

TANS BURN SHOP
AND BEAT UP
PEOPLE

VOLUNTEERS DUFFY
AND MARLEY
ACCIDENTALLY KILLED

BATTLES AT
PARTY AND
ISLANDEADY

WEST MAYO'S FIGHTING STORY

THIS is the story, according to the facts now available, of the fight for freedom in West Mayo, by the famous and fearless West Mayo Brigade I.R.A. led by the late Brigadier Michael Kilroy, of Newport, whose death in December, 1932, deprived writers of a valuable source of information on the exploits of Michael and his group of daring fighters. Many still remain to tell the story and this paper has the honour to give to its readers as told to staff reporters by men who fought side by side with Michael Kilroy in his campaign against the forces of occupation.



As told to—

Anthony Lavelle

The officers and men of the West Mayo Brigade pictured in Westport Demesne. Photo (copyright) J. Leonard & Son, Bofecnaun, Ballina.

THE shooting of a police sergeant in Derrykillew. Cushlough made the 'Tans raging mad and they went out on raids on families who had members on the run or those who had anything to do with Sinn Fein. The homes of Tom Ketterick, Willie Malone, of High St., Broddy Malone of The Fairgreen, McDonaghs of High Street, Westport, were raided by drunken Tans, who turned the parents and sisters of the Volunteers out on the streets in the middle of the night and threatened to shoot them. They turned everything in the houses upside down and prodded the feather beds with bayonets in their search for arms.

At the same period the 'Tans came looking for Charles Hughes in his shop in Bridge Street. An R.I.C. District Inspector, who was friendly with the I.R.A., gave warning of the raid and Mr. Hughes escaped. The Tans burned his shop and all that was in it. They even went up to the railway and burned a wagon load of goods which had arrived for Mr. Hughes.

Rifles From England

TOM Ketterick brought the rifles and revolvers from England by train to Maam Cross, Connemara. They were taken by car to the house of the late Pat Tunney in Cushlough. From there they were distributed to the members of the Column. It was Pat Tunney, who organised the Cushlough Band which led the procession on the day of the trial of Ned Moane of Westport, and William O'Malley of Newport. Members of the band were beaten up by the R.I.C. that day. The big drummer, Owen O'Malley of Cushlough and Ml. Gavin of Kilmeena, had to go into hospital as a result of the beating they got that day. Pat was on parade at Easter, 1916, with the first Volunteers at Fornaught Hill and with him were J. Hastings, Dick Grimes, P. O'Reilly and T. O'Malley of Cushlough. Pat was arrested then and kept in Frongoch until Christmas of that year. He was arrested because he was treasurer of West Mayo executive of Sinn Fein and Secretary of Cushlough Sinn Fein Club, and helped at the burning of Carrakennedy R.I.C. Barracks with Johnnie Duffy, Owen O'Malley, H. Sammon, J. Hastings, P. Hoban and Ml. Tunney. Pat had the band at a great Sinn Fein meeting in Westport in 1916, which was addressed by The

O'Rahilly and Major John McBride.

Pat was arrested again in January, 1921, and held in Galway Jail and the Rath Camp with the late P. J. Rutledge of Ballina; John Kilroy of Newport and Ml. Tunney, Cushlough. They never got over the beatings they got there from the Black and Tans. At that time also Tom Lambert and Josie Geraghty of Westport, were arrested.

Ned Sammon, a member of the Column, told me he has one of the American flags carried by the Aughagower Volunteers when they met the American delegates who were refused admittance to Westport, as referred to in the first article.

Houses Burned

AFTER the shooting at Cushlough, the Tans burned three houses in Letterbrack, Carrakennedy, also the houses owned by Pat Cox at Cuilmore, Drummin, and Ed. O'Malley of Carrowreevagh.

In trying to extract information from Thomas Hastings of Derryherbert, the Tans pulled out half his moustache with a pincers. Many other people, who kept the members of the Flying Column in their houses, were beaten unmercifully. Owen O'Malley of Carrowrevagh, died some years later as a result of a beating he received.

Volunteer's Accident

THE Westport unit went into Westport several nights trying to contact police patrols without success. Ml. Kilroy went on to Newport and Castlebar to get things going in those areas.

One night when the Westport men were moving into Rockfield after a visit to Westport, a fine Volunteer named Jim Duffy of Prospect, was accidentally killed by the discharge of a revolver during cleaning in the house of Austin Hastings. The members of the Column buried Jim on top of the little hill overlooking Cushen.

The Butlers, McGuires and Kerrigans helped to carry his coffin across the fields to Cushen.

Dr. Madden Joins Column

SOME time before this Doctor Madden, a young doctor, who

was assisting Dr. Anthony McBride in the Old Infirmary on the Mall in Castlebar, took Dr. McBride's bicycle and cycled away to join the Active Service Unit, then in the house of Anthony Judge of Glenmask, near the Tourmakeady Mountains. From that day onwards Dr. Madden became a favourite in the Westport area. He saved the lives of members of the unit by dressing their wounds after engagements with the enemy. If captured he would not be treated as a Red Cross member as in war.

Moved To Partry

AROUND this time the Column received information of intended troop movements along the Leenane Road so they took up an ambush position at Brackloon Bridge. Having stayed there until evening they received word that Tom McGuire, O/C South Mayo Brigade, was in trouble in the Bohaun Mountains and surrounded by military following an engagement at Partry. They moved off to his assistance, but on arrival at Glenmask found that the ambush was over. On learning that Paddy King and Phil Hallinan of Glenmask, were captured in the engagement, plans were made to rescue them at Ballinrobe the next day but the plans were abandoned when it was learned that they were taken to Claremorris.

The men of the unit learned that a few minutes after leaving Brackloon Bridge three lorry loads of military passed in from Leenane followed fifteen minutes later by six others. These were coming from the attack on the South Mayo column.

Newport and Castlebar Units

AT the end of April the Westport men were joined by the Newport Unit and Castlebar Unit at Curvey, Aughagower, and were billeted over the townlands of Curvey, Cordarragh and Lanmore.

Notable amongst the Newport men were: Jack Connolly O/C., Jim Moran and Larry McGovern, all of Tiernaur; Danny O'Donnell of Newport, Paddy Doherty, Mick Gallagher, Two Jim Brownes, Val Staunton, Vol. Geraghty, Jim Kelly, Vol. O'Malley, and Tap-Corcoran, al lof Kilmeena.

The Castlebar boys were: Paddy Jordan, O/C; Jim McEvelly, Dolly

Chambers, James Chambers, "Gas" Hughes, Jimmy Switt, J. Hughes, Paddy Cannon, who threw up his job as a teacher to join the unit, Vol. Maloney, Mark Killalea and F. O'Boyle of Letter, John and James Cooney.

Fight At Big Wall

THE next important action the Column had was at the Big Wall at Islandeady, on May 1st, 1921. The action took place near the High Wall at the Half-Way House. The Column got information that troops were travelling from Castlebar to Westport. The men got into position to attack the lorries. The plan was that when the lorries were in the ambush area men of the Islandeady Company were to come out and take the top off a gullet in the road at Cloonkeen to prevent reinforcement from Castlebar. Some of the column-men not realising the danger of exposing themselves against the skyline on top of a hill did just that as the lorry came around the turn. The military saw them and suspecting something was wrong halted the lorry before they came into the ambush position. They turned back to Castlebar and came on the Islandeady men cutting the road. They opened fire on the men in the trench who had no chance to escape. Volunteers Lally and O'Malley of Islandeady were killed and Vol. Frank O'Boyle was arrested. Others were captured and some escaped. The most notable escape of all was that of Paddy Cannon, who bearing a charmed life that day, made good his escape through a hail of bullets and escaped without a scratch.

It is also said that someone told the Tans that there was an ambush set up on the road.

After the attempted ambush the house of Ml. Staunton, Islandeady, was raided.

Another Accident

A FEW days after, when the Unit was billeted at Mayneen and Ardigommon vilages near Westport, Volunteer Marley of Glenhest, was accidentally killed coming off sentry duty. That night he was laid beside Jim Duffy in the Old Graveyard at Cushen. The Navins of Westport, made the coffin and it was brought out by John Kelly of Altamount Street, Westport.

(To be continued).

TOP

THE word
up day
be expected
tural to m
without it
to man it
basis, that
love in its
not merely
affair as t
to-day's m
lead us to
supernatur
Scripture t
Love. Al
kind came
back to H
thing spiri
test of wh
or false lov
NOTHING u
Church's a
is in favour
bases marri
is what sh
riage base
there can
without ov
from marri
mental u
society, tha
based on l
make it all
any in our
preach tha
merely in
of things
society. Th
ture and th
desire for
A Sp
MARRIED
very s
and often c
tic love bu
there. It
and strong
Without it
poses of m
tained. It
the things
and destroy
UNBEA
John
Austrian Ty
Sunny Spain
(San Seba
Tour of Italy
Lourdes ...
London ...
Paris ...
Brussels ...
10-day Cruise
Tangier,
New York W
Many other
JOHN
Trav