Enemies of the People

The irregulars are at present engaged in a campaign which has for its object the destruction of the Irish Nation.

This is abundantly clear to all who have followed the trend of events in Ireland during the past few months.

For the first time since the Invasion, a Government has been set up by the Irish people, responsible to them in all things, and entrusted with all power to govern and develop the national resources.

An opportunity is now provided to undo the harm of 750 years of alien rule and to set about the gigantic task of building up the nation.

Those who direct the activities of the irregulars have thought fit to obstruct all this. They are attempting to over-ride the will of the people by resorting to methods of terrorism and destruction which might well put an alien force to shame.

They are pursuing this policy fully conscious of the grave results which it must have upon the political and economic life of the country.

The irregulars are in fact fighting the People's Army to bring the British Army back.

They want to see the horror of the Black and Tan regime once more prevail in the land.

The irregulars are attempting to bring about the destruction of the Irish Nation in order to wreak vengeance on the people because the latter are standing firmly by the National Government.

The irregulars are the enemies of the people. They are the enemies of peace and order in our country.

What are you doing to defeat the terrorists?

"THE ROBBERS"

A gang of irregulars made a descent on the village of Rathkeale on Monday evening, and looted several shops. They have seized thousands of pounds worth of goods in this town since they commenced their attempt to subvert the National Government. No wonder the people have come to refer to them as "the robbers."

Free State news sheet, 27 July 1922.

County Gaol. The leader was placed in the County Infirmary directly opposite the gaol. The gaol was now open for business on a large scale.

These things having been done, the infantrymen returned to the Tavern and were reinforced later. They immediately barricaded the Tipperary and Kilmallock roads, which branched from Mulgrave St. at the Tavern like the letter "Y."

As a result of this action, the Staters controlled most of the perimeter of the city. The Diehards had a line of retreat still open to them to the South West at Ballinacurra leading to Patrickswell and the counties of Cork and Kerry.

It was the humane ambition of the Staters to get those men out of the city and cause their dispersal without bloodshed. In taking the Tavern, the Staters now controlled the water supplies to the city from the nearby Tank Field in the Fair Green.

The Diehards had held the city for four weeks, but made no move to defend it. By their rapacious and peremptory seizure of
goods they aroused the hostility of such citizens as were in favour of the republican ideal until their goods vanished. On the arrival of the Staters in the city, there was consternation and outraged indignation in the Diehard camps at their audacious and unexpected entry into the city. Confused groups of Diehards marched, raced or trotted down Henry Street and occupied Russell’s Mill, the G.P.O. and Daly’s Bakery. They also occupied the mills along the Dock Road. As they marched or trotted to their positions, they were occasionally barraged by missiles from upper windows on their route. They occupied the bakeries in Parnell Street and Edward Street. They now held three bakeries and had secured a breadcrumb for the New Barracks and other posts held by them. They now had enough bread for their needs and a little bit more for the citizens in their territory.

Included in the Diehard territory were the houses of the wealthier citizens and the medical profession. The Staters held the two hospitals and the County Infirmary, so that they had hospitals but no doctors, while the Diehards had doctors but no hospitals. Though the Diehards were prepared to defend the Republic, they were not prepared to die for it. Any wounds which they might receive would be mere scratches, easily treated by a medico with a dab of iodine. The injuries which they proposed to inflict on the Staters would need hospital treatment and so the Staters would need the hospitals, which was a happy and encouraging thought.

Having gained one side of Sarsfield Street, the Staters remained quiet and unobtrusive. They did not wish to draw a massed attack on themselves. For nine days they watched the thundering bread vans racing up and down Henry Street from Daly’s Bakery with an armed guard on the high seat beside the driver. On the ninth day, as the vans began galloping down Henry Street, they were fired upon and halted in their gallop. One man was wounded and several others were flung from their high perch with the shock of surprise. This was the opening volley in the fourth siege of Limerick.

Daly’s Bakery was now isolated and, unless the garrison went underground into the sewers, they could not escape from the premises. Because of their heavy occupation of the Bakery, the garrison had neglected to stockpile some nourishing tinned foods and vegetables. They had depended on the New Barracks for their daily intake of calories and now that supply line was severed. Each morning they hoped for and expected a relief force from the New Barrack, but no fierce attack and relief force came to their aid. By sunset they feared and dreaded an attack from the Staters on the opposite side of the street. The silence and inaction of the Staters was more menacing than any attack. They were not going to wade through their brother’s blood.

For four days the garrison lived on bread and on bread alone. No streaky rashers or smiling sausage lay on their breakfast table; even the solace of a blue duck egg was denied them. Their dinner was bread and their supper was bread, but man cannot live on bread alone: he needs a balanced diet of proteins and carbohydrates washed down with vitamin-rich fluids for sustained effort. On the fourth day of this malnurtitious diet, the Staters attacked by firing several volleys through the plate glass windows and doors. They then entered the bakery and took the garrison of thirty-five men into custody. There was no resistance, there were no casualties.

The prisoners were taken to Cruise’s Hotel, where they were given an enriched soup followed by a substantial meal of tender meats and vegetables. Not until their release from internment over a year later did they enjoy such a meal.

The Diehards were now minus one bakery, leaving them but two; the Staters were one bakery up, their score now being six bakeries. The bakeries held by the Staters were Daly’s in Sarsfield St., McNamara’s in Mary St., Reilly’s and Russell’s bakeries in the Irishtown, Troy’s in Patrick St. and Tubridy’s in Athehnark Street.

The Staters gave themselves and their opponents three days for political meditation and then sent a scouting patrol of twenty men up Henry Street to test the defence and the road barrier which the Diehards had erected by Russell’s Mills. The Staters had come within fifty yards of the G.P.O. when they were fired upon and retrieved with three wounded but mobile men. On returning to their base, they were rebuked for their unseemly haste and chided for their precipitate and un-heroic retreat.

One man amongst them suggested that if the officer with all the talk led them and arranged covering fire, they would advance again with happier results. The suggestion was acted upon and thirty men raced up Henry Street firing at the G.P.O. and the road barrier at the Mills. Two groups of twenty men advanced behind them, haling, taking aim and advancing again. A Lewis gunner was set up on a third-storey window which covered Henry Street and carried on a light conversation with the gunners behind the barrier at Russell’s Mills. The Lewis gun in Sarsfield Street, having the advantage of height, gained the honours and the scouting party and its supporters entered the G.P.O. and found it to be empty. The Post Office now came under heavier fire from the Mills.

For almost a fortnight the Diehards had enjoyed the leisurely occupation of the G.P.O. on the corner of Henry Street – Cecil Street. They had a line of retreat towards the New Barracks by the Post Office Lane and other lanes which ran parallel with the main streets. They also had an opening into the spacious underground sewers to the Telephone Exchange in number six, Upper Cecil Street. In the sewer they had installed electric light from the plant in the Post Office and could move as they pleased up to the new Exchange. In the Exchange they could listen in on all calls and enjoy the secretly gained information from various parts in the city. On the second attack on the Post Office they retreated up the lanes to the New Barrack and in their haste neglected to burn down the Post Office. The men in the Exchange phoned the latest information and were instructed to burn the Exchange and join the garrison in the Glentworth Hotel, but the Staters emerging from the lighted sewers took them prisoner and prevented the destruction of the Exchange. The Staters could now enjoy listening in on confidential information and gain the names of those people in their territory who were supplying information to the Diehards and later arrest and intern them. The reaction of the Diehards to the capture of Daly’s Bakery and the G.P.O. was that one Free State soldier was shot dead in Waller’s Wells, one at the junction of Roche’s Street with four other streets, and one on Boyd’s roof water tank. Three civilians were also wounded.

Two hundred yards uphill, in the fifth...
block at 49 O’Connell Street, the Diehards had barricaded the street and billeted themselves in Kidd’s Café. They thus had a line of fire down O’Connell St. and Patrick St. as far as the Town Hall, a total range of over 300 yards. With their customary concern for the welfare of their men, the Diehards had been placed in that commanding position because of the splendid culinary facilities available at Kidd’s Café. In the Café were a resident chef and staff, who normally prepared and served rare and exotic dishes, such as the pirate king, Capt. Kidd of the Caribbean, might have ordered for his personal pleasure. The Cafe was provisioned by the Diehards with the goods normally available in the city. In the hands of the chef, the potato, the egg and various meats took on a new and sublime grandeur when enriched and embellished with the fruits, spices and condiments of the Indies and the Orient, which were normally served in Kidd’s Café. Those rich foods may have given a wanton belligerence to the Diehards, whose duties were to deny the use of the streets to the Staters. The Diehards had a line of retreat from the back gardens to the Glentworth Hotel. Their orders were, in the event of a massed attack by the Staters, “send for reinforcements.”

The Diehards could cross O’Connell St. only at Cruise’s Hotel, where they had a trench and a barrier. Anything that moved was shot at by the Diehards. The only thing safe in the street was the life-size wooden figure of a Chinese Mandarin overhead a grocer’s shop opposite Kidd’s Café. The benevolent-looking figure in scarlet and gold was mounted between the two windows, sixteen feet off the ground. The figure was mounted there for almost a century and had counted the passing years with calm serene indifference. The Diehards regarded him as a mascot and would not blast him from his high perch. The Diehards in the café were armed with German Mauser rifles, which fired a copper-coated leaden bullet of almost half-inch diameter. It could pierce a three-eighth inch steel plate at one hundred yards. They were splendid weapons for shooting elephant or hippopotami, shattering the conciet and bones of those rugged beasts. No one ever survived a Mauser bullet: they died. The Mausers had a shattering effect on the morale of the Staters, who dared not appear in O’Connell St. without suffering the loss of men and prestige. At this time the Staters did not have an armoured car to run up O’Connell Street and declare their ambitions by cleansing the windows of Kidd’s Café with a Vickers gun. It can now be seen that the Staters had a problem. Their problem was to avoid the occupying hazard of perforation of the cranium by a Mauser bullet, but Collins had said to those men, “go in and take the city.”

The most difficult problem often has a simple solution. Einstein had a problem and expressed a universal concept in a simple equation. The Staters could not go up O’Connell Street in the open, but they could tunnel their way underground to Kidd’s Café. In this way they would not fritter away their resources in futile acts of valor. Starting in the basement of William Street – O’Connell Street corner, they broke down each dividing wall where it was weakest. With steel bars and sledge-hammers, with picks and shovels, they broke through into the next basement at the fireplace. Where there was no fireplace they broke through two feet of bricks. Where there was a fireplace, a mere nine inches of brick encouraged their progress. In this manner they reached the underground vaults under Thomas Street. The ends of the vaults or cellars formed the walls of the underground sewers. Those cellars were broken down and the sewers were crossed with the heavy wooden doors of the vault and so they entered the vaults of the next block of buildings. What normally would be a wearying and toilsome task became a cascade of falling bricks alarmed the garrison, some of whom came downstairs to investigate the cause. On seeing the uninvited visitors emerging through the opening, they dashed back upstairs with the alarming news, “the Staters are making a massed attack on the café.”

The orders of the Diehards were, in the event of a massed attack, to send for reinforcements. Each of those men were dedicated and zealous men, each felt that only by personal sacrifice and zeal could reinforcements be brought quickly to the scene. Each felt that it was better to go in person rather than depend on a messenger, who might prove to be unreliable. In their anxiety to comply with their orders, they dropped their loaded Mausers and, dashing out the back, hastened to the Glentworth with the utmost speed. The Staters waited in vain for the return of the garrison. They collected fifteen loaded Mauser rifles on the premises. Going out on O’Connell Street, they took possession of the barracks. They now had full control of O’Connell Street from the Town Hall to the Monument, a distance of 400 yards. This was a notable gain without the loss of life or wading through their brothers’ blood. Looking up to the red and gold figure above the barricade, they could see a smile on the face of the Chinaman.

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On the Island, the Staters held the Courthouse, St. Mary’s Cathedral, and the pub at the corner of Nicholas St. -
was untenable. Their purpose was attrition, to wear down the O/C of the Castle that his position in Thomond Bridge, connected the Castle with the Clare bank of the river.

The Diehards held the Castle and St. Munchin’s Protestant Church, with a splendid sniping position on its square tower. There were nearly one hundred men in the Castle. This was a ridiculously small number of men to maintain a minimum of five sentry posts with daily reliefs under conditions of potential massed attack.

Day by day and slowly but surely the Staters leisurely approached the Castle, their nearness being indicated by the rifle fire of the snipers. They were in no hurry. Their purpose was attrition, to wear down the garrison by keeping them continuously on the alert. They had no intention of a massed attack, as they had not enough men for this purpose. They hoped that the Diehards would evacuate the Castle without bloodshed. It became clear to the O/C of the Castle that his position was untenable.

A line of retreat lay open to him at night, across Thomond Bridge to the Clare side of the river. A Lewis gun on St. Mary’s tower would deter even the most foolhardy from crossing by day, and the nights are short in July.

A speedy evacuation of the Castle was vital to avoid surrender or death. They could not escape from the Island except by boat. The fast-flowing river could not be crossed by boats except when the tide was almost in and ere it ebbed. This was a period of almost three hours. These were the hours of watchfulness by the Staters. As the Staters had a post on the metal railway bridge across the Shannon above the Castle, it is seen that the Island, besides being surrounded by water, was also surrounded by Staters. It was decided to remove all sick men from the Castle in a Red Cross van. The plan was put into action and in a short time the Red Cross van made several journeys to the Strand Barracks. The route from the Castle to the Strand is downhill, so that a laden van would have little difficulty in making the short journey.

The speedy movements of the van attracted considerable attention. It seemed to indicate that the van was being loaded at the Castle with dead or wounded men. The dreadful thought arose that the garrison had indulged in mutual slaughter, or that some explosion or accident had occurred, and that the ambulance was removing the men to the Strand for medical treatment. As the nearest hospital was the Workhouse, it was considered odd that the van did not take that uphill journey.

As the van moved along the Strand for what proved to be its last journey, it stalled. Two men got down and by pushing, managed to get it in motion again. It was then seen that these were not sick men needing medical attention, but militant men needing militant attention. These things being noted, fire was opened on the ambulance. There were no casualties.

The story of the Staters firing on the Red Cross ambulance quickly spread throughout the city. In plaintive tones the infamous deed was condemned by the Diehards. The citizens were assured that the few men in the ambulance were in for a joy-ride only. The whole affair was a mere boyish prank carried out by youngsters who, as soldiers of the Republic, would do nothing mean or low.

In ringing tones and with flashing eyes the question was asked: To what depths of depravity would the Staters sink? In voices appalled with horror it was even suggested that the Staters might bring down the Big Gun from Dublin and start shelling the brave defenders of the Republic. As everything which went on in the rival camps was known to each of them and to the citizens, the various events of the day were discussed with homely and spirited candour. As the city prepared to bed down for the night, the possibility that the Staters might bring down the Big Gun was freely discussed.

In the four military barracks there was quiet and confident calm amongst the garrisons. The possibility of the Big Gun being used against them was also freely discussed. It was felt that the gun would come in by the Dublin road and that its progress would be resisted and halted. It was felt that Patrick Sarsfield of glorious memory, looking down from celestial orbit, would smile approval on their noble efforts and bless their brave hearts.

While some discussed and others mused and some lay quietly dreaming, the gun came south over O’Brien’s Bridge. It crossed the Shannon again at Corbally Bridge and continued in by Corbally Road. It crossed over the Abbey River by Park Bridge and entered the city before ten at night.

The gun was towed by a covered heavy motor lorry and travelled at about nine miles per hour. If it travelled any faster,
Free State troops and civilians on William Street, from the Illustrated London News, 29 July 1922. (Limerick Museum)

the iron and wooden wheels would fall to pieces. The gun slowed down to a crawl to pass the barrier at the hump-back narrow Park Bridge. The gun was called Sean McKeon’s 18-pounder. It entered the city on the evening of Wednesday the nineteenth of July, 1922.

The gun was taken to Arthur’s Quay that night. Next morning, July 20th, the gun was set up alongside the Mills and forty feet from the quay wall. The gun was manned by three Limerick men, Jim Leddin and John and Michael McNamara, all from the Island. These three men had been in artillery regiments of the British Army and had been demobilised in 1919 and 1920 at the end of the first World War. The officer in charge of the gun was Colonel Fraher, an ex-officer of artillery and also a Limerick man. By 10 in the morning, the whole city was aware of the arrival of the gun and that the Strand Barracks was to be shelled. Crowds of citizens flocked to every vantage point to view the scene of impending horror. The Staters were unable to stop the onrush of spectators except at Arthur’s Quay, where masses of barbed wire prevented entry. Almost dead on 10.30 am the gun was ready. The range across the river was about 150 yards. At such short range aim is always taken through the barrel of the gun. Colonel Fraher and each of the gunners in turn looked through the barrel of the gun. Some few privileged officers also had a look through the barrel of the gun. It was considered improper to invite the mayor and the two city bishops to have a look: there was but little time for such courtesies. The view through the barrel was true: it gave a telescopic view of the Strand Barrack gate. The shell was then inserted in the breech in correct military manner. The gunners then saluted their officers and the officers returned the salute.

The gun was one of a pair left behind in Athlone by the British when they evacuated and the barracks was handed over to General Sean McKeon. They were old 1912 vintage guns and were badly worn. With the guns was a supply of solid shells. The shells did not contain an explosive charge and so did not explode. In fact, like the guns, the shells were obsolete. It was a solid shell that was inserted in the breech of the eighteen-pounder. Now that everything was ready, a great hush fell upon the military and spectators. A further consultation was held between the officers. Everyone realised that this was an historic occasion, a momentous event. Not since the siege of 1691 had a siege gun been fired in Limerick city. Standing twenty feet from the gun, Colonel Fraher waved his arm. Michael McNamara then pulled the lanyard and fired the gun. This was at 10.30 am. With the roar of the explosion the gun jumped eighteen inches in the air and recoiled backwards, the trail of the gun narrowly missing the gunners. The shell travelled forward and struck a telegram pole thirty feet to the left of the Strand Barrack gate, cutting it down. The shell ricocheted and then struck the second window on the right of the gate. It skidded along the road and later was picked up near the Treaty Stone. The spectators were happy with the spectacle and the loud bang was heard for miles away. They were unhappy with the result and expressed disapproval of the gunners until it was pointed out that this first shot was a trial shot to get the feel of the gun. Better results would follow the next shot. A consultation was held between the Colonel and the gunners and it was agreed that the soft mud and stone of the roadway at Arthur’s Quay was not the best surface for the spade of the gun. A deeper hole was then dug for the trail of the gun. Once more the gun was mounted and aim was taken through the barrel of the gun. From the first shot it was realised that the gun was shooting thirty-five feet to the left at one hundred and fifty yards range. This represented a lateral deviation of about fifteen degrees. To allow for this lateral deviation the gun was aimed at the window near the red brick house on the right of the Strand Barrack. Once more the gun was mounted and aim was taken through the barrel of the gun. From the first shot it was realised that the gun was shooting thirty-five feet to the left at one hundred and fifty yards range. This represented a lateral deviation of about fifteen degrees. To allow for this lateral deviation the gun was aimed at the window near the red brick house on the right of the Strand Barrack. Once more the gun was mounted and aim was
gunners. The tenants in the tenement houses on Arthur's Quay complained loudly, saying "take that yoke away before the houses are knocked down on top of us."

The second shell struck the barrack gate, knocking it down. It bounced off the barrack square and disappeared over the top of us.”

The Strand Barracks is a grey limestone building, two stories high. It is located on the County Clare bank of the Shannon, midway between Thomond and Sarsfield Bridges. It was built in 1774 as a House of Industry, wherein crafts were taught. Years later it was acquired by the British Military and used as a barrack for the defence of the two bridges. It formed a bridgehead into County Clare so that the army forces would not have to battle their way into the Banner County. The barrack could comfortably contain two companies of infantry and a whole battalion in an emergency.

The barric was a rectangle measuring about 47 yards on the front facing the river. It is 116 yards in depth. The outer walls form part of the dormitories, store-rooms etc. within. Inside the barrack is a square overlooked by all the windows within the barrack. Entry and exit from the barrack was by the front gate only.

From these details it can be seen that the Strand was an ideal building ideally situated for its purpose – the defence of Thomond and Sarsfield Bridges.

Before the arrival of the gun there were sixty-five men in the Strand Barracks. Due to their commendable initiative in stockpiling, they had ample supplies of food and ammunition. They were cut off and isolated from the other three barracks. They could not emerge on the Strand Road in front of the barracks. They could hear and enjoy the sound of the flowing river over Curraghguire Falls, but they dare not attempt to look at it. They had made an opening in the wall at the back of the barracks and so had the liberty of all the surrounding country at the back of the barracks. There they could stroll in the open, bask in the sunlight and commune with nature. They could, if they so desired, arrive on the Ennis Road and disperse around the County Clare. The more active amongst them could take a brisk walk towards the Clare Hills or Cappanti Mor, a few miles distant, and return by Craite Wood and the Ennis Road in time for dinner. The only compulsion in their lives was the call of the cook to dinner. Breakfast in the Strand was a standard affair of tea, bread and butter, with a boiled or fried egg, according to taste. This was followed by the cigarette and the long cup of tea. Cigarettes were plentiful.

Dinner was the big event of the day and was looked forward to with curiosity and speculation amongst the garrison. It was like asking "what would you like for Christmas?" The replies gave scope for wit and wisdom. On Monday the dinner might consist of best Limerick bacon with potatoes and cabbage; on Tuesday it could be potatoes, bacon and cabbage; everything depended on the sequence in which the items were served. Should a successful foray in the countryside produce a straying bullock or a witless sheep or lamb, then the menu varied. The order of precedence was first come, first served. Because of these things a continuing interest in dinner was maintained.

On the morning of Thursday, 20th of July, all of the men were up and around by ten o'clock. The sparkling flow of the Shannon at Curraghguire Falls was music to their ears. The occasional rifle fire of the Staters reminded them that they were not in this world for easy living and slothful rest. The bullets falling like isolated drops of rain before a thunderstorm pointed the moral, into each life some rain must fall. Blissfully happy and unconcerned, they were unaware of the coming downpour.

The first shell had cut the telegraph pole, struck the side of the window and finished its career near the Treaty Stone before the sound of the explosion from the gun reached their ears. They were untutored and uninformed in the ways of shellfire, yet an infallible instinct informed them that this was it – The Gun.

Those who were near the barrack basking in the morning sun felt the call of the wild open spaces. They were near and wished they were distant. Those who were distant from the barrack increased the distance.

Never did the hills of Clare and Cappanti Mor look so beautiful and so distant. Far-off Craite Wood was like a mother calling her wayward children home. In times of stress and deep travail, mother knows best. The first shell took their courage; with the second it surely broke down.

The fear and terror of the unknown may have urged some speed – the sight of the Staters compelled speed. Fifty men from Cleeve's factory led by Captain Hessian gave God speed to their movements.

The Galwayman, an ex-officer of the Connaught Rangers, who had resigned his
In an issue of the Free State War News it was inferred that one of our snipers wounded a woman who died in Barrington’s Hospital. That this lady lost her life through a bullet is to be deplored, and the Republican Army wish to convey to her relatives their deepest sympathy. It is impossible to believe that any man worthy of the name could fire on a lady who was carrying out her ordinary daily routine, and the Republican Army would like the people of Limerick to believe that the bullet which caused the lady’s untimely death from whatever side it was fired, was not intended for her.

It is also inferred that one of our men wounded a Nun in the Mount Convent. This kind of propaganda savours of an Englishman.

Civilised Warfare.

On Tuesday one of our ambulances conveying a wounded soldier to hospital was practically riddled by machine gun fire. On reporting the matter to the Free State H.Q. we were informed that the matter would be looked into. We hope it will. This is not playing soldiers. None of our Red Cross boys said this. They all know that we are serious and not playing at soldiers.

Heroes Always.

Cathal Brugha, whose career is well known to all Irishmen, has given his life for the Republic, for which he also stood. It is to be hoped that the man who shot him, and those who gave the orders for his shooting, are now contented. They did more than the English could do, doubtless the English Government will congratulate them in their efforts to save the Empire.

The Middle Classes.

The middle classes have our sincerest sympathy. The Free States are not at all pleased with the response they have received to their call to the middle classes. Poor old middle classes, everybody except yourselves know exactly who the middle classes are, and we are sure that those of you who know that you are the middle classes will hardly follow the example of the lady (the italics are ours) who sent many young men to join the Free States. The middle classes, who ever they are, must surely be aware that the man who will not fight for his country voluntarily no matter on which side, is not worth worrying about. The Republican Authorities wish to inform their dear old friends that they want no recruits of the type the lady from Athlunkard Street sent to the Free States.

Desertors.

The Republican Authorities would like to know who the men posing as Republican deserters are. We have no record of having lost any of our men through desertion.

Oh, to be a Real Newsboy.

The newboys who were arrested for selling lying propaganda stated they got the papers for nothing, but that they were told to bring the money they got for selling them to the Courthouse. Presumably to pay the recrutes who were pushed into the ranks by the threat of the white feather.

Liam Lynch.

The Free States are at it again. General Liam Lynch was looked upon in the same way by the English as the Free states look upon him. But the man who are responsible for the propaganda directed against this gallant officer deserves nothing but contempt. Where would some of the bravest of today be, when we were fighting the English if Liam Lynch was not there?

Casualties.

The Irish Republican Army casualties to date are—2 dead and six wounded. Will the Free States be candid and publish theirs?

The Attack on Daly’s Bakery.

The following statement will interest the people of Limerick. It is to be hoped that the Sergt-Major with whom Miss Daly had an interview in her shop will not be censured. The Sergt-Major has only recently arrived from Dublin, and from what Miss Daly has said, he is a soldier.

On Wednesday morning my bakery premises in Sarsfield St. were searched by Free State troops, on the pretence that a sniper was operating there.

This was ridiculous, as the roof is low and overlooking directly by tall buildings in occupation of their men.

I remained at my work until 4 p.m., when the bakers had finished, the place was locked up by Mr. O’Sullivan, and not a living soul remained.

All during the day, F.S. troops were firing from Cannyock’s windows opposite, also McBurney and the Catholic Institute and they held every position in the locality, so it would be impossible for any person to get in after I left.

On Thursday morning I found the glass in occupation of F.S. troops, the heavy door being smashed and all the glass and partitions inside broken.

From a resident in the street I heard that they came down at 2 a.m. in the morning, and made a great noise smashing in the door.

Sixteen men were taken prisoner. Those men who were taken prisoner were brave and honourable men. Having surrendered they stood their ground and prepared to take the consequences of their
I went to the Officer in charge, and in the presence of his men and some of my employees asked the meaning of such wanton attack.

I protested strongly against their taking over my bakery and so preventing me from baking and distributing bread to the citizens.

He said he was ordered to take the place and search it, he did so and found no one; he was sure there was nobody there at anytime. He seemed appalled at the work done, and added that his men had not damaged the place, but another batch of F. S. troops.

I saw the report in the “SKEAL CATA LUNMINIGE” it is a tissue of lies.

If the place was defended during the night against F. S. troops, then it must have been defended by the ghosts of my dead who died for an IRISH REPUBLIC.

M. DALY.

Raids and Arrests.

The raids and arrests being carried out by the Free States set us thinking. The Black and Tans shoes are now being worn by Irishmen.

Relief

The following letter is interesting:

28 Bowman Street, Limerick, July, 1922.

Captain McInerny, Quartermaster.

A Chare,

Herein I give an account of Food Supplies received and distributed by my Committee to-day.

No of families relieved 333 consisting of 1,883 dependants; average quantity given to each family—Quarter lb. meat, quarter tea, quarter stone flour, 1 lb. sugar, quarter lb. butter.

On behalf of my Committee, I wish to thank the General, Quartermaster, and Quartermaster for their promptitude in relieving the great distress presently prevailing in this district, and any further supplies will be greatly appreciated.

Miss,

JAMES CASEY, Abl.

Republican Courts.

Are the people of Limerick aware that the Free State Government has suppressed, by Proclamation, Republican Courts?

Lloyd George tried and failed, so will his hirelings.

Free State Troops Lay Down Arms.

Members of the Free State Army who have left the Curragh state that there are 1,700; 250 of these recently from Scottish Brigades; they are all ex-soldiers which is causing much dissension. Roughly about 300 men have left the Free State Army in the Curragh and 70 others are under arrest for refusing to carry arms against their fellow countrymen.

It is reported that 9 men laid down their arms in Athlone Barracks last week. Twelve men from Kilbeggan alone left Athlone Free State Barracks and are now working at home.

The Triumph of Wise Statesmanship.

In an article entitled “God Save Ireland” by A. J. Gardiner in “John Bull” July 8th, 1922, we read the following:

“Home Rule (for that is the name he confines on the so-called Treaty). Has done more six months to bring peace between the two countries than centuries of force succeeded in doing. Today the Irish Government is fighting our battle, the battle of mutual friendship and good-will. Think of it—the Irish people at this moment are fighting the foes in their own household in order to make peace with England. Is not this the triumph of wise statesmanship.

Shot for Waving to His Brother.

Free States in Limerick will doubtless feel elated at the foul deed of one of their members in Dublin. Young Sanderson, a lad of 17, had tried to get in to see his brother who was a prisoner in Mountjoy, but was refused. Then he stood outside the prison waving his handkerchief, and was ordered away and threatened. How many times have the relatives stood outside the prisons in Ireland waving to their imprisoned boys—how many times have English Soldiers ordered them away and threatened them, and yet in all these years not one was shot down by the English because he or she waved a handkerchief to an imprisoned relative. It remained for the Free States to shoot in cold blood a boy of 17 for that "crime."

Will the Free States tell us was Pte. Ryan (a Free State soldier and an ex-English soldier) executed for murdering his comrades, Moloney, at O’Brien’s Bridge.

Republican news sheet, 20 July 1922.

(Limerick Museum)
bore of the gun at the Castle without endangering any nearby houses. It is true
that the Treaty Stone by Thomond Bridge might lie in the line of fire or be hit by
accident, but it could be removed from its pedestal before firing started, like moving
the furniture before polishing the floor. On this stone was signed the Treaty which
followed the siege of 1691.

Here is seen the tragedy of the Civil War. Ireland's first National Army was
fighting to enforce a treaty which once again the British would be happy to dis-
honour. Urged on by aliens, the Diehards were unwittingly playing into Britain's
hands. Britain still had enough troops in the country ready to resume total
occupation.

Should the Staters shell the Castle from the heights of Thomondgate, they
would be following the precedent of earlier sieges. In the siege of 1691, the
Williamite guns crossed the Shannon at a ford two hundred yards downriver from the
present Corbally Bridge. This was in August when the river is low. A small
island of trees in the river marks the site of the ford.

There is a notable difference in mobility and firing power between a
twentieth century field gun and the blund-
ing cannon of 1691. Sean McKeon's 18-
pounder could reduce the Castle to rubble in a few hours. In doing this, the Staters
would destroy a mother's blessing. They
would destroy the city's most prized possession and be damned forever as
vandals. They could ignore the tempting
prestige of possession of the Castle, as a
handful of men could contain the garrison until they died of old age or surrendered
from sheer boredom.

The New Barracks, on the heights of the
city, was like pie in the sky. It is a
triangular piece of land of about ten acres. The base of the triangle, from Edward
Street to O'Connell Avenue, is about two hundred yards long. The Edward Street
side is about three hundred yards long. This
area is cluttered up with various
types of buildings which surround a
barrack square and a playing field. In the
playing field, children play at soldiers.

In July 1922, there were several contingents of armed men from the
surrounding counties in the Barrack. They
were well stocked with arms and ammun-
ition. In all, there were about five hundred
determined men dedicated to the defence of the
Republic.

In theory, there was a unified com-
mmand over the several contingents, but in
practice, there was none. On any one day,
Cork or Kerry men might control one or
other of the barrack gates and allow entry or exit only on a pass signed by their own
commander. On the following day men from
other counties would act in a like
manner. Though the garrison was strong
in numbers, this lack of unified control was fatal to their interests. The question of
precedence at the cookhouse or the duties of sentries might cause umbrage. A minor
General with a following of only twenty men might resent the limitations of his
authority and threaten to take away his
"Chanties" and go to some distant town
where he and his men would reign supreme, strong in the defence of the
Republic. To soothe the inflamed minds and calm the ruffled spirits of men of such
diverse pretensions would be a mighty task for any one man. When the task was
shared by many, chaos and unreason gave
council to their policies.

The New Barrack was strongly supported
by outposts in the flour mills at the
dock and in Roche's Street. It would have
to be contained before an attack could be
made on the weaker Ordnance Barrack. It
would take weeks of shelling and hun-
dreds of men to attack and take the New
Barracks if the garrison resisted the take-
over bid. That an army marches on its
stomach is forever true. As has been shown earlier, the barrack was amply
 provisioned for a long siege. The stores
contained tinned fruits, tomatoes, tins of
bully beef, best Limerick smoked hams and
sides of bacon. Within the stores were
chests of tea, sacks of sugar and stacked
cases of condensed milk. The new season's
potatoes and fresh crisp cabbages were
in plentiful supply. Fresh meat on the hoof
was available from the surrounding coun-
tryside. All these were rich blessings to
be counted and guarded. Added to all
these rich blessings was an abundant
supply of sparkling clear water from a six-
inch main, which the British had laid
down when the waterworks were built at
Rhebogue around 1850. The Staters controlled the water supply and at the turn of
a valve could rout the garrison with the
greatest of ease. All the smoked hams and
salty bacon, all the biscuits and flour, as
well as the crisp curly cabbage and the
new season's potatoes, were worthless
without water.

The Staters controlled the water supply
at the tank field in the Fairgreen and by
merely reducing the pressure could deprive the barrack and surrounding area
on the heights of the city of water. In
reducing the pressure they would leave ample supplies of water to all that part of
the city which they controlled. First with
thirst and then with hunger, the Staters
could empty that barrack without firing a
shot. There remained to them, then, the
logical choice of attacking the Ordnance
Barrack. The Ordnance was elected as the
people's choice.

The occupation of the Ordnance Barrack by the Diehards was a pretentious
piece of patriotic endeavour. It was scarce
two months since British officers, in
elegance and ease, had sauntered up and
down the steps on the front of the
building, with the Union Jack floating from
the archway. In the archway gateway in Mulgrave Street and on
Roxboro Road, British sentries had upheld
the power of the Empire. At a word of
command several companies of armed
troops could spray out into the surround-
ing streets. The brick-built sentry posts,
projecting like crows nests from the stone
walls, and the many lowered firing posts
covered every approach to the barrack.

The barrack was built to hold several
batteries of artillery. It was strategically
situated so that artillery could move into the
country over high dry ground without
having to cross swamps or bridges. A well-
kept straight military road led from
Mulgrave Street towards Tipperary town,
an equally well-kept road from Roxboro
led into County Limerick and places
They had no intention of wading through Staters had decided to drive the Diehards was replaced by the bang of the Mauser four bacon factories, rashers became as men could be got out of that barrack and anyone's blood and certainly not their out of the city without bloodshed, than their humane intent, the Staters decided but to keep the garrison in suspense. They desired to bring home the bacon. The Staters had decided to drive the Diehards out of the Ordnance and out of the city. They had no intention of wading through anyone's blood and certainly not their own. If by wile, guile or subterfuge those men could be got out of that barrack and out of the city without bloodshed, than such means would be used.

The quaint and comic idea was suggested that the Staters should bring the Gun up William Street and fire a few rounds of blanks at the Ordnance. The resulting smoke rings curling upward and lazily drifting along in the clear air would suggest to the garrison that celestial haloes and bronze plaques in Celtic could be evaded by a noble retreat from a patriotic but untenable position. Suspense is a dreadful state of mind. Youth or age, reading the saga of a glorious defence or attack, is held in suspense by the author, who all the time is aware of the climax. In the first World War, 1914 – 1918, the Munster Fusiliers, waiting in the trenches in Flanders to go "over the top", were kept in suspense. The men who died fighting in 1916 were held in suspense. Whosoever can hold an enemy in suspense holds a trump card. Suspense is the prelude to a possible panic flight or a contemptible surrender, or perhaps a tale of dauntless attack and glorious victory.

With a shrewd insight well worthy of their humane intent, the Staters decided not to attack the Ordnance immediately, but to keep the garrison in suspense. They would prepare to attack the Ordnance and let their preparations be seen. It is not enough to know that an attack is imminent; it must be seen to be imminent. From midday until midnight the Staters did not fire one shot from a rifle or from the Gun at the Ordnance Barrack. They kept the garrison in suspense. The Staters spent the day sealing off the approaches from the New Barrack. The result of their menacing inaction was that, from the moment in which the Strand was taken until midnight, the garrison in the Ordnance were at their posts, every moment expecting an attack. Their minds may have been moved in the various emotions of heroism, of panic or terror.

The long day wore on and the stars came out on that warm dark night of July, when a courier or despatch walker got through to the Ordnance with the doleful tidings – heroic defence was to be abandoned. The garrison expressed their contempt of the Staters, who by their inaction had deprived them of their hour of glory. Preparations were put in hand for a militant advance into the towns and villages of County Limerick.

The long day of inaction by the Staters in not indulging in target practice against the Ordnance Barrack gave rise to rumours in the city that a parley or high-ranking conference was in session between the opposing parties. It was known that there were three Generals of the National Army in the city. They had been created Generals by the authority of the Provisional Government. There were innumerable Generals in the Diehard camp – they had been created Generals by their own authority and were self-perpetuating. Because of this, in any conference between the opposing parties, the Diehards would always be in the majority and win every vote. On this account, no conference was held between the opposing parties. There were some private talks between individuals, but no formal conference.

Meanwhile, the people living in Watergate, in the Irishtown, in Palmerstown and in the adjoining streets and lanes held by