

# AN T-ÓGLÁC

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS.

Vol. III. No. 7.]

MAY 6, 1921.

[Price Twopence.

## TO VICTORY!

At no time has the growth and development of the Army of the Irish Republic in efficiency and effectiveness been more remarkable than during the past four months. The enormous advance made has surpassed all the expectations of the heads of the Army. The Volunteers of Ireland have made history both from the political and the military point of view. They have brought the practise of guerilla warfare from a casual thing to science and in that science have exercised a trained and disciplined skill which has revealed unsuspected possibilities to the student of the science of war. Many brave fights for their national freedom have been fought on guerilla methods against a foreign invader by the people of other lands; but none have put up a braver fight and still more emphatically none have put up so effective a fight against mighty odds as the troops of the Irish Republic. They have this advantage that though they fight by guerilla methods, they are a highly disciplined and organised Army acting methodically and in concert under one supreme command. They have shown how ineffective huge numbers and mighty armaments can be against such a national Army. The enemy's military prestige has suffered a severer blow by his failure in Ireland than by all his display of incompetence during the great European War.

There has been no time yet when the Army of the Irish Republic could look on the future with more hope and confidence than at present. The surprising increase in efficiency and effectiveness of our troops, the development of a first-class type of fighter, has enlarged our outlook. New plans and new possibilities reveal themselves daily; and we can promise the enemy that he is in for a very much hotter time of it than anything he has yet experienced. The backward districts are waking from their lethargy; quite a large number of successful affairs have been brought off in districts hitherto inactive; and in the active districts

the Republican troops are adding victory to victory. For every device of the enemy we have been able to find a countering move. His campaign of unbridled savagery has proved a futile frightfulness. The spirit of the people is not broken; and the Army of the Irish Republic, fortified by the sense of the justice of its cause, strengthened by the memory of its many victories, thrilled by the thought of its sacrifices and the gallant lives that have been given for Ireland, animated too by the desire to strike its hardest blows against the barbarous authors of so many outrages, is stronger in morale more hopeful and confident in its outlook than ever before.

We have now reached a stage in the struggle in which it is possible to see the development of the warfare in clear perspective and realise many hitherto unsuspected possibilities. The enemy by "doing his damndest" against us has unconsciously done us a service. He has put us on our mettle; he has hardened and steeled Volunteers into regular soldiers; he has given us fresh motives for relentless and unceasing warfare against him; and by enlightening the ignorant among the Irish people as to the true meaning of "British rule" he has strengthened and solidified the support of the people of Ireland for Ireland's fighting men. There is only one course for the young men of Ireland to-day—to give the services of their minds and bodies to the service of Ireland in her war for self-defence against a brutal invader.

In this connection the last words of the heroic Thomas Traynor sent out to his fellow-Volunteers before his murder by hanging in Mountjoy Prison deserve to be given the widest publicity. He said:—

**Fight on not for vengeance but for Freedom.  
I hope that some young man who has not yet  
realised his duty to his Country will fill my place.**

Volunteers need not be disturbed in their work by the rumours of "peace moves" on the part of the enemy which are being so assiduously circulated at the present time. When things are going badly with

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the enemy he always resorts to such devices with a view to dividing the Irish people and impairing the national morale. If the enemy sincerely desires peace he can obtain it at any moment by withdrawing his forces from our country. Volunteers need never fear that the Government of the Irish Republic will betray the cause for which so many gallant men have laid down their lives. The Republic IS and WILL BE; its Government is the only one with moral sanction, the only one to which we owe allegiance; the Army of the Irish Republic acts by its authority and under its orders; and for the acts of that Army in prosecuting the war with the English invader our government accepts responsibility. For the President, the Ministry and Dáil Eireann as for G.H.Q. the first task and problem is to rid the country of the English usurpation. To that task the Army of the Irish Republic has devoted and will continue to devote its best energies; and with the blessing of God strong in the justice of our cause, in our unassailable moral position as, lawful defenders of a nations rights, we will carry out our fight unflinchingly to victory.

## GENERAL NOTES

There is an improvement in the prompt forwarding of reports to G.H.Q. Attention is called to the new General Order on this subject just issued.

At Durrow, Co. Waterford on March 3rd a party of 40 Volunteers ambushed a troop train from Fermoy and wounded two enemy soldiers. Later the same party attacked a troop train containing 150 enemy soldiers and two machine guns. In a fight lasting some hours the enemy had 2 killed and 3 wounded. Our men suffered no casualties. On the 5th the Rosslare train was held up by 9 men at Kilmacthomas and 16 unarmed soldiers were deprived of their equipment. On the night of the 6th Tullow barracks was sniped at and 2 R.I.C. men wounded.

The Belfast Brigade executed a number of raids on the 16th and 21st March in which they secured two revolvers, two shot guns, two Martini rifles and some military equipment.

A party of enemy soldiers of the Border Regiment were ambushed on the Ballinrobe—Castlebar road, South Mayo, on March 7th. There were 8 enemy casualties and all their arms and equipment were captured. Our troops sustained no casualties.

In an ambush at Scramogue, South Roscommon on March 23rd, an enemy captain, a lieutenant and 2 R.I.C. men were killed and three soldiers seriously wounded. Our troops, who had no casualties, captured one Hotchkiss gun, one Vercy pistol, 2 rifles and 227 rounds of ammunition. The enemy lorry was burned.

In an ambush at Ballyconlon, North Mayo on April 3rd an enemy car was taken and burned and two Black-and-Tans wounded.

A party of Volunteers who were preparing for an ambush while in an unoccupied house in Falcarragh Village, West Donegal, on March 20th were surprised by a police patrol. One policeman was shot dead and the others fled to the barracks where they remained firing all night. The press reports of this affair are very misleading.

A party of Volunteers at Ennis on the 10th. surprised a mixed party of enemy soldiers and Black-and-Tans and bombed them, killing one and wounding two others

## AIRCRAFT PRECAUTIONS

Reports of recent actions show that the enemy has used his aircraft against our forces, for the purpose of scouting and observation. It is obvious that the English have an advantage in their aircraft, it being possible for them to review all daylight operations from a safe point of vantage, and at the present time the best and only way to overcome this difficulty is to take extra precautions to avoid being observed when operating. Study of the Principles and practices of camouflage will be found to be of great assistance in coping with this difficulty.

The fact that our forces are operating in small units presents a great difficulty to the enemy in observing, and is also of assistance to us, in so far as it tends to facilitate concealment of movements.

## PRINCIPLES OF CAMOUFLAGE

### DEFINITION

Camouflage may be defined as "concealment of the act or fact that something is being or is concealed." *Deception* is the essence of it. Its purpose is to render objects undistinguishable or unrecognisable by means of imitation or disguise. Concealment in the sense of hiding from view is not the primary aim.

### THE IDEAL

Perfect camouflage of any work can only be attained by non-interference with the natural or normal aspect of the locality as viewed from the air, and with which the enemy has become familiar. This is an ideal which can only be approached by close attention to detail, and by the exercise of forethought and imagination.

### LOCATION OF POSITIONS

Positions can be located by "*Aeroplane photography*" and "*Air observation*." It is principally by means of photographs from the air that positions are definitely located on the map. The camera is a most accurate witness, and a photograph will always record something. The art of camouflage lies in conveying a misleading impression as to what that something means.

The aeroplane observer cannot, however, be altogether disregarded, and, although the main efforts must be directed towards defeating the air photographer

it must be done in such a way as not to draw attention of the observer.

#### CONCEALMENT OF MOVEMENT

In some recent actions our forces have been somewhat inconvenienced by enemy aeroplanes acting as observers and scouts. It should be clearly understood that when small forces are operating in a 'close' country like ours, aeroplanes are not a great advantage. However they necessitate the use of extra precautions by our troops when moving about.

When selecting routes for moving about it is essential to confine movement to tracts which run under shelter of natural cover, such as afforded by trees and hedges, and can be concealed entirely, from overhead view. Of course the shady side of the cover should be used. Movement across open pieces of country which afford no shelter or cover, can be affected by creeping at good intervals between men. The best way to conceal movement from aeroplane observation is to operate entirely in shadows and covers.

#### PROPER EMPLOYMENT OF RIFLE

In modern warfare, whether on a large or small scale, a great variety of weapons are used; and each particular kind of weapon is suited for one kind of work, and not so suitable for any other kind of work. Some of our men—and even of our officers—do not fully realise this need, and we find instances—of rifles especially being used quite unsuitably.

For instance it is not uncommon to have men in close-quarter ambush positions armed with rifles. The rifles are largely useless in this position—not at all as useful as shotguns. There is too little value put on the shot-gun, and yet a shot-gun loaded with buck-shot is a first-rate weapon. This is particularly the case with a double-barrelled gun: the confidence afforded by a Right and Left is of the greatest value. Some of our troops have killed deer at 60 yards range with shot-guns.

The proper use of the rifle must be for aimed fire at long or medium range. The more skilled the marksman the longer the range at which he can open fire. Riflemen should be used to cover Ambush Parties—to protect the flanks, to hold off reinforcements, to enfilade roads—"one rifle enfilading a road is better than six crossing," to quote from a recent report.

It follows naturally from this that good results may be obtained from even solitary riflemen if they know their work. Take the following: "I detailed No 2 Squad Leader off for Sniping, and he reported to me that he trailed a raiding party of military up across the fields in Fox and Geese direction. There were about 20 men and 2 officers, he reports looking for dumps. They were returning to barracks along the canal in extended formation, and about the third lock

he sniped one of the soldiers. The man fell and the rest took cover." On another occasion recently in Meath one of our Snipers killed or wounded three R.I.C. He had a post from which he was able to take under fire a long stretch of road. The Enemy party was in a Crossley; and our Sniper shot one as the car approached, one as it was passing, and a third as it was going away. Yet a third example of the single Sniper: "I detailed a man to snipe sentry at Lissonfield House, Rathmlines Road. He went into position at 4 o'clock, and remained there until he got a fair shot at the sentry. The sentry came over from the house and sat on the swing in the grounds when the Sniper fired. He fell off the swing on to the ground and never moved."

So much for the single Sniper: here is an account of a well-carried-out rifle combat with larger forces near Dungarvan: "At a range of 350 yards a party of four of our men who were in position at that side of the road opened fire, firing 4 rounds each, killing two and wounding another. Military retreated and opened fire with a machine-gun. Our party replied at long range wounding two more, and compelling machine gunner to leave his gun. Owing to the nature of the country firing was at long range and only the best shots of our party were allowed to fire." This is an evident case of good Fire Control and Marksmanship beating a force very much superior, but lacking in these factors,

It is to be hoped that careful study and application of these examples will enable us to secure better results in all areas from the use of our rifles.

#### VALUE OF THE SMALL ACTION

Here is a report of an "Affair of Outposts" in West Mayo on March 22nd. It shows that men of the proper stamp can turn any area into a "War Area." Three of our officers "were inspecting or about to do so an ambush point at Cushlough. They encountered a patrol of 4 R.I.C. cyclists at Carrick-kennedy within a mile from Cushlough Barracks. They engaged the patrol, and the R.I.C. after an exchange of shots surrendered . . . Three revolvers with two fills each, a shot-gun and two egg bombs were captured"—quite a useful little haul.

Chances like this are to be had in several parts of the country. Indeed, it is gratifying that a large number of them are availed of, although not nearly as many as could be if a similar spirit of enterprise was displayed as in the present instance. The R.I.C. are endeavouring to adopt their old habit of moving around in small cyclist patrols. If they attempt this they must, in the words of General Falkenhayn be "sent home with bloody pates." The other day an R.I.C. cyclist was thrown and stunned and his machine smashed by a trip-wire. That is only one example of what may be done—and that was in Lonsdale.



## SCOUTING II.

Observation is the most important branch or study in the training of a Scout and consequently a great deal of his time must be devoted to training the eye. (i) *for the enemy* (ii) *for ground* (iii) *for estimating distance, size and numbers.*

I. *EYE FOR ENEMY* what to look for—Scouts should be on the watch for movement, changes and contrasts, curious or unnatural objects, signs of the enemy in dust, smoke tracts, the glint on or clear outline of such objects as the barrel of a rifle or a helmet. He should keep a watch on any object when once seen.

Where to look—He should learn the habits of the enemy at various times and seasons, and constantly put himself in the enemys place. He should search likely points such as skylines, trees, points with good views, defiles, ridges, exposed points, shadows and covers.

How to look—He should always act as if he were watched, and try to see quickly without been seen; in doing this he should be careful not to disclose his position. The outline must be broken, likely places avoided, and the hands and face hidden. In all searching, method should be employed.

### II *EYE FOR DISTANCE, SIZE AND NUMBERS*

The following methods of ranging by eye will be found useful—

- "Unit of measure"—measuring by some familiar unit, such as 100 yards. This is accurate up to 400 yards when the intervening ground is visible.
- "Key Range"—The range to one object having been gained, it is compared with other ranges.
- "Bracketing"—The possible maximum and minimum ranges are taken and the mean estimated.
- "Appearance"—Judging by the size and visibility of a man, or some other object of a known size.
- "Doubling"—Judging the distance half way and then doubling it.

*FINDING THE WAY.* The Scout should be constantly practised in finding his way and committing his observations of ground to memory.

(i) Before starting—He should study the map and any available photographs for information. He should make notes, and endeavour to visualise the country.

He should note the direction by compass, sun, moon and churches. He should note the time of starting, direction of wind and get the general lie of the land into his head.

(ii) On the way—He should compare the map with the ground, note and memorise hills, trees, rocks, towers and any curious or prominent features. He should ask himself occasional y, "could I direct anyone back by giving him a series of landmarks"? He should

note the distance by time. He should avoid suggesting an answer when questioning inhabitants.

## HINTS FOR MOUNTAIN AREAS

The following from Major Younghusband's "Indian Frontier Warfare" may prove useful as suggesting possible modes of action for our troops in certain areas:

"Where the track passes along the bank of a river or steep hillside it is a common device amongst forest-born tribes and mountaineers to *cut the path away and to entangle and obstruct the adjacent slope*, so that hours and days, or, if the path is on the face of a cliff, even weeks may be required to repair the damage."

"A very deadly and effective defensive measure employed by the tribesmen of some mountain district is *the establishment of stone-shoots*. They find a place where a precipitous incline drops—if possible at some unexpected and exposed corner on to the path beneath. On the hill above a great collection of boulders obtained close at hand is made, and the moment the enemy appears a continuous and deadly storm of missiles comes hailing down the hill. A stone-shoot of this description is quite impassable for troops as long as it is garrisoned, and the garrison is very generally so placed as to be invisible from the path below and is often unturnable from any direction. A stone-shoot may therefore be placed amongst the list of effective obstacles open to a force placed on its defence in a hill district, *whether forest-covered or bare.*"  
Picture a lorry convoy under a stone-shoot!

## MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES

The Irish Republican Army at the moment confers no medals or distinctions—except promotion, which, after all, is the most sincere tribute that can be paid. At the same time it is the intention henceforward to publish under the heading "Mentioned in Despatches" any instances of particularly distinguished conduct on the part of officers or men. For obvious reasons it is not intended to publish names: mention can only be in a general way by rank and unit.

East Clare: April 2nd. "One scout ran right across an open space with a machine-gun playing on him at 300 yards range, to reach a house where the Commandant and two other men were sleeping. He could have taken a path slightly longer with perfect safety to himself, but in order to try and save us by getting over a minute sooner he risked his life under the guns of an armoured car."

Kerry No. 2: in the train attack at Headford on March 21st. When the Officer Commanding the Irish force was killed, the first care of the Second in Command on taking charge was to give orders to secure the rifles of the dead English soldiers which were lying on the platform.