

# AN T-ÓGLÁC

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS.

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## WHERE WE STAND.

Since our last issue appeared the situation as far as the relations of the Irish Republic to England are concerned has been made abundantly clear to the general public. The President of the Irish Republic with the enthusiastic approval of his Cabinet and of every member of Dáil Eireann has rejected the enemy terms, which would involve a surrender of what we have been fighting for for the past five years—and for the past seven hundred years—our right as a nation to independent national existence. The enemy proposals involved the continued military subjection of this country to England and practically the continued military occupation of Ireland by a foreign army and to this neither the Irish Government nor the Irish Nation will ever consent. In reply to Dáil Eireann's refusal to enter into negotiations on any such basis the head of the English Government has replied in terms which involve a refusal to waive his claims and a threat of further military aggression if this claim of England to what it has no right to be not acceded to. The early termination of the truce is threatened by him in no equivocal terms. It is therefore obviously the duty of every officer and man of the Irish Republican Army to regard himself as liable to be recalled on active service at any moment. Our position as we have said, has been made abundantly clear. In the words of the President, if force is again used against us we will resist it by every means in our power. Our war has been simply a war of national self-defence. We do not seek war, we merely resist aggression; and the occupation of our country by the military forces of our neighbour country is an act of aggression an outrage on our liberties which we will resist with all the force at our disposal. As long as that threat of force remains, as long as the foreign Army of Occupation is in possession of strongholds in our country so long there can be no rest, no "easy time" for

the Irish Republican Army. Every effort should be made to improve the training, organisation and efficiency of officers and men. We cannot afford to take any chances for the safety of the nation depends on us. If the Army is again called on to defend the liberties of the Irish people we are satisfied that they will give as good an account of themselves as in the past. Even if war were averted the nation would always require that safeguard of its national existence provided by the Army of the Irish Republic and it is impossible at the present time to foresee any set of circumstances in which the maintenance at its highest strength of the Army of Ireland would not be a matter of vital concern to the nation. It is certain, however other persons may misunderstand the outlook, that the fighting men of Ireland are under no illusions as to the situation and realise that many things may yet have to be suffered and many dangers may yet have to be faced before the Irish Republic can feel itself secure from the threat of foreign aggression.

## STRATEGIC POSITION OF IRELAND.

### AN ENGLISH VIEW:

"Great Britain lying 300 miles west of the coast of Germany, restricts her communications with the ocean to a southern passage of eighteen miles and a northern gap of 250.

"Ireland lying west of Great Britain and much closer to her shores, might restrict yet more closely the communications of Great Britain with the ocean.

"If the North Channel between Antrim and the Mull of Cantyre, in Argyle, a passage eleven miles wide, and the gap of 140 miles between Daunt Rock, near Queenstown, and Land's End were held by a hostile fleet; Bristol, Cardiff, Liverpool, Glasgow and all other ports on the Bristol Channel and Irish Sea would be closed to oceanic and all other sea traffic. An extension of this blockade line from the Land's End to Ushant, a further ninety miles, would prevent access to the oceans from all other important English and

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Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
OFFICIAL FORCES IRELAND

## NOTE ON SIGNALLING

Though an armed mob may win an engagement it can never win a campaign. A fighting force is effective only if it is organised on a proper system. The difference between an army and a mob is that the organisation of the army makes co-operation between all its units for the attainment of the common objective possible. Ultimately it was such unity of command which won the military victory in the late European War.

Before an army can act effectively as a whole it must possess a complete system of Inter-communication between its component parts. Efficiency consists in doing each thing in the best way. The best way of doing anything is that way which completely achieves the required result with the least expenditure of effort. Accordingly efficient inter-communication must make use of the least wasteful methods. It is not efficient to get a message across a zone of fire by runner if it is possible to signal across it. Hence the imperative necessity for Signal Training.

In Guerilla Warfare especially the rapid transmission of complete information—positive or negative—is essential to success. To enable the C.O. to strike at the right time and place full information both of our own dispositions and movements and of those of the enemy is required, and such information is if possible even more essential to ensure the clean get away which should always be arranged for.

Of all systems of signalling the Semaphore is the simplest, and it is the only one which, for short distances, can be used when no apparatus is available. A good knowledge of the Semaphore is especially useful to scouts. Like most types of visual signalling Semaphore can be read over a very large angle of vision. Where possible the signaller should take up a position in which he cannot at all events be read from the rear. Important communications should when possible be put in cipher. The effective range for Semaphore without flags is about 600 yards. Ten words per minute is the standard rate, but it will be found possible in practice to read the signals at the quickest rate at which it is possible to send them.

Morse signals with the flag can also be intercepted over a wide angle. The question of back ground is of very great importance. Signals can be read at varying distances which depend mainly on the suitability of the back ground and then on the state of the atmosphere. One to two miles is as much as can be expected under ordinary circumstances. A good man should read eight words per minute.

Signalling discs of the shutter type are satisfactory over short distances only. Their advantage over flag systems is that they can be operated from under cover. Signalling with the shutter will also be found slower than the flag.

Daylight signalling with the lamp requires a special

type of apparatus but any shutter or electric lamp will give good results by night. Lamp signals may be made very directive, and so comparatively secret by exposing the flash through a tube which has been blackened on the inside. Where possible lamps should be set on the distant station by day, or the direction defined by white pickets to facilitate the subsequent opening up of communication.

In all types of Visual Signalling the points to consider are:—Obtaining Communication, Concealment, Backgrounds.

As regards opening communication the position selected should have a clear view to those stations with which communication is desired, as well as to those with which it is already established and with which it is likely to be required later. For this reason the highest ground should be looked for, consistent with the other essential considerations. The immediate vicinity of Camps, Roads, Traffic Lights, Smoke, dust and mists should be avoided as tending to hinder communication. Stations should take up positions from which they are most likely to be seen and picked up: near prominent buildings, haystacks, distinctive clumps of trees or solitary trees. They should be where they can easily be found by messengers and orderlies.

The necessity for concealment is due to consideration for: The secrecy of the work; The secrecy of the dispositions of the troops; The safety of the party; and varies more or less with the distance or proximity of the enemy. Signallers should invariably take advantage of all natural cover which may afford concealment from the enemy. In order to obtain communication it may sometimes be necessary to take up a position on the sky line but soon as communication has been obtained a lower position should be occupied.

With respect to backgrounds the object to be kept in view is to obtain as great a contrast as possible between the signals and the background against which they will be seen. The background should be unbroken and uniform in colour. Woods, especially of Pine trees Ploughed fields, Rocks and dark buildings form the darkest backgrounds and skyline and water the lightest. The greater the distance between the background and the observer the lighter it will appear. The less the distance between the object displayed and its background the sharper will be the contrast. It should be remembered that the background to a station is not necessarily the colour of the ground in its immediate vicinity, but may be that of the features of the country some miles behind it.

If portable telephones are available for signal purposes, and a line can be laid or an existing line used they are more satisfactory than visual signalling on account of their secrecy. To ensure accuracy of messages on the 'phone must be checked back group

by group as the message is being sent and the whole message repeated by the receiver before it is finally accepted.

Telegraph instruments of the vibrator type are extremely portable, and can often be worked over faulty lines in which speech would be impossible.

In all signal work reliability, accuracy and speed can only be assured by keeping rigidly to a uniform system of procedure which must be followed in a mechanical manner. Of course without complete uniformity of method inter communication can not exist at all.

It must be remembered that the signaller always carries a very heavy burden of individual responsibility. Many lives may be lost by his lack of nerve or lack of resource. He does not enjoy the moral support which ability to reply to the enemy with his own weapons gives to the ordinary Volunteer. He should be made to understand that, if given a message to deliver, it MUST be delivered at all costs, no matter how great the risk. And the value of an efficient Signaller can not be over estimated.

## HOW ONE MAN HELD UP FORTY

A report despatched on July 11th to G.H.Q., from the Headquarters of the 1st Southern Division I.R.A., contains an account of the coolness and daring of one Republican officer, the Commandant of Kerry No. 2 Brigade, who unaided held up a party of some forty British troops and constables. The Report says:—

“On the night of June 18th the O.C. Kerry No. 2 Brigade was prevented by much enemy activity in the — Company area in which he was staying, from returning to his Headquarters. Soon after dawn on the 19th he set out armed with a rifle and 20 rounds of ammunition with the intention of getting through the enemy lines if at all possible. A few minutes later while he was passing along the banks of the Brown Flesk river he heard the approach of a British motor patrol. He took cover until it had passed, and then presuming that the convoy would return in a short time, he took up a position on a neighbouring hill commanding the road at a distance of about 350 yards. Some time later three lorries and one private car approached. The O.C. fired two rounds at the leading car, the occupants of which at once dismounted. He then fired six rounds into the private car, seriously wounding a District Inspector of the Constabulary. Immediately the remaining troops left their cars and began to spray the countryside with machine-gun and rifle fire. Eventually they found the O.C.'s position, and he retreated under cover for two miles. Working westward he again took up a position commanding the main road. After an hour and a half the enemy came into view. They were in extended formation and were pushing the private car which had apparently been

damaged by the previous fire. The O.C. again sniped them, and the patrol dashed across the river and endeavoured to encircle the position from which they were being attacked. Having once more fired upon them in order to delay their approach, the O.C. withdrew under cover and again took up a position in their rear. He waited for the return of the patrol which however branched off to Castleisland, having taken four hours to cover a distance of eight miles.”

## THAT ARMOURD CAR

The following secret document captured from the enemy during the recent hostilities will be read with interest and some amusement:—

Secret.

To: O.C. No. 1 Section, O.C. No. 2 Section, O.C. No. 3 Section. O.C. No. 4 Section. O.C. No. 5 Section.

(1) Your special attention is drawn to the accounts recently published in the newspapers of the capture of a Peerless Armoured Car by the Rebels in Dublin.

(2) The following points should be noticed:—

(a) The duty was of a routine nature giving the rebels opportunity for daily observation.

(b) The cars appears to have been vacated by all the crew except one gunner.

(c) The gunner who was exposing himself above the top of the turret was immediately shot before he could get his gun into action.

(d) No fight appears to have been put up by the crew who were surprised and tamely surrendered their arms and their car.

(3) With regard to these points, the following instructions will be impressed upon all ranks under your Command.

(a) Routine duties are the most dangerous and particular precautions against surprise must be taken on such occasions by varying the procedure, route etc, as much as possible.

(b) Should it become necessary for a portion of the crew to leave the car, two men preferably the two gunners will always remain in the car, the remainder of the crew remaining close by. One man will be posted as a sentry in the turret the other keeping completely under cover inside the car.

(c) The turret sentry will observe over the top of the turret but will not expose more than his head and eyes in so doing. Gunners will wear steel helmets whilst on duty, and the bottom driving flap will always be kept closed, in Peerless Armoured Cars.

(d) It must be impressed upon all ranks that it is a disgraceful thing for a crew to lose its car, and that surprise is no excuse for a failure to fight.

Victoria Barracks,  
Cork. 18. 5. 21.

C. Pope, Major,  
Commanding "A" Company  
3rd Tank Battalion.

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Scottish ports except by a route leading round the north of Scotland. At first sight this circuitous route appears to be an open one but as the trans-oceanic ports lie further south, the proper tracks to them lead somewhat close to the north and west coasts of Ireland.

"That island is well provided with first class naval harbours. The long deep-water inlets of its northern, western, and southern coasts, afford excellent anchorage for large fleets. Lough Swilly, Co. Donegal, in the north and Bearhaven, Co. Cork, with its sheltering island, in the south, are much frequented by our own fleets. Indeed in this respect Ireland is better, provided against Great Britain than Great Britain against Germany, for only in the Northern-most portion of its Eastern coast has Great Britain any sea-lochs comparable to these.

"Now let me emphasise as strongly as I am able the importance of the following argument. The main recruiting and technical base of the Empire, both for Navy and Army, is the island of Great Britain with its population of forty-one million, its coal and iron mines, large output of steel, and great shipbuilding industry.

"The oversea Dominions have not sufficient white population nor adequate naval organisation to contend on equal terms with a great power, whilst for Great Britain the supply bases which must always be essential for raw material of munitions and are at present, and perhaps permanently, essential for food, lie across the ocean. Thus if the sea-routes be cut between Great Britain and the trans-oceanic Diminions the Empire is debarred from the pooling of resources in men and material which is the first condition of that concentration of force which is the basis of strategy.

"To call Ireland the Key to the Naval Communications of the Empire is to employ a metaphor which is precise in its significance and not exaggerated in its suggestions, for a key closes gates against those who would enter and those who would leave, and the passages past Ireland are the gates between the principal habitation of the British race and its principal estates."

## ARTICLES USED IN CLEANING THE RIFLE.

- |                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| (1) Pull-through                   | } carried in butt |
| (2) Oil (oil in bottle)            |                   |
| (3) Flannelette and provisionally. |                   |
| (4) Gauze.                         |                   |

### PULL-THROUGH.

A pull-through is a length of cord weighted at one end with a brass weight (to enable it to be dropped through the bore) and having three loops at the other.

There is very often some difference of opinion as to

how these loops are numbered. It is really immaterial if men make no mistake in putting each article used in cleaning the rifle on the loop specially provided for the purpose.

For the sake of uniformity, however, the first loop will be regarded as that *nearest* the brass weight. Naturally then the third loop will be that farthest from it.

### TO PACK THE PULL-THROUGH.

The pull-through is packed above the oil bottle in the butt recess by holding the loop end between the fore-fingers and thumb of the left hand, so that the loop falls about two inches below the third finger. Lap it loosely three times around the first three fingers remove the coils from the fingers, and lap *tightly* with the remainder of the cord, leaving enough cord to allow the brass weight to drop easily with the butt recess. Then put it into the recess, leaving the loop end uppermost; drop the weight into the recess and close the butt trap.

### WARNING.

Never use a cord after it has started to fray as it may break, and the pull through may be lodged in the bore. If it does break only an armourer must remove it.

### OIL.

Only regulation mineral oil must be used in cleaning. This is Russian Petroleum, specially prepared.

DISEASES OF THE RIFLE—Wear, Fouling, and Nickelling.

### RIFLING:

A gun barrel is said to be rifled when it has spiral grooves cut down the bore. In the Lee-Enfield they are five in number, with a corresponding number of lands. The depth of the grooves is only a small fraction of an inch, but is sufficient to give a spin to the bullet which enables it to maintain its velocity, thereby overcoming in great measure the resistance of the air.

### LIFE OF THE RIFLE:

In the course of time, from the continual friction of the bullet, these grooves become worn, until eventually the bore becomes perfectly smooth. With proper attention the soldier will be able to fire from 5,000 to 6,000 rounds from his rifle before this happens.

### THE SOLDIER A DOCTOR:

Every soldier knows that a rifle must be cleaned but a great many are not familiar with *all* the reasons for it. They are (1) To prevent diseases. (2) To cure disease, so that the soldier should regard himself in the light of a doctor whose motto is "prevention is better than cure"

### THE ARMOURER A SPECIALIST:

The skilled armourer is symbolic of the clever specialist to whom all very bad cases must be handed for attention.