

Balrobnockmore,  
Corrondulla,  
Co. Galway.

16 - 1 - 1922.

C. J. France Esq.,  
Standard Hotel, Dublin.

Sir:-

On the 20th January, 1921, myself and family were preparing for bed when we heard the tramping of people coming towards my house. On looking out I noticed about 20 Black & Tans approaching my house. I ordered my two sons out at once. One of them took one direction and the other another direction. In the meantime I heard shots they fired after them. By a hairsbreadth they escaped.

They then surrounded my house. Ten ~~of~~ of them came in by the front and as many more the other door. They asked me where my sons were or were they at home. They ordered me outside, then my wife and three daughters, and put us standing against the wall and said if we left there until they were ready they would shoot us all. They then started to throw petrol on the house inside and then set fire to it. When I saw the house on fire I asked my coat of one of them as I had no coat on. My wife asked her boots and stockings as she was preparing for bed at the time. We were both refused. In about fifty minutes I saw the house falling in. They then left after discharging about forty shots. I was all night looking for my two sons; I was sure they were shot somewhere about the house. About 12 o'clock the following day I saw my sons coming towards me. It was then I came to myself again, for I never cared as long as I saw my sons alive after all the shots that were discharged after them. It effected myself and wife very much as we were thrown out of our bedroom. We had no clothes what-so-ever, and no means to get any. My three daughters had no clothes either, and they were depending on the neighbours for six or seven months. I could not sow my Spring properly as my two sons were "on the run". I lost £100. 0. 0. that Spring. It effected one of my sons very much. He got a severe cold when the truce started, and spent three months in bed in a neighbour's house. He was attended by a doctor and is hardly fit for work yet. I cannot describe to you the hardships I had to undergo.

I received £10. 0. 0. from the White Cross prior to the time I got the loan. I received £100. 0. 0. of a Loan which enabled me to get up a portion of my house for myself and family and it was badly needed.

Afterwards I received another £100. 0. 0. to help me on to finish my house and get some farming implements which I wanted, and especially for beds and bedding for myself and family.

I am sorry I have no picture of my house at present. I do'nt desire my name to be published in the Book with my letter.

(Sd) Patrick Forde.