

# AN tÓGLACH

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS.

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## FIVE WONDERFUL YEARS.

With the dawning of 1919 the Irish Volunteers enter upon their sixth year of existence, and can look back with pardonable pride upon the five years of strenuous work and exciting history through which they have passed. That Ireland to-day is stronger than she has been for many a year, that the National spirit was never sounder or more uncompromising, that we look to the future with the utmost confidence, that there is good ground for hoping to see the fruition of all our hopes in this New Year of 1919—all that is due principally to the Irish Volunteers.

place-hunter seemed supreme. The faithful few who strove to keep the torch burning in those dark days—the torch handed down from Tone and Emmet—were met on every side with derision. To suggest that the men in these days were prepared to die for Ireland moved the mockery of the professional politician. The British Government had set itself out to buy over Irish Nationalism. Every fresh Act they passed—the University Act, the Old Age Pensions Act, the Insurance Act—created a fresh horde of officials, and consequently a fresh army of job-hunters. A weak, supine, corrupt Party seemed to speak for and have the confidence of

Complaints are constantly reaching G.H.Q.—sometimes from Battalion Officers, more frequently from Company Officers—that copies of "An tOglach" are not sent them. Brigade H.Q. must clearly understand that the paper is for distribution among ALL Companies. It is issued by G.H.Q. on the basis of five copies for each Company. Brigade H.Q. will keep this in mind when allotting supplies to their Battalions. Battalion H.Q. will act in like manner to their Companies.

Both Brigade and Battalion H.Q. must have arrangements for IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION on receipt of "An tOglach."

Their establishment in November, 1913, marked the dawning of a new era. It would be hard to find a period in Irish history in which the Irish National spirit seemed to have sunk to a lower ebb than in that year of 1913. The previous eight years had been years of Anglicisation, corruption, and the insidious lowering of National ideals probably unexampled in our annals. All the dominant forces in Irish public life stood for cowardice, compromise, and corruption. All faith in lofty ideals, in patriotism or self-sacrifice seemed to have vanished. A horrible cynicism reigned everywhere. The

the vast majority of the Irish people. The crowning triumph of the English Government's policy of corruption was their purchase of that Party, by making its members pensioners of the English Government. The road seemed clear for hoodwinking whatever of National feeling was left in Ireland by passing off some trivial concessions on the Irish people as a satisfaction of the demand for self-government. It seemed as though the conquest of Ireland by England was at last to be accomplished.

Suddenly the Volunteers sprang into being, and the first signs appeared of a change of

sphere. All that was healthy, all that was sincere and courageous in Ireland rallied to the standard of the Irish Volunteers. For, despite everything, the heart of Ireland was sound, and burned secretly for independence. The time is not yet come to write the true history of the Volunteers. This much at least can be said, that the commonly received story of its origin is false. Its founders were that small and faithful handful we have referred to who had "kept the torch burning in these dark days", who cherished the ideals of Tone and Emmet in all their purity, and who at last saw their opportunity of saving the body and soul of Ireland.

After more than a hundred years of disarmament, with all its degrading moral effects, Ireland at last saw an Army of her very own spring into being. The appeal of the Irish Volunteers was responded to by all that was manly in Ireland. The forces of corruption looked on baffled and balked. The politicians intervened and strove to control the Volunteers, or failing that to break up their ranks. Despite the efforts of the small handful we have already referred to, the majority of the Provisional Committee in a moment of weakness surrendered to the politicians and admitted to the control of the Volunteers. The result was mischievous in the extreme. For a time it seemed as though the Volunteers would lose their military character, and be converted into an "army" of uniforms and parade, of flag-waving and "imposing demonstrations". But military and National instincts were too strong in those who had first joined the ranks, and their spirit kept the Volunteers a vital force. In those days, too, good service was done by the "Irish Volunteer", edited by Laurence De Lacey, which helped to create and educate sound military and sound National ideals.

The outbreak of the war, when the politicians tried to sell us to England, brought things to a crisis in the Volunteers, and the Army of Ireland threw out those corrupt and treacherous men from control of their body. The usual forces of lying, bribery, misrepresentation and intimidation were employed by the politicians to seduce Irishmen throughout the country from their allegiance to the Army of Ireland and create a split in our ranks. Their efforts met with partial success. Our ranks were depleted, but we still remained a disciplined, well-organised body. The Irish Volunteers threw themselves with the heartiest energy into the task of arming, drilling and organising to make themselves fit to strike a blow for Irish freedom. The opportunity came in 1916, and despite the events which interfered with the plans of insurrection, the Volunteers of Dublin

won undying glory for themselves by their gallant fight against overwhelming odds in Easter Week.

The events of that week proved a turning point in Irish history. It is a new Ireland we are fighting for to-day, not an aged, tired, cynical Ireland, but a young, full-blooded, vigorous Eire, full of hope, courage, and enthusiasm. For two years and a-half the British Government has vainly striven to suppress the Irish Volunteers. To-day they are far more numerous than at any time since 1914; they are well-organised, trained, and disciplined; and the entire National sentiment of the Irish people is at their back. They have weathered many vicissitudes during this time. Many have suffered death, many have suffered imprisonment and torture, but the ranks are unbroken, each gap is speedily filled. To have kept our Army intact in the face of the enemy through these five stormy years is indeed a wonderful achievement. By this means we have kept the Conscription menace from our shores, and saved Ireland's manhood and Ireland's honour.

It is not now our task, however, to boast of our past achievements nor pride ourselves on our present efficiency. We must remember we have much stern work to do—vital work, perilous work, work requiring the utmost determination and the highest standard of efficiency. We must remember that whatever armistices may be signed in France there is still a state of war in Ireland. We may not be much longer "in the trenches." It is good to look back upon the adventures and achievements of the past five years in so far as it will hearten us to further efforts. Let us resolve to be worthy of the gallant and honourable body to which we belong. Let each man do his best to be a faithful and efficient soldier of the Army of Ireland, an Army without fear and without reproach.

## NOTES FROM HEADQUARTERS.

**ORGANISATION NOTES**—Duties of Battalion Officers (continued)—The Battalion Adjutant—In the Scheme of Organisation it is laid down that he is to (a) act as Adjutant to the Commandant; (b), supervise the instruction of recruits. Under (a) his duties may be outlined as follows:—

1. He will attend to the receipt and distribution of all ordinary despatches by direction of the Commandant.
2. He will have particulars of the Officers, numerical strength, situation, attendances of all Companies in the Battalion.

3. He will be responsible for instructing Company Officers in the proper manner of keeping records of the attendance of Volunteers at drills and parades, and such other records as may be required for Battalion purposes.
4. He will be responsible for the collection of affiliation fees, and forwarding them to G.H.Q. through Brigade H.Q.
5. He will be responsible for giving notice of Battalion Council Meetings to the Battalion Officers and the Company Commanders.

With regard to (b) he will require to arrange with Company Commanders that recruits receive some special training before being attached to existing sections. (See Notes from Director of Training in various issues).

Generally, it will be seen that the duties of the Battalion Adjutant are so closely associated with those of the Battalion Commandant that it will greatly facilitate matters if these Officers reside within easy reach of each other. I would strongly recommend Company Officers to bear this important fact in mind when making the appointments.

Battalion Quarter Master—Is responsible for the armament, transport, quartering and supply of the Battalion. (See Notes on Equipment in various issues).

**NOTES ON TRAINING.**—Skirmishing—A skirmisher need not worry himself about keeping in line, nor even about keeping at exact intervals from his right and left hand man, but he should move forward in as near a direct line as the cover will admit, and should always be very careful not to diverge so much from a straight line of advance as to bring himself in front of a comrade's rifle or bring a comrade in front of his rifle. Doing this is called masking the fire, and it might be very unpleasant in actual war for the fellow in front.

As the primary object of skirmishing is to enable a firing line to advance without exposing itself to the enemy it is evident that concealment is of the first importance, and the skirmisher should select such stopping places as will hide him from the view, and protect him from the fire of the enemy.

Good cover should let the skirmisher have a good view of his front, for a man cannot get bull's-eyes if he cannot see the target. For the same reason the cover should be such as will allow the free use of the rifle, and if it provides a rest for the rifle as well so much the better. It should also hide you from sight and give you protection from the enemy's bullets.

To choose Cover.—Before you start your rush you should make up your mind as to the cover

you will make for. In choosing cover bear in mind that trees, bushes, or hedges standing by themselves are invariably fired at by the enemy, even if they cannot see anyone behind them, and that such "cover" is really no cover at all. Also that rocks and stone walls are not such good covers as they appear at first sight, inasmuch as there will always be danger of the man behind the cover being hit by splinters. A brick wall or a mound of earth is all right, provided either is thick enough to resist the passage of a bullet. I am inclined to think that there is no cover, taking it all round, to beat natural folds in the ground, and it is surprising what a small depression will make a man invisible at a short distance.

In rushing for your cover be very careful not to show yourself against the sky-line, and when you have reached your cover get as close to it as you can.

If you can fire round the right side of your cover do so in preference to firing round the left side or the top. You should never fire over the top of cover if you can help it, for though you can get a better view of the ground the enemy will get a better view of you. If you are firing through a loophole fire from the left side; this will give you better aim.

If you cannot find any cover near your line of advance you must throw yourself down on the open ground and flatten yourself out as much as possible.

Don't fire precipitately after a rush—to do so will only be wasting ammunition, and you will not be of much use as a skirmisher when your pouches are empty. Make sure that you can see your target and then take steady aim at it before you loose off that precious round of ammunition; remember that firing for the sake of firing when you can't see your enemy, and don't know where he is, is utter foolishness. In ordinary circumstances you should fire slowly and methodically, but when you are in a tight place or have a big target to shoot at, you should fire as quickly as is compatible with hitting.

If you see anything that appears to have escaped the notice of your Section Commander draw his attention to it.

### GENERAL NOTES.

The following information, supplied to us from abroad from an absolutely reliable source, will be read with interest by Volunteers. We reproduce the information in the exact form in which it reached us:—

"Few people outside certain official circles in England are aware of the immense part played by Lord Northcliffe in bringing about the collapse of the Central Powers. The

authenticity of the following information (supplied by one whose official capacity enabled him to become possessed of it) can be absolutely guaranteed. Northcliffe was appointed Director of Propaganda in Enemy Countries in the course of 1917, when military operations had decidedly failed to give the anticipated results. Almost unlimited funds—our informant stated them in millions—were placed at his disposal. By the beginning of the present year (1918) his plans were completed, and the campaign opened. A large number of British agents were sent to neutral countries, and many neutrals, Swiss, Swedes, Danes, Dutch—men of all classes were brought over to undertake propaganda work in the Central Countries. Immense numbers of books, leaflets, pamphlets, and “neutral” newspapers, bought up specially for the purpose, were distributed broadcast, especially in industrial centres and among disaffected Socialistic and Anarchist groups in Germany and the countries allied to her. The point of view expounded in this literature was that the Allies (especially America) were not fighting against the German People, but merely against the militaristic entourage of the Kaiser. Once the German People had taken the management of affairs into their own hands and had cleared out the Kaiser and the militarists, the Allies would be satisfied with evacuation of the occupied territories, and would demand no ‘annexations and indemnities’. Every kind of false and insidious rumour was effectively spread for the purpose of damaging the Central morale. In Bulgaria and Austria this propaganda was especially successful, and the internal collapse of these countries left Turkey and Germany practically helpless. When the full details of this stupendous propaganda are fully known it will appear that Northcliffe and not so much Foch or Lloyd George must be given the credit of having won the war.”

“The following [curious fact was supplied from a Government source :—:

“When the ships of the German Fleet were surrendered to the British and interned at Harwich and elsewhere, the German crews were left on board to look after them, and one of the terms of the agreement signed by both parties was that these Germans were to be allowed to correspond, without any interference, with their own country. The German mails were to be collected at certain fixed intervals, and conveyed in sealed bags by British destroyers to Germany. The British observed this condition in the following characteristic way: The bags were duly brought to the Censor's office in London and opened in such a way as to leave little or no trace, and the letters were read. Our informant states that many of these letters,

both from officers and men, contained bitter complaints that the Germans had been tricked into surrendering by false news. Early in November, when unrest began to manifest itself in the German crews at Kiel and elsewhere, a series of wireless messages was sent out from England stating that a great Labour Revolution had broken out there, that a Republic had been proclaimed in London, and that the Navy had mutinied and joined the Republicans. Later messages stated that the British crews were only waiting for their German brethren to do likewise, and would then go out and fraternise with them. Many of the German crews immediately mutinied, killed their reactionary officers, and steamed out to meet their British “comrades”. They soon found themselves hopelessly trapped, and had to surrender at discretion. Irishmen are not unfamiliar with such methods!”

A resolution has been passed by the International Prisoners' League demanding the release of the Irish political prisoners. This fact has been suppressed by the Censor, and newspapers have been warned not to publish it.

Tá cúig bliadna ó shin ann ó cuireadh Fianna Fáil ar bun. Is mó cor a chuir an saoghal de ó shin agus is mó rud iongantach do thuit amach. Tá a chroidhe díchill deunta ag an nGall chun na hOgláigh do chur fé chois ach táid siad ann fós i n-aindeoin a dhíchill níos tréine agus níos acfuinnighe agus níos líonmhaire ná mar bhíodar riamh. As obair na nOglách iseadh dhásh gach maitheas eile do ráinig do chúis náisiúntachta. Isiad do mhúscail an sprid i gcroidhe na ndaoine agus isiad a chuirfidh an tsaoirse i n-áirithe do mhuintir na hEireann.

The death of Risteárd O Colmáin in Usk Prison adds another name to the Roll of Honour of the Irish Volunteers. Risteard played a gallant part in the fight at Ashbourne in 1916. He was accorded a public funeral with military honours by the Irish Volunteers in Dublin, which was made the occasion of an imposing demonstration. Previous to the funeral the English Chief Commissioner of Police in Ireland asked through the Lord Mayor an undertaking that there would be no uniforms worn and no firing party at the grave. This was scornfully refused, and the funeral carried out as arranged, the enemy forces not daring to interfere.

**COMMUNICATIONS NOTES**—Brigade Officers i/c Communications who have not yet returned corrected the time-tables sent out with communications Order No. 5 (11.11.18) must do so without delay. A single time-table not returned will make the route to which it belongs unworkable.