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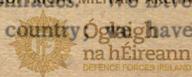
THE PRESENT!

The relentless determination of the Government and soldiers of the Irish Republic to wage warfare on every portion of the machinery of alien robbery and violence was eloquently expressed in the destruction of the Dublin Custom House on May 25th. The headquarters of a number of the departments of the enemy engine of exploitation were destroyed by the gallant efforts of a number of heroic Volunteers. The headquarters from which the enemy carried on his campaign of interference with the legal administration of the Local Government of Ireland under Dáil Eireann, the headquarters of the machinery by which he raised a large amount of taxation from the people of Ireland have "gone west." This destruction is a symbolic one; it signalises a further step towards the decline of the enemy power; but Volunteers are not concerned with symbolism but with practical things, and this operation was carried out by them as the servants of the legally constituted Government of the Irish Republic, because that Government were satisfied that it was a heavy blow against the enemy. The brave men of the Dublin Brigade are to be congratulated on their disciplined and methodic performance of the operation, and warm sympathy will be extended to the friends and relatives of the few who fell in the struggle.

It is admitted officially by the enemy that never before had he suffered so many casualties as in the week before last. The enemy attributed this to a special effort on our part, intended by way of a demonstration, but the steady increase in enemy casualties which cannot be hidden, is not to be explained by any such theory. The whole country is awake as never before. In every part Flying Columns are operating with striking success. That kind of widespread, incessant, relentless guerrilla warfare which has been advocated in AN TÓGLACH for a long time past is now a live reality almost everywhere. Connaught was formerly rebuked for inactivity. To-day "the West's awake" with a vengeance. In the North, and

even in the much-talked-of "six county area" the soldiers of the Irish Republic are showing where their allegiance lies and teaching the traitorous and rebellious much-needed lessons. It is noteworthy that in those parts of the country where the Volunteers are putting up a vigorous fight the devilries of the Black and Tans have considerably abated. It is only in the "tame" districts that the Black and Tan savage is in his element. In places where he has to fight he is unable to carry out his favourite pastime of murdering, robbing, and torturing non combatants to anything like the same extent as in those places where he is given a walk over. These latter places are steadily growing fewer. Black-and-Tans are less and less able to move about with safety, whether on lorries or cycles or on foot in any part of the country. The soldiers of the Irish Republic are well on the way to clearing these pests out of a great portion of Ireland. At least it can be guaranteed that there is no place in the territories of the Irish Republic where they will be able to carry on their ruffianism with impunity.

The Irish people were recently afforded an opportunity of expressing their endorsement and ratification of the establishment of the Irish Republic and by an overwhelming majority—unanimous outside the six-county area—they have given the Republic its ratification and voted their confidence in its elected Government. This ratification is an endorsement of the attitude of that Government in waging unflinching war on the foreign invader and is a message of encouragement to the fighting men of Ireland. The people of Ireland have voiced their approval of the message to "get on with the war." We have made great sacrifices; we have achieved wonderful things; our Army was never stronger in numbers, equipment, organisation or morale than to-day. We face the future with confidence, nerved by the consciousness of these facts, of the great cause for which we fight and the example of so many gallant COPYRIGHTS, MILITARY ARCHIVES shaken the enemy's grip off our country Óglach have na hÉireann



smashed his machinery of "government" to atoms; the flames of the Custom House were symbolic of the collapse of English civil administration in this country; and even his military administration, his Black-and Tan machinery, is proving a broken reed in his hands. Cabined, cubbed, confined by our incessant and increasing offensive, the enemy grows daily more important to accomplish anything towards regaining his grip on our country.

GENERAL NOTES

Very extensive road cutting operations were carried out in every Company Areas of Kerry No. 2 Brigade, in the latter part of April, and as a result of this a big enemy round up in the Furies Area proved abortive. The enemy came in 14 large lorries but had to withdraw without capturing a single man. Mails were raided on three occasions and a number of Telephone outfit and other implements were captured. Two enemy Motor Cars were captured and burned. In the successful ambush in Rathmore nine enemies were killed and one wounded. Our troops suffered no casualties. The enemy report of the ambush at Headford captured in the mails and the statement of the four survivors of the ambush also captured in the mails show that the total enemy casualties at Headford were 26.

Seven men of the West Connemara Flying Squadron engaged in a brisk combat with an enemy cycling patrol at Munterown on 23rd April. After some hours fighting, eight enemy lorries and armoured cars arrived from Galway and the seven Republicans had to retreat, keeping up a running fight. They got off safely without a scratch and only lost one revolver. The enemy casualties were one constable killed and a sergeant and constable wounded.

The latest West Mayo Brigade report says "So nervy have the enemy become that they have evacuated three outpost Barracks namely Culimore, Coolnabin and Kinury." A party of eleven R.I.C. men were ambushed by three Volunteers in Westport on the 8th May and seven of them were wounded. Dublin Castle reported only five casualties. Volunteers occupied Westport for five and a half hours on May 13th., but the enemy would not come out. Two Flying Columns made a forced march to the assistance of the South Mayo Brigade, who were engaged with the enemy on Partry Mountains, but the battle was over when they arrived the South Mayo Brigade winning all along the line.

The Monaghan Brigade's report for April shows that during that month 25 attacks on the enemy were arranged, every road in the area was trenched and blocked; telegraph wires on the different railway lines were all cut on six occasions and the lines were blocked

four times. Enemy dispatches were captured three times, one train of forty-eight waggons of Belfast Goods was totally destroyed in a hostile district within two miles of the enemy stations of Monaghan and Glaslough. The mails were raided four times and two goods trains were searched for Belfast goods. In addition the Belfast Boycott was enforced in all areas.

An unsuccessful attack on Carrickmacross Barracks resulted in two enemy casualties. In Castleblaney twenty Volunteers took possession of the town but the enemy would not "come out and fight." In this as in other areas the enemy shows an increasing reluctance to going out on patrols.

The April report of the Mid Clare Brigade shows extensive road-trenching and mails-raiding in the Area. A party of six R.I.C. were attacked at Corofin on 5th April and it is believed two were killed and three wounded. A number of R.I.C. were attacked near Ennistymon on 24th April and three of them were wounded. £28,000 of Poor Rates were collected for the County Council.

Eight Bridges were blown up and fourteen others rendered impassible for enemy lorries in the Kilkenny Brigade Area during April. A sham attack on Mullinavrt Barrack consisting in the firing of seven shots kept the enemy firing all night.

A ROUND UP OFFENSIVE

The enemy is said to be contemplating an intensified campaign against us. A recent statement in the Press thus puts forth his alleged intentions: "Huge Concentration Camps are contemplated for wholesale interments, and I should imagine an enormous increase of the garrison will be necessary. The idea is to give the policy of military repression in the grand manner the fullest possible chance."

Very likely the enemy will, in his development of this policy, resort to the "Drives" of the old South African Wars days. Of this method General von Bernhardt says: "These drives were arranged in regular shooting fashion. The tract of country to be driven over for Boers lay, as a rule, between two block-house lines approximately parallel with each other. At one of the open ends troops were posted like sportsmen, as it were, towards whom a line of beaters drove the Boers from the other open end. During night the Beaters bivouacked in small groups of about six men. All the large detachments of the Boers, of course, broke through, partly on the flanks, and partly through the line of beaters, and then marched wherever they liked. Only stragglers were caught, at the expense of an enormous amount of force, of money, and of Kitchener spirit."

Now in the examples we have had of Drives being attempted against our own troops much the same Oglagh

can be observed. The enemy has met with a very small measure of success: practically always he merely strikes a blow in the air. At the same time the fact that the enemy has had only a limited degree of success in his round-ups does not justify us in neglecting any precautions. It is only reasonable to assume that he will, to some extent at least, improve his round-up methods; and we must see to it that we improve in like manner.

The first essential to countering a Drive or Round-up is to know it's coming. This should always be possible in our circumstances, and the better our Intelligence service the sooner we will know and the more detailed and accurate our Information will be. The great numbers of troops, vehicles, and material which the enemy must concentrate for a Drive cannot be concealed: if he can conceal these things it means that the Drive will not be very extensive or very long-drawn-out. Hand and hand with Information we can put Communications—Information to be of use must be systematically passed on. And so the machinery for passing on Information—Communications to wit—must be thorough and up-to-date.

Passing through Information and Communications one arrives naturally at Protection. For we may correctly regard signalling—in the most general sense—either from the point of view of Communications or from the point of view of Protection. Without reliable linking-up by signallers of some description no system of Protection will avail us at all. Really through efficiency in one means efficiency in all.

Then there are counter-measures by attacking his Transport: every lorry burned, every bicycle captured, every horse shot, means so much deducted from the enemy's raiding capacity. Consequently we must redouble our attacks on his Transport machinery of every description. Latterly there have been reports of enemy troops refusing to march on foot, so accustomed have they become to being easily transported in lorries. We may even reasonably assume that their physical efficiency and stamina is to some extent impaired by constantly travelling in lorries.

Closely connected with the question of Transport is that of road-cutting, which has been applied with remarkable results on several recent occasions. This is a specialised subject which requires to be dealt with separately, but we may adopt for practical purposes the Donnybrook Fair maxim—"when you see a head, hit it." That is to say—"When you see a road, cut it."

But the final move against Drives should always be Aggressive Tactical Action—the drivers must be turned on and mauled as heavily as possible. There will always be some opportunity of doing this. A recent report thus describes their system of operating: "They took possession of all the hills with small parties and had detachments operating in the fields between, with connecting files between those and the parties on

the hills." Aeroplanes scouted overhead. These arrangements are practically identical with those of the Boer War—fronts and intervals would, of course, be narrower.

These two distinct types of action for meeting moves of this kind: (a) By forces inside the enemy cordon, (b) By forces outside it. The correct method for the force inside is thus described by one of our officers: "I marched the whole force to a strong defensive and springing-off position . . . and placed pickets, sentry groups, scouts etc. My idea was to lie low and await developments. Should the enemy form a skirmishing circle, I would feel it, make a feint, and break through at some other point which would suit me." Such action merely calls for trained troops and judicious leading—the enemy cannot possibly be strong all along a cordon. Sometimes it may even be possible to inflict sharp losses on him as we burst through.

As for action by forces outside—it will vary greatly with circumstances. Sometimes a few snipers carefully posted will be the most efficacious method; sometimes the roads may be blocked behind the enemy—in this case even a temporary barrier is of value; sometimes again it will be possible to assemble enough forces for a quite formidable attack on them from the rear. Where this last is possible an important objective should be selected for attack—their halted lorries, the Command Post of the O.C. who will be of senior rank, any formed supporting body of troops. By carefully selecting the objective for our counterstroke we can wrest the initiative from them and completely turn the tables. There is an offensive solution for every military problem. Find it for this one.

NOTES FROM REPORTS

At Clogher Cross, Westport, 16 men were proceeding to town across country in order to attack Patrol there when they were surprised by two Police tenders. *Our men had absolutely no cover, but they opened fire—the only thing they could do under the circumstances. After 25 minutes battle the police retreated towards town. It is now definitely known that five of their men were wounded. No casualties to our men.*

I placed a Republican Flag out of a chimney *with grenade attached.* On going up for same one or two were badly got and also some more on the ground (In Longford)

The enemy threw petrol and explosive bombs and set the wood which contained a good deal undergrowth on fire (In Kilkenny)

Lamps and excavations on Harold's Cross Road removed after Curfew. Lamps and working materials found broken and scattered next morning. a car ran into cutting.

AEROPLANE PHOTOGRAPHS II.

The best means the English have at their disposal for locating our standing positions, strong points and dumps in the country is the aeroplane photographer. In order to overcome this difficulty it is therefore necessary to understand what an aeroplane photograph records.

A photograph records colours, accident of ground such as bare earth, vegetation, woods, etc., in terms of light and shade, and is a patchwork or pattern of black and white meeting in varying intensities of grey. An agricultural district presents a regular chess board pattern, with large rectangular expanses of monotony, the only accidents to break the monotony being hedges, banks, houses with their attendant deep shadows. Broken ground such as patchy vegetation presents a highly complex pattern, full of merging lights and shades.

Photographically, the effect of colour is not so marked or important as the effect of light and shade. Earth is towards the white end of the scale, and grass and vegetation towards the black—not because of their respective colours, but on account of the amount of *contained shadow or texture*.

A billiard table or top hat illustrates this quality. Brush them the wrong way, against the nap, and their tone is lowered to dark green or dead black; brushed the right way, with the nap, they appear much lighter in tone. They absorb light in the former case and reflect it in the latter. Nap is constituted of millions of slender hairs, each one throwing a shadow when erect, but casting none when "laid." Grass, or vegetation, possesses this same property to a marked degree. The longer it is, the darker it appears on a photograph: but when it has been pressed down the amount of shadow thrown is lessened and consequently it appears lighter. Hence the obviousness in a photograph of a slightly worn track in grass which is quite inconspicuous from the ground.

Earth, on the contrary, contains little texture, and the longer it has been turned up and exposed to rain and sun the less it has. A beaten track is, however, noticeable, as it contains no texture at all, and will therefore reflect more light.

The reason for mottled effect in a photograph of a patchy mixture of grass and earth, which blend imperceptibly into each other is therefore evident.

A field of young corn, viewed from the ground, appears green, but from above, probably the earth only is seen, darker in tone than the normal owing to the shadows cast by young blades of corn.

It is of first importance to grasp this principle of regarding any locality purely from the point of view of the pattern it will present on a photograph. Once understood, the problem of choosing and erecting a

cover which will reproduce that pattern, or will fit naturally into it, is rendered far simpler. This is the basis of successful camouflage.

DESTROYING WAR MATERIAL

Latterly we have been able to greatly increase the number of attacks on Enemy War Material in various parts of the country. Previously some of our units were slow to realise the importance of this: an attack on a barrack, a well-planned ambush etc, these took the public eye. But the mere burning of a lorry or shooting of a horse did not seem anything. And yet, what are the actual facts? The enemy is hit far harder by losses of material in a war of this kind than by losses of men—unless on an unusually big scale.

Attacks on War Material have three results: (a) They inflict loss on the enemy, (b) They weaken his fighting strength by making him split up his forces to provide numerous escorts, (c) They often help to provide ourselves with warlike stores. We have latterly in this way secured many motors, bicycles, instruments, tools, clothes etc. And if the matter were placed on a more systematic basis we would have still more useful captures to record.

The amount of direct loss inflicted on the enemy recently has been very great: in some of his big centres great quantities of valuable stores have been destroyed. The most recent example was the burning of lorry tyres worth many thousand of pounds at the North Wall under the noses of Auxiliaries. One day in April a train rumbled into Waterford with six disabled Crossleys on trucks—and a Crossley is worth nearly £1,000.

Again consider the value of a mule—the difficulty of breeding good mules, of transporting them across the Atlantic, of training them—in all these hundreds of pounds are involved. The mule can work harder, stand climates better, and resist disease better than the horse. The enemy can replace the full of a Crossley of Black-and-Tans more easily than a single mule. Even a horse shot is far more serious loss than a couple of soldiers. These things are not evident at first—we must point them out.

Finally by compelling the enemy to split up his forces to provide escorts we make him offer opportunities for attack. Some of his escorts will be weak, and some will be carelessly commanded. All such as these must be pounced upon speedily and vigorously. We preserve the Initiative by energetically attacking all points that the enemy must protect—War Material of all kinds gives us abundant opportunities.

Frequent Road-cutting, wire-cutting and the seizure of tools and telephone apparatus are reported from all the Battalion areas of the West Limerick Brigade for the month of April.