the event all these preparations worked out as planned, and down to the smallest detail, if the workmanship put into the construction of the stretcher be excepted. This appliance was a piece of amateur carpentry, hastily knocked together and fated to let down—in every sense of the term—one of its amateur constructors before the night was out. Initially, however, it fulfilled satisfactorily its first task—the removal of a seriously ill lady to a place of greater safety than that of her residence, which was in the line of fire. This transfer was effected immediately prior to the hour fixed for opening the attack, and not without considerable difficulty, due to the need for quietness, exact timing and having to surmount an 8-foot high fence of barbed wire, with the loaded stretcher.

Concurrently, the attacking party proper was assembling at a cross-roads less than a mile from the village, receiving final instructions and, where needed, the men were assigned local guides to their various firing points. At the last moment, an incident occurred which threatened ruin to the project. Suddenly, in the still night, a shot rang out from the midst of the assembly. To the keyed-up Volunteers it sounded louder than a thunder-clap, and it seemed almost certain it would give the alarm to the nearby police garrison. No such effect was produced, however, the final reconnaissance reports as they came in showing that the police were all within their barrack and evidently unaware anything unusual was afoot. What might have been a very unlucky shot for the Volunteers had, it transpired, been discharged accidentally in the course of some last-minute instruction in rifle manipulation, which was being imparted to one of the Volunteers, Peter Steepe of Kilfinane. Incidentally, this member of the attacking party, who was in no way responsible for the accident, calls for special mention in that he was a Protestant, a member of that community in the Kilfinane locality, which has branches here and there in Co. Limerick, known as "Palatines," a name derived from the place of their ancestors—the Palatinate in Germany.

The Volunteers had moved quietly to their positions around 11 p.m. and had occupied them without incident. After a hurried erection of some protection against the volume of fire expected to be directed on them by the police garrison, all eyes were turned expectantly on the dispensary post, the house adjoining the barrack. From that post was to be given the signal to open fire. After a short, but tense, wait, a green pinpoint of light flashed out. It was the signal. From the semi-circle of firing positions stabbed the rifle flashes of the opening volley, swiftly intermingled with the swish of the Veré rockets and the answering fire of the defenders. For the half-hour that followed, the quiet village street became a focus of concentrated light and sound.

Simultaneously with the opening volley, the break through the dispensary roof was started and quickly accomplished. From the point of vantage thus gained, the roof of the barrack was within reach. Soon the dull thud of heavy stones crashing on the slate roof was added to the volume of sound. A gaping hole appeared in the roof, but the reaction of the defenders was swift. They brought rifle fire to bear on the gap. For a while this fire threatened to prevent the attackers exploiting their initial success. In the end a grenade was dropped through the opening and silenced this defensive effort. The grenade was followed by quantities of paraffin oil and a lighted torch. Almost at once the flaming torch spread a rapidly growing circle of fire through the top storey of this wing of the barrack.

Meanwhile, at the opposite gable, a hot exchange of rifle fire was taking place between the post in O'Grady's and the defenders firing from their gable-end windows. This was a point-blank duel in which the flashing rifles of defence and attack seemed almost muzzle to muzzle.

111

The police, behind their steel shutters, had the advantage of position, being practically immune behind this solid, loopholed protective screen, as against a hastily thrown up breastwork of bedding at the windows through which the Volunteers fired. Of the two upper storey windows in the Volunteer post, one was manned by D. O'Hannigan and the other by the officer in charge of the post, with Sean Meade of the local Volunteer Company, standing in between under cover of the room wall where he awaited his chance to fire. This he could get only by one of the firers yielding position and weapon to him, no more than two rifles and two firing points being available there. Eventually his turn came. For some time the volume of fire from the barrack against this post had been intense and well-directed. It was afterwards noted that the woodwork of the windows was deeply scored from the passage of bullets entering there to impinge on the barricade of bedding or on the opposite wall of the room. This well-aimed fire soon found its mark; a bullet struck Sean Meade at his firing point at one of the windows. It was evidently a serious, and possibly fatal, wound.

His companions, coming to his aid, found him completely collapsed and proceeded to get him downstairs out of the line of fire. That was accomplished with difficulty, owing to his collapsed condition and the impossibility of his helpers adopting other than a crouching posture under the quick succession of bullets still penetrating the windows. On reaching the comparative safety of a ground floor room, his wound was examined and found to be a clear-through penetration of the chest, one obviously needing skilled and swift attention. The stretcher, of which he was one of the constructors, was again brought into use to take him to the first-aid station. On the way it broke under the strain and deposited its burden heavily on the ground. The wounded man was given preliminary aid at the station until the arrival of the local dispensary medical officer, Dr. Hennessy.

Throughout these events the defensive firing of the police from the front face of the barrack remained intense, though less concentrated, as it had to be distributed against a number of separated positions. At the same time it was seen that the flames, which had blazed up at one end of the barrack roof, were gaining grip on the whole top storey. Clearly, the attackers saw that the exercise of patience and maintenance of their rifle fire against the barrack to prevent the garrison fighting the flames, could only have one result. The police evidently came to realise that, too, for with the top floor well alight, they gave indications of surrendering by slackening their rate of fire, and finally by a complete cessation of fire and the display of a white flag through one of the windows.

The ground floor of the barrack was still intact as the Volunteers entered to take the surrender. The police, all un wounded, numbered five—a small garrison, but one which, instead of offering a defence of half-an-hour's duration, could have held out indefinitely behind their steel shutters were it not for the exploitation by the attackers of the single weak point in the defensive layout. In the circumstances, the Galtee Battalion had every reason to be satisfied with its first serious operations and its results—the complete destruction of the post, the capture of the rifles, grenades and miscellaneous equipment of the garrison, and all at the cost of a single casualty.

Happily, that casualty did not prove a fatal one. Having been medically attended, the wounded man's condition was such that it appeared the most humane decision to leave him undisturbed at the first-aid station, despite the inevitable capture this involved. However, a chance was taken to save him from the enemy, and in a motor car provided and driven by Jack Crowley, the wounded Volunteer was hurriedly moved by devious routes to the residence of Mrs. Burke, Laurencetown, Kilfinane, some five miles distant. There, under the care of Dr. Maurice Fitzgerald and two nurses, the Misses O'Sullivan, he remained a considerable time before being fit for removal to the County Hospital in Limerick City. Prolonged treatment followed there until the patient was sufficiently strong to complete his recovery at Mount Melleray Abbey, where he filled an appointment under an assumed name. A year later he was able to report for duty and assume office as Intelligence Officer of East Limerick Brigade, which by then had recorded a long list of engagements since that initial and successful effort at Ballylanders.

WITH THE I.R.A. IN THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

SIEGE AND DESTRUCTION OF KILMALLOCK BARRACKS.

By LT-COL. J. M. MacCARTHY

LONG BEFORE the fashion of erecting memorials to the "Unknown Soldier" came into being in countries abroad after the first World War, Kilmallock boasted such a monument. It was the memorial to the "Unknown Fenian" who fell in the attack on Kilmallock police barrack in 1867. That event was to be re-enacted fifty-three years later—and history to repeat itself in more ways than one—when East Limerick Brigade I.R.A. decided to lay siege to the same barrack on the night of May 28th, 1920.

In that attack the Volunteers were attempting a task bristling with difficulties that seem insurmountable, but they had the satisfaction of successfully concluding an effort which had proved too much for their predecessors in 1867. As in the '67 Rising, the attackers on this occasion also suffered one fatal casualty. Curiously enough, the parallel was further continued in that the Volunteer killed, Liam Scully, like "The Unknown Fenian" of '67, was a stranger in the locality, being a native of County Kerry, who, but a short time previously, had taken up a Gaelic League teachership in the neighbourhood, and was but little known locally.

Looking over old papers dealing with the Rising of '67, another notable circumstance comes to light. The roll of the participants in the Kilmallock attack in '67, who were tried and sentenced to transportation or imprisoned for—as the charge had it—"most wickedly, maliciously and traitorously making open war against our said Lady the Queen," was repeated almost name for name, and, in many cases, in blood relationship, by the attackers of 1920.

New expedients were used by the Volunteers to overcome the difficult obstacles in the way of this attack. One was the improvisation of what would now be called "Molotoff Cocktails," and to these missiles the destruction of the barracks was largely due. Their use ensured that a fire, started by a bomb in a wing of the building, was steadily expanded to embrace the whole barrack, and defeat all efforts by the garrison to extinguish the blaze.

That outcome was brought about, however, only by much planning, good tactics, and a prolonged fight. Fronted by a lawn, the barrack was set back from the street, its front face being in line with the rear of a business premises, Carroll's, a slight gap intervening between the two buildings at their nearest points, that is, between the left rear corner of Carroll's house and the right front corner of the barrack. As in the case of Ballylanders police barrack, attacked successfully just a month previously, this proximity of another building was seen to be capable of exploitation by an attacker. In this instance, the gap between the corners of the two buildings, though only a few yards in width, and the different alignment of the two premises, did not afford quite the same facilities as in the earlier operation where the buildings concerned were joined to one another, gable to gable. A counterbalancing feature in the Kilmallock lay-out was, however, the fact that the roof of Carroll's house rose much higher than the nearby roof of the barrack and, once securely attained by an attacker, would facilitate an assault on the barrack rooftop despite the intervening gap. In all other respects the barrack was defensively a very strong post, a solid masonry structure, steel-shuttered, loopholed and thickly surrounded by barbed wire entanglements.

With Carroll's premises fixed on, as the pivotal attacking position, three other main combat posts were selected. These were the houses directly fronting the barrack on the opposite side of the street, Clery's Hotel, the Provincial Bank, and O'Herlihy's shop. The left-hand gable of the barrack offered no point of vantage to either defence or attack, while the rear, containing the usual out-offices, was covered by a party detailed for that purpose.

The scheme of attack was worked out at a series of conferences presided over by Brigadier Wall and held at the farmhouse of Thomas Sheedy of Ballingaddy, midway between Kilfinane and Kilmallock. Generally the tactics decided upon followed those adopted so successfully in the preceding attack at Ballylanders—the central feature being again an assault on the roof. In this instance, however, a stronger defence of a more elaborately fortified position was to be anticipated. Indeed, subsequent to the destruction of the Ballylanders post, questions asked in the British Parliament had indicated that an attempt to take Kilmallock barrack was expected and had been prepared for by a strengthening of the garrison and its fortifications. All this meant special care and meticulous planning by the Volunteers. Coming so soon after the assault on Ballylanders, the local store of munitions was low and had to be replenished from far afield, not only the neighbouring Brigades in Cork and Tipperary being called on for the purpose, but Dublin as well. The movement of these supplies, and their assembly at two special dumps near Kilmallock, in face of an alert enemy expecting such preparations, was successfully accomplished, though some of the carrying parties narrowly escaped disaster.

The material side of the project, including arrangements for providing extensive quantities of petrol and paraffin oil, having been completed, the concentration of the Volunteers required for the attack was planned. To avoid detection and to ensure exact timing of arrival of the various parties, this had to be worked out precisely, especially as representatives of Cork, Tipperary and even East Clare units were to participate. An assembly point in a field close to the town eventually saw the punctual arrival of the various contingents close on midnight. They totalled approximately sixty Volunteers, of which number some thirty were to take part in the actual attack and the remainder to man various close-in barricades and outposts. Simultaneously the progress of a circle of more distant barricades and demolitions was in the hands of the local units on all routes leading to Kilmallock, especially on those from the hostile military centres at Bultevant, Tipperary and Limerick.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S. 883

Approaching midnight, the assembled Volunteers were assigned to sections, tasks detailed and leaders designated for each section and its combat post. Carroll's house, the post giving access to the barrack roof, was allotted to Tomás Malone ("Sean Forde") with Edmond Tobin and P. Hannigan, both of Ballylanders, among others in his section. Facing the barrack, Clery's Hotel had Tim Crowley in control; the Provincial Bank being assigned to D. O'Hannigan and a garrison which included Tadhg Crowley, Ballylanders; D. P. MacCarthy of Kilfinane; J. Lynch and J. O'Brien, both of Tankardstown; and Michael O'Keeffe. Herlihy's premises fell to the lot of J. MacCarthy of Kilfinane, and its garrison included the East Clare leader, Michael Brennan. These posts and that at the back of the barrack yard were occupied on time and without incident, each party being directed to its destination by guides from the local Volunteer company. In the case of the Provincial Bank and O'Herlihy's shop, entry was gained from the rear. In the other three posts there was more direct access by the normally used entrances, that at Clery's being opened to the attacking party by a Volunteer who had booked into the hotel earlier in the day in the guise of a commercial traveller. In all the occupied premises, the Volunteer parties took special pains to cause the minimum damage and disturbance, and appreciation of their care and courtesy in those respects was afterwards freely expressed, in particular by the Bank authorities. In some instances sandbags, already filled, were laboriously brought into the posts to avoid the necessity to make use of household effects as barricading material for the windows. In another instance the lady of the house, having retired for the night, was induced to remain quietly at rest, while her mattress, bedclothing and herself were lifted bodily and conveyed to safe refuge with the minimum of fuss and inconvenience.

To the occupying parties in the three houses facing the barrack, as they hastily barricaded the lower portions of the large windows as firing points, the dark, rather squat enemy post looked grim, forbidding and seemingly impregnable. From this front face of the barrack—the "broadside" of the defence, as it were—would come the greatest volume of defensive fire. Thoughts, too, turned on the numerical strength of the police garrison. On this point there had been some conjecture, as the numbers of the R.I.C. in the post had varied almost daily over a long period. The final and probably accurate estimate for this particular date had put the strength at one sergeant and seventeen constables. But there was little time for these last-minute reflections. Shortly after midnight the previously agreed on light-flash signals winked out from the skylight on Carroll's roof where Malone and his aides perched precariously.

This flanking position, as is so often the case in combat, was the decisive one, so far, at least, as affected the chances of destroying the barrack. At the same time it was recognised that the brunt of the conflict, so far as concerned the return fire of the police, would be borne by the three attacking posts facing the barrack. While events followed expectations in these two respects, it turned out that the fate of the actual garrison of the barrack was decided not by any of these main positions, but by the seemingly minor post at the rear. However, that outcome was still hidden and many hours ahead as the "open fire" signal flashed.

The thud of the first missile—a heavy iron weight, numbers of which had been brought to the scene—as it hit the slate roof of the barrack, partly thrown, partly dropped from Carroll's skylight, was lost in the opening crash of musketry. The crunch of similar missiles that followed could be heard more clearly as the initial wave of sound from the opening rifle volley gave way to a brief silence of the rifles, which was succeeded by separate groups of shots as each post fell into its own rate of fire. The working space at the skylight was cramped and awkward, and for a time this gave rise to doubt as to whether the number and weight of the missiles it permitted the attackers to launch at any one time would suffice to breach the barrack roof. But this doubt was short-lived; the slates began to give way under the repeated impact. Soon a gaping hole appeared, laying bare a small portion of a top-floor room at that side of the police building. Confidence restored by this success, the way was clear for the next stage in the attack plan—bombs, petrol and paraffin would be propelled through the breach until the final objective was secured.

Meanwhile, from the posts fronting the barrack poured a steady rain of rifle-fire and quite as heavy a volume of answering shots came from the police garrison. This return fire of the defenders had been slow in starting—thus denoting they had been taken by surprise—but gradually it built up to a regularity of stabbing flashes from the double row of steel-shuttered windows. It was finding its targets in the opposite windows across the roadway. Soon these were mere gaping apertures, the glass from which had been showered in fragments on the attacking riflemen firing over the window sills from kneeling or lying positions on the floors of the front rooms. In the Bank post a Volunteer was hit, apparently by a direct shot, but on examination the wound was found to be from flying glass. In the post at O'Herlihy's a police bullet dislodged a massive curtain pole, bringing it down heavily on the head of the post commander who, curiously enough, was the only Volunteer wearing a steel helmet on the occasion, and so escaped injury. In this duel the police had the advantage of position. From the security of their loop-holed steel shutters they could seek their targets with deliberate aimed fire. The attackers on the other hand, had to fire over the top of low and improvised barricades. Even if a lucky shot of theirs found its way through one of the barely discernable loopholes of the barrack, it would be unlikely to strike a defender. But mere maintenance of a steady fusillade amply fulfilled the mission of these three posts. Irrespective of its finding a human target, it kept the police pinned down in their firing positions and prevented effective counter-action against the point of main threat—the attackers' flank position.

SEIGE AND DESTRUCTION OF KILMALLOCK BARRACK— (2)

There a road oil tank wagon had been moved to the front of Carroll's shop. It was just out of the line of fire, being covered, in relation to the barrack, by the gable of Carroll's premises. From this tank car a chain of buckets conveyed the oil to the roof-top post. Quantities of empty bottles had also been provided, and these—an early form of the missile later used in the World War under the name of "Molotoff Cocktail"—were filled with petrol, and some with paraffin, for use as fire-spreading missiles. Thrown from buckets or in the filled bottles, oil began to pour through the broken roof. A flaming torch followed, but failed to ignite the oil-soaked rafters until a grenade was thrown, the explosion from which spread the flame of the burning torch. Soon the fire took a strong grip. It seemed only a matter of time before the whole building would be ablaze, provided the police garrison were kept pinned down. But just then an unlooked-for development occurred—the attackers' flanking position, Carroll's house itself, took fire!

Quickly the fire-raisers had to reverse their role. For a while it looked like a losing fight to curb the unwanted fire, especially when a bucket of paraffin that had been mistaken for water, was thrown into the blaze and added fuel to the flames. In the confusion and heat of battle a parched Volunteer mistakingly drank paraffin instead of water! He became painfully sick and, while able to resume duty after a while, it was only with difficulty he later completed a long journey home at the conclusion of the engagement. In the end, the fire was got under control and the task of spreading the flames in the adjoining building resumed.

By 2 a.m. most of the upper part of the barrack was well alight, and part of it was beginning to collapse. It was, therefore, deemed opportune to give the police garrison a chance to surrender. Cessation of fire was ordered, and demands to surrender were shouted. Some muffled shouts in reply were heard, point being given to them by a volley of police fire from some part of the barrack. Accordingly, the attack was resumed. For the next few hours it followed the earlier pattern, except that rifle fire from the barrack dwindled to scattered shots. Some of the attackers were then operating from street level, alternately appearing around the corner of Carroll's house, throwing a filled bottle of oil against the front of the barrack, withdrawing and again reappearing to repeat the process.

With the dawn, the rifle fire from the police had died away entirely. The main barrack building was then all but completely in ruins, with the roof and most of the upper floor collapsed to ground level. It looked like the end. But it was at this stage that the attackers suffered their single casualty. Liam Scully was one of the attacking party, as also he had been in the assault at Ballylanders, the previous month. Taking his stand in the centre of the open street in front of the barrack, he opened fire, and was answered by a single shot from the ruins. He fell where he stood. Brought under cover by a few of his comrades who rushed to his aid, he was attended to by Nurse O'Sullivan and Miss Maura Sheehy, both of whom were available in readiness for such emergencies—one of many sterling services these ladies rendered to Volunteers. But the fallen Volunteer was beyond human aid; his death must have been almost instantaneous.

It was now discovered that the police garrison, or rather its survivors to a number then unknown, had succeeded in retiring from the barrack proper to one of the small outoffices in the rear. This retreat had been effected out of view of the attackers' post at the back of the barrack, and it was probably the rearguard of this withdrawal who had fired the final and fatal shot of the defence.

If the surviving police were to be captured, a new attack on an entirely separate building would have to be mounted. Time did not permit this, with the hour close on 7 a.m., and heavy military and police reinforcements momentarily expected to close in on the town. Leaving a barrack completely demolished with all its store of munitions, the Volunteers began their withdrawal which was effected without any sign of life from the remnants of the police garrison. It was never properly established what losses that garrison had suffered. Estimates ranged from very large figures to the more conservative—and probably accurate—figure of one constable killed and two wounded.

So ended the second occasion that Kilmallock barrack was the centre of military conflict. To the attackers of the Fenian Brotherhood and the Irish Republican Army the cost in blood had been similar: in '67, the "Unknown Fenian"; in 1920, the all-but unknown Volunteer from distant Glengal, County Kerry.

ÓGLAIGH na h-ÉIREANN.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S.

883

Organisation Memo No. 1 (1920).

Árd Oifig,

Baile Átha Cliath.

4.10.1920.

Organisation of Flying Columns.

At the present time a large number both of our men and Officers are on the run in different parts of the Country. The most effective way of utilising these officers and men would seem to be by organising them as a Flying Column. In this way - instead of being compelled to a haphazard and aimless course of action - they would become available as standing troops of a well-trained and thoroughly reliable stamp, and their action could be far more systematic and effective. Permanent troops of this kind would afford an exceedingly valuable auxiliary arm to the remainder of the Republican Army which is in great measure only a part-time-service militia. The Flying Columns having to serve actively all the time would have to be kept fully equipped and supplied with all necessaries.

These Flying Columns would consist of only first-rate troops as the work required of them would be very exacting. In the matter of organisation the Cyclist $\frac{1}{2}$ Company of 1 Lieut. and two Sections each of 1 Section Commander, 2 Squad Commanders, and 2 Squads of 4 men together with an Adjutant and Quartermaster, both ranking

as N.C.O., i.e. a total of 26 combatants could be taken as a basis. A larger number than this had better be formed into two Flying Columns. The men should be thoroughly familiar with Cyclist Tactics, but inasmuch as the roads would frequently be denied to them by superior enemy forces they should also be minutely trained as Infantry.

It would often happen that a considerable proportion of the troops composing the Flying Columns were Officers. Generally while such Officers are attached to the Flying Column, the next in command will command and control their units, except in the case of Battalion Commandants, who shall be released periodically from the Flying Column for the purpose of attending Battalion Councils and carrying out inspections, the Vice-Commandant, otherwise taking charge. After some experience in Flying Column work a Battalion Commandant may be detached from the Column and returned permanently to his own area to work his Battalion. Each case, however, shall be dealt with as circumstances demand, except that when the general rule above indicated is departed from the matter shall be reported to the Director of Organisation and permission sought. Within the Flying Column the Brigade Commandant shall appoint the Lieut. and Section Commanders. The Lieut. in charge shall appoint the Squad Commanders. Within the Flying Column, too, all men of whatever Commissioned or non-Commissioned rank, shall while retaining that rank for general Organisation purposes, carry out the particular duties of whatever position is assigned to them as

Officers or men of the Column.

The duties of Flying Columns would consist of two quite distinct type of action (a) Auxiliary Action and (b) Independent Action. The second of these would supply a striking arm hitherto not in our possession at all.

(a) Auxiliary Action.

Brigade Commandants would be able to assign the Flying Column as an extra force - and a very valuable one - to any Battalion Commandant for a local enterprise in his area.

(b) Independent Action.

This would comprise attacks on hostile patrols, raids on mails or on enemy stores heard of accidentally, etc. in short all enterprises requiring to be taken on at instant notice and liable to be endangered by delay. The Flying Column Commander while having a wide discretion as to enterprises he may undertake, subject to any definite limits set by the Brigade Commandant, shall be in definite touch with the local O/Cs in whose area he is, and shall keep them advised of the probable movements or any proposed activities of the Column, so that there may be no "crossing of tracks" or interference with one another's enterprises. He shall be confined to his own Brigade Area, except by definite arrangement with the Brigade Commandant of a neighbouring Area, which offered an opportunity for action.

Temporary attachment of other troops to the Flying Columns should not be done without careful consideration, but might be advisable on special occasions.

BY ORDER

(DIRECTOR OF ORGANISATION)

OGLAIGH na h-EIREANN.

GENERAL ORDERS.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 883.

1920 (New Series.)

19:5:20.

NO. 1

General Orders shall in future be issued as occasion arises and shall be numbered consecutively. Sufficient copies shall be issued to supply each Brigade Officer and Battalion Commandant.

Brigade and Battalion Commandants shall be held responsible for the systematic conveyance of these instructions to their officers and men, and for ensuring that they are acted on by them.

By Order.

ADJUTANT GENERAL

OGLAIGH na h-EIREANN.

GENERAL ORDERS.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,

1920 (New Series)

19:5:20.

NO. 2.

"Proclamations".

No Volunteer shall take upon himself the issuing of any public proclamation in the name of the Irish Volunteers or of the Irish Republic, without formal authority from Headquarters Staff.

By Order.

ADJUTANT GENERAL.

OGLAIGH na h-EIREANN.

GENERAL ORDERS.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,

1920 (New Series)

21:5:20.

NO. 3.

Statements to Police etc.

No Volunteer shall under any circumstances make a statement to any policeman or other English Official as to his whereabouts or actions at any particular time, or as to the whereabouts or actions of any other person.

This instruction shall not refer to cases of indiscriminate holding up of passers-by by military or police patrols of which the following is an instance -:

On Saturday night soldiers and policemen were posted at the several approaches to the town of N--- and all persons entering or leaving were asked their names and business, while many were searched. The guards were posted about 8.30 p.m., and were withdrawn at midnight.

Volunteers are expected to be so completely on the alert, that they shall not be held up in this way. When, however, they happen to be so held up, they may account for themselves, but should do as simply as possible.

By Order.

ADJUTANT GENERAL.

OGLAIGH na h-EIREANN.

GENERAL ORDERS.

1980 (New Series)

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,
25.6.20.

Article

1. Volunteers shall be governed in their actions by the following orders.

Action in Military Matters.

2. No action of anything like a military nature shall be taken or be ordered to be taken by any Volunteer, except in so far as this is covered by definite orders or permission actually received from his superior officer.

3. The fact that action of a certain type takes place in one Brigade or Battalion area does not constitute such an order or permission.

4. This order is not intended to restrict in any way the "important offensive spirit" of our forces, but rather to preserve this spirit by preventing it running riot in hasty action to its own detriment. Success depends on foresight, and careful observation and planning and the offensive of thought and planning must be unceasingly kept up.

5. Every action of a military nature undertaken shall be reported on in detail immediately by the officer in command to his superior officer and the report should ultimately be transmitted to Headquarters Staff.

6. Any unauthorized action of a military nature taking place shall at once be enquired into by the officer in command of the area in question.

By Order.

Action in Civil Matters.

7. Volunteers as Volunteers and under their ^{ordinary} military control shall not interfere or order interference in any matter of civil administration, except in so far as such interference is covered by the definite order or permission of their superior officer.
8. It is however the right as well as the duty of all persons to interfere in as organised and effective a way as possible to prevent practices which tend towards disorder or demoralisation in social life, and this right and duty remains to the individual Volunteer. Because of their organisation and efficiency, and because of their nature, containing as they do the most public spirited and self-sacrificing of our people, public opinion regardless of the primary function of the Volunteers, at times will look to them, as the body specially fitted to interfere in such matters. In such circumstances full and definite details of the matter shall be reported without delay to Headquarters Staff, by the Brigade Commandant concerned, with any definite proposals he may consider advisable for dealing with the matter, such as the utilisation of Volunteers as an organisation under their military control, the enrollment under a selected Volunteer Officer or other person of an emergency police force or otherwise.
9. In general it is not desired to utilise the Volunteers under their military control to deal with civil matters.
10. Foresight in the anticipation of such calls for interference by circumstances or by public opinion is also necessary, and Headquarters should be kept fully informed of circumstances and developments likely to call for it.

BY ORDER

ADJUTANT GENERAL.

OGLAIGH na h-EIREANN.

GENERAL ORDERS.

1920 (New Series)

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,

NO.5.

29:5:20.

Correspondence

In addressing Correspondence to Headquarters the following points will be attended to :-

1. Reports or queries relating to different departments or to different well-defined subjects will be written on different sheets of paper, separate sheets being used in connection with the following:-

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Organisation | 7. Plans and activities. |
| 2. Appointments and Elections. | 8. Medical Matters. |
| 3. Intelligence. | 9. An t-Oglach. |
| 4. Training. | 10. Prisons. |
| 5. Engineering. | 11. Prisoners' Dependents. |
| 6. Munition Manufacture. | 12. Crime (Robberies, etc.). |
| 13. Stores (Arms, Hand-books, etc.) | |
| 14. Civil Matters (Arbitration Courts, Elections, etc.) | |

2. Replies to communications received from a particular Director will be separately written to that Director and not as a portion of some other communication either to him or to anyone else.

3. Communications will be written on one side of the paper only.

4. They will be written on paper of a suitable size, and headed if at all possible with a printed heading indicative of the Brigade.

5. All correspondence will be enclosed in one envelope addressed to Adjutant General.

By Order.

ADJUTANT GENERAL.

OGLAIGH na h-EIREANN.

GENERAL ORDERS.

1920(New Series).

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,

4th. June, 1920.

NO.6.

BOYCOTT OF R.I.C.

Volunteers shall have no intercourse with the R.I.C., and shall stimulate and support in every way the boycott of this force ordered by the Dail.

Those persons who associate with the R.I.C. shall be subjected to the same boycott, and the fact of their association with and toleration of this infamous force shall be kept public in every possible way. Definite lists of such persons in the area of his command, shall be prepared and retained by each Company, Battalion and Brigade Commander.

By Order.

ADJUTANT GENERAL.

OGLAIGH na h-EIREANN.

GENERAL ORDERS.

1920 (New Series),

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,

19th. June, 1920.

NO. 10.

EMIGRATION.

1. Ordinarily emigration at the present time must be regarded as desertion in the face of the enemy.
2. No Volunteer shall leave the country or apply for a passport to any other country for the purpose of emigration without transmitting particulars of his case through his superior officer to Headquarters Staff and receiving their formal written authority.
3. The booming of emigration and the touting for emigrants by Emigration agents shall not be allowed, and cases of this occurring shall be reported at once to Headquarters. This does not refer to the simple booking of passages.

ADJUTANT GENERAL.

By Order.

On the 6.1.21 a meeting of the following BDES was held in Cork No.2 area. The O/C Cork No.2 informed you that said meeting was called.

BDES. REPRESENTED.

Cork No.1
Cork No.2
" 3
Tipp. No.2
Tipp. No.3
East Limerick

REPRESENTATIVES.

Comdt and Adjt.
" "
" and Q. master
" "
" and Adjt.
" " "
Vice

The Comdt. Tipp. No. 3. presided: Adjt Tipp No. 3. was Sec. to meeting.

It was decided to send the following suggestions to G.H.Q.

1. That G.H.Q. issue a proclamation to effect:-
In areas where hostages are taken by the enemy in lorries and otherwise: the enemy whether armed or unarmed will be shot at sight.

2. That G.H.Q. issue a proclamation to effect:-
In view of the enemy proclamation that our troops will be shot if found armed. The enemy will be similarly dealt with by our troops.

3. To ask G.H.Q. to get J.J.O'Connell to pick out the telling points in reports of encounters from BDES. represented at the meeting: to criticise ambushes: attacks: surprises, all encounters planned or carried out, in fact a résumé of the activities of these BDES. and issue a copy to each of these BDES. monthly.

4. To ask G.H.Q. to decide what punishment be meted out to deserters.

5. To suggest that G.H.Q. publicly declare our troops on active service.

6. To ask G.H.Q. if anything is available in discipline arising out of suggestions sent them (at their own request) from various BDES. some time ago.

7. To point out G.H.Q. that there is a great difficulty in BDES. about enforcing Discipline: As BDES. have no definite uniform punishments to deal with various offences.

8. To ask G.H.Q. to issue at least a list of offences that incur the capital punishment.

9. That as medical services are so very important: G.H.Q. are asked to pay a Doctor in each BDE. area. Such Dr. to be a whole time officer who will organise this branch on a military basis.
-

10. To point out to G.H.Q. that a food ship has recently arrived at Cork (sent by some committee in America) and to ask G.H.Q. to consider the advisability of getting a shipment of tinned foodstuffs for flying columns in this way.
-

11. To ask G.H.Q. to do its utmost to get the Cork Relief Fund (America) extended to cover all areas.... Monies to be used to relieve the unemployment caused and helping uninsured owners of property and business.
-

12. To offer G.H.Q. :-

(a) An unarmed flying column of 20 men from each two BDES. (i.e. Three flying columns 20 men each). To be armed by G.H.Q. and to be sent by them to inactive areas, or (b) That the six BDES. represented between them arm one flying column for similar duties G.H.Q. to see to their Quartering and Rationing. It is suggested that these columns (or this column) operate in inactive areas and as far as possible from Enemy Active Bases.

1. It was decided to make roads impassible for the enemy by tearing them up and posting snipers to prevent the enemy from repairing them. Also to instruct Co. Councils not to repair them.
-

2. It was decided that the fact of the enemy carrying hostages will not prevent our attacking them (unless otherwise ordered by G.H.Q.)
-

3. To snipe all enemy posts on one night each week and to constantly snipe them by day.
-

4. To make week ending 23.1.21 a very active week.
-

5. Intelligence was discussed at some length.
-

6. Wrecking of troop trains was discussed.
-

7. Inter BDE. communications were fixed up.

8. Tapping of phone messages was discussed.

9. Dug outs were spoken of and it was decided to make at least one in each Coy. area and report at next meeting.

10. Coy. outposts for the night in each Coy. area to be posted at entrance to area: to consist of six armed men, two on and pair off duty; they to snipe at enemy entering the area, and alarm the whole area against surprise.

11. It was decided to snipe aeroplanes.

12. The chances of capturing despatches dropped from planes were also discussed.

13. Day alarms: such as singing Church bells, shouting through bottles (with the ends out), etc., were also discussed.

14. It was decided to arrest all strangers appearing in areas and make them prove identity. In the case of a Volunteer he will be sent back to his own area unless he either has his transfer or a note of permission from his O/C.

15. Arms:-
It was decided to ask G.H.Q.:-(a) can we, or will they (G.H.Q.) do anything about Limk. City where possibly 400 rifles are lying idle. (b) Also 100 rifles in Tipp. Town. Bn. 4. Tipp No. 3. which are useless, as they wont eject mark Vll..303. can mark IV be procured anywhere or can mark Vll be reduced to suit.
16. -----
It was decided to remove enemy proclamations wherever and whenever possible.

17. To send a report of meeting to G.H.Q. with the suggestions included, and on receipt of their reply to call a further meeting.

C. na M.

ADJT TIPP No. 3.

Sec. to Meeting.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO. STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 883

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

E. Lk. Bde. ✓

12. I. '21.

REPORT BYVICE BRIGADIERToO.C.,E. Lk. Bde.

I. I wish to make the following report to you and for transmission to G.H.Q., subject to your approval.

Our Brigade has now had about twelve (12) engagements with the enemy during 1920, one of these being fought outside our own area. We have waited in different parts of the Brigade area about fifteen (15) times for the enemy without result. These activities, in conjunction with the fact that our Brigade area is small compared with those of other Brigades, have placed excessive burdens on the civil population increased by the fact that we formed the first active service corps in Ireland and are in the field since May, 1920.

II. As far as we know, there has been scarcely an military activity of any consequence in two Brigade areas adjoining ours - Mid Limerick and West Limerick. Two such inactive areas on our borders are a danger to us in our operations and I therefore respectfully make the following suggestions:-

- (a) That three or four Battalions of West Limerick Brigade nearest to us be included in our Brigade.

(b) That all Battalions in Mid-Limerick between us in the city be included in our Brigade.

(c) That all arms, ammunition and men in these districts be placed at our disposal so that the burdens and trials experienced by the civil population consequent on military operations be equally distributed over the whole county.

(d) That, as an alternative to the foregoing suggestions, East Limerick be appointed Headquarters for the whole county and city and that the Brigade be empowered to spread the offensive operations over the whole county and city and to organise the men of the county to use their arms to the best advantage.

ARMS AND AMMUNITION

I. In view of the fact that we never had a large quantity of arms and ammunition in our Brigade and that what we actually have was obtained from the enemy by hard fighting, our supplies are not nearly adequate for the enterprises now offering. On occasions when we lay in wait for the enemy we expected a strong force instead of which we had to meet overwhelming numbers armed with weapons far superior to our own. On these occasions our men fought well but were unable to make the necessary captures to maintain our supplies. The forces of the enemy are now at all times liable to press heavily on us. Preparations are in progress at the southern end of our area and may at any time have to assume the defensive. We also require more harassing tactics in our area and for this purpose we need to be in a position to expend some ammunition without expecting a return by way of capture. I am of opinion that we require a reserve of, at least, 5,000 rounds of .303. For offensive as well as defensive purposes we require a machine gun and ammunition for same, or at the least the use of one until we capture one.

With regard to the remarks concerning West and Mid-Limerick, I am of opinion that they will be quite willing to co-operate with us if we are commissioned by G.H.Q. to approach them.

Our most pressing need is an extension of our area.

J. J. [Signature]

✓

OGLAIGH NA hÉIREANN.

ÁRD-OIFIG, ÁTH CLIATH. General Headquarters, Dublin.

Department

Reference No.

26th January, 1921.

The Brigade Commandant,
East Limerick.

A Chara,

This is an acknowledgment of the receipt on the 21st Jany. of two communications dated 4th January re transfer of Officers and Propaganda and the communication of the 15th January being a report from your Vice Brigadier. The matter shall have consideration in due course and you shall be further communicated with.

Beir beannacht,

C/S

ÓGLAIGH NA h-ÉIREANN.

General Headquarters,

Dublin.

19th January, 1921.

To:
Brigade Commandant,
Limerick East.

A Chara,

The following is a copy of a communication sent you on 9th December to which I have not had a reply:

"Upwards of twelve months ago you were asked to make certain arrangements with a view to having ready on short notice special men volunteering for special work. You quoted a number as available, but this figure is unfortunately not now available here.

Will you review the matter at once and

1. Let me know by return what this number is and if all are still available.

2. Consider and report in a month if any additional number of Volunteers will be available from your area. In getting additional Volunteers, the routine already laid down must in all cases be strictly adhered to."

Will you report in the matter without further delay.

Beir beannacht,

C/S.

COPY/

APPENDIX "J"

(2 Pages)

HQ

5th Batt. ✓

12.4.21.

To O. C.
E. L. B.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21	
BUREAU STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21	
No. W.S.	883

A Chara,

I have heard from a most reliable source that there is to be a round-up on a very large scale in East Limerick and that this round-up is to take place at any moment. This might take in the whole of East Link. They are going to billet the men in houses whenever they require rest. The enemy officer who told this to the person whom I got it from said it would be a "glorious smash up".

O. C.

To Brig. Adj.

As there may be something in above you may send out warning.

O. C.

APPENDIX J.

OGLAIGH NA hÉIREANN

Headquarters, 4th Battn.
Cork No. 2 Brigade.
26.4.21.

TO: Brigade Commandant,
East Limerick Brigade.

"Intelligence Dept."

A Chara,

The following telephone message passed through here this morning, the 21st inst. at 2 a.m. I could not find out where it came from but expect from Limerick or Kilmallock or perhaps Croom going on to Buttevant -

- I. That they had received information that the rebels were preparing for an attack on Croom Barracks. The information came from a good source, same as at the time of Fedamore, but on that occasion the messenger was late with the news, otherwise the story of Fedamore would have been different.
- II. The (the enemy) would try and find out from the informer of the above message, when this attack was coming off, and if the information came they would round up a big area round Croom. This round up would be on a very large scale.

You will know yourself if there is anything in the above and, if so, will be in a position to make arrangements accordingly.

I would also warn you to insist on those with you keeping their mouths shut. "A closed mouth catches no flies".

Hoping you are well.

Signed: BATTN. LT. INTELLIGENCE.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BUREAU STAIRS MILITARY 1913-21

No. W.S. 883

1. 2. 3.

BLACK AND TANS ANNIHILATED AT DROMKEEN

By LIEUT.-COLONEL J. M. MacCARTHY

FLAUNTING defiance from the highest point of a large, detached building in the village of Pallas,* County Limerick, a conspicuous flag in the sombre colours of black and tan strikingly, if unconventionally, identified the local police barracks throughout the winter of 1920-21. Pallas was the headquarters of a police district in charge of an officer ranking as a District Inspector, R.I.C., but whose special category, and that of the greater part of the large garrison, was plainly indicated by the unofficial emblem so prominently displayed. The hoisting of this banner reflected the tension prevailing in the area at that period, and was expressive of the challenging sentiments of the garrison towards the countryside at large, but particularly towards the East and Mid-Limerick Brigades, I.R.A. These two units were equally involved through the fact that, though Pallas itself was in the East Limerick domain, the inter-Brigade boundary ran close by, while the police district—and, needless to say, the police activities—extended into both areas.

For long the operations, and more especially the methods, of this garrison had made its personnel exceptionally feared by the general public, and had proved a very sharp thorn for the two brigades which it faced with a challenge that had to be met. The police were definitely in the ascendant when, early in 1921, they scored what, in the circumstances of the time, was a big success, and for the local I.R.A. a correspondingly serious reverse, by locating and capturing the arms dump of the Mid-Limerick Brigade. The police raiding party took good care to celebrate their feat by visiting the house of Dick O'Connell of Caherconlish, the "on-the-run" C/O of the Brigade's 'Active Service' Column, and staging a feu-de-joie with the captured weapons in the presence of the occupants paraded to witness, so they were assured, this proof of defeat and final end of the Column's activities.

These events brought matters to a head. Consultations, already in progress between the two brigade staffs, with a view to common action, were hastened to a conclusion. Plans considered for an attack on the barracks disclosed serious difficulties to be surmounted, in view of the pitifully poor armament of the I.R.A. The nature of the building, its position and defences made for difficulty of approach, and ensured a protracted fight before the defenders could be overcome. Despite the fairly extensive experience of the East Limerick Column in conducting prolonged and successful barrack attacks, such as that at Kilmallock in the previous May, when the attack was sustained for over six hours, the time factor in this case was a definite obstacle to success. The proximity of Pallas to large military and police centres (Limerick City, ten miles; Tipperary, twelve miles) made it probable that the garrison would be relieved long before the barracks could be destroyed or captured, notwithstanding all that might be done to impede the arrival of reinforcements. With a mere sniping, or demonstration, attack being of no value since the situation required that the I.R.A. should register a clear-cut success, an awkward problem seemed to defy solution when John Purcell, the I/O of the Mid-Limerick Column, came to the rescue. He was able to report that a considerable portion of the Pallas police garrison regularly travelled with a lorry-convoy to Fedamore, eleven miles distant, making the return journey on the same day. Further, he was able to indicate the route normally followed, and even to fix the usual date of the movement as the first Thursday of each month.

With this information the decision to attack and destroy the convoy was taken, the first Thursday of February being fixed for the effort

* Author's Note.—This is the form of the name by which the village is normally known except when necessary to distinguish it from Old Pallas, $\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the south-west. According to local usage, it then becomes New Pallas. The Ordnance Survey map versions are respectively, Pallas Green, (New) and Pallas Green, but in some map editions Old Pallas is given as an alternative, to the latter name.

as a joint operation by East and Mid-Limerick Columns, the C/O of the former, D. O'Hannigan, taking charge of the combined units for the occasion. An examination of the route led to the further conclusion that a carefully laid ambush along a particular stretch of road (see sketch) at Dromkeen, some three miles from Pallas, offered the best method of attack. There a straight section of the route extended for 300 yards, slightly downhill, from a bend at its western (Fedamore) end, to a road junction at its eastern (Pallas) limit. A house at the bend afforded observation both over the whole ambush position, and westward for a considerable distance towards Fedamore. The road junction presented almost full right-angled turns to vehicles travelling in any direction, and, was an obvious site for barricades which would be out of sight until the turn was about to be taken. From this point, too, observation over the entire position, and extending as far as the western bend and Dromkeen House, was feasible from a ruined house at the road fork.

These facilities, and the lay-out of the road section, were definite advantages in the light of a number of factors. As the intention was to destroy the convoy completely, a fairly lengthy stretch of the route had to be held to ensure that all the vehicles were within the position before the action opened. The position had also to be capable of being sealed-off at both ends when the convoy had entered it. The length, at first sight over-long, was therefore not excessively so in the circumstances, especially when there was no certainty as to the number of lorries likely to be encountered, nor as to the distance between the lorries.

Dola

out

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

To reduce this uncertain element to the minimum, and for other reasons, it was decided to intercept the convoy on its return, rather than on its outward journey. In this way its strength would be known on its departure from Pallas and might be counted on to be approximately the same when it set out on its return trip from Fedamore, though it had varied somewhat on occasions. With this knowledge any necessary last-minute adjustment in dispositions could be made. Also, there was the point that some local residents had seen I.R.A. officers in the vicinity a few weeks previously. Although not connected with the planned attack, this circumstance had given rise to not a little gossip locally that the area was being marked out as the scene of an action. There was always the possibility that this gossip had reached further afield and enabled the hostile garrisons in the neighbourhood to have planned a counter-move to any I.R.A. attack. Allowing the convoy to pass unmolested on its outward trip would permit observation of hostile movements in the area during that period and reveal any preparations for such a counter-move. Further, the later in the day the action opened the better from the standpoint of the Column's withdrawal, which it was desired to effect under cover of darkness as far as possible in view of the elaborate military and police reactions anticipated. The other grounds for interception on the return journey were that it made actual occupation of the position unnecessary until confirmation of the movement of the convoy was received, and, by that very fact, lessened the possibility of a long and perhaps fruitless wait in the position itself. Also, by ensuring that occupation would not be effected at all if the convoy did not move out, possible disclosure of intentions was avoided, and the same site could be used another day. This consideration was important in view of the suitability of the location, and the distinct chance that the Intelligence Officer's estimate as to the date of the movement might not be borne out by events.

Keeping this valuable consideration in mind, as well as the special caution needed in this particular area, the arrival of the two columns, and their junction with one another, was so timed that neither would be in the immediate vicinity of Pallas longer than was absolutely necessary. The most distant of the two, the East Limerick unit was mainly concerned in this "approach march." By the day preceding that fixed for the attack, it had reached a billeting area, nine miles away, near Emly on the Limerick-Tipperary border. At nightfall it moved forward some four miles to the neighbourhood of Kiltcealy, where it remained for a few hours before continuing, while darkness still prevailed, to a previously agreed-on "assembly area," and rendezvous with the Mid-Limerick Column. This rendezvous was at Bennett's farm at Cloverfield, Kiltcealy, a secluded locality away from dwellings, and a little over a mile short of the selected Dromkeen position. There contact was made between the two columns just before dawn. The combined force, some forty riflemen strong, then lay up to await developments. A dilapidated shed afforded the shelter required, both because of the need for secrecy and because of the fact that the weather during the moves on the preceding nights had been very bad and had continued so. Communication was soon established with the local scouts who, from early morning, were keeping movements in Pallas, and on the adjoining roads, under observation. It was not, however, until close to noon that calculations were in great part fulfilled by the news that two lorries, carrying about twenty policemen, with the District Inspector in charge, had started out along the road towards Fedamore.

A move was at once made to the site for the intended interception through which, as further information soon indicated, the lorries had passed, travelling fast and close together. The weather had then cleared, and, luckily, as matters developed, little time was required for taking up positions, these having been assigned beforehand. Excepting the farmhouse at the turn of the road to Old Pallas, and Dromkeen House, all the houses and the barn provided fire positions,

BLACK AND TANS Annihilated at Dromkeen. —C—TWO.

and were occupied in varying strength according to accommodation and field of fire available. The farmhouse, left unoccupied, was used to detain passers-by, some half-dozen being thus "interned." The house on road bend at the western end held a party detailed to observe the route towards Fedamore, signal movements from that direction, and prevent a withdrawal by the lorries or their occupants by that route. Among the members of the Column who comprised that party were Captain D. Guerin (Kiltcealy Company); Captain Sean Stapleton (Oola Company), and Volunteer M. Meade (Elton Company), all of East Limerick Brigade. The last-mentioned had the distinction of having served with Roger Casement's Irish Brigade in Germany and was a very experienced soldier, who acted as weapon and drill instructor in the Column.

The Command Post was located in the ruined house at the road-junction, its occupants being the East Limerick Column commander, D. O'Hannigan; the writer, as Column Adjutant, and a few volunteers, including David Clancy of the Cush Company. This position was the nerve-centre of the operation, being, as already indicated, well placed for observation, fire and control. Any vehicle entering the ambush would face it head-on, and the only doubt about the suitability of its location was whether one or more of the fast-driving police lorries might not crash into it before being stopped by fire and so demolish not only the already tumbled-down structure, but its garrison as well. However, that risk had to be taken. Small detachments also took position at intervals on both sides of the straight stretch of road long its low boundary walls, in the yard of the farmhouse used as a place of detention, and at the fences covering both the road-fork and two barricades erected there. The main body of the Mid-Limerick Column was placed on the northern side of the straight stretch of road and included the C/O of that Column, Dick

2.

3.

Oola

out

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

O'Connell; Sean Carroll of Castleconnell; James Horan, Johnny Vaughan, Joe Ryan and Ned Punch. A few of the Mid-Limerick men—Jimmy Humphreys, the noted county hurler among them—were also detailed to garrison the barn on the opposite side, a position that allowed plunging fire to be brought to bear from the top of its contents, on to the road. The other fire positions on this (southern) side and on the barricades were manned by East Limerick Volunteers, with Liam Hayes, Dan Allis, Ned Tobin, Owen O'Keefe and Danny Moloney in charge of sections of the Column so located. Other prominent members of the East Limerick Column with these sections included Jim Greenc, the late Tom Howard, who was killed in action a few months later; and—such is the ubiquity of the men of Cork—two natives of that county, Bill Burke of Ballindangan, Mitchelstown, and David Barry of Glanworth. The latter subsequently served in his native county as Brigade Adjutant of one of the hard-fighting Cork brigades.

The barricades were made with farm-carts in preference to other forms of obstruction so that no outward signs need remain should there be a postponement. For the same reason no artificial fire positions were constructed, except at the northern boundary wall of the road where loose stones, readily replaceable, permitted a limited number of loop-holes. Elsewhere fire was to be brought to bear from the top of the walls and the fences, the hay in the barn, and the windows of the houses. A passing ass and cart conveying a bag of flour was commandeered to form one of the barricades, and the woman owner "interned" in the cross-roads farm house, loudly bewailing the fate of her flour. As events turned out, this barricade was so violently struck by the leading police lorry as to burst open the bag and scatter its contents. This incident, however, had a happy ending for the owner, as she persisted in a claim for compensation, which was fully met years later by the State.

The dispositions of the joint Columns were then complete except for two other measures intended to secure the authors of the projected surprise against being themselves surprised. One was the occupation by a party of armed local Volunteers of a position near Dromkeen across the intended line of retreat to keep open that route and cover the withdrawal of the Column. This step was considered essential in view of the heavy military traffic in the vicinity. The other security measure was the use of a screen of scouts provided over a wide area by the local Volunteer companies, warn of hostile approach from an unexpected direction. The frequency of enemy patrols in the locality generally, and on the main Limerick-Tipperary road, only three-quarters-of-a-mile distant, made such a happening not improbable. Whether or not it was appreciated at the time, the fact is that these scouts had no effective means of delaying, or rapidly communicating the progress of any hostile formation should the latter, as was likely, have been motorized. Consequently, had an occasion for action by the scouts arisen, this protective measure would in all probability have broken down badly.

It was a little after 12.30 p.m., with all in readiness. After an uncomfortable night and morning, and a long cross-country march to their next billeting area in prospect, the Volunteers hoped for an early end to their vigil. In this they were not disappointed, for nearing one o'clock the approach of lorries was signalled. Hardly had the signal been amplified to indicate the number of vehicles as two, when the first appeared around the road bend, quickly followed by the second at about fifty yards' distance. Orders had provided for the opening of fire when the first of whatever number of lorries might comprise the convoy took the turn at the road-junction. In the event, fire was opened a few seconds before this occurred, due probably to the riflemen in the western half of the position having difficulty in judging the exact moment of the leading lorry's arrival at the road-fork. As matters went, the plans of the attackers were not harmed by the premature firing, though it might have been otherwise had there been a larger convoy or a wide interval between the lorries. The happening did serve to emphasize the necessity for a check on detail lest danger should result from a small oversight on a future occasion.

After the opening volley, the first lorry continued along the short distance which separated it from the road-junction. To the occupants of the Command Post it gave a feeling akin to what must be the reaction of riflemen in a trench when confronted by a tank charging directly upon them. The lorry towered to a huge size in the eyes of Command Post garrison as it thundered down the sloping road almost on to the muzzles of their rifles. Would it maintain its course and crush them in a sickening crash into the ramshackle cottage? Would its driver survive long enough to avoid the crash and take either the left or right turn? Amazingly, he did survive despite the point-blank volleys which struck his lorry from the ~~point~~ and from both sides. Confronted with the barricade as he was taking the left-hand turn on the usual route to Dromkeen Station, he swerved violently to the right in an effort to take the other turn. Faced there with the second barricade, the lorry struck both it and the fence adjoining the ruined house. Thrown, or having jumped clear, the driver, who happened to be the District Inspector, and another policeman, reached the adjoining field unharmed. Aided by the fact that they alone among the police were wearing civilian clothes, they succeeded in making good their escape and eventually proved to be the sole survivors of a total police party of thirteen. A stronger police escort had been expected, but a reduction in the original number had probably been made at Fedamore. Of the five occupants of the first lorry three remained, one of whom was mortally, and two slightly, wounded at the outset. The latter two took cover at the roadside, but shortly after were again hit, this time fatally.

The second lorry contained eight policemen. It had arrived a little beyond mid-way in the ambush when the first shots were fired. Halting at once, its occupants began to dismount. Some were hit

Appendix "L" - 4 pp.

and sketch map

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

while doing so; others as they took up positions at the roadside; of these five were killed outright, and one suffered severe wounds that proved fatal some days later. Two managed to get into positions beneath the lorry, from which they fired from behind the wheels. Refusing to surrender, they maintained a steady exchange of shots, and might have prolonged this situation indefinitely as they were practically secure against being hit by fire from the initial positions of the attackers. A move to get on their own level by firing on them from the actual road-bed was undertaken by Volunteer Johnny Vaughan, a Limerick City member of the Mid-Limerick Column. Assisted by the fire of his comrades, he engaged in a close-range duel by taking up a new position on the roadside, from which he quickly put an end to this last-ditch stand of the police remnant. The two policemen responsible for this determined fight against hopeless odds were two of only three members of the "regular" R.I.C. in the police party.

In the course of the attack on the second lorry the combined Columns sustained their single casualty when Liam Hayes, in his position on the wall near the church, had his hand shattered by a bullet.

Nightfall saw the Volunteers safely installed in billets some twelve miles from Dromkeen.

In the particular circumstances outlined at the outset, the action at Dromkeen had not inconsiderable effect on the morale of not only the I.R.A. in County Limerick, but of the civil population as well. Perhaps its achievement in this respect is best illustrated by the remark of a local "character" who, having accosted the Mid-Limerick Commander following the operation, registered his disbelief in rumours then current of an impending political compromise, by enquiring, facetiously: "Would you take Dominion Home Rule now, Dick?"

4.

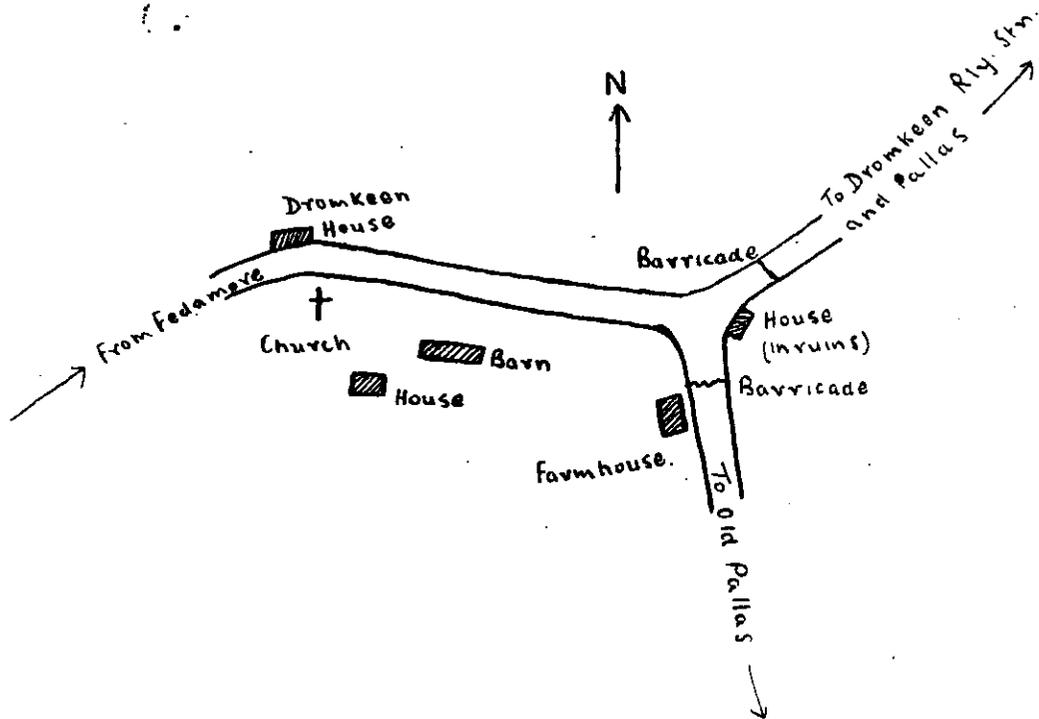
BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRÉ MILEATA 1913-21

No. W.S.

883

Appendix "L"



Appendix M

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 883

13. 2. '21.

I have pleasure in stating that, from the time of my being taken prisoner on the 10/2/'21, until the eve of my release (i.e., when I write this) I have been treated by the I.R.A. as well as could possibly be wished for under the conditions prevailing. I have been treated with every possible consideration and respect and have no complaint whatever, in fact feel gratitude in the way that they have done everything in their power to make me comfortable.

The inhabitants, who were forced to house me, by the I.R.A., made me very comfortable and I do not consider that they could be held responsible.

(Sgd) G (?) O. Mackay, F.O.
R.A.F.

Appendix 'N'

Secret

Weekly Intelligence Summary.

Copy No.

17.5.21.

6th Division.

89 / 13 / 1 / 1 / 2

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO. STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21
No. W.S. 883

1. General.

The long expected rebel offensive took place on Saturday. Their action, preceded by thefts of bicycles on a large scale throughout the area, was confined to a number of revolting outrages.

No military skill or courage was shown by the rebels, who evidently find it more profitable to shoot down unarmed men - and women, than to take the field. The appearance in large numbers of pamphlets addressed to the members of the I.R.A. may have acted as a deterrent to many who have not as yet actually committed murder. The recent heavy losses among their leaders, by arrest or execution, had undoubtedly hindered their operations, which were probably planned by organisers in their G.H.Q.

There has been no recurrence of counter reprisals by the rebels, who appear to have been stopped by our determination to increase the ratio of destruction indefinitely.

[Handwritten signature]

SORK.

Major General
Commanding, 6th Division.

1st (Mid) Cork Brigade I.R.A.

This Brigade has shown more activity during the week. An attack on Middleton Police Barracks was the first Military operation undertaken for some considerable time. A large number of men took part many of whom came from the City apparently on bicycles stolen during the same evening.

The rebels have collected some motor cars and motor cycles during the latter part of the week, also a large number of pedal cycles. These may be used for an operation in the near future.

A concentration of rebels is reported at Inchigeelagh again, but information about this area is difficult to confirm.

Information received from several sources goes to show that there is no Flying Column for No. 1 (Mid) Cork Brigade, and that Hales Column is spoken of as the Flying Column of both No. 1 and No. 2 Brigades. There are a certain number of active service men who go round in small bands, but these appear to spend their whole time attempting to avoid capture. Their numbers when reported by civilians are greatly exaggerated.

No. 4 Battalion area (Queenstown, Middleton and Youghal) of this Brigade is very unsettled and a small murder gang headed by William Aherne is very active.

1st Battalion area (Riverstown) is being plundered by members of the I.R.A. The residents are not reporting these occurrences. This Battalion is not otherwise active.

2nd (North) Cork Brigade:

2nd Battalion Column is reported to have moved into West Waterford and to be billeted round Kilmacothomas. This seems unlikely but they may have gone there to reinforce the Waterford Bde Unit. At all events there has been practically no activity in their own area. They are said to have been responsible for the Turrow Train Ambush.

3rd Battalion has been active in road blocking, and are also responsible for the burning of a Motor Ambulance at Glanworth and for pulling up the Railway Line at Ballyhooly. This latter place is now in rather a bad state owing to the release of a number of internees from Kilworth against whom sufficient evidence could not be obtained.

On the night of the 3/4th May the A.S.U. of the 6th Battalion were billeted at Clashykinleem, 4 miles N.W. of Kiskeam. On 4th May they moved to the Meelin district, but left hurriedly about midnight in commandeered carts, etc. This may have been the result of a convoy of stores and reliefs, which went to Newmarket on the previous afternoon. They are believed to have returned to the Kiskeam area.

Several of the chief men of the 4th Bn. A.S.U. were located at Aughrim House, 1 1/2 miles N. of Lisacrol. In consequence, this house was raided on the 10th Inst., with the result that Dan O'Brien and John O'Regan were captured. Two men managed to escape and they are believed to be Pat O'Brien and Michael O'Regan.

The remnants of the 5th Bn A.S. continue to lie low and have not yet been located.

I.R.A. Movements, contd.

3rd. (West) Cork Brigade I.R.A.

During the period under review this Brigade was inactive but on Saturday afternoon they attacked nearly every Barracks in their area. These attacks were driven off in every case.

The death of Frank Hurley Commandant No.1. Battalion will be felt throughout the Brigade.

It is now established that the Flying Column collects all the best men and material from the two Brigades. Heles has always been very loath to leave his own area as he is afraid of being given away by people who are strangers to his men and he dislikes working in a County which is not well known to him. Up to the present there is no direct evidence that he has ever operated outside No.3. (West) Cork Brigade Area.

1st (West) Kerry Brigade.

One column is still round Ardferit, Abbeydorney and Lixmaw, but has been comparatively inactive during the past week. Their chief work has been the raiding of Ardferit and Ballyheigue Post Offices for telephone instruments.

The Duagh Column attempted their anticipated ambush with unfortunate results to themselves; for their leader Jerry Lyons and 2 others were killed and a number were wounded.

2nd (East) Kerry Brigade.

The A. S U. of the 2nd Bn. are still in the neighbourhood of Castle Island. Members of this gang were responsible for the attacks on Police at Farranfene and Castle Island on the 8th Inst.

The 3rd Bn. has been active at Lissavigeen and Muckross (A. and S. of Killarney) in carrying out raids for bicycles and motor cars. A small gang operating to the N. of Killarney has made two raids for telephone apparatus and tools at Ballybrack Station.

3rd Kerry Brigade.

After a long period of inactivity this Brigade carried out several raids for bicycles and cars in Caheroiveen last week.

Mid-Clare Brigade. Has been inactive and has not been located.

West-Clare Brigade. Has been in the Doonbeg-Coraclare-Kilmihil area and intended attacking the R.I.C. Barracks at Kilkee on the 6th inst. It is now believed to have moved up north towards Quilty. Its only activity has been the cutting of roads in the southern part of the County.

The following information re. the attack on the Kilrush Barracks on 22nd ult has been obtained and corroborated:-

The attackers comprised about 40 men of a Flying Column from Kerry or County Cork, and the Coraclare and West-Clare Flying Column.

The Kilrush members of the I.R.A. were used as guides, very unwillingly and apparently on point of the bayonet.

Simons Breen's house at Kilmaduan, Coraclare was used as the meeting place for arranging the attack.

I.R.A. Movements contd.West Clare Brigade contd.

John Liddy, Michael Hinan and Michael Killoughrey have been living in a dug-out in the townland of Clonraddan, which was discovered on the 8th instant. This was large enough to hold 6 men and apparently a tent had been erected, as a number of tent pegs were found.

Liddy's party were rationed from Coorallare and obtained money and despatches through a woman who cycles from Ennis to Clonreddan once a week. Willie Haugh is reported to have taken over command of this Brigade. One of the rebels who was killed is reliably reported to have been buried at Doonbeg on the 24th ult.

Willie Haugh and 20 others had been living in a dug-out in a bog in Moyasta-Shragh district.

West Clare Brigade I.R.A.

This column is still believed to be north of Scarriff except for a small section under Harry O'Hara of Flag-mount, which met at Caher Cross roads during the latter end of the last week. It left in the direction of Feakle. It is now reported to be in the vicinity of the West Limerick Brigade.

Michael Brennan is now reported to be touring County Galway. He is stated to have taken over command of the Galway I.R.A. in addition to the East Clare Brigade. The man he took over came from Kincarra and was reduced in rank for inefficiency. The above

incidents suggest that the I.R.A. are forming Divisional Headquarters in certain areas. This is mere conjecture.

Mid Limerick Brigade.

Nothing is known of the movements of this Brigade during the last week.

East Limerick Brigade.

The large force of rebels reported last week as having been in the Kiltteely district and making for Fedamore split up into 3 or 4 separate Columns. One of these Columns moved south via Hospital and Ardpatrick where they spent the night, on the 5th instant. At about 13.00 hrs. on the 6th instant they were seen in Laurencetown, Kilfinane. Later the same day they were seen in Tankardstown. Another Column of rebels estimated about 80 strong was seen on the Drumacummer Railway Bridge north of Bruree. They later moved off in the direction of Castletown Conyers. On the night of the 10th/11th instant they were in the neighbourhood of Adare and spent the night commandeering motor cycles and cycles. Eight of them were surprised during the night near Ballinleenly with a blind-folded ex-soldier prisoner. They ran away and were fired at, one rebel being killed, one wounded and captured and ex-soldier was recovered. They have not since been located.

One other column is believed to be in the hills between Ballybrosna and Pallas Green.

The civilian killed at Cappawhite during the week has been identified as Seán Wall, Commander of this Brigade

Armed men were seen at the following places during the week: -

Ballyoullane, 2 miles north of Kilmallock

Ballygubba, 2 miles west of Kilmallock.

West Limerick Brigade.

Have remained inactive and have not been located. The column of rebels from Co. Kerry frequently visit Knockagashel and have recently been in the vicinity of Abbeyfeale.

Mid Tipperary Brigade.

The Mid Tipperary Brigade though inactive are certainly in and around Thurles. James Leahy has been seen in Thurles during the past week. It appears that he has taken to drink and last time he took charge of an operation was not in a fit state to give an order. James Larkin, Roskeen, James Stapleton and Patrick Kinnane of Upperchurch have left for Kilcommon.

North Tipperary Bde.

The 1st and 2nd Bn. are in the neighbourhood of Nenagh but are not very active. The 3rd Bn. Column is in the hills around Toomevara and was encountered on the 11th inst. near Toomevara. They left a bicycle and some ammunition behind.

The 4th Bn. has moved from Arra Mountains and are in the neighbourhood of Dromineer.

The 5th Bn. and 6th Bn. are billeted still in the

Kilcommon district and are inactive.

The 7th Bn. is still in Kings County. Edward Quinlan the Commandant has been seen in Shinnone within the last fortnight.

3(South)Tipperary Brigade.

No information has been received.

East Limerick Brigade.

The 1st Bn. Column are still in the neighbourhood of Mitchelstown and it is said that they intend to remain there till the O'Sullivan and Clifford case is finished. They were reported on the 8th instant to be in the Glenacurrane area, but were resting and not preparing for any frightfulness. This probably accounts for the fact that the Glen which is an ideal ambush position, was completely blocked with 4 stone walls and at least a dozen trees. They have also been located slightly further east in the foot-hills above Kilbehenney and on the 11th four camp fires and a look-out post, recently vacated, were found 1/2 mile s. of Geeragh Bridge. Two case of bicycle thefts have also occurred recently in this neighbourhood.

Waterford West Brigade.

Patrick Whelan, late Commandant, was not wounded in the Dungarvan ambush but is now away somewhere in the West of Ireland undergoing a Course of Intelligence work. The column has not been very active during the past week and is probably in the Comeragh Mountains north-east

of Kilrossanty. Mansfield, Commandant 3rd (Ardmore) Bn. and 6 or 8 more have been located in an empty house situated in a large wood 2½ miles north-east of Ardmore.

Waterford East Brigade.

From reports received there is reason to believe that a column from outside the county has come into Waterford City within the last few days. There is, however, no confirmation except for some vague police reports of strangers. "F" Coy. (Ferrybank) Waterford City Bn. mobilised on 10th at the Golf Club House which is immediately above the goods yard and held up a goods train, while the Dunhill Coy. 2nd Bn. has been active trenching roads.

I.R.A. Movements contd.

Wexford Brigades.

An A.S.U. of the North Wexford Brigade has been active and is reported to be moving south. On 7.5.21. they ambushed a Police Patrol N.S. of Gorey, on 10.5.21. a small attack was made on Saniscorthy Police Barracks and on 11.5.21. a train was ambushed at Killurin. This Column is (about) 30 strong and is armed with rifles, shotguns and bombs. A second Column, probably of the South Wexford Bde. is in the Campile Area and has so far confined its attention to raiding mails, cutting telegraph wires etc.

Kilkenny Brigade.

Neither the Callan nor the Castlecomer A.S. U's have been located definitely; though it is reported that the Castle Comer Column is in the Muckalee Area; this is probably correct. Trains have been raided by armed men at Aylwardstown twice within a week but this is the work of local men.

I.R.A. Methods. (2).

(a) Road blocking.

It is believed to be the early intention of the rebels in cases where trenches in roads have been filled up, to mine one of such trenches and then fill it up again. They thus hope to blow up military and police lorries passing unsuspectingly over the filled-up trench.

The following form of blocking a road has just been reported in the N.S. Tipperary Area.:-

A single strand of barbed wire is placed across the road at such a height that it will catch the head of a cyclist. This is presumably intended to catch the point of a cyclist patrol operating by night.

(b). Arms and Ammunition.

A dump of rebel munitions was discovered under a stable attached to a farm. There were 5 stables altogether, and each of them had about 12" of manure on the floor, which had apparently been there for many months. Each stable was cleaned out by the searching party, and about 2 tons of manure removed. Eventually underneath some manure in one of the stables was discovered some more or less loose earth. This was removed and about 2 feet below the surface a concrete slab about 6' by 3' with two iron rings was found. The slab was removed and a drop of 7'-0" was disclosed. This was a chamber 6' long 7' high and 3' wide; The floor was concrete and the walls built of good quality red brick. There were also some clothing wrapped up in a newspaper dated 18.3.21. thus proving that the dump had been entered into quite recently.

The rebels are however rather giving up the idea of arms dumps as too many people are bound to know of their existence. Revolvers are now being kept entirely by individuals and in towns more attention must be paid to the walls of the back yard.

Whenever a man is seen to run away his track should be closely examined. It will nearly always be found that he has thrown something away.

Rebels in the Waterfall area are said to hide their arms in drain pipes, sunk in the ground upright.

I.R.A. News Methods contd.

(c) Communications.

Every kind of communication is now used for notifying the rebels of the approach of the Crown Forces. Post Office and Railway telephones are made friends of. The column of smoke from chimneys is now a warning throughout County Cork.

The following method of carrying letters from inside a prison to the outside world has been discovered and it is quite likely that despatch carriers use the same method. A cord is tied around the waist next to the skin and another tied from this cord between the legs and joining it at the back. The letters are tied to the cords.

Rebels finding that the cutting of the telephone wire has not proved particularly effective, as the wires are usually repaired a few hours after the cutting, have now commenced to saw down the telephone poles. This has been done extensively in this area.

(d) Miscellaneous.

It would appear from a document captured in Dungarvan that there is a General Order for the I.R.A. to equip themselves with bicycles.

Rebel Flying Columns are suffering heavily from scabies. In order to cure this disease men are returning to their homes and lying up there for a week or two. It is essential that these men be kept on the move by frequent visits to their houses, thus driving them back to the Column.

Two men who raided the Post Office at Ballinspittle recently, wore Balmoral caps and entered the Post Offices disguised as Auxiliaries.

3. Anticipated I.R.A. Activities.

The thefts of bicycles from all Brigade areas, indicates a resumption of activity. This was borne out in and around Cork City, where thefts of cycles and cars on Friday were followed by numerous murders in the following day. In some part of the country, the destruction of roads makes the use of bicycles and absolute necessary, if retribution for murder is to be avoided.

In County Cork the comparative calm of the last few weeks was broken by Saturday's outbreak. No ambushes by Flying Columns took place, and it is probable that the men who carried out the murders are now in hiding. A period of comparative calm in this area may be anticipated.

Information has been received that the Marine Despatchment at Seafield Quilty is to be attacked and that a ledge which is situated about 100 yards is to be used by the rebels to fire from.

The murder gang in West Clare have decided to assassinate Sergt., Monaghan, Constables O'Keefe and Kelly R.I.C., Kilkree, for having arrested Michael Roche on 12/4/21.

Information from a fairly reliable source points to the likelihood of the rebels damaging the railways in Limerick County in the near future.

4. General.

16th Infantry Brigade Area.

Information from a new and untested source in Dungarvan states that the I.R.A. have put a levy on the inhabitants of Dungarvan. Some people have been delivering notices and collecting money. The money is given grudgingly - the inhabitants are becoming very indignant about these collections and only give because they are still terrorised. This method of obtaining money is doing a lot of harm to the B.F. cause in the neighbourhood.

A big drive was carried out by the Crown Forces in the KilmacThomas area on the 6th inst. The drive failed to round up the I.R.A. Unit which has been operating in that area, yet there is no doubt that it will have a good effect in a part of the country where Crown Forces are seldom seen. One old loyalist farmer made remarks to this effect and said that such a parade of troops would make the hooligans going round the country look very small. On one man who was arrested there was a printed notice demanding that everyone should subscribe to the I.R.A. funds. The notice contained the usual rebel propaganda but wound up with the interesting information "that" unless the money was forthcoming this Area must be given up to the Army of a Foreign Nation".

The editor of the Waterford Evening news (A Sinn Féin Organ) has been interviewed during the past week and a prolonged but friendly discussion ended in his agreeing to present to his readers a fairer and less biased review of the Irish Situation.

The feeling against the I.R.A. in Enniscorthy due to their road trenching operations is steadily growing.

Enniscorthy have arranged a system of weekly conferences between Military and Police - further a police sergeant has been appointed to furnish a daily account of all intelligence and rumour that comes to the police during the past 24 hours.

The state of timidity which has been such a salient feature in the civil population of Enniscorthy with regard to its relationship to the Military is passing, and a bolder outlook is to be seen.

Kilkenny reports that the attitude of the population towards the Crown forces is on the whole friendly, especially to the Troops with whom the people often say they have no quarrel. The influx of a number of young English recruits to the R.I.C. who though not by any means perfect in Police work, are more disposed to mix with the civil population, is having a good effect - the R.I.C. are now regarded with more esteem.

A deputation, signed by a number of leading Callan citizens, has been received asking that the ban on fairs and markets may be removed - this is signed by a number of B.F.'s and shows that the effect of this Proclamation.

An I.R.A. notice found posted up in Windgap on 6.5.21. is attached as Appendix "B".

Mrs Potter received on the 3th a parcel containing her husband's diary will and ring. The diary was completed up to the time of his death and in one place the I.R.A. wrote of his being locked up by an old man and woman and a young man. He also said these people were known to Mrs Potter, which looks as if he had not been taken out of this area. At 11.00 Hrs on 27.4.21. he wrote of being warned that he was to be executed that same evening at 19.00 hrs. Further he wrote that his guardians were not at all anxious to kill him, but they had received orders from G.H.Q., I.R.A., which could not be disobeyed.

General. contd.

On 8th inst a Protestant named Cross was chained to railings of Rally Hooley Church for several hours. This was done because it is stated that he knows who burnt Lord Listowel's house and the men who did so. He wished to frighten him into keeping his mouth shut about it.

At Waterford on the 10th inst a Goods train was held up in the goods yard at 02.00 hrs. The driver and fireman were taken off the engine and placed in arrest in a shed. The train was then driven to a bridge about 1 1/2 miles distant. Some barrels of oil addressed to R.I.C. Kilkenny were broken, open and the oil split out and some bacon for the Military was thrown into the river. The train was then backed into the station. Subsequently the Military retrieved the bacon at low tide. Two bicycles shops in Henrietta street were raided simultaneously by 20 or 30 men said to be armed, and 23 new and second hand bicycles stolen. A party which was sent out to Ballmacaw found three bicycles under suspicious circumstances and one arrest was made; one bicycle was found dismantled and carefully wrapped up and hidden in a hedge.

(b) 17th Infantry Brigade area.

The Brigade Mobile Column returned on Thursday 12th inst after a tour of a part of the Brigade area. No armed body of rebels was encountered but the local company at Aharla was rounded up almost to a man. Frank Hurley Commandant No. 1. Battalion No. 5. (West) Cork Brigade and a prominent leader of the Flying Column was shot. It is hoped to obtain information as to whether the Brigade Column made any difference to rebel plans for attacks on Barracks, and caused them to be postponed.

During the period under review no thefts of any kind took place in the area. The leader of the Railway robbery gang was arrested last week actually on his way to one of the stations. His name is Frank O'Sullivan and he boasts that he took part in the murder of Pindar Sullivan and two others.

Several important arrests have been made during the week both by Police and Military. Men "on the run" from the City are in many cases working on farms at some distance. It is essential that no portion of the Brigade Area be allowed to become "quiet". It is in these "quiet" areas where the mischief brews.

Reliable information has been received that the rebels intend to attack Kinsale Police Barracks in the near future.

The Berrings Company is becoming active again. This tends to confirm the rumour that an ambush on the Macroom road may be expected shortly.

Parties of rebels are said to be concentrating in the Inchigeelagh area again, and are reported to be in possession of two motor cars and to be plentifully supplied with ammunition.

Everything points to the fact that men "on the run" are short of clothes. In the recent case of a hoard of Military stores the boots and clothing were moved in bulk to a convenient shed where they were immediately split up into smaller parcels; and distributed by carts and by hand.

Road communication between Cork and Blarney is completely severed. A patrol of two Rolls Royce cars were able to reach Blarney from the north but could only get back by driving along the permanent way of the Muskerry Railway.

Apparently reprisals are having the desired effect. The following conversation was overheard during the week.

"We should be winning hands down if it was'nt for those reprisals they are hitting us terribly hard."

4. General contd.

(c) 18th Infantry Brigade

A man riding a motor cycle No. F1 149 was seen on the 5th inst round the districts of Hly holycross and the Ragg commandeering labour for the destruction of bridges and the trenching of roads.

Information has been received that during the week an important meeting of the I.R.A. Officers of high rank was held in the Cappamore district. It is reported that Michael Jollins was present.

The people of Caher (S. of Loughgraney) who have been considerably inconvenienced by the cutting of the bridge there, had a free fight with the people of Killaneena (N. of Loughgraney) as the inhabitants of the former place accused them of cutting the roads and threatened to go up and out Killaneena roads. Ballinroan also had the same grievance against the Killaneena people.

In County Limerick the large force of rebels reported last week at Kiltasly has been kept on the move. On the afternoon of the 9th inst they were reported near Brures and although large forces of military and R.I.C. converged on that area they were unable to bring the rebels into an engagement. Finding that we were on their trail they commandeered all motors, bicycles etc., which they could lay their hands on during the night of the 10/11th inst and made out of that area.

(d) Kerry Brigades Area

The Crown Forces have met with success both being in North Cork and Kerry; that most notable achievement being that of a small patrol of Listowel police who encountered a gang of about 80 rebels and put them to flight after killing their leader and two others and wounding several more. This operation was doubly successful in that the dead leader has been recognised as Jeremiah Lyons of Duagh, the commander of the Flying Column which has been active in N. Kerry for some time past.

Two of the most dangerous rebels in the Lisserroll area have been captured, and at Killarney two men, who have been identified as having taken part in recent ambushes, have been arrested.

During a raid in the vicinity of Tournaboul about 2 1/2 miles S. of Killarney, posters were found posted on a wall calling on the people of Ireland to pay their rates promptly to Dail Eireann, and there were also posters forbidding emigration.

A loyal farmer living near Buttevant has been forced by the I.R.A. to take a man into his employment against his will.

Information was received by the B.I. Dingle that an ambush was laid for him outside the town on the evening of the 5th inst. He went to attack it on the following morning but found that the position had been vacated.

It is reported that an ambush was prepared on the 5th inst. on the Castleisland-Abbeysale road, near Pt. 810 Parsons in the vicinity where were compelled to remain indoors during the day and traffic was diverted until 12.00 hrs when the ambushers dispersed. The party consisted of about 70 men under the command of Jack Cronin and they were armed with 1 Machine gun, rifles and bombs.

Information has been received that the I.R.A. in the Brosna districts have a trench mortar, which they intend to use in an attack on the R.I.C. Barracks. This mortar is said to have been brought from Cork.

4 General contd.

Kerry Brigade area contd.

A round up on a large scale was carried out round Turnaboul, 3 miles S. of Killarney. 84 men were collected and taken to Killarney for further examination. Two of them, Jon Lynch and Jeremiah Moran, were recognised as having taken part in recent ambushes and were detained. The remainder were released after being warned about road cutting. A number of S.P. Posters were found on this raid.

On the 9th Inst at 13.30 hrs the typewriter to Mr Ferguson, solicitor Kanturk was stolen by 2 men in a very daring and open manner. They Drove up to the house, which is next door to the R.I.J. Bks, and one of them went to the room where the typist was working. He cut the speaking tube communicating with Mr Ferguson's Office and calmly walked out with the typewriter, whereupon 2 men drove off in the direction of Mallow. In spite of an exhaustive and immediate search no trace of the trap or men could be found.

On the 9th inst. a party of troops from Tralee proceeded to Farranfore to carry out punishments for the ambush of 3 consyables. Three houses were destroyed. 1 Officer proceeded to the house of Charles Daly, Knockanoculteen. Posts were placed round the farm and the house was then approached. As the Officer entered the house, a man jumped out of the window and ran away. As he refused to halt when called upon to do so, he was fired at and badly wounded. He was found to be John Shanahan, chemist's assistant, son of a chemist in Castleisland. He was wearing a Sam Browne belt, cartridge pouch and had a .380 revolver loaded with Dum Dum ammunition. He had also in his possession a camera and some films, which were found to be those taken from the R.O.R.T on the 23 ult. when he was held up near Castleisland.

On 11th inst a Cyclist and R.T. party from Kanturk visited Millstreet to carry out search at the Workhouse and Brishane Castle, at the latter place, hidden in a locked box in a bank, were found 2 revolver holsters, a list of all Officers of the Millstreet Bn. I.R.A. (See Appendix B) and other documents and training manuals. Nine wooden dummy rifles were also found in odd places in a quarry. Three men were detained, but owing to there being no female searchers present, the Castle buildings, now a French Convent, could not be searched. It is reported on good authority that rebels often billeted in the place and it is more than probable in the Convent. The Mother Superior is french woman and harmless, but the Secretary Sister Beatrice is an out and out Sinn Féiner. The steward of the demense, Jerome McCarthy, is already interned. After finding the list of Millstreet I.R.A. Officers, a visit was paid to the R.I.J. Bks in the town, but information was given that only two of the men mentioned were likely to be in the town. If these it was found that Jer. O'Connor was on his honeymoon and J.D. Murphy had bolted from his house immediately he saw the R.T. Party proceeding to the workhouse.

5. I.R.A. Personnel.

(a) 16th Infantry Brigade. area.

Br Oderick the chemist is certainly handling Dail Aireann and Prisoners dependants monies in Fermoy. He took over the job from G. Power senior.

Mrs Sweeney (mother of Mick Sweeney interned) has been receiving 30/- per week from the fund. Broderick made these payments himself. He is also stated to be collecting money.

5. I.R.A. Personnel contd.

16th Bde Area contd.

One of the Joyce family a returned hunger striker is reliably reported to be staying at the house of a farmer called Burns or Byrne situated on the road between Moore Park and Quinlan Mills.

Pat Whealan who was relieved of his command of the W. Waterford Bde is now somewhere in the West of Ireland undergoing a course of Intelligence Work.

Bennett, Railway porter at Mallow, referred to by Lynch in a captured documents as being a safe man for transmission of reports etc. has gone on a weeks leave commencing last Monday. He was reported in Fermoy on Tuesday but left the town in the evening his whereabouts are not known.

The following are Officers of "F" or Fairbank Coy. of the Waterford Battalion.

- Michael Morris Liar Row. Captain.
 - Patrick Carroll. do. Lieut.
 - Thomas Sullivan. Upper Ferrybank. Lieut.
- They are "on the run".

Two men, William O'Donoghue, and James Kinsella, recently released from Kilworth have gone "on the run".

Robert Nugent of Kilsod was concerned in thefts of bicycles.

The following was discovered in Jannans House at Co. Kilkenny (Muckalee). A stranger came there for work on 27.4.21. he left them on the following Sunday giving no reason, before 08.00 hrs. That was the day the Muskerry Wood ambushes got into position. He gave his name as Patrick Rouningham, Description - Age about 50 Ht. 5'9" greyish hair and grey moustache, decently dressed. Believed to have been working with a farmer called Joe Kenny of Byrnegrove. It seems that this man was a rebel organiser sent specially to prepare the above ambush.

Three brothers named Shene living between Coon and Ridge, Co. Kilkenny are reported to be dangerous rebels.

Mrs Lucy of Callan is the leading local spirit of the Cumann Na Bman.

Mrs O'Gorman of Burncourt Castle is high up in the ranks of the Cumann Na Bman. Pat Walsh of Dunnamaggin, recently released after a term of imprisonment at Waterford, has gone on the run.

17th Infantry Brigade Area.

John Linnahan is reported to be in command of No. 1. (Mid) Cork Brigade in the place of Sean Hegarty who is in Kanturk at present. This is not confirmed.

Frank McCarthy, 9 Eastview Terrace Quaker Road is on the Bde Staff.

Tim O'Neill the new Brigade Intelligence Officer is sleeping somewhere in the Curragh Road, Cork.

It is reported that 13 men "on the run" have been housed and fed at the houses of the following at Dripsey.

- (a). Denis Battens of Knockans, 1 mile N. of Dripsey Mill.
- (b). William Murphy of Acres 1/2 mile N. of Dripsey Mill.
- (c). John Kallagher of Marshall House, 1 mile N.W. of Dripsey Mill.

5 I.R.A. Personnell. contd.

17th Bde Area

The leading light in the shooting of Sergeant Malliffe and Corporal Ryan in Cork last January is said to be Patrick Murphy. He is to be found in one of the houses near 25 Blarney St. Cork, but not actually at No. 25. He is the son of a Dipsy farmer named Denis Murphy who lives near the National School of the Old Road, Dripsy.

John Crispie of Cornishal (3 miles N.W. of Leap) and Timothy Donovan of Foheragh (5 miles W.N.W. of Skibbarren) are reported to be active.

The following address was found written on the wall of a house in Mount Pleasant 5 miles N.W. of Bandon. It is very likely house for man "on the run".

M. Wiseman, 6, Sundays Well Road. Cork.

(c). 18th Brigade area.

Michael Brennan of Clare is apparently Commanding-in-Chief I.R.A. in the West. He calls himself Lieut General of Flying Columns and states that it is his job to rouse the West and is confident of his ability to do so.

The Madigans of Bannore Moyasta and Miss Irene Kennedy of Lisdoon Gilke, Co. Clare are in the habit of harbouring rebels.

Herald O'Dwyer of Rahoon, Bruff. (a brother of Nicholas O'Dwyer) took part in the Bruff ambush. He is at present very active.

Mick Slattery of Newtown-Shandrum is Captain of "B" Coy. 4th Bn. Cork Bde.

Reliable information has been received that altogether 15 rebels were killed or died of wounds as the result of Lackally action.

In addition to those already reported killed, the following were either killed or have since died of wounds:-

- Michael Walsh, Capt. of Spittal Coy. 1st Walter Bn. Died of wounds
- Ryan Annagh, Newport. Killed.
- Purcell Shrahena. do.
- Dea or O'Dea. of Pallas. do.

Martin Deagan Clonmore Dova is an active rebel. He is reported to be in possession of a revolver and goes around that district turning out trenching parties.

John Casey Roarstown, Dova is a very active rebel. He is believed to have been promoted to Commissioned rank in the 1st Bn. Mid Tipperary Bde. I.R.A.

Bridie Fitzpatrick Liberty Square, Charles writes to all prisoners in Ordnance Barracks, Limerick as soon as they arrive there.

John Uote of Spancel Hill near Ennis who was acquitted of carrying arms etc. is an itinerant tailor and also a deserter from the M.G. His tailoring is only a cloak, in reality he is a Machine Gun Instructor to the Clare I.R.A.

John Neylon of Kifanora, who is serving a sentence for taking rates from a rate collector by threats, was in charge of all the administrative side of the I.R.A., North Clare. If the prison authorities where he now is use their influence he might supply some very useful information, although he did not do so when arrested. He is a well known commandant and a brother who is a

Kerry Brigade Area.

John O'Connor on whom was found a paper giving the diganls between the villages about Kiskeam (as reported in last week's Summary) has now confessed that it was given him about 26th April by Jar. Mullane of Ballybahallagh, near Freemcunt, to take to John Moylan at Kiskram on the following Sunday (May 1st) when the latter would be found near the cross to the S. of the Village about 8 p.m.

James O'Connor of Banteer, who was tried recently before a Summary Court for having a rebel despatch, stated that he used to find letters hidden under a stone in an old lime kiln which he visited twice a week.

Peter Collins who was arrested during the round up N. of Maelin on the 5th inst. had apparently left behind by the Newmarket Flying Column when they moved from this area a few days before, as he was too drunk to go with them. Philip Curtin had also been left behind as he was ill, but he was not arrested. This man is a Lieut in the Maelin Coy.

The following is an extract from a letter addressed to Martin McGrath I.E.A. organiser, after his arrest.

"I cannot give you details of my activities, but you know of old that I am ever on the same game".
The writer signs herself "Lena" and gives her address as Lorsta Convent, Balbriggan."

Three of the men who took part in the shooting of H.C. Streey and Sgt. Butler at Castleisland are believed to be Jack Cronin of Ballymacolligott, a man named Lane, and John McCarthy of Brohig. The first two were reported to be in Castleisland on the night of the 7th inst.

An informant, who recently returned from England observed a man watching the passengers as they were leaving the boats at Ross-lare. He has since seen the same man in Cork Station and on the platform at Headford Junction, and on each occasion he appears to be keeping a careful watch on the passengers. He has also been seen in K. llarney and is described as- Tall, fair hair, slight moustache, of well-to-do-appearance.

James Brislane, Commandant of Charleville Bn is believed to have gone to Clare, and one of the Clare leaders is reported to have taken his place.

In the house of Rev. J.M. Brennan of Castleisland were found a number of Dail Eireann Trade Dept. notices. "Importation and sale of British goods. Prohibition Order No.2." dated April 14th. Also leaflets giving the Belfast Boycott "Black List"

6. Casualty report.

Date.	Name.	Place.
	Crown Forces.	Killed.
8.5.21.	Head Const. Storey. R.I.C.	Castleisland.
6.5.21.	1st Sergeant R.I.C.	Newtown.
7.5.21.	1 Const. R.I.C.	Inch.
8.5.21.	Constable Sterland.	Cork City.
14.5.21.	Constable Coughlan.	"
14.5.21.	Constable Hyle.	Cork City.
14.5.21.	Sergeant Coleman R.I.C.	Midleton.
14.5.21.	Constable Comyn.	"
14.5.21.	Constable Thomas.	"
14.5.21.	Private Hunter. K.O.S.B.	Berhaven.
14.5.21.	Private Chalmers K.O.S.B.	"
14.5.21.	Private McMillen. K.O.S.B.	"

Crown Forces. Killed.

Date.	Name.	Place.
14.5.21.	Constable Bridges R.I.C.	Drumcollogher.
14.5.21.	I.R.M.A. Gunners.	East Ferry.
14.5.21.	Constable Kenna R.I.C.	Innshannon.
14.5.21.	Major Biggs. D.I.	Newport.
14.5.21.	Head Const. Bansen R.I.C.	Trales.

Date.	Name.	Place.
8.5.21.	Sergt. Butler. R.I.C.	Castle Island.
7.5.21.	1 Sergt. R.I.C.	Inch.
11.5.21.	1 slightly wounded.	Killurin.
14.5.21.	Constable Hayes)	Cork City.
	" (Brookwell) R.I.C.	Cork City.
14.5.21.	Const. McDonald.	Middleten.
14.5.21.	Pte Edwards K.O.S.B.	Baranavan.
14.5.21.	1 Constable R.I.C.	Drumcollogher.

Rebel Forces Killed.

Circumstances

5.5.21.	Daniel Killcurhy. Moymore.	Died of wounds received when running away after being called upon to halt.
6.5.21.	1 rebel.	At Newtown Cross.
7.5.21.	Frank Hurley.	Comdt. No. 1. Bn. Nos (East Cork) Brigade.
11.5.21.	An armed rebel (unidentified)	At Clondereen.
10.5.21.	John Fox.	At Ballinleenly Co. Limerick while escorting a blind feld ex-soldier.
12.5.21.	J. Lyons and 2 rebels.	Kilmorna.
14.5.21.	3 rebels.	Carrigtwehill.

Wounded.

8.5.21.	Pat Walsh.	At Windgap near Dungarvan, refusing to halt when challenged.
10.5.21.	1 rebel.	When escorting a blind felder ex-soldier at Ballinleenly Co. Limerick.
10.5.21.	John O'Regan.	Liscarrall.
20.5.21.	John Shanahan.	Farranfere.
12.5.21.	Several rebels.	At Kilmorna Ambush.
13.5.21.	3 rebels.	Drimoleague.
13.5.21.	2 rebels.	Tubrid.
14.5.21.	4 rebels.	Glencakilly.

Munitions captured

Date.	Place.	Description.
5.5.21.	Knocktoosh.	7 rds .303, 6 rds .450. 1 detona- tor.
6.5.21.	Kilrush	D.B. Gun
9.5.21.	Thomastown Kilfinane.	1 maxim Gun. German. 1 spare feed block. 1 M.G. Flash ob- scurer. 1 .22 rifle.
9.5.21.	Thomastown Kilfinane.	3 D.B. Guns, 2 bayonets, 1 scal- pel, 2 trench helmets, 2 velmetara 2 Mine exploders. Large quantity telephone cabling and galvanized Blasting powder, dynamite 4 sheets Fuse firing. 8 Spare cartridges 30 rds Mark VII.

Kerry Brigade area.

4 revolvers, 1 shot gun, 61 rds .303 S.M.L.
28 rds revolver ammunition, 1 set of leather
equipment, 1 signalling telescope.

Appendix, "A".

A call to action.

The days of watchful waiting have passed. England is hanging prisoners of war. Shall we stand idly by?

Impatient to act; and mindful of our duty as liberty loving Americans we have organized the Boston Reprisals Commission. We have already placed pickets on the streets protesting British atrocities in Ireland. Urging determination against English goods, and favouring home industry. Further we are investigating the mediums of British Propaganda.

We have dug the trenches, will you join us in this work? We welcome your assistance.

Have you an Auto? Have you friends who would use their auto or auto-truck in the cause.

Will you picket?

Will you give us one hour of your time M?

Can you give us reliable information concerning things of vital importance to America's welfare and Ireland's fight for freedom?

Call immediately, Ireland needs you.

Boston Reprisals Commission,
60 Pemberton Square, Room 308. Boston.

Appendix. "B".

Irish Republican Army Warning.

"The public are warned not to close trenches, cut up trees interfere with mines or any way undo the work of the I.R.A. You won't refuse if forced by the enemy. Spies, informers, talkers will be dealt with from this day forward. Women and girls must keep their telephone machines closed when in town and in other public places. Parents will be held responsible for the secrecy of their children when in school, Mass etc., etc., look out shortly for a list of spies, informers, talkers in this district. Don't have your name on.

Signed.
Officer in charge.

Please tear off and return to

Headquarters
"I" Branch,
6th Division.

Your G/18/89/1/2 (Weekly Intelligence Summary)
dated 17.5.21. has been received.

Office No.....

Signature.....

Copy No.....

Unit or Formation.....

Weekly Intelligence Summary - 6th Division.

Distribution List Week ending.....

Copy	Unit or Formation.	Address.	Acknowledgment No.	Date.
	General Headquarters.	Dublin.	.....	.....
	"	"
	5th Division.	Curragh.	.....	.....
	Dublin District.	Dublin Castle	.....	.....
	Chief of Police.	"	.....	.....
7.	Admiral C-in-Chief.	Queenstown	.....	.....
8.	Gen. Staff, 6th Division.	Cork	.....	.....
9.	Q.M.G., 6th Division.	"	.....	.....
10.	A.A.G., 6th Division.	"	.....	.....
11.	Law Officer, 6th Division.	"	.....	.....
12.	Sen. Div. Commissioner.	"	.....	.....
13.	Divisional Commissioner.	"	.....	.....
14.	O.C., 33 Fortress Coy., R.E.	"	.....	.....
15.	Divisional Commissioner.	Clonmel	.....	.....
16.	16th Infantry Brigade.	Fermoy.	.....	.....
17.	"A" Coy., Auxy. Divn., Innistoge.	Kilkenny.	.....	.....
18.	1st Brigade, R.F.A.	"	.....	.....
19.	2nd Brigade, R.F.A.	Fermoy.	.....	.....
20.	31st Brigade, R.F.A.,	Cahir.	.....	.....
21.	7th Brigade, R.F.A.	Moors Park.	.....	.....
22.	1st Battn., The Buffs.	Fermoy.	.....	.....
23.	1st Battn. Lincolnshire Regt.	Tipperary.	.....	.....
24, 25.	1st Battn. Devonshire Regt.	Waterford.	.....	.....
26.	"C" Coy., R.F.A.	Clonmel	.....	.....
27.	2nd Battn., The Green Howards.	Tipperary.	.....	.....
28.	1st Battn. West Surrey Regt.	Kilworth.	.....	.....
29.	17th Infantry Brigade.	Cork.	.....	.....
30.	31st Fire Command.	Bere Island.	.....	.....
31.	C.R.A., 6th Division.	Cork.	.....	.....
32.	32nd Fire Command.	Queenstown.	.....	.....
33.	1st Battn. The King's.	Bantry.	.....	.....
34.	2nd King's Own Scot. Borderers.	Bere Island.	.....	.....
35.	2nd Battn. The Hampshire Regt.	Cork.	.....	.....
36.	2nd Battn. S. Stafford Regt.	Cork.	.....	.....
37.	1st Battn. Essex Regt.	Kinsale.	.....	.....
38.	1st Battn. Manchester Regt.	Ballincollig.	.....	.....
39.	2nd Battn. Queen's O. Cam. Highldrs.	Queenstown.	.....	.....
40.	"J" Coy., Auxy. Divn.	Macroom.	.....	.....
41.	"L" Coy., Auxy. Divn.	Millstreet.	.....	.....
42.	"O" Coy., Auxy. Divn.	Dunmanway.	.....	.....
43.	18th Infantry Brigade.	Limerick.	.....	.....
44.	2nd Royal Scots.	Ennis.	.....	.....
45.	1st Battn. Royal Warwick Regt.	Newcastle W.	.....	.....
46.	2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers.	Limerick.	.....	.....
47.	Ox. & Bucks Light Infantry.	Limerick.	.....	.....
48.	1st Battn. North Hants. Regt.	Templemore.	.....	.....
49.	1st Battn., M.G.C.	Ballyvonaire.	.....	.....
50.	"G" Coy., Auxy. Divn.	Killaloe.	.....	.....
51.	Kerry Brigade.	Buttevant.	.....	.....
52.	1st Battn., Royal Fusiliers.	Killarney.	.....	.....
53.	2nd Battn. East Lancs. Regt.	Buttevant.	.....	.....
54.	2nd Battn. Royal Regiment.	Tralee.	.....	.....
55.	1st Battn. Gloucestershire Regt.	Kanturk.	.....	.....
56.	Cork City Intelligence.	Cork.	.....	.....
57.	Document's Officer, 6th Divn.	Cork.	.....	.....
58.	O.C., 136 Battery, R.F.A.	Fethard.	.....	.....
59.	1st Esso, R.	Bandon.	.....	.....
60.	"B" Coy., Aux. Divn., R.I.C.	Templemore.	.....	.....
61, 62.	Divisional Commissioner.	Limerick.	.....	.....
63.			.....	.....

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21
BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

ORDER

No. W.S. 883

HD. QRS.

TO

SND. S/D.

BDE. COMDT.

East. Limerick.

10/7/'21.

1. You will see that the following INSTRUCTIONS are faithfully carried out during the present PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.
2. ALL PUBLIC HOUSES in Villages, Small towns, and Isolated Districts will be closed.
3. A special POLICE FORCE to enforce ORDER will immediately be selected from each CO.
4. BN. O/Cs. will see that all ARMS are under control. Arms save in exceptional cases will be collected from individuals.
5. ALL COS. will be paraded and strictly warned against TALK.
6. THE CIVILIAN population, where possible will be warned against talk, as many seem to think the WAR is over.
7. Every effort will be made to perfect Plans of ACTION more especially for TOWN JOBS so that the DIVISION as a whole can slog into the ENEMY the minute negotiations break down.

(Signed)

Earnán Ó Máille

O/C

2nd S/D.

HD. QRS.

SND. S.D.

19/7/'21.

TO.

O.C.

E.L. BDE.

1. Paragraph 2. of General Order No. 2 G. is countermanded; as it was written before Truce Terms were published.
2. Add the following to paragraph 2 of Routine Order: NO. 6. ALL BDE. officers and all Departments will use the Bde. letter, and will number their respective despatches consecutively.

(Signed) Earnán Ó Máille

O.C.

SND. S.D.

HD. QRS.

SND. S.D.

19/7/21.

To E.L. Bde.

1. THIS is a recapitulation of some INSTRUCTIONS recently issued. Whilst Truce lasts BDE. O/Cs. will see that special attention is devoted to the following.
2. COMMUNICATIONS. (a) DIV. ROAD AND RAIL COMMUNICATIONS.
(b) BDE. Routine Despatches.

Perfect weak Links in the Chain COMMUNICATIONS must be properly and thoroughly organised, otherwise you cannot avail of your Routine Organisation.

3. ROUTINE. Clear up arrears, see that BN. Routine Systems are worked on a sound basis, that all Officers know what REPORTS to forward and that they are forwarded.
4. DUG-OUTS AND DUMPS. Finish off and improve existing ones, make and finish others; arrange for inspection of DUMPS and DUG-OUTS.
5. MATERIAL FOR RAIDS. Think out Material which might be of use to you, and forward a list to DIV. HD. QRS. Pending a reply perfect your Organisation.
6. REPRISALS. Complete your list of Enemy houses and see that particulars are correct. See that Operation details, in connection with the above, have been considered.

7. RECRUITING. See that your COs. are brought up to strength. Tap unexplored areas. In every BN. there are men who would be of use to the technical Departments. Very often the CO. COMMANDER CANNOT BE RELIED ON to furnish particulars of his Area.
8. OFFICERS. See that all CO. and BN. Officers are suitable; if not scrap them and get good men in their places. If they cannot be replaced locally get good men from another Area.
9. MOBILISATION. Test your BN. and CO. Mobilisation System and locate flaws.
- Try (a) Quick MOBS. for Parades etc.
(b) Quick MOBS. for BN. Groups.
10. Police. (a) See that a special Police Force is in working order during the Negotiations.
(b) Organise your Regular Police Force.
11. ARMS. See that all ARMS, AMM. and EXPLOSIVES are inspected and thoroughly cleaned. See that Repairs are executed. If BDE. is unable to undertake repairs, please notify the DIVISION.
12. PLANS. See that Plans are laid for a resumption of the offensive. Lay your Plans carefully, inspect and SKETCH Positions, especially Towns and Villages. In the two latter pay particular attention to Lines of Approach and Retirement.
13. COURTS. See that Republican Courts are re-established in your Area. The Civil side is as important as the Military side.

14. TALK. Warn members of the I.R.A. and Civilians against Talk; do your utmost to locate the source of such talk. It is the principal danger at present.
15. TRAINING. Start INTENSIVE Training in
- (a) Revolver and Automatic Shooting.
 - (b) Musketry.
 - (c) Bombing.
 - (d) Bayonet Training.
 - (e) Scouting.
16. SUSPECTS. Keep them under continual observation; they may be inclined to come out of their shells now.
17. ENGINEERING. Prepare Mines, inspect BRIDGES and take dimensions, inspect Railways.
18. INTELLIGENCE. Tap as much as possible. Tongues are beginning to wag now. Perfect your REPORT SYSTEM; in each Area arrange to have persons outside the I.R.A. to report regularly. Work up the details of the Enemy Supply System.
19. THE PRESENT IS A TIME FOR HARD THINKING AND INTENSIVE TRAINING - NOT FOR HOLIDAY MAKING.

(Signed)

Ea. Ó Máille

O.C.

SND. S.D.

OGLAIGH NA hÉIREANN

ÁRD OIFIG, ATH CLIATH.
General Headquarters, DUBLIN.
Liaison Offices.

BUREAU OF MILITARY HISTORY 1913-21

BURO STAIRE MILEATA 1913-21

NO. W.S.

887

12th July 1921.

TO: O/C.
E.L. Bde.

Instructions to Liaison Officers.

Each Liaison Officer will immediately get in touch with the British Army Liaison Officer for his district and will co-operate with him in carrying out the terms of the truce which are as follows:-

On behalf of the British army it is agreed as follows:-

1. No incoming troops R.I.C. and Auxiliary police and munitions, and no movements for military purposes of troops and munitions except maintenance drafts.
2. No provocative displays of forces armed or unarmed.
3. It is understood that all provisions of this Truce apply to the Martial Law area equally with the rest of IRELAND.
4. NO pursuit of Irish officers or men, war material or military stores.
5. No secret agents, noting descriptions or movements and no interference with the movements of Irish persons, military or civil, and no attempt to discover the haunts or habits of Irish officers and men.

NOTE: This supposes the abandonment of Curfew restrictions.

6. No pursuit or observance of lines of communication or connection.
7. No pursuit of messengers.

On Behalf of the IRISH ARMY it is agreed that:

- (a) Attacks on Crown Forces and Civilians to cease.
- (b) No provocative displays of forces armed or unarmed.
- (c) No interference with Government or Private Property.
- (d) To discountenance and prevent any action likely to cause disturbance of the peace which might necessitate military interference.

In interpreting the terms of the Truce the following points will be borne in mind:

1. There are to be no movements of bodies of British troops from place to place except under exceptional circumstances and after consultation with REPUBLICAN LIAISON OFFICER AND neither military or police forces are to be increased.
2. Police or Military carrying arms is to be regarded as a provocative display. In towns of over 5,000 population police on night duty to have the right to carry concealed arms for their own protection

in the discharge of ordinary civil police duties such as dealing with armed burglars, etc. between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.

3. The Martial Law area to be in no worse position than the rest of Ireland. Consequently prohibition of fairs, etc. to cease and Liaison Officers to arrange that creameries, business premises, railways, etc. closed under Military Order be re-opened.
4. All acts of aggression against I.R.A. including raids arrests etc. to cease and Officers and men to have the right to move about freely which in some cases will naturally be exercised with discretion.
- 5,6,7. Officers and men of the I.R.A. and the population generally are not to be shadowed followed or spied upon by BRITISH AGENTS. No interference by BRITISH agents with lines of communication messengers etc. and the truce not to be availed of for the purpose of obtaining information as to men on the run etc.

GENERAL: The question of discontinuance of courts martial restriction on motor traffic etc. are under consideration.

The I.R.A. is not prohibited by the terms of the truce from carrying out its ordinary training provided this is done in such a way as not to attract unnecessary attention.

Decisions involving important questions of INTERPRETATION of the terms of Truce are not to be given by local Liaison Officers but will be referred to the Chief Liaison Officer for Ireland:-

EDMOND J. DUGGAN,
66, DAME STREET,
DUBLIN.

Telephone NO. 4888 DUBLIN.

Local Liaison Officers will at once secure a public Office and advise the Chief Liaison Officer of their telegraphic and postal address and Telephone No. It is essential that all Liaison Officers should be accessible by TELEPHONE.

It is to be distinctly understood that persons guilty of breaches of the truce on either side will be drastically dealt with by their respective authorities. All such breaches to be reported immediately to the CHIEF LIAISON OFFICER.

Dated 12th July 1921.

66 DAME STREET,
DUBLIN.

Chief Liaison Officer
Army of the IRISH REPUBLIC

East Limerick Brigade - Principal Actions.

NO. W.S. 883
 Date.

Actions (I.R.A. strength in brackets.)	Date.	I.R.A. Casualties.	Enemy Casualties.	I.R.A. Officer i/c.	Remarks.
Ballylanders (30)	April, 1920.	I.W.	8.P.	S. Forde.	Bks. captured and destroyed. Police rifles & revolvers seized.
Kilmallock. (50)	May, 1920.	I.K.	Unknown number K.	S. Wall.	Bks. destroyed.
Ballinahinch. (12)	July, 1920.	Nil.	4.P.	T. Crowley.	Rifles captured.
Emly. (14).	July, 1920.	Nil.	I.W. 8.P.	D. O'Hannigan.	9 Rifles captured. 600 rds. amm. -do-
Bruree. (14).	July, 1920.	Nil.	I.K.	D. O'Hannigan.	Rifles captured.
Kildorrery, Co. Cork. (16).	August, 1920.	Nil.	8.W.	D. O'Hannigan.	8 rifles captured. 260 rds. amm. -do-
Grange. (40).	Nov. 1920.	2.W.	Nil.	D. O'Hannigan.	
Cross of the Tree. (12).	Dec. 1920.	I.K.	Nil.	D. O'Hannigan.	Surprise attack on I.R.A.
Glenacurrane. (50).	Dec. 1920.	Nil.	4.K.	D. O'Hannigan.	Lorries, rifles and grenades captured.
Dromkeen. (50).	Feb. 1921.	I.W.	10.K. 2.W.	D. O'Hannigan.	Lorries, rifles and revolvers captured.
Kilfinane. (10).	Feb. 1921.	Nil.	I.P.	J. M. MacCarthy.	Aeroplane captured and destroyed. Documents seized.
Sraharla. (20)	May, 1921.	4.K. 2.P.	Nil.	D. O'Hannigan.	Surprise attack on I.R.A.
Lakelly. (12).	May, 1921.	4.K.	I.W.	D. O'Hannigan.	Surprise attack on I.R.A. who released prisoners and recovered bodies of killed, also captured 13 bicycles of attackers.
Annacarty Co. Tipperary. (5)	May, 1921.	I.K.	I.K.	D. O'Hannigan.	Attack on I.R.A. beaten off.
Knocklong Rly. Station. (8)	1919.	3.W.	2.K. I.W.	S. Treacy.	Prisoner rescued from train by I.R.A.
Ballynahill (6)	April 1921	I.K.	I.K.	D. O'Hannigan	I.R.A. Beat off attack after 3 hours fight.

The foregoing list summarises the principal engagements in the East Limerick Brigade Area.
 Numerous other actions of a smaller type are not included.

Annacarty

Kilmallock. (50)	May, 1920.	I.K.	Unknown number K.	S.Wall.	Bks. destroyed.
Ballinahinch. (12)	July, 1920.	Nil.	4.P.	T.Crowley.	Rifles captured.
Emly. (14).	July, 1920.	Nil.	I.W. 8.P.	D.O'Hannigan.	9 Rifles captured. 600 rds. amm. -do-
Bruree. (14).	July, 1920.	Nil.	I.K.	D.O'Hannigan.	Rifles captured.
Kildorrery, Co. Cork. (16).	August, 1920.	Nil.	8.W.	D.O'Hannigan.	8 rifles captured. 260 rds. amm. -do-
Grange. (40).	Nov. 1920.	2.W.	Nil.	D.O'Hannigan.	-
Cross of the Tree. (12).	Dec. 1920.	I.K.	Nil.	D.O'Hannigan.	Surprise attack on I.R.A.
Glenacurrane. (50).	Dec. 1920.	Nil.	4.K.	D.O'Hannigan.	Lorries, rifles and grenades captured.
Dromkeen. (50).	Feb. 1921.	I.W.	10.K. 2.W.	D.O'Hannigan.	Lorries, rifles and revolvers captured.
Kilfinane. (10).	Feb. 1921.	Nil.	I.P.	J.M. MacCarthy.	Aeroplane captured and destroyed. Documents seized.
Traharla. (20)	May, 1921.	4.K. 2.P.	Nil.	D.O'Hannigan.	Surprise attack on I.R.A.
Lakelly. (12).	May, 1921.	4.K.	I.W.	D.O'Hannigan.	Surprise attack on I.R.A. who released prisoners and recovered bodies of killed; also captured 13 bicycles of attackers.
Annacarty Co. Tipperary. (5)	May, 1921.	I.K.	I.K.	D.O'Hannigan	Attack on I.R.A. beaten off.
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The foregoing list summarises the principal engagements in the East Limerick Brigade Area. Numerous other actions of a smaller type are not included.

J.M. MacCarthy
 MAJOR.
 (J.M. MacCarthy).

30th May, 1945.