

Droumroe,

Farranfore,

CO. KERRY.

20/1/'22.

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

Dear Sir:-

On the 8th May, 1921, a patrol of Black & Tans, stationed at Farranfore, were ambushed. For about six months previous to this, two of my sons were marked men, and were consequently on the run.

My place had been continually raided in search for them but each search proved fruitless. On the evening following the ambush, - May 9th, four lorries of Crown Forces, (comprised of a mixed Force of Auxiliaries, Military, Black & Tans, and local R.I.C.) arrived at my house. They read a Notice to me - signed by an English Commandant, stationed at Buttevant, and in charge of the Kerry Brigade, saying that my house was to be burned as an "official reprisal" for the shooting of Constable Stockton, who was one of the party fired on the previous evening, and giving us one hour to clear our foodstuffs and clothing, but no furniture.

After about a quarter of an hour they started demolishing the windows and furniture, and in less than a quarter of an hour they sprinkled and sprayed petrol around, set it on fire, and immediately the house was in flames. It took fire all the more readily, half of it being thatched, and the other half covered with corrugated iron. Some of the articles which we had removed outside were again thrown to heighten and speed up the blaze. We saved nothing practically in the dwelling except some clothing.

While some of the party were setting the dwelling ablaze, another party had already (even before the Notice was served on us) begun burning outside. They burned the following:-

- (a). Dwelling-house, furniture, and clothing.
- (b). A hay-shed and its contents, (3 tons of hay).
- (c). A rick of straw, (about 2 tons), a quantity of wheaten straw, and a large quantity of rushes.
- (d). About 120 Sts. of potatoes, which were in a pit.
- (e). A cow-house.
- (f). A barn (which was attached to the cow-house), and its contents; dairy, farm, & household implements.
- (g). A machine house & its contents, - mowing & raking machines, also ploughs, etc.

Owing to the petrol running out they only partially succeeded in burning a stable and pigery.

Faced with the facts that we were now homeless and deprived of everything to carry on our farm-work, we were in a bad plight. The financial loss would amount to about £2600, - a not excessive figure, considering all that was either burned or destroyed. We had to seek shelter from the neighbours, and had not even as much as one implement to carry on farm pursuits, thereby suffering still further loss.

(OVER)

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I received no assistance from the White Cross until October, when I was granted a Loan of £250, - £100 of which I have received to date. This amount I have now expended in rebuilding the dwelling, which as yet is only about a quarter completed.

I have not any picture of my premises after they were destroyed.

Mise le meas,

(Sd). John T. Walsh.