

THE MOSSIE HARNETT MEMOIRS

# Re-organisation after the Easter Rising

*In the previous article from his memoirs, which we published last May, Mossie Harnett told how the West Limerick Volunteers—himself included— assembled at Glenquin Castle on Easter Sunday, 1916. The order countermanding the Rising planned for that day, led to the Volunteers being ordered to return home. From there we now take up Mossie Harnett's story.*



**MOSSIE HARNETT**, a native of Knocknadiha, Tournafulla, was an officer in the Irish Volunteers. He played an active part in the War of Independence in West Limerick. Later he served as a member of Limerick County Council. Today he lives in Dun Laoghaire.

## Commandant

Our first Brigade Commandant of the reorganised Volunteers in 1917 was Tom O'Shaughnessy, but he resigned after a short period. The man elected Brigade O/C to replace him was Sean Finn, a native of Rathkeale. Sean was a lovable character, young, handsome, athletic, a universal favourite. I got to know him first at a Volunteer Convention held in Croke Park in November, 1917, which was presided over by Michael Collins.

Our local Battalion, comprising five companies, had Dr. Edward Harnett as its O/C during 1917 and part of 1918. He, too, resigned but remained in the I.R.A. as medical officer to the Second Battalion. Our Brigade comprised five Battalions, the total approximate strength of the Brigade being about twelve hundred men. Each Battalion had as centre the nearest local town, these being Newcastle West, Abbeyfeale, Rathkeale, Dromcollogher and Glin-Ballynahill.

Madame Markievicz addressed a large meeting in Athea, the home town of Con Colbert shortly after her release from prison in 1917. Whilst all these exciting events were taking place the people had still to see after their daily affairs, buying and selling and attending to the never-ending tasks that call to be done from the cradle to the grave.

● NEXT WEEK: Life in 1917 and 1918.



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**E**ASTER Monday was a bright, warm day, as is usual in late spring. That afternoon I tackled the ass to the cart to take some dozens of eggs to sell at Leahy's shop in Tournafulla. This was something I usually did for my aunt. I bought groceries for the house at Leahy's, bartered for by the eggs.

As I slowly wended my way homewards I was accosted by an R.I.C. man named Bourke who, in a short chat, informed me of the Rising in Dublin, of the sinking of the arms ship, the Aud, and of the capture of Casement on Good Friday. I was dismayed at the news, and hurried home, impatient to tell everyone what I had just heard.

## Cycled

Next morning I cycled into Newcastle West where I met some Volunteers, and we discussed the possibility of trying to reach Dublin. Dan Ronan of the Monagae Company was emphatic in his views, and was determined to get to Dublin. However, after a lengthy discussion, we agreed there was nothing we could do as individuals without specific orders from our Commandant. Garbled news continued to reach us about events in Dub-

lin. At the end of the week the truth finally reached us.

Nearly everybody was astounded by the news; people generally were bewildered, and comments were not favourable. This was understandable, as most of the country was still behind John Redmond's policy. The subsequent executions and deportations were soon to change the people's attitude radically. West Limerick men deported were G. McAuliffe, Matt Flanagan, J. Dore, Paddy Sheehan, Con Collins and Patrick Mulcahy of Monagae, who fought with the Citizen Army. But it was the execution of Con Colbert, and the drowning of Donal Sheehan of Monagae on his way to meet Casement that affected us most of all, and that determined us to vindicate them and emulate their sacrifice on Freedom's Altar if necessary.

On Easter Saturday night, 1917, Jim Colbert, Bill Carroll, Mick Roche and Con Mullane, all of Athea, spent until 2 a.m. hoisting national flags on the topmost branches of trees in, and on trees bordering the roads leading into Athea Village, where Con Colbert had spent his youth. Having tied the flags securely on the tree tops, Con Mullane cut off all the branches as he descended, thus making it impossible for anyone to climb the trees and remove the flags.

## Flag

In Tournafulla, a green-white-and-orange flag was placed on the chimney of the tallest house in the village by Jack Aherne (known as 'The Private'). All the ladders in the area were hidden after the erection of the flag, so that the police could not remove it. It stayed aloft for a considerable time, flowing proudly and defiantly in the breeze.

On St. Patrick's Day, 1918, I and a few of the boys held a collection for the Gaelic League outside the church gate

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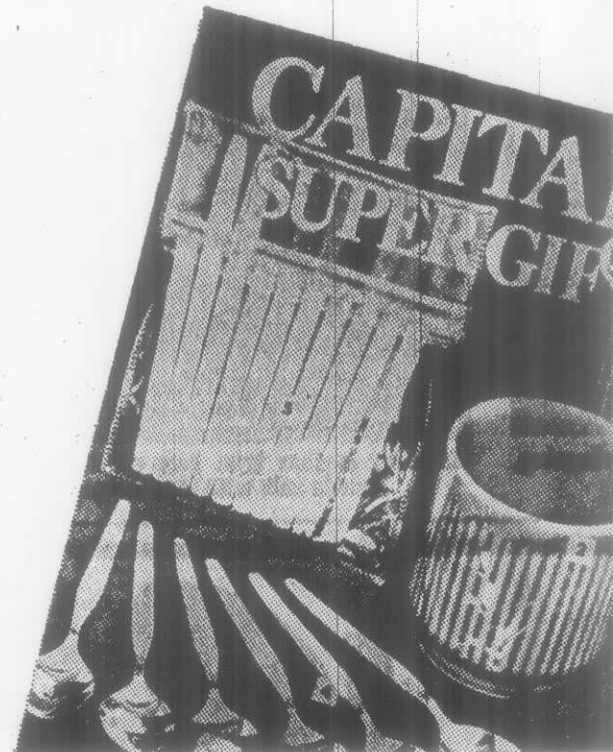
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# Life in County Limerick in the 1917-18 period

**THE FARMERS'** and labourers' lot improved noticeably from 1917 onwards. Prices for cattle rose steeply—around sixty pounds for incalf heifers, twenty to thirty pounds for stores, thirty pounds for fat sow pigs, with corresponding high prices for bacon pigs, milk, sheep, poultry, eggs and all kinds of farm produce. Agricultural labourers benefited, and their wages rose from the twelve pounds a year that was formerly paid to from forty to forty-five pounds.



good looking bachelor were not too remote... alas his hopes never came to fruition!

Agricultural feeding stuffs rose in price too, and it was customary to pay three pounds for a twenty stone sack of Indian meal. Rationing of sugar and other commodities was enforced as a war measure by the British Government. Pollard was mixed with the flour, giving the latter only a remote resemblance to the real thing. It was a real laxative, and nobody who ate it ever required medicine.

One of the results of the good prices paid for cattle, milk, etc., was that farmers now bought pony traps to travel in more comfort than formerly. It says a good deal in their favour that the support most of them gave us in the I.R.A. was now given from a position of comfort hitherto unknown to the majority of them.

## 'The King'

During 1918 we had reorganised and retrained our Volunteer company in Tournafulla. We gave every assistance too to the Sinn Fein cumann, and provided protection for the Sinn Fein court which was held in our parish. The court was presided over by our local Catholic curate, Michael Twomey. The Sinn Fein cumann met in Sheehan's. Davy, called "The King", was a bachelor labourer, living alone in a small thatched dwelling. He was middle aged, a sturdy build of a man, dark complexion, and spoke rather rapidly, and was cranky. He was a staunch supporter of the Volunteers, Sinn Fein and the G.A.A. He talked about some farmers' nice daughters living nearby and thought his chances as a

During all this time I was very busy with work on the farm, as well as attending parades, political meetings, aeriochtal dances and Battalion Councils. My time was completely occupied. I paid many visits to Newcastle West to attend meetings of the Comhairle Ceanntair Sinn Fein for West Limerick. One of our most successful dances was held in the local school in 1918. Our curate, Fr. Michael Twomey, attended, and sang several patriotic songs. Father Michael Hayes, C.C., Newcastle West, also attended, and delivered a marvellously stirring oration to the assembled young men and women. Our guest singers were from Abbeyfeale, Dromcollogher and Newcastle West. They were splendid singers.

## Ladies' choice

I was usually appointed Master of Ceremonies at these gatherings in my own parish. Many's the nice girl I flirted with at these dances, and in neighbouring parishes as well. Feiseanna, sports and dances occupied our time almost every Sunday. The young girls at that time were filled with patriotic ardour, and showed this by their preference for the men and officers of the Volunteers.

As I was living with my aunt at this time, I was free of parental control. My parents did not take too kindly to the new movement now sweeping the country; and in no uncertain terms I was informed of their views and of their disapproval of the course I was following. My aunt led a lonely life, and being a person with political views inherited from her association with the constitutional movements of Parnell, and then Redmond, was reluctant to accept or approve of this business of armed re-

sistance. I lived with her from 1918 to 1920.

It was only during periods of turf cutting, hay making and harvesting that we had any company. I being young, this lonely life my aunt led did not bring any realisation to me of the great sadness she must so often have felt as she contemplated her long past happy girlhood and young womanhood. For her the present meant little as she sat all day near the turf fire, in complete isolation. Her only occupation was the cooking of our simple meals, and caring for some hens, chickens and geese she kept.

My life at that time, as I've said, was a very full one, and with the thoughtlessness of youth, I'm afraid that my actions showed little concern, thought, or sympathy for her lonely life. I was totally engrossed in national affairs, and in selfish interests of my own, and I did not give her the sympathy I now know I should have given her. The difference in sex, age and outlook didn't help to make communication easy.

## Raids for arms

Many a lonely night she sat near the fire awaiting my return from some dance, political meeting, or military exercise, as she recited the Rosary to herself in that isolated house. Hearing my footsteps on my return, she usually unlocked the kitchen door, standing inside it just as she opened it for me. On one occasion, hearing my footsteps approach as she thought, she lifted the latch off the door, and opened it, only to discover nobody there. She was terrified, and nearly collapsed. She informed me of this, when, to her great relief, I arrived a short time later. She never complained to me or my father about my late nights out. The incident of the footsteps coming to the door, and later happenings in our house,

caused her to have a severe nervous breakdown from which she never recovered.

During the period I am writing of we called at several farmers' houses to commandeer the guns that they owned. Sometimes we met with resistance and violent hostility. At that time the police were also collecting guns from their owners, but in most cases we forestalled them. One Sunday afternoon, in two commandeered motor cars, Ned Cogan, Paddy Aherne, Ned Ryan, Tom Leahy and myself carried out a raid for arms in the Abbeyfeale district. We searched selected houses of people we thought to be hostile to us. On approaching the house of one of these, a large farmhouse, the door was slammed in our faces. Leading the party was Tom Leahy as myself, and as we dashed towards the closed door a shot was fired from the side, through the door, and wounded me slightly in the right hand. We threatened to throw a bomb into the kitchen, and open fire through the windows, if we were admitted. At the same time we shouted loudly that we were the I.R.A. collecting guns. This had the desired effect, and we were admitted to collect the guns. At the house of Walter Broderick, Lieutenant in the British Army, we got a splendid revolver and shotgun. No assistance was offered.

(To be continued.)

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THE MOSSIE HARNETT MEMOIRS

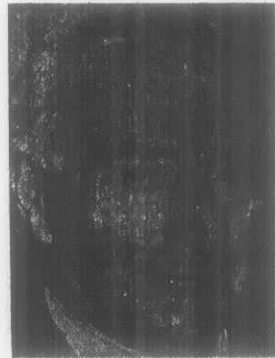
# Death of Liam Scully, birth of a flying column

**E**ARLY IN May, 1920, a meeting between the officers of the West Limerick and East Limerick Brigades of the I.R.A. was held at the home of Mike Cregan, Monagae,

A long discussion took place as to the feasibility of attacking either the Newcastle West or Kilmallock R.I.C. barracks, and eventually it was decided that the attack would be made against the Kilmallock barracks. Kilmallock, one of the strongest police barracks in the south of Ireland, had been bravely but vainly attacked by the Fenians in 1867, and it was felt that its destruction at this stage of the War of Independence in 1920 would have a demoralising effect on the forces of the British Crown.

The fateful night of the attack arrived, and West Limerick Volunteers, who had been previously selected to participate in the fight, met at the home of Mrs. Mac-Inerney, Camas, Monagae. Tommy Leahy, Jack Aherne and myself attended, together with Sean Finn, O/C West Limerick Brigade, I.R.A.; Garrett MacAuliffe, Vice O/C; C. Cregan, Larry MacNamee and Jimmy Roche, as well as a number of Volunteers whose names I cannot now recall.

The numbers of Volunteers present was far in excess of the number the West Limerick Brigade was to have supplied—the latter number being decided by the number of rifles and shot guns available. The problem of picking the man who were to go to Kilmallock was left to the Officer in Charge of the Brigade, Sean Finn, and if my memory serves me right, he chose ten men who were armed with either rifles or shot guns. Neither I, Tommy Leahy nor J. Aherne were among those selected.



Some motor cars were assembled to take the fighting men to Kilmallock. I know that I got two cars, one from Michael O'Mahony, creamery manager, Devon Rd., the other from Richard Roche, Meenahela creamery. Larry MacNamee drove the O'Mahony car, but I have forgotten who drove Richard Roche's car.

### Returned

After seeing our comrades drive off towards Kilmallock on their fateful journey, we returned home by Glenquin Castle, and sat for a while by the fireside, speculating on the outcome of the fierce fight we knew was by then in progress in Kilmallock. Down there in the central plain of Limerick men were engaged in a deadly struggle for possession of that barracks, long a symbol of British dominance. We had to wait for the light of the next morning to get any news from our comrades about the outcome of the fight.

I was up early, and had occasion to go out to the public road, which was connected with my home by a long boreen. I was on the road only a few minutes when I was surprised to see two motor

cars arrive. They stopped immediately they saw me, and from both cars several armed men jumped out. In one car I noticed a young man lying on a stretcher, with a young nurse in uniform sitting beside him. The young man, who was dead, was Captain Liam Scully, B.A., and he had been shot through the neck in the fight. The young nurse was Miss O'Sullivan, who had rendered first aid to the wounded Scully when he was brought into a house near the barracks after being shot.

As for the fight itself, it had lasted for six hours, and was the fiercest such engagement of the War of Independence. The garrison in the barracks, consisting of two sergeants and eighteen constables, put up a heroic defence, even after their fortress began to collapse in flames above their heads. At that stage they retreated into a strongly built outhouse from where they kept up the fight, refusing to surrender. Two of their comrades perished in the flames. The main outcome of the fight, as far as the I.R.A. was concerned, was that they had succeeded in completely destroying the barracks, for long considered an impenetrable fortress.

But to return to the scene after the armed men had left their cars that morning near my home. Among them I recognised Sean Finn, Garrett Mac Auliffe and Larry MacNamee. Sean Finn introduced me to the others, who included Michael Brennan, Tom Malone, (alias Sean Forde), and Patrick Clancy. Sean consulted me as to the safest place near at hand where we could leave Liam Scully's remains. I suggested a farmhouse, O'Gorman's, near my own home, but even more secluded, and further too from the road. In fact this particular farmhouse was at least three-quarters of a mile from the road — the Drom-collougher-Abbeyseale road — and had the added advantage of being occupied only by a

caretaker, William Long, and his two sons.

### Burial

As we moved slowly down the rambling boreen to our destination, I heard a vivid description of the fight from the boys who, only a few hours before, had been engaged in that desperate struggle. On reaching the house, I explained our business to the occupants. Placing our sad burden on a bed in the sittingroom, a meal was got ready in the kitchen. The fighting men then sought some hours sleep on the few beds in the place. Meantime I went home and made contact with Tommy Leahy, and we arranged for armed guards to be placed around the house where the Volunteers were with their dead comrade.

In an outhouse in O'Gorman's farmyard, Con Kiely of Strand, with a helper, made a crude plain coffin of deal boards. I owned a Volunteer officer's uniform with a Sam Browne belt, and in these we dressed the remains, which were then laid in the coffin, with a guard of honour standing at attention as he lay in state on a big timber bed.

The sunny afternoon drew to a close, and after dark a part of Volunteer officers arrived from East Limerick. The caretaker of Templeglantine churchyard was notified that a burial was to take place during the night. Family burial plots occupied all the graveyard area, and there was no vacant space; but one man eventually gave permission to have a grave opened in his burial space.

In sad procession we bore on our shoulders Liam Scully's mortal remains from O'Gorman's to 'Glantine cemetery on a fine balmy summer's night. We gave him a full military funeral, as befitting a brave young man. Fr. Dick McCarthy of Ballybahill performed the religious ceremony, and an oration was delivered by one of the East Limerick Brigade officers. Amongst those in attendance at the burial was the dead man's brother, Bertie Scully, all the way from Caragh Lake in Kerry.

In due course the East Limerick men returned home across country from the funeral, fully armed; and when they arrived at the home of John Lynch at Tankardstown, between Brures and Kilmallock, the idea occurred to one of their leaders, Donncha O'Hannigan, that in view of what they had done they should form a small permanent fighting force that could devote its whole time to carrying war to the British forces who, against the declared will of the Irish people, held their land in subjection by violence and force. And so was born the famous Flying Column of the East Limerick Brigade, I.R.A., the first such flying column to be formed during the War of Independence. A full account of its formation will be found in the Kerryman publication, Limerick's Fighting Story.

● NEXT WEEK: Trial and execution of a spy.

**'Met up with sailors'**

WHEN RETURNING home from a dance in Glin, 17-year-old Peter Dee met up with a group of sailors who gave him quite a lot of drink. Tarbert Court was told. Dee, of Carrigisland, Ballylongford, admitted taking a peal cycle without permission.

Mr. Patrick Fitzgibbon, soiler, said Dee foolishly took the drink and got drunk. He took the bike, which was the property of 11-year-old Tina McElligott, and he left it in a place where nobody would have difficulty in finding it. Dee, in evidence, said he went to the dance in Glin and met these sailors. They gave him drink and after his return home on a bus to Ballylong-

**DJ sentences expectant wife for shoplifting**

BY LEADER REPORTER

JUSTICE de Burca this week warned that he was going to clamp down on shoplifting. He sentenced a 40-year-old

labourer who earned about £8 a week. She had never been in trouble before.

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THE MOSSIE HARNETT MEMOIRS

# Trial and execution of a spy in Co Limerick

NOW TOLD FOR THE FIRST TIME . . .

**D**URING 1919, and up to the Truce in 1921, a special effort was made to perfect our intelligence system. I spent much time in our battalion area organising the intelligence into a near-perfect one.

From my knowledge of available material, I put in charge a creamery manager of unquestionable integrity as O/C of a company of intelligence officers in each district in the Battalion area. These were to report immediately on any suspicious movements of enemy forces, and in particular were to keep a close look out for suspected spies. In addition we had the wholehearted co-operation of Cumann na mBan, and of various civilians who could move without suspicion among the military and police. All strangers coming into the district were closely watched, and their movements reported.

At this period (1919-1920) young men were continuously joining our Battalion area, seeking refuge. They came from various counties, were "on the run", and had moved from company to company.

They were usually vouched for by officers of their respective areas, but it was an arrangement that carried definite risks of infiltration by the enemy. It happened, in fact, that in this way a dangerous spy infiltrated our own ranks. It took some months before this was discovered.

My first contact with this person was late in the autumn of 1919. He brought with him credentials that convinced all the I.R.A. officers in West Limerick and East Kerry of his genuineness, as an I.R.A. man on the run from his enemies. He was introduced to me by my O/C by a name that was subsequently found to be fictitious, and so I shall refer to him as "A" for the purpose of this

narrative. He said he was from Co. Tipperary. I myself and two officers of my company were his companions from then on in the activities in which were engaged, generally raiding for arms. On one such occasion, when we encountered strong opposition, I noticed that "A" was very aggressive and brandished his revolver.

## Suspicion

He stayed in my house for approximately one month (late 1919), and was then taken to Knocknagoshel, and from there to a district adjoining Castleisland. Prior to his departure he joined in a lunch offered by a kindly priest at an Abbeyfeale hotel.

Here "A" surprised me by talking rather too much spirits, a thing foreign to the habits of IRA men on the run. He also engaged in a flow of very unstable conversation, especially in the presence of so saintly a priest. I felt disgusted and succeeded in bringing our meeting to as early an end as possible. But no suspicion as to "A's" real role ever entered my mind. I was to meet him again in the spring of 1920, in completely different circumstances.

Early in March, 1920, our intelligence received information that led to the arrest of "A" as a suspected spy. He was at that time living among IRA families in Kerry. I was notified by the Brigade O/C Intelligence, to be prepared to find accommodation for "A" and to keep him under strict guard, night and day. Needless to say, I felt somewhat put out at meeting him again in this manner. Four senior officers of East the Kerry Brigade brought him to West Limerick on a night in March 1920. On receipt of the information that had led to his arrest they had searched him, and were astonished at finding a large sum of money hidden in a pocket under his armpit. They also found on him documents written in code, which they were unable to decipher.

On arrival of the prisoner in West Limerick he was lodged and closely guarded in a remote farmhouse occupied by an old lady and a farm workman, neither of whom had a great welcome for us. Our Brigade O/C and vice O/C and other officers, including Sean Hogan of Knocklong Rescue fame, came to see the prisoner next day and questioned him at length, and discussed what



should be done with him. It was arranged that he should be court-martialled. The court-martial was to be made up of the principal officers of the Brigade staff, together with some senior officers from the East Kerry Brigade, and a Sinn Féin TD, then on the run in the area.

## The magpie

Acting on instructions, I made arrangements with the occupants of another farmhouse living nearby to provide their sitting-room for the court which was to be held there. It took some days before the court was ready to sit. In the meantime the prisoner acted as if nothing of importance was happening. We all tried to act naturally, as naturally as we could in the strained circumstances. "A" got ample supplies of cigarettes; we played cards with him, and accompanied him on walking exercises outside the house. He seemed calm except for one little incident.

This incident was caused by a magpie which came each morning and perched on the window sill outside the bedroom where "A" slept. The magpie would persistently peck away at the glass of the window in the early morning light. "Do you know," said "A" to me, referring to the magpie's strange behaviour, "I don't like it, and it portends no good." Stranger still, the magpie came to the window only while "A" slept in the house.

The day of the trial eventually came. Of the seven officers forming the court, one was selected to act in "A's" defence; another was selected as prosecuting officer. The prisoner strenuously denied that he was a spy who had infiltrated the I.R.A.

After several hours deliberation, no verdict was reached; but the court decided to sit again if any new evidence should come to light. There was of course the matter of the documents in code. Here the prisoner gave us no help, and kept a shut mouth. I suppose if we were bad enough to have tortured or terrorised him he might have spoken, but such were not our methods.

## Execution

The court officers decided to send the coded documents to the I.R.A. staff headquarters in Cork. There, on the documents being deciphered, it was established beyond all doubt that "A" was an enemy agent engaged in espionage. When confirmation of this reached West Limerick, it was arranged to call the court together again. Meantime, "A" seemed to be getting more and more restless. This was particularly noticeable on an occasion when only one guard had charge of him. The surprising thing is that he didn't suddenly try to overpower the guard and make a bolt for it.

The unanimous verdict of the court on its second sitting was that "A" was guilty, and he was sentenced to death by firing squad. The execution was to be carried out in the early morning hours of the next day. Scouts and guards were placed in a wide circle round the lonely field where the execution was to take place. With few feelings of sorrow I now saw the prisoner being driven off in a pony and trap between two guards. Fully realising now his terrible predicament, and visibly trembling, he clutched his rosary in his hands. Near the place of execution, a priest heard his confession; then he shook hands with his executioners and admitted his crime.

Returning in the early hours of the morning, the two guards tumbled into the bed in which the executed man had slept during his imprisonment. As they were settling down to sleep, the front door gave a very loud bang as a result of a sudden gust of high wind. Immediately they jumped out of bed, holding drawn revolvers, startled by this unexpected alarm, and ready for the worst. It was a false alarm of course, but it underlines the frightful tension under which men lived, even slept, at that time.

● FINAL instalment of the Memoirs next week.

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THE MOSSIE HARNETT MEMOIRS

Truce, civil war, prison and then my release

IN OUR area in West Limerick, the truce between the I.R.A. and the British Forces was sometimes very hard to maintain. In the area of the Second Battalion, which included the town of Abbeyfeale, the Black and Tans were inclined to be very aggressive. In their patrols through the town they made it their business to push known sympathisers of ours off the side-walks, abusing them as they did so. Things were getting so dangerous that there was a grave danger that armed attacks would be made on Tans because of their truculence. Something had to be done about it.

It was agreed by the Battalion Staff that Jimmy Collins, Vice Comdnt., and myself should approach one of the Tan patrols on one of their periodic rounds. One evening, in fear and trepidation. We approached a patrol of Tans and R.I.C. — about eight in number — as they moved down the main street. We carried small arms hidden under our coats, and were covered by a party of our men who strolled down the opposite side of the street, well scattered so as not to attract attention. There was no public lighting then in Abbeyfeale, the only light being the light of paraffin lamps glowing weakly through shop windows.

Listened

As I accepted the officer of the patrol, an R.I.C. sergeant, they stopped in a somewhat irresolute manner, crowding around their officer as they listened to our conversation. I stated what our business was, and didn't mince my words, about the conduct of their patrols on the street, saying that if they persisted in their behaviour some of their men would probably be shot. He listened to what I had to say, as he looked around apprehensively at his bunch of dangerous men. He was not too sure of their reaction to my accusations as they shuffled around uneasily with their weapons.

Giving an assurance that my complaints would be considered by his superior officer, the sergeant and his men moved off in the direction of their barracks. At their departure Jimmy Collins, and myself breathed more freely; all the time we had realised the danger inherent in our abrupt confrontation with the patrol. After that things got quieter in Abbeyfeale, and an uneasy



peace was maintained until the Treaty was signed.

Imprisonment

Early in the fateful year of 1922 our people were split hopelessly asunder, a tragic forerunner of worse to come. This was reflected in our area and in the towns of West Limerick — as elsewhere in the country — as two distinct armed forces were in occupation of different buildings. In June, 1922, things looked very serious, as open conflict seemed each day nearer.

One day I was visited by Brigade Officer Michael Keane, who had command of the Free State Forces in West Limerick. He was accompanied by a Captain in that Army, a native of East Limerick, and former member of the East Limerick Brigade Flying Column. Keane invited me into Moloney's Hotel, and we had refreshments. We also had an earnest discussion on the existing military and political situation, followed by an invitation to join the Free State Army, with the promise of the rank of Commandant. I declined, and still gave my allegiance to the Republic.

In this final extract from my Memoirs I haven't space to tell of the progress of the Civil War in West Limerick, or of the activities and engagements in which I took part. My account of my experience in various prisons as a Republican prisoner have likewise

MOSSIE HARNETT, a native of Knocknadiha, Tournafulla, was an officer in the Irish Volunteers. He played an active part in the War of Independence in West Limerick. Later he served as a member of Limerick County Council. Today he lives in Dun Laoghaire.

be severely curtailed. I was arrested in September, 1922, and conveyed to Limerick Jail. I still vividly remember the filthy condition of the cells and corridors and the smell from the filthy lavatories. In October we were removed to Dublin, and spent our first night in the grim bastille of Ireland, Kilmainham. We were crowded six into a cell, cells with stone floors that were ice cold. Next day we were moved to Mountjoy. In January we were moved to the Curragh.

Disease

Disease struck us during the spring. Many suffered chest ailments. One fine young man, Commandant Owen O'Brien, from Castleconnell, developed pneumonia and died in our inadequate hospital. As a result of widespread illness involving all the prisoners, our medical staff carried out an inspection of all our underwear, some of which they confiscated and burned in large incinerators. When the weather began to get warmer lice spread all over the ground in the vicinity of the toilets and made life a misery for us in bed or out of it. Prison experience is a hard education for anyone; but to suffer in prison as victims of Civil War, as we did, had its terrible humiliations, since we suffered at the hands of our fellow countrymen.

Those of us anxious to learn Irish got the use of a vacant

hut for that purpose. Our teacher was the famous "Sean a' Chota," and we made very good progress under him, and were able to converse in Irish before we were released. One of the great loves of "Sean a' Chota's" life was a pint of porter. "No woman," Sean would say, "can ever take the place in my heart that I have for my dark pint."

Talented

In our camp we had men from the four provinces, amongst them native Irish speakers from the Gaeltacht area. The hut I was domiciled in had some talented men: the gentle poet, Joseph Campbell (Seasomh Mac Cathmhaoil), author of "The Gilly of Christ," "The Ninepenny Fiddle," etc., from Laccandara, Co. Wicklow; Sean O Tuama, member of a talented Gaelic family from Cork; Sean Mooney, Vice O/C Dublin Brigade; Peter White (our hut officer), another very talented man; Dr. Liam Shortis, Ballybunion, etc.

Our company also included Jack Staunton from Ballina. He was a fine young man, over six feet in height, and powerfully built. He was captured near the Tyrone border after a fight with Free State Forces. Before that he had been a member of the R.I.C., and at the time of the Treaty was stationed at Dungannon Barracks. The irony of his case was that shortly after the Treaty was signed, when Michael Collins was actively engaged in sending men and rifles to mount an offensive against the British in the occupied part of Ulster, contact was established with Jack Staunton. This resulted in the capture of Dungannon Barracks, together with a considerable store of rifles, grenades and ammunition.

Release began in the winter of 1923. One morning I heard my own name called.

I was taken to Kildare railway station and there given a ticket back to Limerick. There is so much more I would like to tell about those now distant days and afterwards, but here I must reluctantly write "Finis." My very sincere thanks to the Limerick Leader for having published these extracts from my Memoirs.

Lab win Feil THE Lat Luimn

- The follo suits: 1, Sinead Scoll Na Ss Nic Conmar 1, Deidr Scoll Mhuil 2, Elaine N 1, Laoise Scoll Na S: Spillane, Sc 1, Sinead Scoll Mhuil 2, Lorraine Mhodb Scoll 1, An M Mhodb Scoll seach. 1, An M Mhodb Sc Scoll; T, Sc 1, An M seach; 3, J 1, Niamh Scoll Mhuil 2, Siobhan Bruff; 3, Ard Scoll 2 neach. 1, Ide N Labhras; 2 aigh, do; ha, do; T, Maire N 1, Siobh Cnoc na L Bhuaicalla, Mhaolchath 1, Eibhl Cnoc Na L Bruaidir, Rion, Luin Ni Uglann, T, Brid N Rion, Lu Lowe, Ard Luimneach Ghalbharras; T, Gr 1, Maev Scoll Mhu neach; 2, 3 3, Maire N 1, Aine Scoll Mhu neach; 2, 3, Pt eide, do; ran, do; aird, do. 1, Malre Cnoc Na Nic Annal Bhulibh, d 1, Malrt Scoll Ide; Brlain, do nain, J.F.F 1, Deird Scoll na S: Ni Mhurch Ni Bharas 1, Rion Scoll na Ni Gheal Toirbhirt, Michelle N seach. 1, Siobh Ide; 2, Fic Cnoc na I Ni Dharsa T, Maire Tracy Ni 1, Miche Ide; 2, Tc 8, Fergus Micheaf C 1, Fiona Toirbhirt dre Ni B seach; 3, do; T, chadhna, S Sr. Seasm Mhaistr, T, Catrion

Feile Luimni junior vocal full results

THE FOLLOWING are the remaining results of the junior vocal competitions of Feile Luimni:—

The standard was very high and entries were very good. Amhranocht Aonair Paisti (facl 7)—1, Niamh Cahill, Salesian Convent School; 2, Colm O Rian, do; 3, tie between Sinead Ni Aogain do, and Aileen Clancy, do; VEC, Denise O'Dowd, do.; Rosanne

Elliott, St. Patrick's Girls' N.S.; Kathleen Phean, do. Amhranocht sonair, buachaill, 11-13: 1, Tomas O Conbhui, Scoll na mBraithre, Rathluirio. Corn Ul Riorlain, boys open solo: 1, Paul McNamara, School of Music.

Doon, Co. Limerick. Piano duet (under 18)—2, Marie Walsh and Niamh Lyddy, School of Music. Brass, grade 3—1, Gerard Cantillon, School of Music; brass, grade 5-6, 2, Dermot Phean, do. Ensemble playing—1, Francis O'Donnell Quartet, School of Music; 2, John Parrott, do. Woodwind, grade 3-1, Owen Madigan, School of Music; 2, Rory McMahon, do. Woodwind, grade 5-6—1, Patrick O'Connor, School of Music. Woodwind, grade 3-1, John Allen, School of Music; 2, John Parrott.

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