

Casement Running Disaster Ends in Casement Tragedy

Culmination of the Irish Free State gun-running exploit is dramatically described today to The Omaha Sunday Bee readers in the sixth installment of "Michael Collins' Own Story."

Earlier chapters of the thrilling tale of Erin's struggle for freedom, as told to an American newspaper correspondent by Collins shortly before his assassination, give a brief sketch of the young Irish leader's boyhood days. Love of country was one thing he learned at the fireside of his home and it was this patriotism that held him in Ireland, later, at a time when he had an alluring opportunity to go to the United States.

By HAYDEN TALBOT.

By HAYDEN TALBOT, *Copyright, 1922, New York American*
CHAPTER XII—Continued.
"We showed the way in to the pier in our motor boat, after ascertaining that the British patrol boat was not in the neighborhood—a thing that we were going to run guns into Westford having sent it off on a false scent. Before we had made fast, the volunteers—doing exactly what the Ulstermen had done at Larnie—had taken possession of the pier, advised the police and harbor officials it was best for them to remove themselves from the immediate neighborhood—advice they did not heed—and were all ready for us. While we were unloading the rifles and several cases of ammunition another 300 of the volunteers were making our total about 1,500 men. The job finished, we started back to Dublin.

Childers Joins Secret Service

"Of course Dublin castle had been notified before ever we left Howth, and at Howth, on the outskirts of the city, we met a force of police and soldiers. Our rifles were unloaded. A parley took place. They demanded the surrender of the guns. We refused. The soldiers—a company of the King's Own Scottish Borderers—were ordered to charge us with fixed bayonets. Two of them in the excitement fired at us. One of our men was bayoneted. Then the English commander called for another parley.

"But by this time there was only the front rank of our force anywhere in sight. The rest of us—interested only in saving their skins—had disappeared across the fields. And so not one gun was lost.

"Then came the tragedy in Bachelors' Walk—when the British troops marching back to their barracks were cursed and stoned by a crowd composed chiefly of women who had been in the streets since the outbreak of the volunteers at Howth. The soldiers fired without warning—and killed one man, two women and a boy. Several others were wounded, of whom one subsequently died.

"Nobody was ever punished for this although it ought to be remembered that this was not only before we had begun to use armed force, two years before, in fact, but also before the world war had made killings the order of the day.

"The only other important thing about the battle of Howth—which I think most certainly should be emphasized—is that about one week later Erskine Childers enlisted in the British Secret Service.

Collins suggested to MacGarry that he continue the narrative of the war which he had in mind to write about Sir Roger Casement's activities in connection with gun-running from Germany. It was interesting to note Collins' intense desire to acquire information on points outside his own immediate jurisdiction.

"The one big point about the Germans that I think should be told," MacGarry once said to me, "is that they did not let us down in 1916. Casement always felt that they did, but he admitted to me that they never actually promised to send men to help us. That was what Casement most wanted—not having too much faith in us, because of our past experience as soldiers—and Germany might have sent men, if the war had gone her way instead of against her.

"I had a letter from Casement when he was in Munich, early in 1916, stating that he had a kind of conditional promise from Germany regarding men for Ireland. It was that if they won a decisive advantage on either the eastern or western front they would send up men.

How the Easter week uprising, instead of being an ignominious failure, became a spur to Irish loyalty because England treated the disturbance seriously has been explained by both Collins and Prof. Eoin MacNeill. Because of England's action, perpetrators of the uprising went to martyrs' deaths, declared Prof. MacNeill, to whom Collins sent the writer of his story to get his part of the facts "first hand."

Casement, contrary to popular belief, did his utmost to halt the rebellion when he failed to enlist German aid, according to both Collins and MacNeill.

Erskine Childers' asinine scheme to get England to consent to a "hands-off" policy toward Ireland, deportations of Sinn Feiners, Boland's devotion to de Valera and

if only we could win it. In other days we had struggled to win repeal of the union, home rule, or some form of devolution. "It was not these labels that mattered; our fight was essentially a struggle to win for ourselves as large a measure of freedom as possible. And so we were fighting—not for a republic—but freedom. We felt—and those of us who believe in the treaty still feel—freedom for Ireland is of vastly greater consequence than the form of government under which we shall enjoy our freedom.

"When charges of treason are directed at us now, it is as well that our aspirations of 1920 be kept in mind. I said at a meeting of Dail Eireann that the treaty gives us freedom—not the ultimate freedom which all nations hope for and struggle for, but freedom to achieve it. AND I WAS AND I AM NOW FULLY ALIVE TO THE IMPLICATIONS OF THAT STATEMENT!

"Returning to the fight as it was being waged at the beginning of 1921—the most important phase of it was our gradual realization of England's desire to call a truce. This was the more important because it had never been possible for us to be militarily strong, nor to do more by force alone than to make England uncomfortable.

"Now at least we discovered that we had grown strong enough to make England also uncomfortable. More than this—we discovered that while England expatiates on the futility of force by other it is the only argument she listens to. Above all the valiant efforts of Irishmen under the terror of their deaths—these finally awoke the sleeping spirit of Ireland.

"That spirit was once more flaming—and with cause. For the people saw in England's desire to end the reign of terror the true worth of the young men who had come to their deaths that peace might come to their country.

"There had been on rare occasions—regrettable acts on the part of individual Irish soldiers, but such acts had been so few as to be negligible, and when they did occur they were the outcome of terrible and incensed provocation, and were foreign to the whole nature of the Irish resistance.

"The normal conduct of our soldiers proved them to be chivalrous, courageous and enduring—and with an unquenchable devotion to the idea of freedom. Let me cite an instance.

"In June, 1921, a party of four volunteers of the East Clare brigade engaged in cutting wires on the railway at Meelek, were surprised by a party of 30 English soldiers with their machine guns. Fire was opened by the enemy at close range.

"The commander of our little force was atop a telegraph pole and had time to shout a warning an instant before the firing began. His men jumped to cover while he dropped the pole behind a low bank beside the railway. Two of the four managed to make good their escape, but the other two—Lieut. M. Gleeson and Commandant C. McCarthy—were killed.

"As they ran across a field McCarthy fell wounded, and Gleeson went off without noticing it. But on reaching a place of safety and finding his comrade missing, he immediately started to retrace his steps. Presently he saw him lying in the open field across which an English machine gun was about to open rife fire. McCarthy, through the too precipitate action of certain of our public men and public bodies.

CHAPTER XIII.
Seven months before England granted the truce of July, 1921, she wanted very much to withdraw the black and tan from Ireland and end the murderous war which she had begun to realize could never be won. A truce could have been obtained after the burning of Cork in the English attitude hardened through the too precipitate action of certain of our public men and public bodies.

The arrest and harsh treatment of Francis Sheehy Skeffington, Irish writer who was opposed to the use of military methods to achieve the republic; his execution with two other writers by the black and tan; the disheartening attempt to fix responsibility on the perpetrators of the alleged "murders"—all this has been told by the Widow Skeffington. Mrs. Skeffington later escaped from Ireland in disguise and toured America, giving speeches to arouse sympathy for the Irish cause.

Last Sunday's installment closes with a description of the first events in the gun-running exploit at Howth and tells how a woman, Mary Spring Rice, daughter of the then English ambassador at Washington, was found by Irish leaders at the wheel of one of the yachts used in the exploit.

Erin Adds Battle Planes to Defense



Irish free state has new aerial corps, this armored plane being piloted by Gen. MacSwiney.

"They had started to cross an open field when the constabulary numbered 27 suddenly swept up behind them in lorries and opened fire. It was a roaring day, and our men were completely played out. The constabulary were, of course, quite fresh. Our men dashed to shelter under orders of their commander, who himself stood his ground to cover their retreat. At once immediately one of the others came running back to his commander, and insisted on remaining with him. He was Brigade Police Officer Thomas Healy.

"As these two men slowly retreated—firing at their pursuers, and under the terror of their deaths sank to the ground in a state of collapse. He had not been wounded. His death was due to heart failure. He was a native of Tralee and had been a member of the R. I. C., from which he had resigned a year earlier.

"Meaning the others were becoming exhausted they could hardly stand, their commander having now to cover the retreat alone, being obliged to order, coax, threaten and appeal to them to keep moving. Here then was one man fighting 27 men with only a few rounds of ammunition and a few cartridges left.

"The pursuit lasted half an hour—all of it uphill—but in the end the constabulary withdrew. After almost unrelenting efforts the commander had succeeded in saving all of his men except Healy.

"These were typical deeds. And as they became known among the people there was no stemming the tide of rising national spirit—victory was theirs. But there was another unifying cause—and one I choose to state merely in general terms. During the terror 274 Irishmen were assassinated in their homes or while in custody. Torture of Irish prisoners in a vain attempt to force them into a betrayal of their comrades had occurred in thousands of cases. Brutal assaults upon suspected men had been almost the invariable rule in raids by black and tan on Irish homes.

"Acting upon Michael Collins' statement that there was plenty of proof of British outrage and killings during the black and tan terror, but that he preferred that I obtain it from sources than himself, accordingly sought this proof in other quarters and quickly found it. There was indeed plentiful sworn evidence of the truth of what Collins had said. Of many that I have seen and read the following sworn statements are typical:

"The sworn statement of Mary Maguire, of Grogan, Newry, County Down: "I, Mary Ellen Grogan, of Corroon, Newry, County Down, do hereby solemnly declare that the statements made herein are the truth, so help me God.

"On Wednesday, June 8, at about the hour of 8 o'clock in the evening, I heard voices which I afterwards found to be those of special constabulary speaking to my brother, Stephen Magill, at the door of our house. They were asking him was his brother in the house. Before he could reply my brother, Owen Magill, walked out to the side of Stephen.

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"I was a young man of 20 years of age. I was in the room with my brother at the time the specials kicked him from the room and abused him. My father is aged 78. Then my brother walked out of the house with the specials, and as far as I know, walked over 200 yards to the military lorry which was waiting. They did not allow my brother to go on his own, but took him away in his shirt and trousers. As far as I can ascertain my brother was dead when he arrived at the hospital.

"The specials returned on June 10, and raided our house. They knocked down a stack of hay, and threw clothes and other things on the yard. On Sunday, June 12, they again returned. Neither my father nor myself were in the house at the time. They broke open the door and tossed every thing over the house, pitching beds, clothes and everything here, there and everywhere. They again returned on June 18.

"On the occasion of their visit on June 8, they followed me through the fields and threatened to shoot me if I did not tell them where my wounded brother was, he having hid himself under the bed when he heard they were coming the second time. This is a true statement of all the main facts of the case. (Signed) "MARY ELLEN MCGUIRE." "June 20, 1921."

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MacNeill and Son Arrested

In the course of the interview Eoin MacNeill granted me he thus described his experiences with the black and tan:

"It was an early hour that the black and tan smashed into my house and arrested my eldest son—then about 12 years of age—and me. They took us in a lorry down into the village of Blackrock, where there were several other lories standing. Apparently their occupants were raiding houses in the vicinity.

"Our captor stopped his car and ordered us down into the road. Then he pointed to a blank wall on which had been scrawled, 'Up The Republic,' and producing a bucket of whitewash he ordered my son and me to go to the wall and ordered him to whitewash the wall.

"My boy looked up at me to see if I would allow him to do this, and I told him not to touch the brush or the bucket. 'Oh, you won't let him do it, eh?' said the black and tan. 'You will see,' said he. 'You do it yourself,' I refused.

"Setting down the bucket and brush he produced a revolver and pointed it at me. He told me if I did not do as ordered within one minute he would fire. But when I did not move he finally put his revolver back in his holster, and snuffily ordered us into another lorry.

"This was the only bad treatment accorded me at any time while I was in the custody of the British. In the English jail where Griffith and I were fellow prisoners every possible consideration was shown us.

"During each interrogation with a view to extracting information, I was treated by these intelligence officers with the utmost cruelty. My fingers were bent back until they nearly tipped the back of my hands.

"My arms were twisted, a red hot poker was held to my eye, and threats to destroy my sight were made. I was kicked and threatened with shooting. On several occasions I was taken to a dark passage, under the canteen, which leads to the cells, and badly beaten. The doctors here can testify to my condition on arrival.

"On one occasion an officer asked me if I would care to see a priest, and upon my saying 'yes' a priest was sent to see me. This 'priest' afterwards discovered was a member of the intelligence staff in Dublin castle and an ordinary civilian. Love to all. Yours affectionately, "FADY."

"The accused offered by the British government for the British insubordination of the black and tan was that they were netting out to murderers' just retribution. Mr. Lloyd George was 'firmly convinced that the men who are suffering in Ireland are the men who are engaged in a murderous conspiracy.' At the London Guildhall he announced that the police were 'getting the right men.' A demand for the truth about English repression in Ireland was beginning to make itself heard in all parts of the world. It was becoming ever more difficult to convince the world that the premeditated murder of Irishmen constituted legitimate acts of self-defense.

"Michael Collins thus began the story of events leading up to the treaty negotiations.

"At length when the terror growing ever more violent and, consequently, ever more futile, failed to break the spirit of the Irish people—failed as it was bound to fail—concomitant was no longer possible.

"Collins continued: "The true explanation was blasted out when Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bonar Law declared that their acts were necessary to destroy the authority of the Irish national government which has all the symbols and all the realities of government.

"But this announcement had an unexpected consequence. In the opinion of responsible men in the other States of the British Empire such destruction had no justification. They expressed their opinion in energetic fashion. The conventional British statement that it was essential for England to get her own right with the world—the Irish state had to be cleaned.

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Erin's Sleeping Spirit Aroused

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"The only other important thing about the battle of Howth—which I think most certainly should be emphasized—is that about one week later Erskine Childers enlisted in the British Secret Service.

Red-Hot Poker Held to Eyes

Herewith are other documentary evidences of outrages and killings by the British during the black and tan reign of terror which I obtained from other sources than Michael Collins, at his suggestion:

Letter written by Patrick Traynor, 106 Botanic road, Glasnevin, Dublin: "Rath Internment Camp, Curragh Co. Kildare, June 19, 1921.

"The following account of my treatment with a view of extracting information by British intelligence officers whilst I was a patient in Dublin Castle should be published. "From March 29 to April 20 I was a prisoner in the castle, and in all was interrogated by British intelligence officers on 33 occasions.

"During each interrogation with a view to extracting information, I was treated by these intelligence officers with the utmost cruelty. My fingers were bent back until they nearly tipped the back of my hands.

"My arms were twisted, a red hot poker was held to my eye, and threats to destroy my sight were made. I was kicked and threatened with shooting. On several occasions I was taken to a dark passage, under the canteen, which leads to the cells, and badly beaten. The doctors here can testify to my condition on arrival.

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"On Wednesday, June 8, at about the hour of 8 o'clock in the evening, I heard voices which I afterwards found to be those of special constabulary speaking to my brother, Stephen Mag