

# AN T-ÓZLÁC

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS.

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## THE MILITARY SITUATION.

Twelve months ago we told the Volunteers that we might not be much longer "in the trenches"; that they should not confine their military studies to defensive tactics, but should give full attention to the tactics involved in taking the offensive. To-day the Army of the Republic is certainly out of the trenches with a vengeance. We have not only maintained our Army intact in the face of an enemy of immensely superior strength, we have increased our numbers and armament and perfected our organisation; and, fortified by the establishment of a Constitutional Republican Government, we are waging war against the forces of the enemy by every means in our power, and with wonderful effect. All the efforts of the foe have been baffled. His spies have been outwitted, his raids and searches have for the most part been futile, his "proclamations" have proved so much waste paper, his "courts" have been ignored, and even his prisons in Ireland and in England have been unable to hold the soldiers of the Republic.

But the Army of the Irish Republic do not to-day confine itself to defensive tactics. A state of guerilla warfare exists in Ireland at present, in which the position of the armed forces of the enemy is growing more and more uncomfortable. Living in daily apprehension of surprises, ambushes, raids on their fortified positions, capture of their arms and equipment, interruption of their communications, and interception of their intelligence, their morale has been badly shattered. A good example of this was afforded by the wild riot of British "policemen" in Thurles. Another instance was the Phoenix Park affair, where British soldiers in their mad panic, imagining they saw Republican soldiers behind every bush, shot their own officer dead, and killed a harmless passer-by. Similar panics and wild shooting occur frequently in British barracks in Dublin. The swiftness and effectiveness with

which the soldiers of the Republic strike here, there, and everywhere, baffling and disconcerting the foe by the rapidity and unexpectedness of their movements, the accuracy of their information, and their knowledge as to his intentions, have struck terror into the hearts of our enemies. It is our business to make the situation still more menacing to them; and it is being done pretty effectively. The value in warfare of taking the offensive and maintaining it is being illustrated powerfully in these times. Eighteen months ago it seemed as if the initiative lay with the enemy, and we remained watching his movements, prepared to counter them. To-day the enemy is on the defensive, and the initiative lies with us.

It is our business to maintain the advantage we have gained. Our warfare against the enemy must be waged relentlessly, with all the courage, energy, and intelligence at our command. One great advantage of recent operations has been that they have given many of our inexperienced Volunteers useful training in the conditions of actual warfare. A good many Volunteers have received their "baptism of fire"; and, on the whole, reports show that they showed wonderful coolness on every such occasion. A tendency to wild firing has been noted in some cases, showing once again what cannot be too often impressed upon officers and men—the importance of proper fire control. We hope this lesson will be taken to heart by every Volunteer officer. In undertaking any offensive military operations men must be impressed with the vital importance of this—that they must not fire without orders; that they must fire under the direction of the person in command of their unit, who shall control, restrain, and direct their fire systematically, in accordance with the general plan.

In this connection we would call attention to the fact noted in our last issue, that it is the intention of General Headquarters to hold examinations for qualification as officers. A scheme has been devised which will ensure a

proper standard of qualification for officership. The necessity of some such scheme has long been recognised, but practical difficulties existed which have now, we think, been overcome. This announcement should prove a fresh incentive to officers to perfect themselves in the knowledge of their work. It need hardly be added that more can be learned from practical experience than from text-books; but the text-books should not be neglected.

Once again we wish to emphasise the importance of keeping a close watch on the movements of the enemy, of studying his methods and machinery in detail, and collecting as much accurate information as possible with regard to these matters. The superiority of our Intelligence Department to that of the enemy has contributed largely to our recent successes. It must be maintained and increased. The fact that we are operating in our own country among a population heartily on our side gives us an enormous advantage in this respect. The enemy cannot feel sure of loyal service from his paid spies and agents. He does not know whom he can trust. The Irish Republic offers no rewards or bribes for its servants; men are asked to risk their liberties and lives on its behalf; yet the Republic can rely on a plentiful supply of loyal servants, ready to do whatever they are called on to do without fear of the consequences. Our solidarity is unbroken; our discipline enforced without payments or punishments; our loyalty unstained by instances of treachery. Things have come to the pass when England can only hold Ireland by a huge Army of Occupation consisting entirely of English soldiers; and to do that Conscription must be enforced in England. The hopelessness of the task of trying to crush the Irish resistance to English rule by force is beginning to sink into the mind of the enemy. Before long he may again resort to the old policy of flattery, promises, and bribes, which in the past he found so effective. But the day when such tactics can avail him has passed in Ireland. He will no longer have to deal with politicians, but with soldiers—with the armed young manhood of Ireland enlisted in the service of the Irish Republic.

Taken all in all, the military situation is full of hope. We have developed a form of warfare suited to the actual circumstances of our case, and are waging it with energy and effectiveness. The enemy has sustained a succession of defeats; his morale is shattered, and his position grows increasingly difficult. Volunteers must push on the War of Independence

with ever-growing energy and enthusiasm, confident that while they retain their loyalty, discipline, and courage the Irish Republic will be a secure reality.

## TALKS WITH N.C.O.'s.

### I.

An army is as good as its N.C.O.'s: in fact without N.C.O.'s there is no army at all. They take the recruits to train; they set the example of discipline; they teach them the little odds and ends that mark the soldier off from the civilian; they form the connecting link between the privates and the officers; they form the stepping-stone by which the soldier rises in the army and becomes an officer; they command in the little skirmishes that make up a great battle; their value may be summed up in the saying: "It takes a good man to head a battalion in a charge—but it takes a better man to stop a section running away."

To-day, however, the N.C.O. is different from the N.C.O. of the past—the old German Sergeant-Major in the story that inspired the young officer with reverence for his calling, because he embodied all that was best in the German Army of the past. In appearance, in habit of mind, in careful attention to duty, in intimate knowledge of details, the old N.C.O. was a model and a standard for his men. The N.C.O. of to-day is different: his knowledge is derived from careful attention to his work, rather than from long service, because he is usually not very senior to his men. Keeness rather than force of habit is the distinguishing feature: the new N.C.O. is quicker to learn, and fits in better with the changing requirements of modern warlike conditions. It is to this type that you, N.C.O.'s of the Irish Republic, must belong.

With you, even more than with any others, it is imperative that keen attention to your military duties should become part and parcel of your being. It is up to you to maintain the discipline and steady confidence of your men in face of any discouragement, to prevent anything in the nature of slackness or inattention, to leave nothing undone that will tend to simplify the work of your officers, to prepare yourselves—as the Army increases in size—to become officers in your turn.

The first requisite is to be soldierly in your manner, whether on parade or off. Carry yourself so as to look like a soldier in your person;

don't allow subordinates to loaf or slouch around; be scrupulously exact in your manner towards officers—if the recruit sees that **you** adopt a strict military manner to your officers on parade, he will quickly do the same. In the recruit's eyes be infallible.

## ENGINEERING NOTES.

### CONVENTIONAL SIGNS AS USED IN FIELD SKETCHING.

Having worked from the six-inch map, it is a good plan to refer at once to the modifications of the conventional signs as required for field sketching. Sectors of the map should be copied, substituting the conventional signs used in field sketching.

Blocks of buildings should still be shown in plan, except that, when the scale is less than 4" to one mile, villages should be merely shaded in, their outline being represented in plan. A wider shading is used to show a demolition, but to make this clear a note should be added in the accompanying report. Prominent buildings—as inn, forge, school—should be **written** horizontally.

Enclosed roads, as in the O.S. map, are indicated by two continuous lines, unenclosed roads by two dotted lines. The character of the road should be shown, especially whether "metalled" or "unmetalled," with the width of the metalling—as "16' m." (14' m. is sufficient for passing traffic). If colour is available, as it should be, really good metalled roads should be coloured brown, or dotted brown if liable to cut up. Rivers are shown blue, with an arrow showing direction of flow. The dry bed of a river is shown black, with a note as to its liability to flood. A footpath is shown by a single dotted line.

Bridges are shown by two lines, with outwardly splayed ends, across whatever the bridge crosses. The material of the bridge, whether "stone," "wood," "brick," "iron," is written horizontally. Write horizontally also "ford" and "ferry," and state width of stream; when it has a width of 15' or more, the stream is drawn with double lines.

Railways are indicated by one **thick** line, with sleeper lines laid across at intervals (telegraph lines on **thin** line, with occasional cross lines, also should be marked "telegraph"); or as a broad line, with "railway" written along it. "Single" or "double" will be

written along the line; "sta." (station) will be written horizontally. Where a railway passes through a tunnel, as when it passes under a bridge, do not leave a blank, but continue it with a broken line. The hachuring to denote cutting or embankment (as also quarry, sand-pit, cliff, bank, mound, etc.), will be as in O.S. map.

Woods are indicated by the conventional signs for deciduous trees (a succession of small upright strokes, each topped by a small circle); but whether they are really deciduous (oak, beech, elm, etc.), or coniferous, should be stated; as also whether they are "passable" or "impassable" for troops; and glades should be marked. Colour trees green. **Write** the word "orchard."

Heath and marsh are represented as in O.S. map; in any case write the words "heath," "marsh," "rough pasture."

Contour lines or form lines are drawn, not as in 6" O.S. map, but, as far as possible, with a continuous red line, the level being written at intervals along the higher side of the line.

Churches and wind-mills are represented, not as in the 6" O.S. map, but as on smaller scale maps: a church is a vertical cross (if it has a spire, a circle is placed directly below the cross; if a tower, a square below the cross). A wind-mill is like a church with a spire, except that the cross is diagonal.

The direction of roads and railways which disappear on the margin of the sketch should be indicated as in the 6" O.S. map.

The conventional lettering is as follows:—P. (post office only); T. (post and telegraph office); S.P. (sign post); L.H. (light house); oW. (well)—coloured blue if possible.

Finally, the true and magnetic north lines are inserted for reference.

As regards purely military information, the following conventional signs are used:—

Obstacles indicated by close diagonal cross lines.

Trenches by single lines showing exact direction of trenches.

Positions of enemy should also be marked, with as many particulars as to strength, guns, tanks, etc., as possible.

In writing names upon a sketch the following rules should be observed:—

Each letter should be separate.

**Block Capitals** should be used for outstanding features, and always for names of rivers, towns, and villages.

All names should be written horizontally, except the names of traffic-ways—i.e., roads,

railways, rivers, and canals; the names of these are written along their course, and are only by chance horizontal.

Descriptions should be written so as to cover the actual sector of the ground described. Where this would confuse, put instead a note in your accompanying report. But remember that the map must give as much information as possible, and that the report should, where necessary, supplement (and **not** repeat) the information given in the map.

## GENERAL NOTES.

A recent attempt on the part of the enemy to resume the offensive against us proved as ludicrous a fiasco as previous efforts. Nothing less than a "round-up" of heads of the Irish Republican Army was contemplated. The selection of proposed victims showed a laughable ignorance on the part of the enemy as to our Army. The operations were highly unsuccessful. Large forces of English soldiers simultaneously raided a number of houses in Dublin in the small hours of Saturday morning, January 31st. In only five cases did they get the men they wanted; and then, in almost every instance, only because no reason existed why the men in question should take precautions. Two others whose names are given in their official list of **seven** prisoners are cases of mistaken identity! In at least sixteen cases they failed to get their men. The whole episode affords a striking example of the inadequacy and unreliability of the enemy's Intelligence Department and the efficiency of our own.

Not a single department of the Irish Republican Army's service will be disturbed by the enemy's raids. The Executive remains absolutely intact, and its work will not be interfered with in any way. A number of men were seized in the counties of Cork, Clare, Tipperary and Limerick, but Volunteer activities in these counties will go on just the same as usual. The enemy must try something better.

It should be unnecessary at this time of day to remind Volunteers that they should on all occasions absolutely refuse to give any account of their movements, or make any statement when questioned by enemy officers. Unfortunately, one or two cases reported to us seem to indicate that this order is not understood at all. It should be thoroughly realised that giving any information with regard to themselves

is an innocent, constitutes a recognition of the enemy's authority on the part of Volunteers, and is consequently a breach of the permanent express orders of the G.H.Q. on the subject. Any neglect of this injunction must be dealt with as a breach of discipline.

Níor mhiste a chur i gcuimhne do chách ná cead ag Ogláigh dul ag ionnsuidhe tithe agus ionnsuidheach dfonn giúnaí d'fáil uatha. Ní ceart tabairt le na leibhéid dá b'áirde gan ceist a seistaltá ó G.H.Q. sa baolach go bhfuil an áidú so dearmhadta i ndúthaibh áirithe.

## FIREARMS AS CLUBS.

At close quarters the rifle, even without a bayonet, is a formidable weapon in hand-to-hand conflict, and the shot-gun is just as good a weapon.

There are two ways in which the butt of the rifle or shot-gun can be used. In the first the weapon is held as if for bayonet combat, the right hand at the small of the stock, the left just inside the sling of the rifle, or mid-way on the barrel in the case of a shot-gun. A terrific blow can be delivered by holding the right hand in front of the junction of the neck and receiver, and smashing up the butt by straightening the right arm; the muzzle of the piece then points back over the left shoulder and the butt crashes into the opponent's face. The same blow may be delivered at the pit of the stomach; a single glance will show which of the two points of attack promises best.

The second form of attack is by swinging the piece like a club. Grasp the barrel firmly with both hands—hands together—about six inches from the muzzle; swing it up over the right shoulder so that the butt is a little behind the line of the shoulder. Don't bring it back very far or you will lose control and the weapon will put a dead weight on your wrists. Smash the weapon down on your opponent's head. In this case the head is the point of attack, because if your weapon drops too far you lose control.

There is just a single case where you could select another point of attack. If your opponent is on a slight height over you—for instance, a man on a bank thrusting at you—you will probably be able to break his leg by a smashing blow near the knee. The soldier who knows these few points is a formidable foe at close quarters, if he has a gun, even though unprovided with ammunition or bayonet.