

COPY

AUGHNACLIPPE,
MOLBY,

19th January, 1922.

Sir:-

In reply to queries, I subjoin the following:-

I am a farmer of an ordinary class in Co. Longford. While doing some handy repairs for neighbours in order to supplement the small profits of my farm, at a distance of a mile from my house, two Lorries filled with Black and Tans came on my premises and burned my house with all its contents, also the outhouse and all the hay that grew on the farm. My wife, a delicate woman and suffering from a nervous disease for years, was rendered frantic - being the only occupant of the house then. They followed her to a neighbour's house possibly with the intention to shoot her. The appeals of women stating her condition of nervous breakdown for years saved her life. They proceeded then to where I was earning a ~~xx~~ day's wage, and arrested me at my work, and lodged me in the Military Barracks of Longford for a month. My wife was then without food or clothing, and not having shelter of any kind. Her delicate condition rendered an unsuitable guest for friends or neighbours, as it takes most of my time to nurse her.

I had no time for politics as I was too engaged to earn a living, with a wife so afflicted. They were prompted to this act by learning that my son was unanimously voted to a high position in the I.R.A.

My son was after this a "wanted man", and he could not at the risk of life look after his afflicted mother. He could not safely enter the locality.

After a month in Barracks I was tried and acquitted and returned, but had nowhere to lay my head.

Characteristic of the Irish, they did all they could for my wife in my absence, but the nature of her disease made that a difficulty. My worry in prison, under these circumstances, has left its mark for life and may hasten my demise by years.

My wife's malady increased. Being beyond middle age myself the catastrophe made me aged and irresolute. We had neither money nor clothing. The provision, clothing and money was all consumed. The furniture, fittings and outhouses took years, and I might say generations to furnish, and which in present rates of market could not be replaced, without a very large sum of money. We stood penniless, without clothing, shelter or food. Till we got assistance we were in danger of perishing were it not for good neighbours.

My farming implements are wanting and farm yard manure is nil, and to put in a crop as usual is impossible. Whatever live animals were on the farm I had to dispose of them at great disadvantage, and none is supplied since, and in fact I am now unable to do so.

My little house is situated in a mountain district where a living of a moderate kind is got by tilling the land. If better things will not turn up I am not yet in a position to put in a crop for coming year.

I beg to acknowledge with deep gratitude the help I received from the American Relief, and, which I may add, saved out lives.

To all that contributed to me and the numerous afflicted ones of Ireland I and they are grateful.

I have no objection to my name and gratitude being appended to these facts I have stated.

I am, Sir,
Very Gratefully Yours,
John Finigan.

C.J.France, Director, A.C.R.I.,
Dublin.