

IRISH BULLETIN

Vol. 4

Tuesday, February 8, 1921

No. 24

THE LATEST METHOD OF COERCION

English Military and Constabulary Provide Themselves with Slaves

Forced labor is the latest method adopted by the English armed forces in Ireland in their efforts to break the spirit of the Irish people. The constabulary and military in many parts of the country have recently formed prominent residents of towns and villages into slave-gangs, and have given them tasks to perform, and have stood by as overseers until it was finished. This forced labor first became a policy with the English forces some months ago. The fact that, as the following instances show, it has, in a few weeks, become general, indicates the direction of this policy by the military and constabulary headquarters in Ireland.

Merchants, bankers, professional men, are rounded up, given picks and shovels, and forced to work on the roads repairing damage they have sustained in the course of the guerilla war. No respect for age or infirmity is shown. One of the forced laborers—a hotel proprietor—drops dead after road mending in harsh weather. He has been taken from his home suffering from heart affection. In a second case neighbors are formed into slave gangs to destroy the shop by which one of them gains his livelihood. Even the owner of the shop himself is commandeered and forced to join his friends in demolishing it. And when the owner's son seeks to escape from the humiliation of wrecking his father's property, he is shot dead. In a third case prominent townspeople are carried from their homes and compelled to cut felled trees into firewood for the constabulary. In a fourth old and young men are placed "on view" in a barbed wire cage in the center of their own town.

The following are 21 such incidents, all of which occurred during the last 16 days:

On Sunday, February 6, all the male residents of Cobh (Queenstown), County Cork, were rounded up by English military and police as they came from church. They were marched to the military camp at Belmont near the town. There they were detained for three hours while their names and addresses were taken. They were then addressed by an officer of high rank, who informed them that the whole body had been divided up into groups of six and that a day for duty was assigned to each group. If an attack on any of the forces of the Crown occurred, the group on duty on that day would have to find out information concerning those engaged in the attack, and convey it to the English military authorities. If they failed to do so, they would be arrested and held responsible for the attack.

On Friday, February 4, military and constabulary rounded up over a hundred men in Listowel, County Kerry, including elected representatives, merchants, professional men, etc., formed them up into parties and marched

them out of the town to various country roads across which trenches had some time previously been dug. There the parties were given picks and spades and compelled under threats of being shot to fill in the trenches. The weather was very inclement, and no discrimination was made in selecting the victims—age or illness being no protection. Mr. Jehr. M. Galvin, proprietor of the Central Hotel, who was suffering from heart affection and asthma, was among those forced to fill the trenches. During the work he complained of heart trouble, but was compelled to continue. While being marched back to the town he fell dead.

On Friday, February 4, a large party of Crown forces surrounded many houses at Kilbrittain, County Cork. They commandeered the residents and compelled them to destroy the shop owned by Mr. Patrick Crowley, and to level the ruins of the business premises of Mr. Simon MacCarthy, which had been burned by constabulary a fortnight previously. Mr. Patrick Crowley, Jr., who endeavored to escape from the Crown forces who wished him to assist in the destruction of his father's shop, was shot dead.

On Thursday, February 3, 30 prominent residents of Listowel, County Kerry, were taken from their homes at 7 a. m. by constabulary and were placed in a big cage of barbed wire which had been erected in the center of the square for that purpose. They were kept "on view" for over an hour.

On Wednesday, February 2, a number of the residents of Glanworth, County Cork, were commandeered and were marched out of the village. They were then compelled to remove trees which had been felled across the roads some time previously.

On Monday, January 31, constabulary rounded up 20 of the residents at Daingean Offaly (King's County), and took them in motor lorries a long distance from the village, where they were forced to fill in a trench dug across the road. When the work was completed the lorries drove off leaving the men to walk several miles to the village.

On Monday, January 31, cordons of military and constabulary were drawn round the town of Tralee, County Kerry. All the male inhabitants were then taken from their houses and marched through the streets to Denny street, where they were assembled and addressed by an officer of high rank who threatened them that if they did not assist the Crown forces they would be "suitably punished."

On Saturday, January 29, all the houses at Bandon, County Cork, were raided by constabulary and the male occupants of all classes taken out and lined along the main street. They were kept in this position for two and a half hours, and were then released without explanation.

On Saturday, January 29, the male inhabitants of Borriseleigh, County Tipperary, were rounded up by constabulary and marched to distant parts of the outlying country where roads had been blocked by trees felled across them. There the constabulary compelled their captives to cut the trees into fire-wood, and to load the pieces into constabulary lorries for use in the barracks.

On Friday, January 28, at Leitrim, men of all ages and classes were commandeered by constabulary and marched to parts of the roads where ambushes "were likely to occur." There they were compelled to fell trees and cut down hedges on the sides of the roads.

On Friday, January 28, constabulary commandeered a number of the male inhabitants at Edenderry, Offaly (Kings' County), and compelled them to fill in trenches on the road.

On Friday, January 28, constabulary at Bansha, County Tipperary, commandeered a local merchant's motor-car and then rounded up a number of young

men whom they brought to the country roads and compelled to fill in trenches which had been dug across them.

On Thursday, January 27, constabulary held up and questioned Mr. Francis O'Meara, at Killinaule, County Tipperary. They then shot him and battered in his head with their rifle butts. Subsequently they commandeered a farm cart and seized a passing civilian whom they ordered to lift the body into the cart. The civilian, when he saw the horrible injuries inflicted on deceased's head, fainted, and was thrown down a 12-foot ditch.

On Thursday, January 27, military and constabulary rounded up many residents in the Bandon district (County Cork), and marched them to Brinny's Cross, which, the armed forces declared, was a suitable place for an ambush. There they compelled them to fell trees, knock down high walls and cut the hedges on the sides of the road.

On Wednesday, January 26, constabulary rounded up many of the prominent residents of Fermoy, County Cork, and marched them to the bridge in the center of the town, where they were compelled to paint on the walls such inscriptions as "God Save the King," "God Bless the Black and Tans," etc.

On Tuesday, January 25, military commandeered many of the residents of Cratloe, County Clare, and compelled them to repair broken bridges on the main road to Ennis.

On Monday, January 24, constabulary rounded up many residents in Edentinne, County Leitrim, and forced them to carry into the local saw-mills trees felled across outlying roads. The workers at the mills were compelled to cut the trees into firewood for the constabulary, and carry them to the barracks.

On Sunday, January 23, military surrounded the church at Ballyhooley, County Cork, and rounded up the male members of the congregation and commandeered their vehicles. The men were then driven to various parts of the country roads where they were compelled to fill in trenches cut on the previous night.

On Saturday, January 22, constabulary rounded up the residents at Holy-cross, County Tipperary, and compelled them to fill in trenches dug in the roads some miles distant from the village.

On Saturday, January 22, constabulary commandeered 30 of the residents of Kildysart, County Clare, and compelled them to fill up trenches in the outlying roads.

On Saturday, January 22, many men were taken from their homes at Millstreet, County Cork, by constabulary, and were provided with shovels commandeered from a local hardware shop. They were taken then to the Macroom road and ordered to fill a trench dug across it. As they did so the constabulary indulged in indiscriminate fire.

Issued at the Office of the
IRISH DIPLOMATIC MISSION
1045 Munsey Building
Washington, D. C.