

THE FIGHT GOES ON

ARMY NEWS: OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE

1. The 1st Southern on the Offensive

June 30th, 10 a.m.

The following seven positions held by Free State Forces within the area of the 1st Southern Division are at present being attacked by the I.R.A.:

- (a) Listowel.
- (b) Foynes.
- (c) Skibbereen.
- (d) and (e) Abbeyfeale (two).
- (f) Newcastle West.
- (g) Broadford.

A hundred men are holding the line—Charleville to the Shannon.

When these seven positions are captured the Free State Forces will not hold a single position in the area of the 1st Southern Division.

The 1st Southern Division has taken over the "Cork Examiner."

The road from Cork to Dublin is clear.

2. The Loss of the Four Courts

Acting on a plan communicated to the O/C Four Courts early this morning, the relieving troops had worked their way through the investing lines to a predetermined objective, from which the garrison could have been relieved. The projected operation failed of completion owing to the premature explosion of a mine, which left the defenders in a hopeless position, and compelled the relieving force, already within the investing lines, to retreat. This was effected without loss of men or material.

When the failure of this operation came to the knowledge of the O/C Dublin Brigade, and it was clear that there was no prospect of relieving the garrison before the fires in the Four Courts reached the numerous mines and large quantities of explosive material stored in the buildings, the O/C Dublin, as the Senior Officer operating in Dublin in defence of the Republic, sent the following despatch, addressed to the Acting Chief of Staff, Four Courts:—

"I have gone into the whole situation re your position, and have studied the same very carefully, and I have come to the following conclusion: To help me to carry on the fight outside you must surrender forthwith. I would be unable to fight my way through to you even at terrific sacrifice. I am expecting reinforcements at any moment.

If the Republic is to be saved your surrender is a necessity.

As Senior Officer outside I take it that I am entitled to order you to make a move which places me in a better military position. This order must be carried out without discussion. I take full responsibility.

(Signed)

O. Traynor.

O/C Dublin."

The bearer of this despatch, having reached the Four Courts, the Staff of the I.R.A. and their men accepted the decision of the O/C Dublin Brigade, and reversed their intention to hold the position to the last. Accordingly they marched out under a flag of truce and surrendered.

Prior to the surrender and to the receipt of the communication from the O/C Dublin Brigade the I.R.A. garrison had sent all women and other non-combatants out of the position. The wounded had also been evacuated.

The total number of casualties on the part of the I.R.A. amounted to seven wounded. Some of the wounds are of a slight nature.

It is hoped to be able to obtain and publish full details of the fight in the Four Courts since the attack by the Provisional Government Forces opened on Wednesday morning last. The reading of this should furnish a thrilling description of one of the finest fights for any position in the long struggle for Ireland's independence.

This ends the first engagement of the war begun by what Mr. Collins styles "my Government"—that is, the Provisional Government. The so-called Dail troops are clearly acting on Mr. Collins' authority as Chairman of the Provisional Government, and not on behalf of Dail Eireann.

3. Escape of Six Prisoners

The Four Courts prisoners have been removed from Jameson's Distillery to Mountjoy. Six have escaped.

To the Free State Soldiers

The Anglo-Irish war is not over: the latest of the battles of seven centuries is being fought in the streets of Dublin to-day.

England's threat of war as the alternative to the surrender of the Republic is being carried out—carried out for her by Irishmen.

England's victory will be complete when the last Irish Republican is dead—not before.

The Battle of the Four Courts

The holding of the Four Courts by Rory O'Connor, Liam Mellows, and their gallant comrades for three days through a hell of fire from British guns and overwhelming Free State forces is an inspiration for upholders of the Republic.

The renegade Free Staters, if they have shame left in them, should be covered with shame at this ignoble "victory." What a "victory"! Won under British direction with British help and by British instigation, to achieve Britain's purpose of forcing her rule upon Ireland and destroying our Independence.

Generations of Irishmen to come will point the finger of scorn at those who won the Battle of the Four Courts.

The Crack of the Whip

MORE LIGHT ON THE BRITISH ORDERS FOR WAR.

Pressure was brought to bear by the British upon the Free State Government with regard to the question of the Four Courts at least as early as June 23rd.

The "Manchester Guardian" of June 24th published the following paragraph, headed "Irregulars' Refusal to Leave Four Courts: Military Conference in Dublin:—

"A Conference was held in Dublin yesterday, at which Mr. Griffith, Mr. Cope (Assistant Under Secretary), Major-Gen. Dalton, of the I.R.A., and two British military officers were present, to consider the continued occupation of the Four Courts by the Irregulars under Gen. Rory O'Connor. The proceedings were secret."

This paragraph, which came from a British source, was censored out of the Irish Press, which only contained the bare statement that representatives of the British and Provisional Governments had conferred.

Three days later, the 26th, came the speeches of Lloyd George and Churchill in the House of Commons, saying that communications had been sent to the Provisional Government insisting on "speedy and immediate" action.

On Tuesday night, the 27th, the attack on the Four Courts was begun.

Reports of Surgeons to Officer Commanding Four Courts

Oglaigh na h-Eireann,
G.H.Q., Dublin,
Four Courts,
28/6/'22

To O.C., Barracks.

I beg to report that our Barrack Hospital was to-day subjected to continuous rifle-fire and periodical shell-fire, and even during a serious operation I was forced to stop and have the position of the operating table changed owing to a rifle bullet having passed through the hospital window close behind my head. I was later forced to evacuate the hospital altogether and establish a substitute hospital in a very unsuitable place in the basement.

Our Red Cross flag and signs were, of course, prominently displayed on the original hospital, and some of them were riddled with bullets. Our flag still flies on that hospital, as the window from which it was suspended was frequently perforated.

(Signed)
Surgeon in Charge.

P.S. 29th June—A gas lamp in front of the new hospital placed in position last night, on which Red Cross signs were placed, was found to have all its signs and glass shot away this morning.

(Signed)
Surgeon in Charge.

Four Courts, 29/6/'22.

To O.C. Barracks.

A Chára—I beg to report that, while passing in the open to-day, at about 11.15 a.m., I was fired at by Free State troops from the Bridewell. At the time I was wearing a white medical coat on which were three large red crosses, and was proceeding to bring in a wounded soldier of No. 3 Post.

On the return journey, while I was aiding the wounded man to come in, I was again subjected to rifle fire from the same direction, and was forced to put down the wounded man, who had then to crawl in, though bleeding profusely, and his life was seriously endangered by this proceeding.

(Signed)
M.O. Barracks.

Latest Intelligence

The 1st, 2nd and 3rd Western Divisions are attacking Free State posts. Also the 1st and 2nd Northern Divisions.