

AN T-ÓGLÁC

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THE ROAD OF FREEDOM

Nothing has yet happened which should cause the Irish Republican Army to relax its vigilances. Now as always the soldiers of Ireland stand ready to guard the nation's honour and the rights and liberties of the Irish people. As long as it lasts the truce will be rigidly observed by the officers and men of the Irish Republican Army and no provocative acts or words will be indulged in at this crisis in our country's history. The war was not our seeking; and no persons will welcome the dawn of peace more heartily than the fighting men of Ireland; for they know that there can only be peace where there is freedom. The soldiers of the Irish Republic are not a apart. They are not a band of men who delight in warfare for its own sake. They are simply the armed manhood of the nation, at one with the people of Ireland, flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone sharing the hopes, desires and sufferings of their fellow-countrymen. Their fight has been on behalf of the whole people of Ireland, in defence of the nation to protect what the nation holds dear, to advance the cause to which the nation has given their lives to the struggle and whenever our own noble old Ireland requires them they will spring to her defence again as ready as ever to resist foreign aggression, whoever the aggressor.

The President of the Irish Republic in an important proclamation has warned the people of Ireland against undue confidence. To the soldiers of the Army of Ireland that warning is unnecessary, for they know that they are soldiers and remain soldiers still whatever political contingencies may arise. The organisation, discipline and efficiency of the Irish Republican Army must be maintained unimpaired during the suspension of hostilities. A truce is not a peace; we desire peace as we desire freedom and know that one cannot come without the other. The perfect loyalty with which the

truce has been observed throughout Ireland is a splendid proof to the whole world of the perfect discipline of our Army. Right up to the stroke of noon on Monday, July 11th the guerilla warfare raged and never at any period in the War of Independence have our forces shown more widespread activity nor operated more effectively. Not a shot has been fired since noon. The guns are silent—but they remain in the hands of the Irish Volunteers. From the military point of view we remain exactly where we were; we have lost no advantage. From the points of view other than military our position is stronger than ever before.

Now as in the past the strength and efficiency of the Irish Republican remains the keynote of the Irish situation. This is because the Army is the Irish nation. It is the will of the whole people to be free expressed in concrete form by the voluntary arming and drilling of the young men of the people. Whether the road to Freedom still untravelled by us be long and steep and rocky, or whether what is left of the road be short and smooth, the soldiers of the Irish Republican Army are ready to march on it again when needed with the same cheerful courage and calm discipline as in the past

A THRILLING ESCAPE

The following is a report received from a Company officer by the O.C. of Cork No. 3 Brigade:—

On the evening of the 17 June at 8 P.M. I was lying in the centre of a field at Castleview. One man was with me, when the military surprised us, and called on us to put up our hands. We immediately jumped to our feet, I drew my Peter the Painter with which I was armed and fired three shots in quick succession at military who were then quickly approaching us. We then took cover as also did the military. While I was in cover I saw some military who were not in cover and fired two shots at them. I then retreated under

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DEFENSIVE FORCES IRELAND

OUR LATEST ALLY THE THOMPSON GUN

The Thompson Sub-machine-Gun of which a large number are now in the hands of the Irish Republican Army is the latest improvement in quick-firing weapons. It has many advantages over any other type of machine gun and in particular over those used by the British—Lewis, Hotchkiss and Vickers. The important point to be remembered is that the above mentioned British guns are not considered readily mobile. The Thompson on the other hand is more than half as light again as any similar weapon used by them and can be transported by one man with no more effort than that required for a rifle. Considering this weapon in the hands of a proficient operator—the terrific speed with which ammunition may be used, the deadly effect of the .45 calibre bullets and, from the ammunition standpoint, the fact that the same shells can be used in the Colt .45 Pistol and the Colt .45 Revolver—arms largely used by our troops—it is a weapon ideally suited for use in guerilla warfare.

The weight of Thompson gun without stock and magazines is approximately 8½ lbs—with stock and 100 round disc magazine fully loaded 18½ lbs. There are three magazines used in connection with this weapon:

- (1) The box magazine holding 20 cartridges
- (2) The 50 disc " " 50 "
- (3) The 100 disc " " 100 "

(at present two of the above magazines are available for use Nos 1 and 3.

The weapon can be effectively used at any distance up to 600 yards. It has a flat trajectory of approximately 100 yards. To fire accurately beyond this range the rear sight must be adjusted to the range desired. On a recent official test by a proficient operator firing, automatically a fully loaded 100-rounds disc magazine at a bull's eye target 15 inches in diameter and 100 yards distance, a 100% accuracy was obtained. This standard is too much to expect from the average operator under war conditions but experience so far has proved that the average normally trained man can obtain a direct hit percentage of 90 to 95 per cent. The chief defect in all machine guns is their tendency to jamb on important occasions. This annoying feature is entirely absent in the Thompson Sub-machine Gun. This achievement is all the more remarkable when the rate and variety of discharge is considered. The rate of fire of this weapon is 100 per cent greater than that of any other machine gun; British or otherwise. It fires 20 rounds per second and the average discharge time period of the 100 rounds disc magazine is 5½ seconds.

There are three methods of fire control: Semi-automatic, Automatic (Bursts), Automatic (Continuous.) The first method gives a single discharge

per trigger squeeze and this operates the machine gun as a rifle. The second gives bursts of from 5 to 10 shots according to duration of trigger squeeze, while the last discharges the whole magazine or such rounds as may remain therein by one continuous stream of bullets. Each of the above variations in fire control has its special advantage when used against particular forms of enemy targets.

The gun is air-cooled, automatically oiled, composed of standardized parts easily replaceable and is unique in the possession of a double grip system. By means of the fore and rear grips it may be used as a revolver from the hip position.

From these particulars of the novel features in the Thompson Sub-machine Gun it will at once be seen with what deadly effect it can be used against enemy troops, how easily it may be carried and concealed under an ordinary coat and owing to its freedom from faults how easily it may be maintained in good working condition. With such a superb weapon available it is up to the individual soldier to lose no opportunity of learning all he can about the construction, use and care of it.

HUSBANDING AMMUNITION

The importance of controlling the expenditure of ammunition is momentous and it is only by exercising the most rigid discipline and fire control that the best possible results can be gained with the minimum expenditure of ammunition. With this object in view it is necessary to understand the:—

SEQUENCE OF FIRE ORDERS AND REASONS

1. *The name or number of unit*—To ensure delivery of order properly
2. *Range*—So that the man does all the looking down required at first and has more time to recognise target.
3. *Indication*—Distribution—Two points on a definite line.
Concentration—Actual point of aim:—
(a) Part of actual target.
(b) An auxiliary aiming mark.
(c) Distance indicated from either.
4. *Number of rounds*: Because:—(a) It checks expenditure of ammunition.
(b) It insures a lull in the firing during which a fire order may again be given
5. *Fire or Rapid Fire*—means reserve of fire.
(a) Ranging.
(b) When effect obtained in a given time with slow fire is not sufficient.
(c) Surprise effect.
(d) Covering purposes.

METHODS OF GIVING FIRE ORDERS AND REASONS

1. CALMLY:—It inspires confidence and avoids confusion.
2. Must be given as an ORDER.—To command obedience.
3. Must be loud:—So that every one can hear.
4. Must be giving slowly:—To avoid mutilation.
5. There must be pauses:—So that each part will be understood.

TWO KINDS OF FIRE ORDERS

1. BRIEF ORDERS:—These are emergency orders, used at close range:—(example) 200, Enemy advancing fire.
2. Anticipatory FIRE ORDER:—(example) 800, when enemy reaches fence, 5 rounds fire.

THE ORDER "CEASE FIRE" means:—Stop shooting, Reload, Wait orders.

A FILLED-IN ROAD TRAP

The following is a report received from a Battalion Lieutenant of Engineering in a Cork Brigade:—

On June 6th, in conjunction with the Captain of — Company and some picked men, I started operations opening a trench which had been filled a few days previously by the enemy. As the enemy used no commandeered labour at the filling I exercised every precaution, as I expected the cutting had been mined. After working cautiously for an hour and a half a small box was sighted. The box was painted slate-grey and therefore could not be easily discerned being practically the same colour as the surrounding material.

A large stone was placed on the cover of the box thus keeping the levers compressed. The box internally was merely the width of the Grenade, and in length held two grenades, placed so that the base plugs were in contact with one another, the strikers respectively facing the end of the box. Extending along one side of the box was a slit about 1" in height, through which the enemy removed the pins from the bombs when he had placed the box in position with the stone on the cover.

The rings of the pins however could not be reached by the hand when the cover was in position, so the enemy must have attached a piece of string or wire to the rings by which they were able to pull the pins. With the assistance of the Captain and 1st. Lieutenant of — Company, I removed the box, keeping the lid compressed.

We next proceeded to insert pins in the Grenades. We accomplished this by sliding the lid along until we were able to get our fingers on the lever of one of the Grenades. The lever was compressed by the hand, and the cover slid farther until all one Grenade was

exposed. The box was inverted and this Grenade slipped out and a pin inserted.

Owing to the position of the Grenades in the box, Base Plugs touching one another, the lid had to be slid back the reverse direction and the second Grenade was removed in the same manner as the former one. This being accomplished, the work of excavation was restarted and after ½ an hour, another similar box was sighted. This box was however, resting side downwards with the cover facing to the front, a large stone placed against it, keeping it in position.

The two Grenades were removed in the same method as the preceding ones. On examination, the Detonator Fuses of the first Grenades discovered were saturated with water, but the two Grenades in the second box were in good condition.

NIGHT OPERATION ORDERS

1. No talking save to pass an order.
2. Matches, pipes, tobaccos and cigarettes will not be carried.
3. N.C.Os. will carry flash lamps, candles and matches.
4. Watches will be synchronised by O.C. Unit.
5. Pockets will be emptied of articles not applicable to operations.
6. Coats will be buttoned up, caps back to front.
7. Officers, N.C.Os and men will see that their whistles are all right,
8. Weapons and ammunition will be cleaned.
9. Rifles shot guns, Revolvers, and Automatics will be tested with regard to ejection. Care will be taken to see that Shot Gun and Verrey Light Cartridges are not swollen. Hand Grenades will be inspected.
10. Each man will understand the whistle signals.
11. Arms or equipment will not rattle. Men will jump about in full kit, and the cause of any undue noise will be remedied.
12. Each man will thoroughly understand the part he has to play in the attack, and his action in case of failure.
13. Officers will wear a diamond white disc on back of coat, N.C.Os. a broad armband on either arm.
14. Shot guns will not be loaded. Scouts will put a cartridge in the chamber.
15. Phosphorus, Luminous Paint, or a white rag, will be utilised to show up sights.
16. *Fire will not be opened without a definite signal, even though enemy open fire first.*
17. The men will be told the Password.
18. Knee pads, when ordered will be placed on boots.

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under desperately heavy fire from 30 men who comprised the patrol that surprised us. I retreated up very rising ground and succeeded in gaining the top safely. The other man did not follow me I then had only two rounds of ammunition left. Two soldiers coming from a flank got very close to me, I managed to shoot the foremost in the arm and he dropped his rifle, I cannot say if it is a more serious wound. The other soldier then halted and I retreated at top speed towards Timoleague out side of which place I hid my "Peter" and remaining round of ammunition. I entered a farmers house and got a pony and trap and drove furiously through the village of Timoleague in the Bandon direction. My intention was to warn some of the Brigade Staff who were to hold a meeting close to the place where I was first attacked.

I had travelled about one mile of the road when I ran into another cycling patrol of military. I had no option now but to submit to arrest. I was taken into custody with another man that was arrested along the road. One soldier was placed in charge of both of us with orders to take us on to Timoleague the direction in which the patrol was proceeding. The patrol went ahead and I proceeded along the road about 400 yards with my guard when I saw that the rest of the party went out of sight round a turn. I then rushed my guard taking hold of his rifle, he dealt me a violent blow on the face but I hit back quickly at the same time striking him with my knee in the pit of the stomach and he fell. I then got complete possession of his rifle and he sprang to his feet and ran. I fired one shot from rifle at him but missed him, I was a bit flurried after the struggle. He continued running and taking aim again I fired and he fell and lay on the road.

On examining the rifle I found it to contain 3 rounds. I then got away safely with the rifle the number of which is 2465, the man from whom I captured it is a Corporal in the Essex Regt. who boasted to me that he had beaten 5 B—— Shiners.

HOW VOLUNTEERS MEET DEATH

The following occurs in a report from Mid-Clare. On the 10th June a party of four Volunteers of this Brigade while engaged in cutting wires on the railway at Meelick were surprised by a party of 30 enemy military with two machine guns. Owing to an accidental shot being mistaken for the dismiss signal all the outposts had withdrawn and the enemy travelling in a train with steam off and down hill, swept round a turn on the four men without any warning. The train pulled up at once and fire was opened by the enemy at close range. The O.C. of our men was up on a telegraph pole at the time and when he shouted

a warning the other three dashed away, two to one side and one to the other he himself only having time to jump behind a low bank beside the railway when fire opened. M. Gleeson and C. Mc Carthy got some distance up the field when Mc Carthy fell wounded. Gleeson went on but on reaching a place of safety he found his companion missing and on seeing him lying wounded in the field he immediately started back again for him. A machine-gun and about a dozen rifles were playing on the field about 100 yards range while a party of 5 soldiers crossed up to cut off the retreat of the two men. It must have been as evident to Gleeson as it was to my informants who were looking on that no power on earth could have saved Mc Carthy but apparently he preferred going back and dying with his comrades to leaving him. He raced down under a hail of bullets, lifted up Mc Carthy and brought him up across the field with his left arm around him while he fired back at the pursuing soldiers with his revolver. A little further up Gleeson fell badly wounded and Mc Carthy struggled on. When the soldiers came up on him this hero of 20 years who was never before in action, lying wounded and dying on the ground was still unconquered. In his last moments he fired his last cartridge at them and according to the British O.C. (a Lieut. Gordon, Royal Scots) he drew his last breath and pulled his trigger on an empty case together. He pulled again after his last shot but his revolver was empty. The British Officer who was through the European War stated he (Gleeson) was the bravest man he had ever seen.

At the other side of the railway another fine feat was performed. The O.C. had jumped down from the pole behind a low wall. While he remained lying flat he was under cover but immediately he stirred he would be seen and the train with the enemy in it was only a few feet from him. To get away he had to stand up and get over a thick fence of wire and hedge. His companion (1st. Lieut. A. Coy. 2nd. Batt.) got away on getting the first alarm but on missing his O.C. he came back again. He sized up the situation immediately, seeing that if he could attract the attention of the enemy he might succeed in getting his O.C. away. He immediately opened fire with a Martini rifle and hit one soldier twice when he attempted to get out of the carriage. One of the machine-guns and 9 or 10 rifles were trained on him but he stood his ground behind a pier until his O.C. succeeded in getting to cover. His rifle jammed after a few shots but when the enemy saw one of their comrades badly wounded no further diversion was needed to make them turn their attention to their own skins.

At the present time every company should have a week-end Training Camp. A programme for one appears next week.

