

O'Gorman Hotel,

BUNDORAN.

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

A Chara:-

I am in receipt of your letter of the 6th inst, asking for particulars in my case, and to submit circumstances.

I carried on a business at my residence which was situated at Creevykeel, Cliffoney, Co. Sligo. My sister, who was then 16½ years of age, was living with me, and I was her sole support. On the 25th October, 1920, a patrol of R.I.C. were ambushed at a place called Money Gold, about 4½ miles from where I lived at that time. My home was visited next morning by Crown Forces, who looted the place, and smashed everything they could leave hands on. I had to leave home and go "on the run" 3 months previous to this, as the house was raided several times for me.

On the morning of the 28th October, - 2 days later at 2.30 a.m. a reprisal column of Crown Forces arrived in Crossley Tenders and Ford Cars. They were a mixed Force, - Military, Auxiliaries, Tans, and R.I.C. As soon as they arrived they did not wait to knock to get in, or see if any person was living in the house, but started throwing in bombs through the windows which they had broken on the previous day. But as luck had it, I had my sister removed out of the house that night at 9 o'clock. They then set the house on a blaze. When they had left some men turned out and extinguished the flames as they had not got much of a hold at this time. When they had to flames just out the Crown Forces returned and arrested 3 men whom they got at this work. The Military re-lit the premises and it was burned to the ground. They also burned another store belonging to me. My whole furniture, stock-in-trade, and Books, were all destroyed. Everything I possessed was burned to ashes. My sister, who was only a child, as I might say, has partly lost her health, and is not able to work. She is under the Doctor's care at present. She got a job 7 months after we were burned out, to keep her going. She is now an invalid in my hands, and we are both penniless and homeless, unless we get rebuilt again.

I have got some allowance already from the White Cross Committee, (Cliffoney Branch). The last sum I got was £8.0.0. on Xmas week. I got some previous to this, but at time of writing I cannot say the exact amount, but will let you know total amount I received. The only means I have of existing is money which has been lent to me by private friends, which I have to repay when I get built up again.

I received £250.0.0. - first instalment from Reconstruction Committee a week. I will start to rebuild next week with same, as I did not wish to start until I was sure that things were settled down a little. The total loss of property destroyed on me would be value £6,000.0.0. or £7,000.0.0. For loss of business for 12 months alone, it would be anything from £700 to £11,000, or perhaps more.

I am a whole time Officer in the I.R.A. and I never received a cent from that organization, and in times like these it is fairly costly to keep going on. I have been an active member of same since 1915, and have been imprisoned several times during the last 5 years. I made application to the White

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Cross through Dr. Kennedy, to make some weekly allowance for me. I was informed that their was some Order that I.R.A. men would be allowed no money from the White Cross to maintain them. I wish to state that I am very much dissatisfied, as my case is one of the most deserving I know of. I know people getting weekly allowances who have not been burned out at all, and have all their people working, and at home. I furthermore wish to state that both myself and my sister are American born, and our father and mother are American Citizens. My mother was killed during the trouble in this Country by a Head Constable in the R.I.C.

I regret very much I have not a photo of the burned establishment to send you at present, but I will let you have same as soon as I can, and statement for publication. Any statement I make in my case I can stand by it, and prove same.

Is mise le mess mer,

(Sd). William Gilmartin)