

ELEVEN GALWAY MARTYRS



The story of the Republican Soldiers of the Second Western Division, I.R.A., executed at Tuam and Athlone in 1923.

POBLAUGHT NA H EIREANN.
THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT
OF THE
IRISH REPUBLIC
TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN : In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and, supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish nation must, by its valour and discipline and by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on Behalf of the Provisional Government,

THOMAS J. CLARKE.

SEAN Mac DIARMADA,

THOMAS MacDONAGH,

P. H. PEARSE,

EAMONN CEANNT,

JAMES CONNOLLY.

JOSEPH PLUNKETT

ORD NA SEARMANAS

UNVEILING OF MEMORIAL WALL AT THE SITE OF TUAM WORKHOUSE

Sunday, April 21st, 1985

1. 3.30 p.m. General Assembly at 1916 Memorial Bishop Street, Tuam.
2. Parade will march, via the Square and Athenry Road, behind Fianna Eireann Colour Party and bands.
3. Cllr. Frank Glynn will chair the proceedings:
 - (a) Deichniú den Phaidrín i nGaeilge.
 - (b) Laying of Wreaths.
 - (c) Reading of Easter Proclamation.
 - (d) County Galway Roll of Honour.
 - (e) Sounding of "Last Post" and "Reveille"
 - (f) Unveiling of Memorial by Cmdt. Gen. Tom Maguire.
 - (g) Oration delivered by Ruairí Ó Brádaigh,
(former President of Sinn Féin).
 - (h) Amhrán na bhFiann.



*To Andy Rowe,
a memento of
1983 (March),
from
Ruairí Ó Brádaigh,
Ireland.
27/5/85*

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

21st January 1919 First Dail Eireann

Enacted by the

Parliament of the Republic of Ireland

'Whereas the Irish People is by right a free people:

'And whereas for seven hundred years the Irish People has never ceased to repudiate and has repeatedly protested in arms against foreign usurpation:

'And whereas English rule in this country is, and always has been, based upon force and fraud and maintained by military occupation against the declared will of the people:

'And whereas the Irish Republic was proclaimed in Dublin on Easter Monday, 1916, by the Irish Republican Army, acting on behalf of the Irish People:

'And whereas the Irish People is resolved to secure and maintain its complete independence in order to promote the common weal, to re-establish justice, to provide for future defence, to ensure peace at home and good will with all nations, and to constitute a national policy based upon the people's will with equal right and equal opportunity for every citizen:

'And whereas at the threshold of a new era in history the Irish electorate has in the General Election of December, 1918, seized the first occasion to declare by an overwhelming majority its firm allegiance to the Irish Republic:

'Now, therefore, we, the elected Representatives of the ancient Irish People in National Parliament assembled, do, in the name of the Irish Nation, ratify the establishment of the Irish Republic and pledge ourselves and our people to make this declaration effective by every means at our command:

'We ordain that the elected Representatives of the Irish People alone have power to make laws binding on the people of Ireland, and that the Irish Parliament is the only Parliament to which that people will give its allegiance:

'We solemnly declare foreign government in Ireland to be an invasion of our national right which we will never tolerate, and we demand the evacuation of our country by the English Garrison:

'We claim for our national independence the recognition and support of every free nation in the world, and we proclaim that independence to be a condition precedent to international peace hereafter:

'In the name of the Irish People we humbly commit our destiny to Almighty God Who gave our fathers the courage and determination to persevere through long centuries of a ruthless tyranny, and strong in the justice of the cause which they have handed down to us, we ask His Divine blessing on this the last stage of the struggle we have pledged ourselves to carry through to freedom.'

(Dail Eireann: *Minutes of the Proceedings of the First Parliament of the Republic of Ireland, 21st January 1919.*)



Comdt. General Tom Maguire, T.D. and G.O.C. Second Western Division, I. R.A. pictured in 1921. General Maguire, whose brother Sean, aged 17 years, was one of the six Volunteers executed at Tuam Workhouse in April 1923, will unveil the memorial plaque at the spot where they died.

Sunday, April 21st, 1985.



Remains of executed Volunteers lying overnight in St. Mary's Church, Headford, October, 1924.



This picture shows the funeral cortege of the executed soldiers of the Second Western Division, I.R.A. passing through Headford en route to their final resting place in the Republican plot, Donaghpatrick Cemetery. The late Michael Hughes, Kilbannon is third from left on the Guard of Honour of the first hearse.

DEMOCRATIC PROGRAMME OF DAIL EIREANN

The Democratic Programme, founded on the Easter Week Proclamation, was read and adopted at the inaugural meeting of Dail Eireann, January 21st, 1919. Its text is as follows:

We declare in the words of the Irish Republic proclamation the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies to be indefeasible, and in the language of our first President, Padraic Pearse, we declare that the nation's sovereignty extends not only to all men and women of the nation, but to all its material possessions; the nation's soil and all its resources, all the wealth and all the wealth-producing processes within the nation and with him we re-affirm that all rights to private property must be subordinated to the public right and welfare.

We declare that we desire our country to be ruled in accordance with the principles of Liberty, Equality and Justice for all, which alone can secure permanence of government in the willing adhesion of the people.

We affirm the duty of every man and woman to give allegiance and service to the commonwealth, and declare it is the duty of the nation to assure that every citizen shall have opportunity to spend his or her strength and faculties in the service of the people. In return for willing service, we, in the name of the Republic, declare the right of every citizen to an adequate share of the produce of the nation's labour.

It shall be the first duty of the Government of the Republic to make provision for the physical, mental and spiritual well being of the children, to secure that no child shall suffer hunger or cold from lack of food or clothing or shelter, but that all be provided with the means and facilities requisite for their proper education and training as citizens of a free and Gaelic Ireland.

The Irish Republic fully realises the necessity of abolishing the present odious, degrading and foreign poor-law system, substituting therefor a sympathetic native scheme for the care of the nation's aged and infirm, who shall no longer be regarded as a burden, but rather entitled to the nation's gratitude and consideration. Likewise it shall be the duty of the Republic to take measures that will safeguard the health of the people and ensure the physical as well as the moral well being of the nation.

It shall be our duty to promote the development of the nation's resources, to increase the productivity of the soil, to exploit its mineral deposits, peat bogs, and fisheries, its waterways and harbours, in the interest and for the benefit of the Irish people.

It shall be the duty of the Republic to adopt all measures necessary for the re-creation and invigoration of our industries and to ensure their being developed on the most beneficial and progressive co-operative industrial lines. With the adoption of an extensive Irish consular service trade with foreign nations shall be revived on terms of mutual advantage and good will; while undertaking the organisation of the Republic to prevent the shipment from Ireland of food and other necessities until the wants of the Irish people are fully satisfied and the future provided for.

It shall devolve upon the national government to seek the co-operation of the governments of other countries in determining a standard of social and industrial legislation with a view to general and lasting improvements in the conditions under which the working classes live and labour.

REVOLUTION and COUNTER-REVOLUTION

(How the All-Ireland Republic was set functioning
and how it was overthrown)

The Republic that the Galway men executed in Tuam and Athlone – and their comrades throughout Ireland – died defending was no mere “paper republic” but a living reality. It was set working during an extraordinary period in Irish history from 1919 to 1921, out of the genius of the Irish people themselves.

The Republic of All Ireland as it functioned at that time became a model for national liberation movements around the globe, but especially in Third World anti-colonial struggles. The Irish people, in response to the Easter Rising of 1916, simply ignored British rule and authority in Ireland, and set about governing themselves – administering a modern state.

They took over the existing local government structure and constructed and operated themselves the other machinery of government in defiance of the foreign occupying power. Thus what is known as the Black-and Tan War was in essence a struggle between rival administrations, one native with massive popular support, the other foreign and usurping and relying completely on brute force.

The invasion and colonisation of Ireland by the English was met by continuous resistance of the part of the Irish people for eight centuries. On Easter Monday 1916, a Republic was proclaimed in Dublin and a Provisional Government named (See 1916 Proclamation on page 2). Galway was one of the very few places outside Dublin to support the Rising. The local Volunteers did so under the leadership of Liam Mellows and inflicted casualties on the enemy at Carnmore cross. The Rising was quenched in blood by the British; all of the members of the Provisional Government were among those executed.

In the 1918 General Election, Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Republican Movement, won 73 out of the 105 seats in Ireland. Instead of going to the British Parliament, the Sinn Fein Deputies met in Dublin and formed a revolutionary parliament for All Ireland called Dail Eireann. The Dail enacted the Declaration of Independence (See page 4), adopted the Democratic Programme (page 5) and published a Message to the Free Nations of the World.

The Dail also sent a delegation to the Peace Conference taking place in Versailles, France following the end of World War I, but they were refused a hearing through English influence. Later a President and Cabinet were appointed and Departments of State organised with a Minister in charge of each. These included Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Defence, Industry & Local Government. Countess Markievicz, as Minister of Labour, became first woman Cabinet Minister in the world outside of Soviet Russia two years earlier.

All the Deputies and all the Volunteers of the I.R.A. which now came under the Minister for Defence publicly took an Oath of Allegiance to the Republic, swearing to defend it “against all enemies, foreign and domestic.” The Minister for Finance raised a Dail loan of over 5,000,000 dollars, a considerable sum in those days, in the United States, and close on £400,000 at home.

Dail Eireann courts were organised at four levels, (a) Parish, (b) District (ordinary and circuit), (c) High & (d) Supreme Courts. These had arbitration jurisdiction at first but later assumed also criminal jurisdiction. Solicitors and barristers practised in them, the people supported them fully and the British courts were deserted. Also under the Home Affairs Minister the newly formed Republican Police enforced the decrees of Dail Eireann and of the Dail courts.

LOCAL COUNCILS GIVE ALLEGIANCE

In January and June, 1920, Sinn Fein again swept the boards at the local council elections. The new local bodies controlled by Sinn Fein repudiated the British Local Government Board and transferred their allegiance to the Dail Department of that name. Even in what is now the Six Counties, Tyrone and Fermanagh County Councils and Derry Corporation and many other lesser bodies affiliated to Dail Eireann.

Foreign consular offices were opened in London, Paris, Rome, the United States, Germany, Soviet Russia, Argentina and Chile; envoys were at work in Australia, South Africa, Canada, while press bureaux functioned in Spain, Switzerland and Denmark. Arrangements were made to hold a Conference of the Irish Race throughout the world.

Further, an incipient social revolution took place. Landlord's estates were taken over and divided; places of work were occupied and run by the workers themselves, e.g. Arigna Coal Mines, Drogheda Foundry, Cork Harbour Board, many creameries including Knocklong, Co. Tipperary where the workers hung out a banner saying "We Make Butter Not Profits."

This great little country was slipping slowly but surely out of the iron grip of the British Empire, then covering a quarter of the globe and on which the imperialists boasted "the sun never set." It was officially admitted by the British that "the King's Writ no longer ran in the three southern provinces of Ireland," and in much of Ulster too, it could be added.

The British response was threefold. First came the Reign of Terror instituted by the Crown Forces, augmented by special forces from England, the Black and Tans and the Auxiliaries. Raids and arrests took place, torture and murder; the jails and concentration camps were filled. Dail Eireann judges and Sinn Fein local councillors were made special targets by the official and unofficial death squads of the British.

The Mayors of Cork and Limerick were assassinated in their homes. Councillor Michael Walsh of Galway City and the noble Father Michael Griffin met similar fates. Over twenty names of Galway's Roll of Honour bear testimony to the official murder policy of the British. The people were to be terrorised, but the I.R.A. struck back. The Volunteers maintained the people's morale by hitting back at the enemy, giving them back blow for blow, terrorising the terrorists and making British rule – even martial law in eight southern counties – impossible.

Secondly, the British Parliament enacted in 1920 the Partition Act which attempted to divide Ireland into Six and 26 Counties, both statelets to be under British subordinate administration. This measure failed entirely in the South but was partially successful in the North. But even in the Six Counties it could not work with credibility without the support and active collaboration of an administration in Dublin. But no such body was available to the British and Dail Eireann was contesting the ground with them on a 32 County basis.

Then in 1921, driven by world opinion and even liberal opinion itself, the British ruling classes made their third move – and won! Prime Minister Lloyd George, ably backed by Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill, sought and effected a Truce with the I.R.A. and invited the "Sinn Fein leaders" – not the representatives of the Government of the Irish Republic – to London to discuss a "Peace Settlement."

There at 2.30 a.m. on December 6th, 1921 under the threat of "immediate and terrible war" he manoeuvred the delegates from Dail Eireann into signing an Agreement which accepted partition, recognised the Belfast puppet administration and turned the 26 Counties into a British Dominion under the King with membership of the British Empire and an Oath of Allegiance to the Crown. This meant of course, overturning the Republic and if necessary, crushing by armed forces its institutions including the Army of the Republic, the I.R.A.

A GLORIOUS MOMENT HAD PASSED

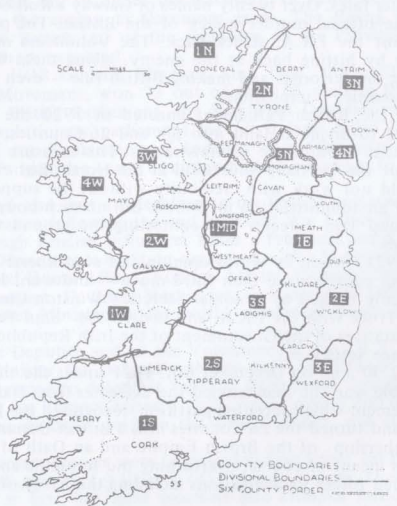
It was the classic counter-revolutionary ploy and as in all such cases the consequences were disastrous for the population concerned. First, a section of the leadership was suborned, in this case mainly Griffith and Collins; then they organised their personal following by whatever means and, with the eager support of the dormant and active pro-British elements of the country destroyed and subverted Dail Eireann and all that had been built by the people themselves from ground level. A glorious moment in Irish history had passed.

Pressure was mounted from outside the Republican Movement on the Deputies of Dail Eireann by the press and the Catholic Hierarchy, and from inside it most powerfully by the secret Irish Republican Brotherhood. A small majority of seven in a house of 130 approved the Surrender and then a second "Provisional Government" was set up at a special meeting of pro-Treaty and Unionist M.P.s from the 26 Counties only.

This second "Government" proceeded to organise a new army, the Free State Army and a new police force, the Civic Guard or Garda Siochana without any authority from the Irish people. The British departments of state were handed over to it and these were merged with the Dail departments through the pro-Treaty majority in the Dail. The Republic was being dismantled as the British evacuated the 26 Counties.

I.R.A. DIVISIONAL AREAS 1921-23

All eleven Republican soldiers executed at Athlone and Tuam belonged to the 2nd Western Division commanded by Comdt. General Tom Maguire T.D. This comprised the South Roscommon, South and East Mayo and North Galway Brigades.



The Irish Republican Army in convention repudiated both the "Settlement" and those who approved it. Between 75% and 80% of the Volunteers supported this stand. Fianna Eireann also stood by the Republic and Cumann na mBan voted 419 to 63 most overwhelmingly of all against the Surrender. (All six women Deputies in the Dail had rejected the Treaty).

The I.R.B., which should have been disbanded when the Dail was first formed since it too claimed governmental authority, had no role to play in the events of 1919-21 other than as a manipulative body in the hands of Michael Collins and his closest associates. With its stand against the Republic in 1921-22 it fragmented and dissolved finally in 1924.

Sinn Fein sought vainly to avoid a split and postponed a decision at an Ard Fheis in February, 1922 and again the following May when it endorsed the famous "Pact" election of June, 1922. This meant that both sides would not put up candidates against each other, and it was only where the Labour Party or Independents went forward that there was a contest.

The new Free State Constitution was to be published in time for the election but it appeared only on Polling Day and Collins, back from a visit to London, publicly repudiated the Pact in Cork two days before the election. A coalition government was to have been formed under the Pact to try and find a way forward.

The new 32 County Dail never met and has not come together to this very day. Following the election, Lloyd George and Churchill publicly demanded in the British House of Commons that the Free State Army attack I.R.A. Headquarters in Dublin's Four Courts (Hansard, June 26th, 1922, no. 84, Volume 155, columns 1711 & 1712).

This was done at 4.07 a.m. on June 28th, two days before the Dail was to meet. Hostilities continued after Dublin fell to the Free State, but almost all Munster and most of Connacht were staunchly for the Republic. The Free State sent troops by sea to Cork and Kerry in August and to Westport, Co. Mayo on July 24th. North Galway stood firmly against Free State drives but on July 25th, Tuam was evacuated by Republican forces.

Meanwhile, no parliament met and the Republic was being further demolished. The Dail Eireann Courts were suppressed and its judges imprisoned and the old British courts were brought back. As the Free State Army, amply equipped by the British with artillery, armoured cars and munitions, pushed through the country the Garda Siochana supplanted the Republican police.

Local councils were now linked to the only functioning administration in the 26 Counties, the Free State "Provisional Government." Tyrone and Fermanagh County Councils, Derry Corporation and many other councils were cut off by the Free State and suppressed by force by the new R.U.C. and B-Specials who occupied their offices and drove out council staff. The Six County regime thus smashed pro-Irish local government while the Free Staters turned their backs.

Wherever the Free State Army marched in the developing social revolution was also rolled back. Lands were restored to landlords and the new occupiers evicted. Bosses were reinstated in all places of work and the workers, far from being the owners and controllers of their co-operatives, were reduced to their old position of being wage slaves.

SYMPATHETIC PRIESTS VICTIMISED

The Catholic Bishops declared the solemn oath to the Republic taken by all Deputies and Volunteers as not binding, but did not declare the new oath to the King of England unlawful. Many of the lesser clergy supported the Republic and were victimised for it. Fathers Albert and Dominic stayed in the Four Courts till it fell and were exiled to America – to die there – as punishment. Father O’Flanagan was silenced twice but never flinched, while An t-Athair (later Monsignor) Padraig de Brun was ostracised. The latter’s poems (see elsewhere in this booklet) and moral support for the Republic were much appreciated at the time.

The Republicans appealed to Rome over the heads of the Hierarchy and Monsignor Luzio was sent over by the Pope in 1923. He was received politely but not seriously by Free Staters and Bishops. On his return he is supposed to have said that he met no Bishops in Ireland – only Popes!

An attempt by the Free State to grab the Dail Loan in the United States, amounting to 2½ million dollars was frustrated by Judge Peters of the New York Supreme Court in 1927 who ruled that the Free State was not the successor of the 32 County Dail and that the money should be returned to those who had subscribed it.

Following the fall of the last town held by the Republican troops on August 11th, guerilla warfare was resorted to. On September 9th a parliament met at last in Dublin, but it was the 26 County parliament of the Free State, meeting at Leinster House, and not the All-Ireland Dail.

In effect the Free Staters at the bidding of and with the support of the English Establishment, brought off a coup d’etat in the summer of 1922. They then presented the Irish people with a military accomplished fact.

The Ballyseedy, Co. Kerry Memorial Booklet (1983) describes the situation in the autumn and winter of 1922:

“The Republicans facing the big guns and armoured cars of the Free Staters realised they had but one answer to such overwhelming firepower; they abandoned the towns, avoided open conflicts when vastly outgunned and outnumbered, and resumed the guerilla-type campaign so successful against the Black-and-Tans.

“The countryside remained largely in Republican hands. In a matter of weeks the Free State drive bogged down. On September 30th the Free State press admitted the I.R.A. could not be beaten – unless extraordinary measures were adopted. The Free State government now ‘under contract with the enemy to maintain his overlordship’ recruited large numbers of ex-British soldiers and anybody else prepared to wear khaki uniforms dyed green and to hound Republicans for thirty shillings a week.

“Then they began a reign of terror. In a gruesome celebration of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, they took Rory O’Connor, Liam Mellows, Dick Barrett and Joe McKelvey from their cells in Mountjoy and shot them dead, without trial, on December 8th. They rounded up, jailed and interned over 12,000 prisoners in their concentration camps in the Curragh. Staters bombed the homes of Republican families, raided houses, arrested suspects and shot prisoners out of hand. Official executions reached 77; unofficial killings far more. Propaganda smeared the I.R.A. as “irregulars,” and hate language issued through the press used Lloyd George’s term “reprisals” to cover every outrage committed by Free State agents.

“Meanwhile F. E. Smith (Lord Birkenhead) told the British Parliament that the effect of the Treaty would be ‘to hold Ireland for the Empire with an economy of English lives.’”

It continues:

“In December 1922, the Free State O.C. in Kerry, Gen. W. R. E. Murphy – ex-British Brigadier and later Commissioner of the Garda Siochana – issued a proclamation that if the I.R.A. continued to attack his men he would as a REPRISAL shoot Republican prisoners. He named five local men. Humphrey Murphy O.C. Kerry No. 1 Brigade I.R.A. dealt quickly with his Free State namesake’s hostage threat by replying that if carried out he would counter by shooting seven prominent Free Staters whom he named. This finished the “reprisal” until Ballyseedy the following March.”

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

All of this brings developments to the stage where the Republican prisoners were executed in Athlone and later in Tuam. With the "Cease Fire Order" on April 30th and the "Dump Arms - Return Home" command on May 24th by Republican Headquarters the Second Defence of the Republic ended. The same organisations which defended the Republic then were those which stood firm in 1926 when de Valera parted with them to form Fianna Fail as a 26 County constitutional party.

Despite directions in the 1930s and '40s, despite the formation of the Workers Party in 1969-'70, the same Republican Movement, composed of the self-same organisations is engaged in struggle today for the restoration of the Republic of 1916 and 1919 in all 32 Counties of Ireland.

Tom Hughes, Martin Burke and their comrades in Athlone, Frank Cunnane and his men in Tuam gave their young lives willingly for this and for nothing less. Let us, in our day, strive to be worthy of their sacrifice.

Ni siochain saoirse !

The bodies of the executed Kerry men with that of Thomas Hughes, Bogginn were conveyed to Athlone Town Hall which had been prepared for their reception, and where they were deposited in the Board-room. A guard of honour was on duty at the Hall all night. Temporary altars were erected in the room on which were placed lighted candles. The Rosary was recited for the souls of the dead when the coffins were placed in position alongside each other.

At 10 o'clock on Wednesday morning in presence of a large crowd of spectators the coffins containing the remains of the dead Kerry men were removed to waiting motor cars which conveyed them to their native places. Prayers for the dead were recited by Father O'Sullivan, brother of Timothy O'Sullivan, one of the deceased, before the removal of the coffins from the room.

The remains of the other executed men were brought to their respective homes on Tuesday evening. Each of the coffins was draped in the Republican Tri-colour, and bore a breast-plate, provided by the relatives, on which was incised in Irish, the name, the date of death and age of the deceased.

The spectacle presented on Tuesday evening, after all the coffins had been removed from the barracks, was a never-to-be-forgotten-one, and a grim reminder of the unfortunate division between comrade Irishmen which was the result of Mr. de Valera's refusal to accept the Treaty. The long line of motor cars, intersected here and there by a huge yellow-painted coffin, formed indeed one of the most melancholy pictures ever witnessed in this or any other country.

Editorial Note: The figures given for the handing over of bodies at the various prisons and barracks are not entirely accurate. Brian Mulvihill of Coosan, mentioned in the text was a life-long Republican who died a few years ago. The Mulvihills have been a Republican family down to the present time. It was acceptance of the Treaty of Surrender and the armed overthrow of the All-Ireland Republic caused "the unfortunate division between comrade Irishmen."

Galway defends the All-Ireland Republic, July 1922 - May 1923

The Second Western Division, I.R.A., covering North Galway, South and Mid Roscommon and South and East Mayo, remained under General Tom Maguire until he was captured in October and then Christy Macken became the Officer in command. North Galway was completely in Republican hands until July 25th, 1922 when Free State forces marched to Tuam and lodged themselves in the Workhouse.

Once the Free State Forces arrived they met stiff resistance and dared not venture far from the Workhouse headquarters, except in very large numbers. Commandant Vincent Corcoran and the North Galway Brigade raided the town five times that autumn in an effort to engage in combat. Cmdt. Corcoran, during the latter months of 1922, supervised the movement of many of his men to Co. Roscommon for training, usually in groups of eight. It is understood that the four Galwaymen executed in January, in Athlone, were amongst those moved to Clonalis House, near Castlereagh, and other places in Co. Roscommon.

On December 8th, Liam Mellows, an adopted son of Galway, was among four men officially executed in Mountjoy Jail. An article elsewhere in the booklet deals with this outstanding leader of the Irish people.

We are not certain as to how and when the five men executed in Athlone were arrested but within two weeks of Christmas, 1922 either side, the following were found in possession of arms and ammunition and then found guilty by Free State Military Court and given a sentence of execution by firing squad, which was then suspended:

Captain Thomas Hughes, Bogganfin, Athlone.
Captain Martin Burke, Caherlistrane.
Captain Stephen Joyce, Derrymore, Caherlistrane.
Captain Michael Walsh, Derrymore, Caherlistrane.
Vol. Hubert Collins, Liskean, Headford.

On Saturday, January 20th, 1923 those five men were taken out in Custume Barracks, Athlone, lined by a wall and, on the orders of the Highest Command in the Free State Forces, executed. Their relatives were not informed until at the earliest, 6 p.m., in the case of Capt. Hughes' family which lived nearby, some ten hours later. Six others were executed in Tralee and in Limerick on the same day.

At that time all I.R.A. Volunteers captured in the Headford and East Bank of the Corrib area were brought to Galway Jail, which stood on the site of the present Cathedral. A column of volunteers had been drilling and preparing in the North Galway area throughout the winter and was resisting in the village of Cluid, parish of Annaghdown on the morning of February 19th.

A huge force of Free State soldiers surrounded the houses and barn and after a brief encounter 18 volunteers were captured. One volunteer, the late John Francis Rattigan of Caherlistrane, escaped shortly afterwards. These 17 included five men who would later be executed in Tuam. Free State Army Headquarters issued a statement the next day saying that a column had been captured "all of whom were fully armed." On the same day, in the townland of Knocklahard, between Headford and Kilbeg Pier, Seamas O Maille of Uachtar Ard was arrested and like all others, brought to Galway Jail.

In March, Cmdt. Corcoran travelled to Roscommon for a meeting of Brigade O/Cs in the Western Command area. Here all were asked to select a suitable target and make one last effort in defence of the Republic.

The Second Western Division was to be the only one to act and their target was in the North Galway Brigade area, namely the Free State Forces in the bank at Headford. A column of men from all over the Divisional area moved in to the Knockma foothills on Saturday, April 7th, and on Sunday morning shortly after 5 a.m., the attack on Headford Barracks began. Early on, Vol. Daniel McCormack of Milltown was badly hurt and played no further part in the action.

Afterwards the Republicans retreated across the river towards Knockma. At some stage Vol. John Higgins of Ballytrasna, Tuam was surrounded, lying on the ground and was shot dead. According to the Second-in-Command of the operation, Comdt. Vincent Corcoran of Caherlistrane, now living in Galway City, Vol. Higgins was unarmed. Vol. Dan McCormack suffered badly from his wounds he received and five years later died as a result of those. He spent the last years travelling around ensuring that all receipts given during the Defence of the All-Ireland Republic were honoured. He is buried with his comrades in Donaghpatrick Cemetery.

Free State casualties at Headford were officially stated as two dead. Whether this is correct or not remains to be seen, but when one notes that six men were executed in Tuam, three days later, it is possible that there was a higher than admitted number of mortally wounded on the Free State side. The attack had taken place on April 8th and afterwards the Republican forces withdrew to their bases, the North Galway Brigade going to dug-outs among the bogs along the Mayo border, near Knockma.

On Monday morning, the Bishop of Galway, Dr. O'Dea died and so followed a period of mourning that lasted until his funeral on Thursday, April 12th. On Tuesday, John Higgins was buried in Kilbannon Cemetery, after Mass in Tuam. The same day six men were taken aside in Galway Jail and told that they would be executed at 8 a.m. the next day, not in Galway but in Tuam Workhouse. The Six Volunteers were:

Comdt. Frank Cunnane, Kilcoona, Headford.

Lt. Sean Maguire, Cross, Cong.

Lt. Sean Newell, Winefort, Headford.

Vol. Michael Monaghan, Clooneen, Headford.

Vol. Martin Moylan, Farmerstown, Annaghdown.

Vol. Seamas O Maille, Uachtar Ard.

They were brought from Galway to Tuam Workhouse that evening. They wrote their final letters, got Mass and in two groups of three, lined by the Oratory wall, were executed early on April 11th, 1923. Free State Command in Dublin issued:

“James O’Malley, Clooneen, Headford; Martin Moylan, Farmerstown, Annaghdown; John Newell, Winefort, Headford; John McGuire, Cross, Cong; Michael Monaghan, Clooneen, Headford; Martin Moylan, Farmerstown, Annaghdown.

All the above were charged with having possession of a rifle and ammunition at Cluid on February 19th, 1923 without proper authority. All six persons were found guilty. The findings confirmed in each case and the prisoners were sentenced to death.

The executions were duly carried out in Tuam Military Barracks (Workhouse) on the morning of Wednesday, April 11th, 1923”

The Connacht Tribune of the following Saturday, April 14th describes the event: “The condemned men, it is stated, went to their doom firmly and with brave hearts. They had been attended during the night by two of the town priests and in the morning heard Mass, at which two of them served. The priests were with them to the last.

The news of the executions cast a gloom over the people who could hardly realise what awful happening had taken place in their midst that morning. About 8 a.m. two volleys were fired and it is stated that the condemned men were taken out in parties of three each and blindfolded and their hands joined as in prayer. They had prayed fervently during the night before and in the morning and were fully consoled, prepared to meet their Creator.

The six bodies enclosed in six coffins were interred in the ground within the Barracks and it is stated that the ground was consecrated. No official information of the executions would be supplied to the Press.”

Word spread by mouth throughout that fateful day, in Caherlistrane and Headford. At nightfall, John Francis Rattigan ventured from the dug-out only to return with the saddest of news. They did not know, but more bad news was on the way. The night before, April 10th, General Liam Lynch, Chief of Staff lay mortally wounded on the slopes of the Knockmealdowns in Tipperary, another blow to the defence of the Republic.

The bodies of the Six, like those in Athlone, were buried where they died. Later in 1923, when the Free State vacated the Workhouse they exhumed the bodies and brought them to Athlone. Towards the end of April the order to down arms was given and during the next year all the prisoners were released.

Finally on October 28th, 1924, the Free State released the bodies of the executed soldiers of the Republic. Some 20 bodies, those executed in Tuam, Athlone, Drumboe, Tullamore, Birr and Tralee were released through the back-gate of Custume Barracks, Athlone at ten minute intervals. Seamas O Maille was taken to Uachtar Ard and buried later in Cill Choimin Cemetery. Thomas Hughes was buried in Cornamagh Cemetery, Athlone. The Connacht Tribune of November 1st, 1924 describes the funerals in North Galway:

"It was nearly 12 o'clock (midnight) on Tuesday night when the procession arrived in Tuam. It was the saddest funeral procession ever seen and ever likely to be seen in the country. Over 20 motor cars were in the procession – the first nine containing the remains of the deceased, and the relatives followed in cars.

The coffins were draped with the Republican Tricolour. There was a shell coffin in each case covering the coffin in which the remains were placed at the time of the execution.

"THE SIX"

The Workhouse, Tuam –

Outside those gloomy walls,
The Famine victims died in fever and in pain.
The golden grain that sprang from Irish soil
Was not for them, for they were slaves,
And by their masters doomed to perish so.
In anguish and in woe,
Now for their souls we pray:
Rest and refreshment, light and holy peace,
Upon this April Day.

Within those walls so grim a spot is marked,
And from His Cross the pitying Christ looks down
Where six men stood to gain the patriot's crown.
Eager and young were they,
One lad but eighteen summers past,
Holding their dream until the last,
Until the volley rang, and in their blood they lay.
Bravely they died in manhood's pride,
Upon that April Day.

Oh, lay the Flowers of Spring upon that hallowed spot,
Flowers for their dream and for their young lives given.
Prayers to the Captain, Christ
Who died on Calvary's Hill,
That He receive their souls today in Heaven.
Now, not in anger or revenge do we look back,
But like unto the Crucified we humbly pray:
"Father, forgive," they knew not what they did
who doomed those six to die
Upon an April Day.

Mai King O'Brien.

In Tuam a large crowd remained on the streets awaiting the arrival of the funeral and although there was a heavy downpour of rain and the remains did not arrive until 11.30 p.m., the people stood waiting. As the funeral cars drove slowly through the town, heads were uncovered, and soldiers and Civic Guards saluted. Spanning some of the principal streets were streamers with mourning crosses in Republican colours.

There was no delay in Tuam and all the cars proceeded on to Headford where they arrived about 1.30 a.m. On passing Belclare church the bell tolled, this lending a solemn sadness to the countryside around, at that late hour of night. The remains were left in Headford Church where the rosary was recited."

Their comrades in the North Galway Brigade, I.R.A., stood guard. The Connacht Tribune continues: The remains of John McGuire, brother of T. McGuire T.D. were conveyed to Cross, Cong from where they were taken, after High Mass on Thursday and interred with the other coffins in a Republican plot at Donaghpatrick Burial Ground.

The interment took place after 11 a.m. mass at Headford on Thursday, October 30th, 1924. Arrangements were made to hold a general day of mourning in Tuam and surrounding towns by having all business suspended during the day."

LAST LETTER OF HUBERT COLLINS

Garrison Detention,
Custume Barracks,
Athlone, January, 1923.

My Dear Joe,

As I write you these few lines it is drawing nearer to my death. As I am about to die for loving my country, I am proud of it. It's just one short month since I saw you all. How happy we were then. But I am happier now when I know I shall be in a few short hours with the great God who made us all. How happy I shall be when I see our dear brother Thomas who died for the same cause I am dying for.

But Joe this world has no earthly charms for me now, as I am ready to meet my God. Don't worry Joe, after me as we will all have to go and might not get the chance of preparing for death as I did. Wish all the boys luck and success for me. I must conclude by sending my best to you Joe, Mammy, James and Cissie. Goodbye now and pray for me and God bless you all.

Your Loving Brother,
Hubert Collins.
(Headford).

GENERAL LIAM LYNCH

Chief of Staff, Irish Republican Army was killed in action defending the Republic on April 10th, 1923 on the Knockmealdown Mountains, Co. Tipperary.

He died the night before the executions in Tuam. It is unlikely then that Frank Cunnane and his comrades knew of the loss of their Commander-in-Chief.



TO THE MEMORY OF LIAM LYNCH

O mourn ye winds of Erin, he is dead:
Our chief - "The Lion-hearted" - is no more.
Go, softly whisper o'er his lonely bed
And list his spirit on th' eternal shore.

The hills of Erin sentinel his sleep
Those "Royal Hills" whose every path he knew
Grieve not for him, but for those others weep,
And, Heroes, at his grave your faith renew.

He gave his life that she he loved might live
As Emmet did in those proud bygone days.
And doubt not. Liam, when his name is writ
Ireland will write you, too, in words of praise.

Sibeal,
Catholic Bulletin, June, 1924.

SECRET MILITARY TRIBUNALS

HOW THE REPUBLIC AND THE FREE STATE WAGED WAR

From the opening of hostilities with the attack on the Four Courts in Dublin at the end of June, 1922, General Liam Lynch, I.R.A. Chief of Staff according to Florence O'Donoghue in "No Other Law," endeavoured to conduct the conflict on the recognised lines of warfare. On September 27th, 1922, he had issued an Order (General Order No.9) strictly prohibiting any retaliation in kind for the killing of I.R.A. men. Having referred to "some cruel and cold-blooded murders" which had taken place, the order stated: '... Our troops are strictly forbidden to carry out similar reprisals on the enemy for these murders and no such acts can under any circumstances be tolerated.'

The same order prohibited the shooting of unarmed Free State soldiers and the use of dum-dum or explosive ammunition. It directed further that wounded enemy personnel should receive proper medical attention; that the Red Cross should at all times be respected, and that where the white flag was hoisted his forces "should accept the surrender, no matter what circumstances." That order was generally obeyed.

Even in the face of persistent Free State policy of executing prisoners of war, he continued steadily to resist any departure from the letter or spirit of the order, beyond the taking and holding of hostages. (*None of these was ever maltreated or executed. - Ed.*)

On the same day as Liam Lynch issued his humanitarian G.O. No. 9 (which was strictly in accordance with the Geneva Convention), September 27th, 1922 the Free State Minister General Mulcahy asked the new 26 County Parliament at Leinster House to grant the Free State Army certain emergency powers. Dorothy Macardle in "The Irish Republic" traces the origins, development and operation of the new powers:

"The required resolution was proposed by Cosgrave. Its effect was to empower the military authorities to set up Military Courts. These courts were to have power to try any person charged with aiding or abetting an attack upon the National Forces, with damaging property, with being in unauthorised possession of arms or ammunition or committing a breach of 'any General Order or Regulation made by the Army Authorities,' and to inflict punishment of fine, imprisonment, deportation or death.

The Labour Party opposed. Thomas Johnson declared that to pass the Resolution would amount to establishing a military dictatorship. No army of novices, he said, should be entrusted with the power of life and death over civilians, and added:

'I predict, with very great sorrow, that if this Order is passed, we will learn of very many more cases of Colleys and Nevilles, and the other men who have lost their lives, for which no explanation has been given to the courts or to the public.'

He complained that the relations of the Army and the Government had never been explained to the Dail, and asked, 'Is the Army the organ of the Government? If it is so, why offer this authority to that subordinate institution?'

In the course of a long speech defending the measure, Mulcahy argued that it was necessary to give the troops power to kill their prisoners in an authorised way in order 'to prevent men from taking upon themselves authority to execute people in an unauthorised way.'

Kevin O'Higgins supported the Resolution in an extraordinary speech. His words could not fail to suggest that in supporting the principle of executions he had one individual in mind. (*He named Erskine Childers who was later one of the first to be executed - Ed.*)

The Military Courts, Mulcahy indicated, were to be secret. Gavan Duffy's proposal that prisoners charged with armed opposition to the Free State Government be treated as prisoners of war was defeated. 'We are not going to treat rebels as prisoners of war,' Cosgrave said.

The resolution, with a few amendments, was carried by 47 votes to 15.

On October 3rd, the Government issued a conditional offer of amnesty. In a long proclamation which announced that Military Courts were about to be established, they offered to those engaged in armed opposition to the Free State Government an opportunity 'to withdraw from this rebellion with immunity for themselves.' A full pardon was offered to all such who before October 15th, delivered to the 'National Forces,' all arms, ammunition, etc. in their possession, and who ceased to aid or abet the armed opposition in any way.

ON October 10th, the Irish Hierarchy, meeting at Maynooth, issued to the priests and people of Ireland a Joint Pastoral Letter in which resistance to the Provisional Government was once more condemned, and the war, on the Republican side, was described as 'morally only a system of murder and assassination of the 'National Forces.'

(Earlier they had individually condemned both the 1916 Rising and the War against the Black-and-Tans. Collectively, they had refused to recognise Dail Eireann in the summer of 1921, but they rallied immediately to the support of the new 26 County Free State - Ed.)

Every and any act of war by Republicans and the mere possession of arms or ammunition would be punishable, after October 15th, by death.

(During November the first executions including that of Childers, took place in Dublin. Mulcahy defended these actions in the Free State Parliament on November 30th - Ed.)

A few days later an army order was issued extending the power of Military Courts to inflict the death penalty for possession of ammunition or any explosive substance.

In no case of execution had official notice been sent to the relatives; so Cosgrave informed Labour organisations in a letter published on November 29th. The Press report of the prisoner's execution was the first notification received by his friends and relatives, who were unaware even that he had been tried. Every Republican taken with arms after October 15th was now liable to be called from his prison cell, convicted by a court composed of his enemies and put to death within a few hours. This situation was one of strain for the prisoners and of incessant anxiety for their families and friends. The Provisional Government had devised a war-measure better calculated than any used by the British Government to break down the resistance of those opposed to them.

However...

The Volunteers were encouraged by desertions from the army opposed to them. The false arguments with which men had been induced to join the pro-Treaty Army had been exposed. No amount of propaganda could prevail, after the events of * December 6th, to sustain the illusion that this army was fighting in defence of a 'Republic in all but name,' and now, secretly and openly, soldiers of the Government's army were giving aid to Republicans. Rumours of execution for mutiny had been prevalent since the beginning of the war. The Free State Ministry now found it necessary to publish the fact that men of its own army were being executed, charged with 'treachery.' Five men were executed on this charge on January 8th, and one of a large number who had gone over with arms to the I.R.A. was captured and was executed on February 26th.

The number of desertions was not sufficient, however, to embarrass the Treaty Party to any considerable extent.

(In addition to torture during interrogation and the prolonged hardship and confinement in overcrowded conditions, the author says:

On many of the imprisoned Republican soldiers lay the additional strain of being tried by a secret Court and held under a suspended sentence of death, seeing comrades led out to execution, and never knowing, from hour to hour, when their own call might come. A whole wing of Mountjoy Jail in Dublin was filled with men so sentenced.

The execution of Republican prisoners proceeded, during January, in every quarter of the Free State, North, South, East and West.

Three were executed in Dundalk on January 13th, four in Roscrea and one in Carlow on the 15th. There were eleven executions on the 20th – two in Limerick, four in Tralee, and five in Athlone. The charge in nearly every case was the regulation one of being in illegal possession of arms – a charge equally applicable to hundreds of prisoners in camps and jails in scores of Irish towns.

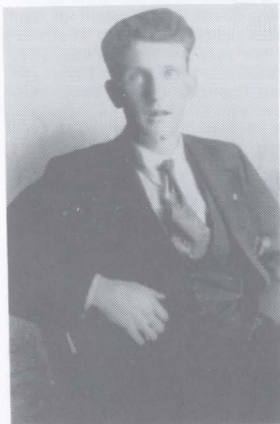
Victims had in fact been chosen from the centre of each district where the I.R.A. was operating with success. It was concluded that the location of a prisoner's home had become a factor in the Court's decision as to whether he should suffer the penalty of death: the intention was, by this programme, to reduce each part of the country in turn.

A General Order made by the Free State Army Council on January 8th extended the powers of Military Courts; these Courts were now empowered to inflict the death penalty for activities of many kinds. A prisoner might now be executed for having in his or her possession any plan, document or note 'for a purpose prejudicial to the safety of the State or of the National Forces.' The Free State Army Council, in a Proclamation dated January 20th and published in full and declared on February 1st, set forth its extended powers in full and declared its intention to exercise them forthwith.

In less than six months, between November and May, the Free State Government had executed 77 Republican Volunteers, Dorothy Macardle concludes.

NOTE: The British executed 40 Republicans from 1916 to 1921 – 16 following the Easter Rising and 24 in 1920-21.]

** The long awaited first Free State Constitution came into force on this date complete with the English King and an Oath of Allegiance to him.*



Vol. Dan McCormack of Milltown, who died on August 15th, 1929, aged 29 years, from wounds received at the Headford Barracks attack on April 8th, 1923. He lost his left arm above the elbow and right leg below the knee. The mark on his chin is from an exit wound.

Seventy-Seven

(1923)

*Seventy-Seven of mine, said Ireland,
Walking the dismal road of death,
Avowed their faith in a tortured sireland,
Called my name with their latest breath;
Lifted their hearts to God above them —
Hearts as pure as the mountain snow —
Prayed for the faithful ones who love them,
But never quailed at the tyrant's blow.*

*Killed in my name! My best, my dearest!
In the lonely fields, in the barrack squares.
Surely, O God of Love, thou hearest
An outraged Sireland's heart-wrung prayers!
Surely for their sake Thou wilt send me
A host of soldiers to set me free!
O God of Battles, do thou befriend me,
For I have been loyal and true to thee!*

*Seventy-Seven of mine are sleeping
Under the sod for love of me.
I have placed them all in God's good keeping
As my pledge for the glorious day to be
When men shall spring from the down-trod masses
And march with a manly stride once more,
To fight in the streets and the hillside passes
Till the night of thralldom and shame is o'er.*

*Mellows, McKelvey, Barrett, O'Connor,
Childers, Brugha and my martyrs all,
Shall gather my soldiers for Ireland's honour,
Shall send through the land my olden call.
My sons shall answer the brave reveille,
And heedless of sorrow and strife and pain,
Bring freedom and peace to hill and valley —
The true revenge for my soldiers slain!*

Brian na Banban

CATHAL BRUGHA

The first nationally known figure and Dail Deputy who fell defending the All-Ireland Republic was Cathal Brugha (1874-1922). He had reported for duty to the Dublin Brigade, entrenched in a block of hotels in O'Connell Street, as an ordinary Volunteer following the Free State attack on I.R.A. Headquarters in the Four Courts with artillery loaned by the British for this purpose.

The O'Connell Street defenders held out for a week – as in 1916 – and then Brugha ordered the men and women under him to surrender. This done, he himself – the last man – emerged from the Hammam Hotel which was burning fiercely, and walked calmly, revolver in hand, towards the Free Staters. He was cut down by machine gun fire and died of wounds in hospital two days later. He was 48 and left a wife and six young children.

Born in Dublin, Brugha joined Craobh an Cheitinnigh de Chonradh na Gaeilge and became a fluent Irish speaker. He was also a well trained athlete, keen swimmer, boxer and gymnast and a member of the Gaelic Athletic Association. In Easter Week, 1916, he fought in the South Dublin Union as Vice-Commandant of the 4th Battalion, Dublin Brigade under Galway-born Cmt. Eamon Ceannt.

Single-handed, Brugha held British troops at bay although suffering from 25 bullet wounds, five dangerous, nine serious and eleven others, plus a leg shattered by shrapnel. He recovered and, although permanently lame, presided over the inaugural meeting of the First (All-Ireland) Dail Eireann in 1919 as elected Deputy for Co. Waterford. He read the Declaration of Independence on that historic occasion and became Minister for Defence of the Republic from April 1919 until the Treaty of Surrender was approved in January, 1922. As Minister, the framing of military policy was his prime concern. He defined the position thus:—

“England must be given the choice of evacuating the country, or of hiding it by foreign garrison with a perpetual state of war.”

Cathal Brugha was determined in his death to show to the Irish people the nature of the war that was being waged on the Republic at the behest of England. A modern Cuchulainn he was one of those who inspired the men executed in Athlone and Tuam the following year.

CAOINEADH EIREANN AR CHATHAL BRUGHA

(Fonn: “I Know Where I'm Going”)

Caoinim blath na nGael.

Caoinim laoch thi calma,
Nar threig an Bhearna Bhaoil,
Ach deag ar son na Banban.

Curfa:

Mo ghra thu, a Chathail Bhugha!
Is tu mo run go dangean!
Alaoich nar gheill sa ngleo,
Is tu mo stor, mo thairneamh!

Aoighim liom do ghníomh!

Bhi fir go líofa agam
Go dilis sheas an fód,
Ach is tu chuir seon i nGallaibh.

Curfa:

Gra mo chroí go h-eag,
Gach oglach trean gan eagla
Ach is tu an treoná coir
Ar bhóthar morna Banban.

Curfa:



Cathal Brugha
Aire Cosanta na Poblachta

Last letter of Stephen Joyce to his sister, Julia.

Custume Barracks,
Athlone,
January 20th, 1923.

Dear Sister Julia,

Just a few lines bidding you the last farewell. On tomorrow morning, Michael Walsh, Hubert Collins, Martin Burke, Tomas Hughes and myself will meet our death at the hands of Irishmen. Still, we are quite happy and contented. We have been to see a priest and will hear Mass in the morning and receive the Body and Blood of our Saviour. Tomorrow morning at 8 a.m. will be the happiest hour of my life.

I know this will come as a terrible shock to you. I fear your heart will break. I ask you not to grieve for me, for it must be God's holy will that I should sacrifice my life for Ireland. It has been the dream of my earliest youth. The music of the rifles has always been ringing in my ears since the day Cmdt. Louis Darcy handed me his revolver and said "Hold this; rather than part with it, lose your life first." This I was determined to do, as you know the consequences of now.

Tell mother and father not to grieve for me for all I ask now is to pray for me. I would not like to hear you crying when I am among the dead. Tell all my companions to pray for me, Julia, and I ask you to wear those medals in memory of your dead brother. God bless and protect you from all danger. Goodbye now until I meet you in Heaven.

From your Loving Brother,
Stephen.

Custume Barracks,
Athlone,
Friday night - Saturday
January 19th-20th, 1923.

Last letter of Martin Burke to his brother, Jim.

To Dear Jim,

Just a few lines before I pass away from this world forever. I suppose my time has come. So don't cry for my sake. Life is sweet but we are getting a good chance at preparing for tomorrow.

Poor Tom Hughes is by my side, a soldier to the last. Stephen Joyce, Mick Walsh and Hubert Collins are going before God in the morning. I think with God's help I'm prepared to die. I don't know where this will find you but I will direct it to Ballinapark, the spot I loved best.

Poor old Dad, this will give him a blow, but it's a chance for a happy death. So Goodbye until we meet in the happy land beyond the skies.

Goodbye from
your Loving Brother,
Martin J. Burke.

Last letter written by Frank Cunnane, previous to his execution.

In the Reception Ward,
Galway Gaol, 1923.

Dear Mother,

You are aware perhaps by now that I am one of the destined by God to swell the roll of that martyred band who died for Ireland. I am going to my grave, dying as I lived, believing that I did the best for my country and that the sacrifice will atone for anything left undone by me. I have conscientiously done everything for the better interests of my country, according to my lights.

I have no dread, therefore it is with composure I accept my sentence, bearing no hatred against any living soul. To all my friends, too numerous to mention, give my best sincerest love. For their many kindnesses, during and after my intercourse with them, I am more than grateful and I trust that God will in some way repay them, as I intended doing. But now, that I am leaving them for a happier exchange, I am debarred from fulfilling my desire in this world of sorrow.

Well, Mother, I know my death will shock you and all at home, but my dying wish is that not grief or sorrow be unnecessarily displayed by any of you, for the end must come some time and is as welcome now as at any future date. And perhaps when I am no better prepared than now. I hope God will accept my sacrifice for any faults I may have committed during my life on earth, — my death is a glorious one and I am unworthy of it.

There may be some who think our line of action a hopeless and foolish one, but the voices of Pearse and Plunkett and those who died for the same cause in 1916, inspired me to follow in their footsteps and I am confident the vindication of the sacred cause will come in some generation or another. Cheer up, Mother dear; I shall meet you in Heaven in the near future, though I hope your life on earth shall be long and happy, so much so that you will be recompensed in some small measure for your past and present worries.

Give to all my neighbours and companions of my childhood, my dying wishes for their future welfare and to my loyal comrades a fond farewell. And let no act of vengeance mar the cause for which I die. Let that sanctified flag be borne aloft, unstained by the sin of Cain, so that the world will see we are not waging a war of Bolshevism of which the I.R.A. are accused. I am sending you a few souvenirs, including a pair of beads I got from Cissie during the Black and Tan regime. In them, find consolation and do not worry.

Now, I must conclude finally and eternally on this side of the grave. So, I send you, Father, Cissie, Tessie, Bertie, Gerald, Willie, John, Tommie, Martin, Charles, Joe and Vincent, my blessing and good wishes. May God bless you all, and may we all meet in Heaven, is the sincere wish of your dutiful and loving son.

Frank Cunnane.

Soldiers Coming Home

Kerryman, 1924

Written in Memory of

CHARLIE DALY, TIMMY O'SULLIVAN & DANNY ENRIGHT

In October, 1924, the bodies of all 77 executed patriots of the 1922-23 period were exhumed from the yards of the barracks and jails where they had been buried and handed over to their relatives. In all cases they were given heroes' funerals by their comrades and by the general public.

Tell me why the crowds are waiting in the city's busy street,
What's the subject they're debating as in solemn groups they meet,
Why the shuttered shops and windows in the early evening's gloam,
Break the news, but break it gently, there are soldiers coming home.

CHORUS:

Coming home to join the column that now sleeps in mother loam,
March with stately step and solemn there are soldiers coming home.

'Twas not in the field of battle with the victor's smile of pride,
Where the guns and rifles rattle, that our soldier heroes died;
But inside a gloomy prison there they found an early tomb
By a brutal bullet driven, those young soldier lads went home.

CHORUS:

Hear the march of that great column with their faces sad and pale,
Hear their steady step and solemn and the pipers plaintive wail;
Raise the old flag up at half-mast, lightly tap the muffled drum,
For a gloom around is now cast, there are soldiers coming home.

CHORUS:

Make their graves upon the hillside where they fought in days gone by,
Fire three volleys o'er their graveside where our soldier boys will be;
Let us wipe out feud and faction and when freedom's day shall come
Let us prove ourselves in action like those soldiers coming home.

The late Mr. Thomas Hughes

As already announced one of the five young men executed at Custume Barracks, Athlone, on last Saturday morning was Mr. Thomas Hughes, eldest son of Mr. Patrick and Mrs. Hughes of Bogginfin, Athlone. He was aged 21 years and received his education at St. Peter's Convent and subsequently at the Marist Brothers' Schools, Athlone. During the Black and Tan terror he was armory officer of the local I.R.A. Brigade, a position which he held up to the time of the division in the ranks, having been present at the taking over of the Custume Barracks from the British.

He had been "on the run" for seven months and was captured by the National troops on December 20th last and it was not until 6 p.m. on the day of his execution that his afflicted parents were officially notified of the event. On being blindfolded he shook hands with some of his captors requesting them to inform his mother that his last thoughts were of her.

Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated in St. Peter's Church on Tuesday last for the repose of the soul of the deceased before a large congregation. Rev. Fr. O'Reilly, C.C., was celebrant; Rev. Fr. Neary C.C., deacon; Rev. Fr. Fallon, C.C., sub-deacon; The Very Rev. Canon Crowe, P.P., and Rev. Fr. Gilooly, C.C., were in the choir and the chief mourners were: — Patrick Hughes (father), Mrs. Hughes (mother), Mrs. Monaghan (grandmother), Dotie, Pearl, Maud, Eileen and Josie (sisters), Jim (brother), Mrs. Hardiman, Mrs. Quinn and Miss Monaghan (aunts).

HIS LAST LETTERS

We have been requested to publish the following letters written by the late Mr. Thomas Hughes to his relatives prior to his execution:—

My Darling Mother,

It is now 6 p.m. We are just after being told that we are to be executed in the morning at 8 o'clock. Do not fret for me, as with God's Holy Will, I will be prepared to meet Him, as it is a grand thing to get timely warning before you die. I hope I will be in Heaven before you receive this sad greeting. Well, welcome be the Will of God. Remember mother, if it is the Will of God that He receives me, I will be always watching over yourself, Dad, Dotie, Pearl, Maud, Eileen, Jim and Josie. Try and bear up mother and please God we will all be together again in the time to come. I am writing to grandma and some of my friends. My companions and I do not bear any malice against those who are going to carry out the deed. Goodbye for the present.

Your Loving Son,
TOM.

P.S. — You will get a crucifix and prayer book from some of the officers.

My Dearest Dad,

It is now 6.30 p.m. We were just now informed that four comrades, namely, Martin Burke, Michael Walsh, Hubert Collins and Stephen Joyce and myself are to be executed in the morning at 8 a.m. We are all to be attended by Canon Crowe and Father Columba tonight and have Mass in the morning. So we have plenty of time to prepare to meet our God. Dad, try and console poor mother and tell her that I am not afraid to die. 10.30 p.m. — We are just after getting Confession now from Father O'Reilly and had a very nice chat with him. He said he would call to see you. I am leaving my beads to you, dear Dad, and my crucifix to mother.

Your Loving Son,

TOM.

My Dear Sister Pearl,

Just a line to let you know I am about to be executed in the morning. Pearl, do not fret for me. Try and console poor mother and Dad, because I know it will be a terrible blow to them. I feel very happy tonight and am prepared to die. It is not everyone who has 12 hours for same. Do not forget to write to some of the lads here as they long for a letter from outside. Well, goodbye and God Bless you.

Your Affectionate Brother,
TOM.

My Dear Sister Dotie,

Just a line bidding you my last farewell on this earth. But, Dotie, keep your heart up and do not fret for me as with God's help I will be happy. I am sending you a small pocket looking-glass for a souvenir. Try and cheer up mother as I know this will be a terrible blow to her. Bid goodbye for me to all my friends.

Your Affectionate Brother,
TOM.

My Dear Grandma,

Sorry to say this is the last time you will get a letter from me, as myself and four comrades are going to meet our God in the morning. Grandma, don't fret for me. I will meet the firing squad just like a soldier should. I am feeling happy now since I had Confession. We will receive Holy Communion at 7 a.m. in the morning. We were attended by Father O'Reilly as Canon Crowe is away. I know it will be a terrible blow to you and poor Mother, but all you can do is say a prayer for my comrades and myself.

The Free State officers and men are as nice as they can be to us and you must not think I am dying bearing any malice towards them. I forgave them as they are only doing what they think is their duty. I only hope I will be with Grandma and Kit before you receive this note. And again, cheer up, grandma, and say "it is no crime to die in a noble cause." Bid my last goodbye to Katie, Pearl, Pat, Lil and family, Tiny and family, Dick and family, Joe and family, and all in the house. Well, dear grandma, I think I have enough said now. Goodbye and God Bless you all.

Your Affectionate Grandson,
TOM.

P.S. — I will have a crucifix for you if I can. Don't forget to pray for me.

—Tom.

(The Westmeath Independent, January 27th, 1923)

National Recitations

Maura O'Kelly From Galway

(A Galwaywoman returns from the funeral of her two Republican soldier sons, slain treacherously by the tools of tyranny)

'Twas Maura O'Kelly from Galway walked down the hill with me.
High was her head for her two sons dead and buried in Killalee,
And I said, "Oh, woman of Galway, it breaks my heart to see
That a Saxon foot still tramples the root of Irish liberty."

Said Maura O'Kelly of Galway, and her eyes were flaming fire.
"No Saxon foot shall trample the root of the tree of my sons' desire
For where they were shot in Galway, and buried in Killalee
A thousand more are still to the fore for Irish liberty.

"And what care I for the shoneens, and what care I for the slaves,
And what care I for Britain's tools who have filled two soldiers' graves,
And what care I for a London peace that a Connacht gun can't share,
There will be no peace in Ireland while a Union Jack swings there.

"Did treaties ever make freedom, or lies from treacherous lips?—
The lash that falls on a shoulder may scourge a soul to strips,
There is only the vengeful rifle to burn old scores away,
And I'd rather be dead with my two brave sons than a willing slave today."

I said "Oh, woman of Galway, the toll of death is long"
She said "They died with their hands in pride and in their hearts a song;
And the lads I buried in Killalee, with blood on their hands and face,
Are a pledge between their God and me that He will redeem the race."

Teresa Brayton.

(Teresa Brayton also wrote that famous Irish ballad of exile, "The Old Bog Road.")

Melancholy Spectacle

IN ATHLONE

Bodies of Executed Republicans RESTORED TO RELATIVES

(The Westmeath Independent, Nov. 1st, 1924)

On Tuesday the bodies of the 77 men executed during the year 1923 were handed over to their relatives by authority of the Adjutant General of the Saorstát Military Forces. They included those of Erskine Childers, Liam Mellows and Rory O'Connor, who were executed in Dublin.

At Dublin 18 bodies were handed over: at Tralee, 12: Dundalk, 5: Ennis, 3: Kilkenny, 2: Limerick, 2: Cork, 1: Athlone, 20: Curragh, 7: Roscrea, 3: Wexford, 3: Waterford, 2 and Carlow 1.

At Athlone the ceremony of handing over the remains commenced at 12 o'clock, the military chaplain officiating. Major-General McKeon, of the Western Command, and a number of staff officers, were also present. The remains were handed over to the friends at intervals of ten minutes each, and as each coffin passed out by the West Gate, into the public square, military honours were rendered by the guard.

Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, a drenching downpour continuing from early morning, a large crowd had collected in the square, or market place, opposite the West gate of Custume Barracks. Many of the spectators were women and girls. Shortly after eleven o'clock, about twenty motor vehicles and a motor hearse arrived and were lined up from the Market Square, along the bridge to Custume Place. A few minutes before 12 o'clock, a guard of honour of I.R.A. arrived, and was formed up in double line facing the entrance gate to the barracks. Some time later two soldiers carrying rifles, with bayonets fixed at the slope, emerged from the barracks and arrested a young man named Bernard Mulvihill, who appeared to be in charge of the Republican Guard of honour. He was conveyed into the barracks between the two soldiers, and as he passed in through the gates, a little cheer went up from the bystanders. The young man acknowledged the cheer by taking off his hat, after which there were shouts of "Up the Republic." Four other young men were arrested during the day. All five, who were searched for arms were subsequently set at liberty, no arms having been found on them.

The first body to be handed over was that of MICHAEL WALSH, Derrymore, Caherlistrane, Co. Galway. He was executed at Athlone on January 20th, 1923. The body in addition to the coffin it was buried in originally, was encased in a large over sized oak coffin, stained yellow.

The coffins, containing the remains of TIMOTHY O'SULLIVAN, William Street, Listowel; CHARLES DALY, Knockanescoulteen, Furies, Co. Kerry; JOHN LARKIN, Ballyharty, Magherafelt, Co. Derry; and DANIEL ENRIGHT, Colbert Street, Listowel, Co. Kerry, were next handed over. These four young men were executed in Drumbo Castle, Tir Conail, on March 14th, 1923. Their friends travelled from North and South the previous day, and arrived in Athlone on Monday night. Father Larkin, a brother of the executed Derryman, was also present at the receiving of the remains, as was also the brother of the late Charles Daly and a number of Kerry men.

The others were handed over in the following order:—

JAMES O'MALLEY, Oughterard, Co. Galway; executed in Tuam, 11-4-'23

JOHN NEWELL, Headford, Co. Galway; executed same date.

MARTIN MOYLAN, Farmerstown, Annaghdown, Co. Galway; executed at Tuam on the same date.

JOHN MAGUIRE, Cross, Cong, Co. Mayo; executed Tuam, 11-4-'23

FRANCIS CUNNANE, Kilcoona, Headford, Co. Galway; executed at Tuam on same date.

THOMAS HUGHES, Bogginfin, Athlone, executed at Athlone, January 20th, 1923.

MICHAEL MONAGHAN, Headford, Co. Galway; executed in Tuam on 11-4-'23

STEPHEN JOYCE, Derrymore, Shrule, Co. Galway; executed Athlone on same date.

HUBERT COLLINS, Headford, Co. Galway; executed Athlone, 20-1-'23

MARTIN BURKE, Shrule, Co. Galway executed at Athlone, 20-1-'23.

JOHN NEWELL, Headford, Co. Galway; executed at Tuam, 11-4-'23

PATRICK CUNNINGHAM, O'Connell Street, Tullamore; executed at Birr Castle, 26-1-'23.

COLUMB KELLY, Barrack Street, Tullamore.

Wm. CONROY, Clara Road, Tullamore, also executed at Birr Castle on the same date.



EXECUTIONS AND AMBUSHES

By a majority of 8 votes to 6, Westmeath County Council at their meeting on Thursday — Mr. J. Conlon, V.C., presiding passed a resolution, proposed by Mr. J. Gavin and seconded by Mr. O'Connell — "Adjourning the meeting as a protest against the recent executions by the Government, and expressing sympathy with the executed men's relatives."

The resolution also expressed sympathy with the relatives of Cmdt. Bertles, shot at Ballymore, and emphatically protesting against the most sinister Proclamation of the Government threatening reprisals.

Mr. Lyons moved an amendment which proposed the deletion of the words relating to the adjournment of the meeting. "I know the Government are wrong," he said "and I know it is up to every public body to speak out and tell the Government that they don't agree with these executions, but we should also condemn ambushes and the like."

Mr. O'Brien thought the Council would be doing their duty by passing a resolution of sympathy with the relatives of the men done to death.

After a long discussion, that resolution was passed on the voting stated above. A full report will appear in our next issue.

(Westmeath Independent, February 3rd, 1923)

Martyrs for Freedom

(Air: Anach Cuain or Boolavogue)

Brave Tony D'Arcy ! brave Sean MacNeela !
From Storied Galway and proud Mayo,
They've walked the ways of the deathless heroes
And have won the glory that martyrs know.
We'll hold their deed in our hearts forever,
We'll call their names over land and sea,
And we'll tell their story through generations
By the glowing firesides of Ireland free.

Their lives they offered for Poblacht Eireann,
For Truth and Justice and stainless Right.
God give them rest in the Halls Eternal.
For with hearts unbending they fought the fight.
May Ashe be near them and brave MacSwiney,
And all who travelled the same hard road
Through the gloom and pain of the Vale of Shadows,
Where no bright hope-star above them glowed.

The foe they fought is the foe of ages,
The vile invader who laid us low,
Whose Empire strangles all peaceful nations
And robs the weak that itself may grow.
While slaves in Ireland bow down to England
And lower the flag that was floating high,
Our loved and faithful, our best and bravest,
For Poblacht Eireann must fight and die !

Young men of Ireland ! Our Dead are calling
To their living comrades in field and town,
To join the standard of Poblacht Eireann
And fight the forces of the British Crown.
Brave Tony D'Arcy, brave Sean MacNeela,
And all our heroes you from sea to sea,
Will march beside you till in joy and triumph
You'll sing their praises in Ireland free !

Brian na Banban

North Galway Brigade I.R.A.

**CAPT.
MICHAEL WALSH**

Derrymore,
Caherlistrane.



Executed at Athlone
on January 20th, 1923



Comdt. F. Cunnane, O.C.



**They gave
their Lives
for the
Republic.**



Lt. Sean Maguire.



Vol. Seamus O'Maille.

Comdt. Martin Burke.



Lt.-Comdt. Thomas Hughes.

Lt. & Q.M. Stephen Joyce.



Lt. & Q.M. Sean Newell.



Vol. Hubert Collins.



Vol. Martin Moylan.



Vol. Michael Monaghan.

THE CLERK OF THE COURT
OF THE DISTRICT COURT
OF THE COUNTY OF
MAYO

The Glens Of Sweet Mayo

(Air: The Felons of Our Land)

One sunny summer's morning,
As I rambled from my home
Down by the banks of a silvery stream
I carelessly did roam;
I overheard a fair maid cry
As the tears from her eyes did flow,
For the loss of her own true Irish love,
In the Glens of Sweet Mayo.

"My true love was a rebel bold
Who loved sweet liberty,
In bloody nineteen sixteen
He fought for Ireland free.
It was in the Black and Tan reign
He never feared the foe,
But 'twas the Free State guns that shot my love,
In the Glens of Sweet Mayo."

"Had I but his rifle
I would fight for liberty;
On the spot where he was shot
I'd fight the enemy,
Until a bullet would pierce my heart
And cause my blood to flow;
I would die beside my own true love
In the Glens of Sweet Mayo."

"Had I all the riches
That old England proudly owns,
Oh, had I all the glittering gold
A king holds on this throne,
Or had I all those stately ships
That are anchored there below,
I would rather have my soldier boy
In the Glens of Sweet Mayo."

"Forget about your soldier boy
And come along with me.
We'll both go off together
And it's happy we will be.
Where is the use in mourning now
For one that's lying low,
With his body growing stiff and cold
In the Glens of Sweet Mayo."

The Soldiers Of '22

Air: The Foggy Dew

I sing no song of the long ago,
Of the warriors staunch and bold,
Who bore their spears on the Irish hills
In the golden days of old;
But I raise a rann for our own dear lads –
The loyal, the brave and true,
Who flung their lives, in the bearna baoghail –
The soldiers of '22.

When they heard the call of a cause laid low
They sprang to their guns again,
And the pride of all was the first to fall,
The glory of our fighting men.
In the days to come, when the pipe and drum
You follow in the ways they knew,
When their praise you sing, let the echoes ring
With the memory of Cathal Brugha.

Brave Liam Lynch on the mountainside
Fell a victim to the foe,
And Dinny Lacey for Ireland died
In the Glen of Aherlow.
Neil Boyle and Quin from the North came down
To stand with the faithful few,
And we'll sing their praise the Freedom days
'Mong the heroes of '22.

Some fell in the proud and red rush of war,
And some by the treacherous blow,
Like the Martyrs Four in Dublin Town,
And their comrades at Drumboe.
And a hundred more in the barrack squares,
And by lonely roadsides, too –
Without fear they died and we speak with pride
Of the Martyrs of '22.

They were true to the Right, they fought the good fight,
And they rest in the peace of God.
Lift up your hearts, O brave young men,
And march in the ways they trod!
The cause still calls that called to them,
And the task will be only through
When freedom comes to the land that was loved
By the soldiers of '22

Brian na Banban.

TOM MAGUIRE

On the second defence of the Republic



CMTD. GENERAL TOM MAGUIRE, G.O.C., 2nd Western Division, I.R.A. in the Black-and-Tan and Free State Wars, talks to Uinsionn MacEoin, editor of the book "Survivors" (published 1980) about the Civil War – also called the Second Defence of the Republic – in his area:

There had been no military confrontations in this part of the West. The British evacuated Ballinrobe, Claremorris and other towns and we were in control. We heard of the attack upon the Four Courts from the newspapers. The position here was that there was no strong force opposing us. However, here, as everywhere else, we adopted the strategy of evacuation. We had not the material, so we retired from the barracks and made for the hills. There was no cohesion or military council formed between the provincial commanders here, Liam Pilkington of the 3rd Western, Mick Kilroy of the Fourth or myself. There were instead many desertions; you might be in touch with personalities on your side today, and tomorrow you could be told that they had gone over to the Free State. (The rapid and business-like way whereby the Free State gained control of the country, especially in areas where Republican garrisons were undecided was a major factor in this). It had a weakening effect upon our effort.

I was back upon the run again, mainly in South Mayo. I was concerned very much by what you termed fragmentation, by the effort to travel around, make contact, and hold our groups together. Ours was a wholly defensive strategy. While we made a few attacks upon Free State posts, I can think of nothing spectacular, certainly there was no longer the thinking or the will power that had created the ambushes of a year and a half ago.

You could not bring yourself to want this sort of warfare. There was a different feeling altogether. The British were the enemy, the old enemy; there was a certain pride in having the ability to attack them. That feeling was entirely absent in the Civil War. It was very disheartening. We knew the Free State Army comprising 50,000 newly recruited mercenaries would not hesitate to shoot us, but that made it no easier for us to pluck up enough anger to really fight them. You were in doubt too about approaching houses where before you had been made welcome. How are they taking the situation, you would wonder? The people themselves were disheartened.

When I heard of the deaths of people on the Free State side like Griffith, Collins and Sean Hales, I could not be glad. You felt these are people who fought the British and now they are gone. Britain is really the victor.

It was on October 10th they passed the Army Powers Resolution, the Murder Act, as we called it, giving tribunals power to execute anyone found carrying arms or ammunition, aiding or abetting in attacks, destruction or seizure of property; so wide indeed was it that it could be used against anyone having any connection with the Republican resistance. The implementation of such draconian powers enraged us but it was futile. We could make no response in the circumstances. I was captured myself anyway just a few days after that in the Headford district, not far from here. I was at my usual task of getting around, trying to hold things together. Suddenly a body of Free State soldiers were in on top of me and I was captured. It was then that I really experienced the sort of mercenaries they were, ex-British Army soldiers, tramps and misfits of every conceivable type. They had expanded their army to over 50,000 men and I suppose you do not find numbers like that unless you rake them from off the street corners.

I was brought to Athlone where there were two prison camps within the boundaries of the former British Army military barracks. In one, known as Pump Square, they held the ordinary detainees and prisoners. In the other, Garrison Detention, they kept people arrested after the passing of the Murder Act. There were regular cells in the Detention, and it was well enclosed as it had been used to hold the delinquents of the British Army. Having been caught in arms after the passing of the Resolution I was held there, from October, 1922 until June 1923, when I escaped out of it. During all the months I was there I never knew but that I might be executed. Five men were shot there by a firing squad in January, my youngest brother John, not yet twenty years of age, was executed in Tuam, only forty miles away in April, 1923. It seems like, from the way Peadar O'Donnell tells in a book of his, they found it easier to make an example of younger brothers, leaving the older and more senior ones alone. I was a T.D., but that had not saved Mellows or Childers, and I did not expect that it would save me.

“THE SIXTH MAN”

They courtmartialled me in January, 1923. The court, if you could call it that, was a military one although they were all in civies. I enquired when I was brought in “what is this ?” although I knew damned well. “I do not recognise this court,” I answered, “you have no authority to try me.” They went through their rigmarole of accusations nonetheless, and of course they found me guilty. The day before, the five executions I have just spoken about, a military policeman of theirs, a Sergt. Browne came in and handed a list of six names to Dr. Tom Powell, our O.C. Powell came to me. “This fellow says that he has instructions to take these people from their ordinary cells tonight and put them into different cells.” The six men were changed that night before lock-up; five were taken out in the morning and shot by firing squad, and one was not. I am that one. I often thought afterwards how did that happen to me, but I cannot tell you. Unless it was because I was popular. I did have a reputation for fair play. During the Tan struggle unionists and loyalists could call upon me if someone was trying to lean upon them.

You have yourself said there’s how the Free State “provincialised” its killings, both official and unofficial, by having the majority of them carried out away from Dublin in contrast to the British who had all of theirs, except one, in Dublin and Cork. It is my opinion that their objective was to involve all of their senior officers in this policy, so that there would be no denying it afterwards. Joe Sweeney carried out executions in Drumboe in Donegal. Dan Hogan had them in Dundalk, Michael McCormick had them in Maryborough, Birr and Roscrea, Joseph Cummins had them in Wexford, Liam Stack had one in Carlow, Sean McKeon had them in Athlone and Michael Brennan had them in Tuam, Limerick and Ennis. Eleven of my command were executed by them. With my brother, John, five others were executed in Tuam on April 11th. (The executions of March, April & May, 1923 were unnecessarily vengeful; the Free Staters knew that the I.R.A. was about to suspend its resistance). He had been arrested in the Tuam area sometime after myself and they had far less on him.



The Dead March Past

Brendan Behan (1923-'64), writer, playwright, poet in Irish and English, who himself served terms of imprisonment in England and the 26 Counties for his Republican activities, pays tribute to his fallen comrades of the period 1938-'46.

Behind the files of Easter Week
And rank, battalioned tread of twenty-one
Close behind the lime-stained dead of twenty-two
Sean Russell at their head they come.

The two that swung in Birmingham, with ordered step from off the
gallows floor,
Now march beside McGrath and Harte, and the boys blown up at Castlefin,
Its fiery roar lights the wasted flesh of Darcy and McNeela,
Kelly, Reynolds, McCaffrey made whole again to join in strict array this
dead march past on Easter Day.

Come now the lonely ones, all solitary they pass,
Maurice O'Neill, Dick Goss, George Plant, young Williams, Casey, Glynn,
O'Callaghan,
On Jackey Griffith's right, comes Paddy Dermody,
So quick avenged by one as dear to us – tho' not as yet departed to the
Columns of the Night.
"Rockey" Burns rises up from Chapel Lane, Charlie Kerins lives, and
laughs again.
Perry and Malone from Parkhurst come to march beside McCaughey
and greet the Easter dawn.

Behind the files of Easter Week,
And all the gallant dead of yesteryear they come,
Their step a hope, a dread salute
To you who march their way,
And pledge your word this Easter Day.

Seventy-Seven who died for Ireland

We have been fortunate in obtaining a series of photographs of a notable event in Irish history. In October 1924, the bodies of 77 soldiers of the Irish Republican Army, who had been executed by Free State firing-squads in 1922-'23 and buried in prison and barrack yards, were delivered up to their relatives, friends and comrades.

From November, 1922 to May of the following year, soldiers and leaders were taken from their cells at dawn and shot to death against barrack walls. Their bodies were quickly buried in some corner of the barrack yard. This happened at various jails and barracks in Dublin and at fifteen other places throughout the 26 Counties.

All the executed soldiers had been captured while fighting against the imposition on the Irish people of the 26 County Free State and 6 County Crown Colony. Some were sentenced to death by secret Free State court-martial; others, without even that formality, were executed by order of the Free State Government. In many cases the relatives were not notified of the impending execution; the first news of a Volunteer's capture often came in a published announcement that he had been shot at dawn.

NATIONAL DEMAND

Following the cessation of hostilities in May 1923 when all Republican Volunteers were ordered by Headquarters to "dump arms and return home," a great national demand began for the handing over of the remains of those executed. County Councils, Urban and City Councils and other local bodies endorsed the demand and pressure mounted on the Free State authorities.

Then on October 28, 1924, 77 remains were handed over at the following centres: Dublin, Athlone, Tralee, Curragh, Dundalk, Roscrea, Wexford, Ennis, Kilkenny, Waterford, Cork, Carlow and Portlaoise. In every case the bodies of the dead soldiers were received with due ceremonial. Guards of Honour of their comrades were drawn up at the barracks and huge crowds of people accompanied the funeral corteges.

LYING IN STATE

At Athlone, where the bodies of the Volunteers executed there and at Tuam and Drumboe were handed over, a party of Free State military came out the gate of the barracks and seized the man in charge of the Guard of Honour, waiting to receive the remains. He was taken into the barracks at gun-point.

In Dublin, remains were delivered up at Beggar's Bush barracks, at Mountjoy and Kilmainham jails and at Arbour Hill military prison. All 18 bodies were taken to the Hardwicke Hall, Hardwicke Street, where they lay in state until the following evening. An unending stream of people turned into the hall to do honour to the dead Volunteers.

At 8 p.m. 12 of the Tricolour-draped coffins were removed to Whitefriar Street Church to await burial in the Republican Plot in Glasnevin Cemetery next day. The remains of Cmdt. General Rory O'Connor were among these. The remaining six were taken for burial to various centres outside the city.

All over the country similar tributes were paid. The "Soldiers of the Legion of the Rearguard" were escorted on the last sad journey by vast crowds. In some cases they were laid to rest in family burial grounds; in others they were interred in Republican Plots with their comrades who were killed in action against Black-and-Tans or Free State troops or were murdered while prisoners of war. In every case full military honours were rendered.

But even as burial was taking place in consecrated ground, Free State troops in full kit interfered with the ceremonies. At Dundalk they opened fire on the crowds in the cemetery as the people threw themselves to the ground for cover, one man was mortally wounded.

Several of the funerals crossed the Border with the bodies of Republican soldiers who were natives of Occupied Ireland. In Belfast the Tricolour was torn from the coffin of Joe McKelvey. In Derry City the remains of Sean Larkin – en route from Athlone to his native Bellagherty – rested overnight in a Catholic Church. Here British Crown Forces interfered with the Guard of Honour around the coffin.

PEOPLE MOURNED

Everywhere the people mourned their dead Republican soldiers. They also mourned the betrayal of the Irish Republic which had borne bitter fruit in those 77 executions. But the pattern was to be repeated.

From 1940 to 1944, six more Republican soldiers were executed – this time by the second Free State Government. Five were shot at dawn by firing squads – like the 77 of 1922-'23. A sixth died on the scaffold at the hands of the imported British Imperial hangman. In September 1948, their bodies too were handed over for re-interment thus ending another chapter of Irish history.

We do not intend the publication of the photographs here to recount the events associated with them – to stir up bitterness among Irish people. Rather we are anxious to assist in doing full justice to the 77 who made the supreme sacrifice for Ireland and to bring home to our people the lesson to be learned from a tragedy of such magnitude.

MUST NOT RECUR

Capitulation to and collaboration with the enemy of our country were the direct causes of those 77 executions – and of the six during the 1940-'44 period. The Republican Movement is determined that this will never happen again. The Irish people, for their part, must ensure that it will not occur a third time.

They can do so by effectively curbing the present day coercionists and collaborationists, and the time to do that is NOW. The following is the full list of the Republican soldiers executed during the Free State War and re-interred in 1924; location and date of execution are given first in every case; native county is given in brackets after name where that differs from place of execution.

Dublin: 17/11/22 James Fisher, Peter Cassidy, Richard Twohig, John Gaffney; 24/11/22 Erskine Childers; 30/11/22 Joseph Spooner, Patrick Farrelly, John Murphy; 8/12/22 Rory O'Connor, Liam Mellowes, Richard Barrett (West Cork), Joseph McKelvey (Belfast); 8/1/23 Leo Dowling (Kildare), Sylvester Heaney (Louth), Laurence Sheehy (Meath), Anthony O'Reilly (Kildare), Terence Brady (Meath); 13/3/23 James O'Rourke.
Curragh Camp: 19/12/22 Stephen White, Joseph Johnston, Patrick Mangan, Patrick Nolan, Brian Moore, Patrick Bagnol (all Kildare), James O'Connor (Tipperary). **Kilkenny:** 29/12/22 John Phelan, John Murphy. **Dundalk:** 13/1/23 Thomas McKeown, John McNulty (Armagh), Thomas Murray (Meath); 22/1/23 James Melia, Thomas Lennon, Joseph Ferguson. **Roscrea:** 15/1/23 Frederick Burke, Patrick Russell, Martin O'Shea, Patrick McNamara. **Carlow:** 15/1/23 James Lillis. **Tralee:** 20/1/23 James Daly, John Clifford, Michael Brosnan, James Hanlon; 25/4/23 Edward Greaney, Reginald Stephen Hathaway (Berkshire, England), James McInerney. **Limerick:** 20/1/23 Cornelius McMahon, Patrick Hennessy (both Clare). **Athlone:** 20/1/23 Thomas Hughes, Michael Walsh, Hubert Collins, Stephen Joyce, Martin Burke (last four Galway). **Waterford:** 25/1/23 Michael Fitzgerald, Patrick O'Reilly (both

Youghal). **Birr, Offaly:** 26/1/23 Patrick Cunningham, William Conroy, Colum Kelly. **Portlaoise:** 27/1/23 Patrick Geraghty (Westmeath), Joseph Byrne (Offaly); 23/2/23 Thomas Gibson. **Cork:** 13/3/23 William Healy. **Wexford:** 13/3/23 James Pearle, Patrick Hogan, John Creane. **Donegal:** 14/3/23 Timothy O'Sullivan, Charles Daly, Daniel Enright (all Kerry), Sean Larkin (Derry) **Tuam:** 11/4/23 Seamus O Maille, Frank Cunnane, Michael Monaghan, John Newell, Sean Maguire (Mayo), Martin Moylan. **Ennis:** 26/4/23 Patrick Mahoney; 2/5/23 Christopher Quinn, William Shaughnessy.

The following is the Editorial from Sinn Fein, November 8, 1924:

The funerals of our martyred Republican soldiers assumed, not only in Dublin but throughout the country, all the dignity, and by reason of the magnitude of the crowds, both watching and marching, all the impressiveness of a great national demonstration.

That the enemies of the nation felt the full force of this expression of public opinion upon their own deeds and upon the greatness of their victims is proved by their conduct. At Glasnevin and at several other gravesides they demonstrated their "frightfulness." One man, a Republican, Mr. Hughes, was shot by them and has since died.

In Belfast the flag was removed from the coffin of Joe McKelvey. Thus the Orange forces and the Free State forces distinguished themselves from every civilised army in the world. To honour the dead of the opposing forces has always been the characteristic of a civilised army.

The desecration of the dead is a tribute to the desecrators, which even an opponent cannot but regret. There are insults which it is an honour to receive. So it has always been with those who fight for the cause of Irish Freedom.

Article from "An t-Eireannach Aoireithe," Meitheamh, 1961.

LAST LETTER OF MICKEY MONAGHAN

Tuam Barracks.

10/4/1923.

Dear Jim,

Tomorrow morning I am going to meet my God and join the goodly company of men who died for Ireland. We are after getting confession and I am very happy. Fr. King and Fr. Cunningham are here with us for the night so you can imagine how happy we are. Dear Jim it is not so hard as you think, it is worse for you and the poor people at home. Remember me to T. Joyce, J. Collins, M. Sweeney, E. Dooley, T. Madden, M. Conneely, P. Farragher, M. O'Brien, Duignan and all our comrades in the other half of the Jail. Tell all to pray for us. Send a letter to my people at home, it will console them a little as you know it will be hard on them. Remember me also to Ray Colleran, Jim Lee, E. Conneely, G. Murphy, and Petie Dooley and all my former comrades. We sang a few songs here tonight, M. Moylan, Jim O'Malley and myself so you can see we are not downhearted. Dear Jim I must conclude, goodbye forever and God bless you all. I hope we will be the last to die for Ireland. Goodbye once more.

From your fond companion,
Mickey Monaghan,
(Clooneen, Headford).

Lux Perpetua Luceat Eis

Here is another of the lovely poetic tributes paid to the dead Irish Republican Soldiers of 1922 by a gifted priest of Maynooth College, Rev. Patrick Browne, D.D. There is reference in it to men who were at first deceived by hypocritical professions and promises and joined the "Free State" Army. Later when they realised that they were being made tools of by the English enemies of Ireland they returned to their true allegiance and took their place in the midst of their Republican comrades.

Lord, for the grace we pray
Of dying as they have died,
To whom death was sweet as a bride
On an April wedding day;
For the ardour that does not fail
In the wintry rains and snows,
And sees the black wall and the pit of the jail
In blossom with Heaven's rose.

No chill in the blood did they feel,
And clear were the eyes they raised
To meet those eyes that gazed
Along the barrels of steel;
And no sign of anger was there,
Or glimmer of useless hate,
Or weak complaint or suppliant prayer
To avert the decrees of fate.

By the mighty streams that pour
With the Irish seas to join —
By Shannon and Liffey and Boyne,
Lee, Slaney, Suir, Barrow and Nore —
Their generous blood was shed,
And the famous Three Waves of Song
Cried out, yet not to lament the dead,
But to greet the souls of the strong.

They have flown from earthly scenes,
And the arduous toil of time,
Grave men of thought sublime,
And lads not out of their teens;
And they laugh at the mazes of doubt
That the worldly-wise have spun,
At the tyrants and slaves whose task is mapped out
From the rise to the set of sun.

Let us raise a verse fro the few
Whom the Spirit's unerring lamp
Led forth from the enemy's camp
To take their place with the true.
Though traitrous tongues upbraid
And bandy the taunts of shame,
With the Lord of the Vineyard their reckoning is made
And their wages allotted the same.

They rose on deathless wing
In the storm and gloom of the year –
Now the fields are stirring here
With the pulse of resurgent Spring,
And you who believe their desire
Can be chained by an earthen band,
You shall know the truth when the new-born fire
Flames forth from the heart of the land!

Padraig De Brun.

Monsignor Padraig De Brun was President of University College Galway from 1945 until his death in 1960.

MICHAEL HUGHES

The late Micheal O h-Aodha (Michael Hughes) of Kilbannon, Tuam at the 1972 Easter Commemoration in Kilcummen Cemetery, Uachtar Ard by the graveside of Seamus O Maille. Micheal was a life-long member of the Republican Movement from when he joined Na Fianna Eireann in 1921. He was interned without trial in the Curragh Concentration Camp, 1940-'44 and acted as Parade Marshal at the Donaghpatrick Easter Commemoration every year until his death in December 1983.





Late Thomas Hughes Graveside Oration

Dr. Conor Byrne, T.D., delivered the funeral oration at the graveside of the late Mr. Thomas Hughes, Bogginfin, Athlone, who was executed on January 20th, 1923, and whose body was re-interred on Thursday, October 30th, in Cornamagh Cemetery. The following is an extract from his address which opened in the Irish language:

Thomas Hughes and his comrades have committed this unfinished task to our care; let us take it up, pure and noble, as they left it, and no power on earth can prevail against us.

This is the lesson we can bring away with us from the brink of this grave and from those of the 77 who are committed to consecrated ground throughout Ireland today. Ireland is one and entire. Sorrow and suffering has unified her; as Padraig Pearse so beautifully delineates — “The fools, they have left us our Fenian dead.”

Folly has been heaped upon folly since those words were written; our enemies have learned nothing. They have used force relentlessly, and force is a boomerang which will ultimately destroy themselves.

We must translate thought and emotion, which this occasion arises in us into hard and ceaseless work towards making the national forces, the moral and material forces, more effective; to improve and perfect our self-discipline; to render ourselves more effective in the work which we are trying to effect for this Nation, by purity of motive and ideal, to make our organisation on a source of light and leading to friend and foe alike. We can this way honour most effectively our gallant dead.

Vengeance and hate we can leave to our enemies. They are both ineffective, barren, futile and unchristian “For Freedom comes from God’s right hand, and needs a godly train.”

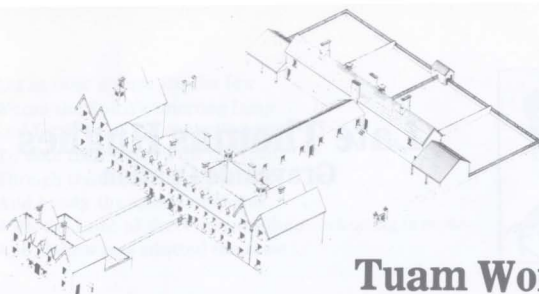
(The Westmeath Independent, November 8th, 1924). Note: Dr. Conor Byrne T.D. of Ballinacargy, Co. Westmeath was elected Sinn Fein Deputy for Longford-Westmeath at the head of the poll in the General Election of August 1923.

RECENT EXECUTIONS

Mr. Sean O Laidhin asked the Minister for Defence if it is a fact that in connection with the five executions which took place in Athlone on Saturday January 20th, the parents of the prisoners were not notified until after the executions had taken place; and if so, what was the reason for this; also, why the remains of Tom Hughes, one of the executed men, was not given to his mother, at her request.

General Mulcahy — It is not the practice, nor is it the intention to address communications to the relatives of men who are arrested, with the exception that, in the cases of men executed, formal notification is, after execution, at once sent to the next-of-kin or nearest relatives, where any such are known. Also, it is not the intention to hand over to relatives or friends the remains of men executed.

(The Westmeath Independent, February 3rd, 1923)



Tuam Workhouse

The Workhouse was opened on March 25th, 1846, but the Fever Hospital was not built for several years afterwards.

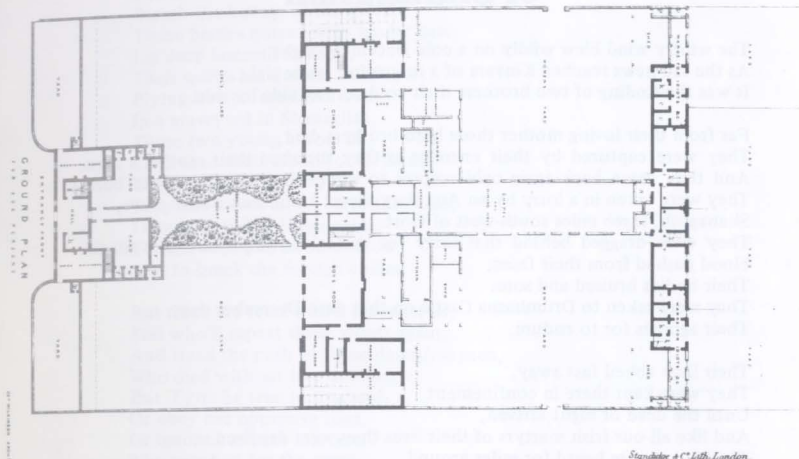
Although erected to accommodate 800, it is said that during the years 1846 and 1847 there were seldom less than 3,000 inmates (According to Thom there were 2,881 there in 1851).

During 1846 conditions in the town grew steadily worse. On October 5th the Town Commissioners were compelled to resolve that: "Application be made to the Government for a sufficient military force under a Resident Magistrate to be stationed in Tuam for the purpose of securing the safe transit of goods and of affording protection to property, for the want of both which Tuam is, at present, in a deplorable state, and further, that Tuam be appointed a Depot for provisions, in as much as that the town has been for the last three days, and still continues, without a supply of meal or flour, and that in consequence cattle have been taken off the streets and slaughtered by a starving populace."

In 1847 cholera broke out and the epidemic, added to the already existing famine, had caused the year to be known as "Black '47." It is said that the roads around the town were dotted with the corpses of people who had died whilst trying to get to the town for food. In the absence of a fever hospital at the Workhouse, sheds were used to house the victims of the disease, and the old barracks were also requisitioned for the same purpose. A large pit was opened at Carrowpeter, in which, each evening, were buried those who had died during the day. When this pit had been filled with corpses another pit was opened at Ballymote. In 1947 the Old Tuam Society erected a stone monument to mark the site of the Carrowpeter burial ground, but there is no record of the number nor the identity of those buried there.

After the Famine the Workhouse continued to receive the homeless and the desolate. In 1916 came the Rising the subsequent War against the British Forces of Occupation. British Troops, among them the infamous Black and Tans, shifted the paupers out of the building and lodged themselves there. In the 1840s when all these Workhouses were built, the design always included the possibility that the building would be used as a Military Barracks, i.e. its defences were strong.

After the British left the Free State troops moved in and shortly afterwards on April 11th, 1923, six men, two groups of three were shot against the wall of the Oratory.



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James Luke & E. Luke, J. Hansard, Printers

BEATHA TEANGA — I A LABHAIRT

Go maith roimh Eiri Amach na Casca agus Bunadh na Poblachta agus an meath a thainig air ina dhiaidh sin is ea a cuireadh tus le Eiri Amach eile. Le glunta anuas mhair an teanga Gaeilge, teanga na hEireann, i gceantar airithe ar fud Iarthar na tire. Ce go raibh si in usaid ag na milte, ni fheadfai a ra i 1890 go raibh todhcaí slaintiúil i ndan di.

Direach timpeall ar thus an cheid, thainig Conradh na Gaeilge le cheile agus go cean deich agus cuig bhliain deag ina dhiaidh sin thug na milte daoine fasta agus oga orthu fein tus a chur le athfhoghlaim agus athbheochan na Gaeilge.

Ina dhiaidh sin, le linn na Chead-Dala bhi Gaeilge a labhairt go fíorleathan agus obair na Dala a deanamh trithi. Fagadh an Ghaeilge ag na scoil-eanna, iar sin, agus d'eirigh, go teoranta, leis an bpolasai sna 26 contae. Ach faraoid ce go dtuigeann an gnath-Eireannach og cuid mhaith den teanga, ni ro-mhinic go dtagann leis no lei i a labhairt agus nach beatha teanga i a labhairt. Na bimis eadochasach afach mar ta an t-eolas againn ar an teanga agus aithnítear mar theanga Naisiunta - rud nach bhfuil fíor faoi theangacha Naisiunta eile, nach moran lion a labharta.

Ach i measc na rudai gur ga a dheanamh ta cruthu armaisfeir di. Ma taimid le dearmad a dheanamh ar ar stair — na nithe go dtrachtann an leabhran seo air — agus nilimid agus tuigimid sin, ni coir duinn dearmad a dheanamh ce chomh tabhachtach is ata se Gaeilge a labhairt.

THE LOUGHNANE BROTHERS of Shanaglish

The wintry wind blew wildly on a cold December night,
As the sad news reached Kinvara of a mournful, tragic sight.
It was the finding of two brothers their cold corpses side by side.

Far from their loving mother those hero brothers died,
They were captured by their enemies as they thrashed their mother's corn.
And they came back again cold corpses to where they were bred and born.
They were taken in a lorry by an Auxiliary escort from their native place,
Shanaglish, three miles south-west of Gort.
They were dragged behind that lorry for three long miles and o'er till the
blood gushed from their faces,
Their bodies bruised and sore.
They were taken to Drumhasna Castle on that dark December day,
Their agonies for to endure.

Their lives ebbed fast away,
They were kept there in confinement,
Until the dead of night arrived,
And like all our Irish martyrs of their lives they were deprived.
Their roars were heard for miles around,
As they stood before the blows
There were given by their enemies.
What they suffered God who knows.
Their bodies brutally burned as they lay upon the ground.

They were then thrown into a deep well, to prevent them from being found,
After ten days in that desolate grave,
Unblessed by any priest,
The Martyred Loughnane Brothers by God's aid they were released.
Oh, God it was a dreadful sight to see their dull remains
Lying side by side that winter night.
Their bodies black with flames.
To an old house near Kinvara,
The funeral marched that day, when a bodyguard of the IRA,
Took the remains away.
Our hearts were almost bursting and dead silence reigned all o'er,
As the bodies were slowly taken and laid upon the floor.
Then another death-like silence around the charred remains,
As their noble sister calmly knelt,
To see their scattered brains.
'Tis no wonder that we grumble, 'Tis no wonder that we sigh,
To see the fresh blood oozing freely from a wound in Henry's side.
Poor Padriag's flesh was torn, Oh his eyes were boiled within,
There was nothing left to recognise,
But his nose and half his chin,
Their broken bones were visible
As cold corpses there they lay.
Their bodies then were coffined,
Wrapped in the brown and white.

And in the Holy Church of God, they were laid to rest that night,
The following day what a mournful sight,
For the mother of the brave, as her darling sons were laid to rest,
'Neath the bosom of the grave.
Those bodies nursed with tender care,
Lie deep beneath the sod,
Their spirits are despite their foes,
Flying free before their God.
In a graveyard in Shanaglish,
Those two young heroes lie.
They shed their blood for Ireland,
They died for you and I.
They laid down all on earth they had,
They suffered all those pains.
To strike for you another blow,
And to break the foreign chains.

But there are rebel hearts amongst us,
Still who'll repeat those words again,
And tread the path of those dauntless men,
Who died without fear or stain.
But if you be true to England,
Or obey her oppressive laws,
Or ignore our Irish Martyrs,
Who persihed for the cause.
We'll never forget their actions,
We'll revenge our men shot down,
By the cold-blooded murderers,
The servants of the crown.
Let those words ring your ears.
And echo o'er the plains,
To show that those precious men,
Have not sacrificed their lives in vain.
May they rest in peace, Amen.

The report of the six executions carried out in Tuam cast a gloom over the town. So unexpected and tragic and indeed it can be said by one who was there every single person felt the greatest sympathy for the families and relatives of the executed men. Go ndeana Dia trocaire ar a n-anamacha.

One wonders why the executions were carried out in a small town like Tuam instead of some of the larger centres. The answer may have been on account of the late events in Headford as several of the executed men were from that area.

There were about three hundred girls and women in prisons in Dublin at the end of March, 1923 and more were being sent up from the country at the rate of four or five every day. Early in the month new regulations were made forbidding those in Kilmainham to receive or send letters or have any communication with their families. These rights, which were essential of political treatment, were restored only after ninety-one girls and women had been on hunger-strike for seven days.

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES KILLED BY THE FREE STATE

Following the death from wounds received in action of **Cathal Brugha, T.D.**, the next Republican Deputy to be killed was **Harry Boland, Sinn Fein T.D.** for South Roscommon. He was unarmed and sleeping in a hotel in Skerries, Co. Dublin when an armed party of Free State soldiers burst into his room early in the morning of July 31st. He was shot and wounded, "Trying to escape" the official version said. He died on August 2nd.

On September 20, Brigadier General **Seamus Devins, T.D.**, O/C North Sligo Brigade and Sinn Fein Deputy for Sligo was one of a party of six Volunteers murdered after being captured on Ben Bulbin mountain. Another man was **Brian Mac Neill**, Adjutant of the Third Western Division, whose father, **Eoin MacNeill** was Free State Minister for Education. Their bodies were found some days later and they are remembered as "Sligo's Noble 6."

In the Mater Hospital, Dublin on Christmas Day, 1922, **Joe McDonagh, T.D.** for North Tipperary died from the rigours of imprisonment, having been moved there from Mountjoy Jail. He was a brother of Cmdt. **Thomas McDonagh**, signatory to the Proclamation of the Irish Republic, 1916, and had been a Sinn Fein Deputy since 1918.

On June 10th, 1923, **Dr. Frank Ferran, T.D.** died in one of the Curragh Concentration Camps as a result of prison conditions. He had been Sinn Fein Deputy for East Mayo since 1921. All of their names appear on their respective County's Roll of Honour.

Note: The British killed two Deputies: Terence MacSwiney on hunger-strike on September 25th, 1920 and Pierce MacCann (Tipperary) died in Gloucester prison, England, on March 6th, 1919.

The Government in Exile

When the Spanish Republic was overthrown by force by Franco and his Generals in 1939 the Spanish Republican Government withdrew to France where they carried on a "government-in-exile." For close on 40 years they maintained in Paris a symbol and a rallying point for resistance against the illegal Franco regime until that regime was no more. One wonders were they aware of the Irish parallel for their action.

The first Dail Eireann at a meeting on March 11th, 1921 resolved that when as a result of enemy action the House was reduced to five Deputies, that "it should resolve itself into a Provisional Government" and that "government should be left to the Volunteers as the Military Body" which was usual in the case of countries invaded.

In October 1922, the faithful Deputies of the last 32 County Dail constituted an "Emergency Government" with the support of the I.R.A. Those who betrayed the Republic and made war on it were regarded as having forfeited membership of the All-Ireland Dail.

The "Wolfe Tone Weekly" of December 8th, 1938 reported that at a final meeting of the surviving faithful Deputies of the 1921 Dail, presided over by "Sceilg" (Sean O Ceallaigh) Leas-Cheann Comhairle, it was resolved "in the spirit of the resolution of the First Dail" that "the executive powers of government be delegated to the Army Council of the I.R.A." The report said that this had been accepted by the body concerned which would hold such powers "in trust for the people."

The surviving faithful Deputies were named as : **Sean O Ceallaigh**, "Sceilg" (Louth-Meath), **Count Plunkett** (Leitrim-North Roscommon), **Cathal O Murchadha** (Dublin South), **Tom Maguire** (South Mayo-South Roscommon), **Mary MacSwiney** (Cork City), **Brian O h-Uiginn** (Clare) and **Prof. W.F.P. Stockley** (National University of Ireland).

The Republican Plot in Donaghpatrick Cemetery is marked by a memorial in the form of a tapering granite pillar surmounted by a cross. The names are inscribed on the plinth. The design was suggested by two Republican Comrades, Mr. John Henaghan, Athenry Road, Tuam and the late Mr. Mick Martin B.E., Taylor's Hill, Galway who later did the drawings.

The inscription is as follows:

InDil-chuimhne ar Oifigh agus Oglagh
Bhriogaid Thuaisceart na Gaillimhe, D'Arm Phoblacht na hEireann
A thug a n-anam ar an 22u Eanair, 1923 i mBeal Atha Luain
Agus ar an 11u Aibreain, 1923 i dTuaim ag cosaint na Poblachta
A fograiodh fa Chaise 1916 agus a bunaioadh in Eanair na bliana 1919.
Ar dheis-laimh De go raibh a n-anam.

* * * * *

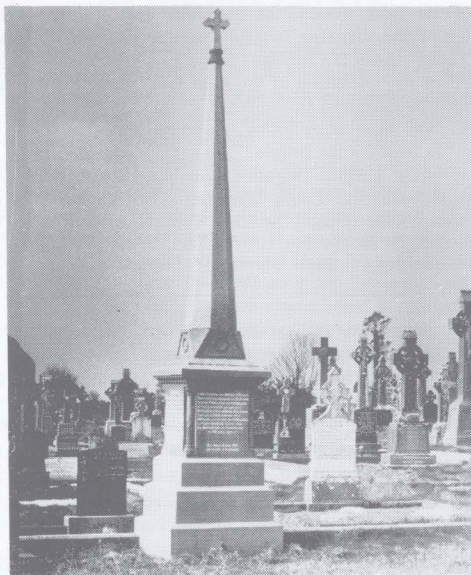
I dTuaim

Prionsias O Conain, Ceann-chatha; Sean Maguidhir, Leas-Chaiphin; Sean O Tnuthail, Leas-Chaiphin; Micheal O Muimhneachain, Oglach; Mairtin O Maolain, Oglach ata curtha anseo agus Seamas O Maille, Oglach ata curtha in Uachtar Ard agus Antoine O Dorchaidhe, Ceann-chatha a d'eag in Osbuideal Naomh Bricin, Priosun Mileata Chnoc an Arbhair ar an 16u la d'Aibreain, 1940 thar eis dha la caogad troscaidh ar son a thire agus ata curtha anseo.

In Ath Luain

Mairtin de Burca, Caiphin; Stiofan Seoighe, Caiphin; Micheal Breathnach, Caiphin; Hoibeard O Coileain, Oglach ata curtha anseo agus Tomas O hAodha, Leas-Chaiphin ata curtha in Ath Luain agus Domhnall Mac Cormaic, Oglach a d'eag de bharr creachta agus ata curtha anseo.

DONAGHPATRICK MEMORIAL



This imposing memorial at the Republican Plot, Donaghpatrick Cemetery, Headford, was unveiled on Sunday, August 17th, 1952. The following is a report of the ceremonies from "An t-Eireannach Aontuighthe" of September of that year:

A parade of approximately 2,000 people formed up in Headford, three miles away, and marched to the cemetery, where the oration was delivered by Cmdt. General Tom Maguire, one of the few surviving faithful members of the Second Dail, and brother of Vice-Captain. Sean MacGuidhir.

Michael OhAodha was in charge of the parade which was headed by a guard of honour of former comrades of the dead soldiers followed by the Cork Volunteer Pipers Band in front of which marched Thomas MacCurtain, Cork, carrying an I.R.A. flag and shield; Caherlistrane Pipers Band, Tuam Brass and Reed Band, Fianna, Cumann na mBan, contingents of I.R.A. from Galway, Dublin Mayo, Clare, Cork and other counties, representatives of the Memorial Committee, National Commemoration Committee, National Graves Association, relatives of the deceased patriots, and the general public. A crowd of about 3,000 had assembled at the cemetery before the parade arrived.

A choir of five priests (Very Rev. James Mullarkey, P.P., Caherlistrane; Very Rev. T. Kyne, P.P., Shrule; Rev. Martin Hopkins, C.C., Headford; Very Rev. H. Curley, P.P., Claran; Rev. Fr. Coen, Moyne Park) intoned the blessing of the Memorial, and Rev. Fr. Farrington recited a decade of the Rosary.

He appealed to the youth especially, to follow in the footsteps of those brave men and not to be led astray by the false promises of politicians and collaborators. It was no shame to the men buried there or in the hundreds of such graves all over Ireland that the attainment of an Irish Republic was still unfinished and that Six Counties remained occupied by the enemy. Those shackles must be broken if they were to be true to the memory of all those generations who had died for Ireland. Mr. MacGuidhir then unveiled the memorial.

Last Post

The last Post was sounded by a Fianna bugler and the ceremony ended with the playing of the National Anthem by Tuam Brass Band.

THE ORATION

Tomas MacGuidhir, in the course of his oration, gave a detailed history of the part played by the dead patriots and their comrades in defence of the Irish Republic. "The Generation of young men today and the coming years would renew those national aspirations and continue to strive for their attainment, namely the unification of Republican Ireland."

Mother Hortense McNamara

After the evacuation of the Workhouse, the Bon Secours Sisters, the Nursing Order which today runs the hospital at Vicar Street, Tuam, took over the building. It served for many years as a home for unmarried mothers, their children and orphans. Rev. Mother Hortense McNamara, as the Sister in charge, did not forget the dead. She placed a beautiful Wood Crucifix on the site of the executions and later, had a glass protection erected around it. Prayers were offered continually by her and her Community for the souls of "The Six."

She was also responsible for the founding of the present hospital. An indication of the esteem in which Mother Hortense was held is to be seen in this letter that Mr. Jackie O'Connell of Tuam, a member of the Memorial Committee, received in 1976:

December, 1976.

Dear Mr. J. O'Connell,

I and my friends hope you and your committee will accept our small donation. It is in honour of Mother Hortense, a great nun who raised us with love and understanding. We remember seeing the names outside, of the Chapel, of the Six brave men, who were executed at the Tuam Workhouse. We hope you succeed in erecting a memorial for those men. We are very grateful that you and the people of Tuam have not forgotten Rev. Mother Hortense. She will live forever in our memory. We hope that, by now, she is in Heaven, enjoying the fruits of her labour. God love and God bless you all for remembering Mother Hortense.

Sincerely yours from Three Girls who wish to remain anonymous.

REACTION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

At a meeting of Tuam District Council, held in April 1923, in Tuam Courthouse, the following resolutions were passed:

- “(1) A vote of sympathy with the relatives of the prisoners recently executed in Tuam.
- (2) A vote of condolence with their cooleague, Mr. Martin Higgins, whose brother was killed in action against the Free State Army at Headford.”

Mr. T. Costello D.C. supporting the resolutions said that the Free State regime “had not the consent of the people to carry out executions.”

Tuam Town Commissioners at their meeting on April 17th, 1923 unanimously passed a resolution recording “disapproval of and sorrow at the executions” of the previous Wednesday. The resolution “equally condemned attacks on the National forces and reprisals by whomsoever committed” and asked the Archbishop of Tuam and through him the other Bishops of Ireland to use their influence with the Free State Government to have such executions stopped.

The Commissioners further “joined with other public bodies in the suggestion that Monsignor Luzio, the Papal Envoy, be invited to act as intermediary between the two contending parties to negotiate an honourable peace. . .”

They expressed heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved and stated that “as Liam Lynch, one of the leaders, was accorded a public funeral this week, the bodies of the executed men should be given over to their relatives for interment.”

It was mentioned during the discussion by Mr. James Moran T.C. that the sister of one of those executed (Frank Cunnane) was a nun in the Mercy Convent, Tuam. * The Archbishop, Dr. Gilmartin in his reply to the Commissioners said he had already expressed sympathy and horror at the Tuam executions “and the deaths which preceded them.” He hoped to use his influence “to put an end to all violence and counter-violence” and he prayed that Mon. Luzio’s mission would be successful. He joined in the expression of sympathy.

* *Their father was National Teacher at Kilcoona N.S.*



Tuam Memorial Inscription

I ndil chuimhne orthu sin
a fuair bas ar son na h-Eireann
Lord have mercy on the souls of six members of
Oglaigh na h-Eireann
who were executed on this spot
on April 11, 1923
by Free State Forces
Fuair siad bas ar son na Poblachta

An Captaen Proinsias O Cuinneain, Ath Cinn.
An Leiftenant Sean Maguidhir, An Chrois.
An t-Oglach Sean O Tnuthail, Ath Cinn.
An t-Oglach Seamus O Maille, Uachtar Ard.
An t-Oglach Micheal O Monachain, Ath Cinn.
An t-Oglach Mairtin O Maolain, Eanach Duin.

Cuimhnítear freisin ar an gcúigear seo a cuireadh chun bais in Ath Luain ar 21 Eanáir, 1923:

An Ceannfort Mairtin de Burca, Cathair Loiscreain.
An Leas-Cheannfort Tomas O hAodha, Ath Luain.
An Captaen Micheal Breathnach, Cathair Loiscreain.
An Leiftenant Stiofain Seoighe, Cathair Loiscreain.
An t-Oglach Hubert O Coileain, Ath Cinn.

This memorial is also dedicated to the memory of Mother Hortense McNamara of the Bon Secours Sisters who ensured the preservation of this site.

Solus na bhFlaitheas go dtugaidh Dia da n-anamacha.

LIAM MELLOWS

Liam Mellows, so dear to the hearts of Galway people, was one of four Republican leaders executed without trial on the orders of the first Free State administration. The other three were Rory O'Connor (Dublin), Dick Barrett (Cork) and Joe MacKelvey (Belfast), and they had all been prisoners of war in Mountjoy Jail since the fall of the Four Courts on June 30th. On December 8th, 1922, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, they faced the firing squad for Ireland.

Liam Mellows was an exceptional man. He was first organiser of Fianna Eireann, the Republican Boy Scouts led by Countess Markievicz, in 1913. In 1916, he led the Galway Volunteers in the Easter Rising, escaping afterwards to the United States. There he became a very effective envoy for the Republic. In 1918 he was elected to the first Dail by two constituencies, East Galway and North Meath.

He returned secretly to Ireland in 1920 and was appointed Director of Purchases on General Headquarters Staff of the I.R.A. He was primarily concerned with the importation of arms and munitions to fight the British.

He made a memorable and far-seeing contribution to the debate on the Treaty of Surrender, which he opened vehemently, ably defining the new imperialism being evolved by the British for the 26 County area in the form of neo-colonialism. Mellows became Quarter Master General following the I.R.A. Convention of March 1922, and with Rory O'Connor (1883-1922) led the opposition to the formation of the new, colonial and mercenary Free State Army.

His famous "Notes from Mountjoy Jail," in August 1922 and later, charted an anti-imperialist course for the Republican Movement which came, unfortunately, too late. Although in prison, he was appointed Minister for Defence in the Republican Government set up by the faithful Dail Deputies and the Irish Republican Army in October, 1922.

This brilliant mind, following in line the other revolutionary Republican intellectuals – Padraig Pearse, James Connolly and Terence MacSwiney – was extinguished because Mellows, as an uncompromising "man of ideas" was a threat to the new colonialism embodied in the 26 County State.

The poet Austin Clarke upbraided the first Free Staters:

"They are the spit of virtue now, prating law and honour,
But we remember how they shot Rory O'Connor."

– and Liam Mellows, and all of the 77, including the men of the west.



Liam Mellows delivering the oration at the annual Bodenstown, Co. Kildare commemoration at the grave of Wolfe Tone in June 1922. This was his last public appearance.

Commandant Louis Darcy of The North Galway Brigade

(Died for Ireland March 14th, 1921)

I

O weep for the noble, the brave and true-hearted,
The highminded youth who's now mouldering in clay,
A terror to England's hired assassins,
Commandant Louis Darcy from beside Clydagh Bay.

II

A young man of promise imprisoned in Dublin,
He returned to Clydagh in no way dismayed,
His aim and ambition was to raise a battalion
And fight as a soldier in a Galway brigade.

III

Success met his efforts but oh said the sad story
At Oranmore station he was captured one day,
Betrayed to the Tans and the official version,
"Tried to escape" and shot down on the way

IV

Little he thought as he left his old mother
Little he thought as he bade her goodbye
That an Angel of Death awaited his coming,
That alone and unarmed that day he would die.

V

Brave men fought and brave men have fallen,
Brave men have suffered and died for the Cause,
But no nobler of motive than the daring young Darcy
E'er died in defence of Republican laws.

TONY DARCY



Comdt. Tony Darcy on his death-bed.

As Galway and Mayo were linked in Tuam, seventeen years later in St. Bricins Military Hospital, Arbour Hill, Dublin the two counties were again linked in the same struggle but in different circumstances. Tony Darcy of Headford and Sean McNeela of Ballycroy, Co. Mayo died on hungerstrike on April 16th and 19th, 1940 respectively, in furtherance of a demand for Political Status for all Republican Prisoners.

Tony Darcy as Commandant of the Galway Battalion had come to Dublin in late January, 1940. A cousin of Commandant Louis Darcy he was captured at a meeting in the Meath Hotel, Parnell Square. As a result of an attempt to brand other Republican Prisoners as criminals, Tony Darcy, Sean McNeela and four other courageous comrades went on Hunger Strike. After six days, both were severely beaten by the police, who invaded D-Wing of Mountjoy Prison. No visitors were allowed in to see the men, including his wife. Tony Darcy gave his life for the freedom and honour of the Irish Republic, after 52 days on Hunger Strike on April 16th, 1940 and Sean McNeela followed him on April 19th. Tony Darcy, aged 32, left behind him his widow, two sons and a daughter.

Tony's remains came home via the main Dublin-Galway road to Galway City and on to Headford. Guards of Honour escorted it through the towns, business premises closed, local I.R.A. units fired volleys in salute and huge crowds turned out.

The funeral itself was an exhibition of frightfulness, worthy of the First Free Staters. As the cortege came to Donaghpatrick Cemetery, the walls lined with Free State soldiers, with bayonets fixed in full war kit.

After the immediate family had entered with the coffin, the gates were barred. Running fights broke out and mourners attempting to enter were attacked and set upon. War-time censorship was invoked as it had been during the Hunger Strike, to cloak all this from the Irish people. Mairtin O Cadhain of Cnocan Glas, An Spideal, teacher, writer and Irish language activist gave the oration on this memorable occasion. Later that evening, the late uas O Cadhain was arrested in Headford and interned without trial, together with hundreds more in the Curragh, until 1944-45.

Such was the barbarism of the State Forces that Tony Darcy's grave alongside the ten of 1923 was not filled in properly until the following day.

Similar scenes took place at Sean McNeela's interment a few days later. Newspapers were forbidden to carry notices for Masses offered for the spiritual welfare of the Hunger Strikers and telegrams of protest from all over Ireland and abroad sent to Mrs. Tom Clarke, Lord Mayor of Dublin were not delivered.

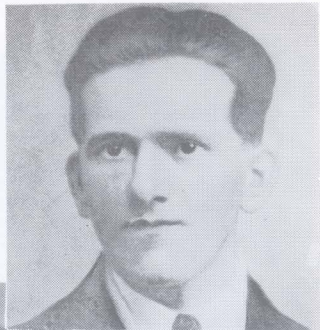
A third Hunger Striker, Sean McCaughey of Belfast died in Portlaoise Prison on 11/5/46 having spent five years on a "blanket protest" and three years Solitary Confinement.



The best known of the twelve Hunger Strikers to die in the 1970s and 1980s was Bobby Sands of Belfast who died in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh on May 5th, 1981, following 66 days of Hunger Strike for Political Status.

He was elected Parliamentary Representative for Fermanagh/South Tyrone on the 40th day of his Hunger Strike and his name became a household word and a symbol of struggle for freedom and justice throughout the world.

Right: COMDT. LOUIS DARCY, O.C. Headford Battalion, I.R.A. He was a first cousin of Tony Darcy who died on Hunger Strike in April, 1940.



Below: I.R.A. firing party which rendered military honours at the grave of Louis Darcy in Clydiagh Cemetery, March, 1921.



WEST CONNEMARA BRIGADE FLYING COLUMN pictured during the Truce, 1921. Front row – first from left: Peter J. MacDonnell, Leenane, Brigade O.C.; fifth from left: Gerald Bartley, Clifden. Back Row – seventh from left: Bill King, Leenane (later of Tuam); twelfth from left: John C. King, Leenane (later of U.S.A. and Dublin).

Can any of our readers identify the others ? Included are the Wallace brothers of Leenane, who are now the only survivors.





This photograph, taken with a box camera, recalls the stirring days of the Fight for Freedom which began in Easter Week of 1916. It shows a group of selected officers of the Second Battalion of the First Galway Brigade of the I.R.A. who were called up for a special course of training at Killeen Castle, Claregalway, in 1921. The photograph was taken by Battalion Adjutant Peter Lally. In the front (reclining) are Martin Skerritt and Drill Instructor W. Cunningham, Galway. Kneeling: J. Cunningham, Slievefin; D. Greally, Claregalway; Capt. Frank Cunnane, Kilcoona (executed in Tuam); Nicholas Murphy, Claregalway; P. O'Brien, Galway; P. Connell, Kilcoona; Sergeant W. Cody, Claregalway. Centre Row: Vice-Comdt. Martin Grealish, Claregalway (later Wellington, New Zealand); T. Cunningham, Claregalway; Comdt. Padraic Feeney (in uniform), Claregalway, O.C., Second Battalion; Lieut. T. Fox, Claregalway (Napill, New Zealand); Martin Fahy, Claregalway; Seamus Duggan, Claregalway; Vol. Craddock, Kilcoona; Vol. Langan, Kilcoona; Michael Feeney, St. Bridget's Place, Galway; John Healy, Drumgriffin; Lieut. Martin Kyne, Abbeystown (later in U.S. Diplomatic Service); Vice-Brigadier Tom Ruane, Carnmore (father of Councillor Paddy Ruane). Back row: Tom King, Corrandulla (for many years chairman of Galway County Council, and a well-known agriculturist); Lieut. Joe O'Flynn, Annaghdown; Sean Lynskey, Claregalway; Sean Lally, Claregalway (New Zealand); P. Dooley, Kilcoona (U.S.A.); Sean Collins, Claregalway (U.S.A.); John Melia, Aughclogheen (later Woodquay, Galway); Malachy Healy, Aughclogheen (later New York).

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CONDAE NA GAILLIMHE ROLL OF HONOUR IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY

Lt. General Liam Mellows Q.M.G., Castletown, Co. Wexford, executed by the Free State in Mountjoy Jail, December 8th, 1922.

Comdt. Eamonn Ceannt, Ballymoe, Easter Rising leader and Proclamation Signatory, executed by Crown Forces in Kilmainham Jail, 1916.

Comdt. Louis Darcy, Headford, murdered by Crown Forces, Merlin, March 24th, 1921.

Comdt. Michael Moran, Tuam, shot by Crown Forces, Nov. 24th, 1920.

Comdt. Joseph Howley, Oranmore, murdered by Crown Forces, Dec. 4th, 1920.

Martin Devitt, Ennistymon, Co. Clare, Feb. 24th, 1920. Killed in action.

Joseph Athy, Maree, shot by Crown Forces, Sept. 6th, 1920.

Sean Mulvoy, Galway, shot by Crown Forces in Railway Station, Sept. 9th, 1920.

Seamas Quirke, Cork, shot by Crown Forces in Galway, Sept. 10th, 1920.

John Hanlon, Turloughmore, shot down by Crown Forces at home, Oct. 2nd, 1920.

Cllr. Michael Walsh, Old Malt House, U.D.C. member, shot by Crown Forces in Galway, Oct. 20th, 1920.

Thomas Egan, Cashla, shot at his home by Crown Forces, Oct. 24th, 1920.

Mrs. Ellen Quinn, Lahane, shot at home by Crown Forces, Nov. 2nd, 1920.

Fr. Michael Griffin, Gurteen, murdered by Crown Forces in Galway, Nov. 14th, 1920.

Michael Kildea, Woodlawn, shot by Crown Forces on Killaloe Bridge, Co. Clare, Nov. 17th, 1920.

Patrick Loughnane, Shanaglish, murdered by Crown Forces in late Nov., 1920.

Harry Loughnane, Shanaglish, murdered by Crown Forces in late Nov., 1920.

Laurence McDonagh, Oileain Arann, shot by Crown Forces near home, Dec. 23rd, 1920.

William Walsin, Headford, shot by Crown Forces near home, Jan. 18th, 1921.

James Kirwan, Ballyglunin, shot near home by Crown Forces, Jan. 21st, 1921.

Michael Hoade, Caherlistrane, shot near home by Crown Forces, Jan. 21st, 1921.

Thomas Collins, Headford, shot by Crown Forces, Jan. 22nd, 1921.

Thomas Whelan, Clifden, hanged in Mountjoy Jail, March 14th, 1921.

Patrick Cloonan, Maree, shot by Crown Forces, April 5th, 1921.

Thomas McKeever, Dunmore, shot by Crown Forces, May 2nd, 1921.

Thomas Mullen, Clonbern, shot by Crown Forces, March, 1921.

Hubert Tully, Clooneyquinn, Co. Roscommon, shot by Crown Forces in Galway, May 11th, 1921.

Christy Folan, Galway, shot by Crown Forces in Galway, May 11th, 1921.

Patrick Molloy, Kilroe, shot near home by Crown Forces, 1921.

Michael Mullen, Moylough, shot by Crown Forces, 1920-21.

Thomas Ganley, Kilkerrin, shot by Crown Forces in Kilkerrin, 1920-21.

John Geoghegan, Magh Cuilinn, shot by Crown Forces, Feb. 20th, 1921.

Bill Freaney, Derrydonnell, killed in action, near Athenry, June 30th, 1921.

James Keogh, Ballinasloe.

Paddy Halvey, Menlough, died a week after Crown Forces beating.

James McDonagh, Ballygar, killed in training, 1920-21.

Joseph Donnellan, Clonbern, killed in action by Free State Forces, July 22nd, 1922, at Cemetery Cross, Galway.

Jack Lohan, Tuam, killed in action by Free State Forces at Killeen, Castlegar, Sept. 22nd, 1922.

Michael Walsh, Caherlistrane.

Stephen Joyce, Caherlistrane.

Executed in Athlone by Free

Martin Burke, Caherlistrane.

State Forces, Jan. 20th, 1923.

Thomas Hughes, Athlone.

Hubert Collins, Headford.

John Higgins, killed in action by Free State, Headford, April 8th, 1923.

Comdt. Frank Cunnane, Kilcoona.

Sean Maguire, Cross, Co. Mayo.

Sean Newell, Headford.

Executed in Tuam by Free State

Michael Monaghan, Headford.

Forces, April 11th, 1923.

Martin Moylan, Annaghdown.

Seamas O Maille, Uachtar Ard.

Michael Kearns, Loughrea.

Comdt. Thomas "Baby" Duggan, Castlegar, died of wounds received in action, Feb. 12th, 1925.

Dan McCormack, Milltown, died of wounds received in Headford, April 8th, 1923 in 1928.

Frank O'Dowd, Galway, died from rigours of the struggle, Nov. 12th, 1920.

Willie Cullinane, Castlegar, shot by Crown Forces, Nov. 21st, 1920.

Comdt. Tony Darcy, Headford, died on 52nd day of Hunger Strike in Arbour Hill Military Prison, April 16th, 1940.

A fuair bas ar son Poblacht na hEireann
Ar dheis-laimh De go raibh a n-anam.

The memorial plaque inset in the window of the wall of Tuam Workhouse Oratory, directly above the spot where the six Republican Volunteers were executed by firing squad. Plaque unveiled April, 1985.

I nDóilchúimhne orthu sin
A fuair bás ar son na héireann
LORD HAVE MERCY ON THE SOULS OF SIX MEMBERS OF
ÓSLAIGH NA HÉIREANN
WHO WERE EXECUTED ON THIS SPOT
ON 11 APRIL 1923
BY FREE STATE FORCES
FUAIR SIAD BÁS AR SON NA POBLACHA.

An Captaen Proinsias Ó Cuinneáin, Ách Cinn.
An Leifteanant Seán Masuidhir, An Chrois.
An tÓslach Seán Ó Tnúchail, Ách Cinn.
An tÓslach Seamus Ó MáiLe, Uachtar Ard.
An tÓslach Micheál Ó Monacháin, Ách Cinn.
An tÓslach Máirtín Ó Maoláin, Eanách Duinn.

Cumhnítear freisin ar an scúisear seo a cuireadh
chun báis in Ách Luain ar 21 Eanáir 1923.

An Ceannfort Máirtín de Búrca, Cathair Loiscréain.
An Leas Ceannfort Tomás Ó hAodha, Ách Luain.
An Captaen Micheál Breatnach, Cathair Loiscréain.
An Leifteanant, Stíofan Seoíshe, Cathair Loiscréain.
An tÓslach Hubert Ó Coileáin, Ách Cinn.

THIS MEMORIAL IS ALSO DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
MOTHER HORTENSE McNAMARA OF THE BON SECOURS SISTERS
WHO ENSURED THE PRESERVATION OF THIS SITE.

SOLUS NA bhFLAICHEAS SO DEUSA DIA DA NANAMRACHA.