

36, WATERCOURSE ROAD, C O R K.

C. J. France, Esq.,

Dear Sir,

I am a horsedealer. I have a wife and four little children whose ages vary from 1½ years to 7 years. My premises are fairly large. One portion of it was let to a blacksmith who paid ten Shillings a week for it; another portion of it was let to a carpenter who also paid Ten Shillings a week rent, and the third portion was occupied by the Irish National Volunteers as their Club Room, who paid me Eight Shillings a week for it. But that is all forfeited now.

The first of the trouble began in having our house raided six times by the Military and police. It is too horrifying to recall it as we had to leave our house each time for fear of being shot and take shelter in a covered van of our own at the end of the yard. That was not the worst. On the 23rd November, 1920, we were all asleep at 1.15 a.m. We received no warning or notification of any kind from the Forces of the Crown until we were awakened by the noise of the lorries and the breaking in of our doors. The house was burning fiercely and my wife and children were in a terrible plight. I had to escape through a back window and remain prostrate on the ground in one of the adjoining yards until the Military returned to their Barracks. In the meantime my wife had to take the little children one by one down to a stable at the end of the yard, and being so afraid to venture out remained there until 7 o'clock in the morning.

From that day forward we received temporary shelter from our goodly neighbours for a period of six months. After that my wife and her four little children had to reside in one little room which escaped being burned. Previous to the house being burned the Military called on us and requested that we should put the volunteers out of the place, but we refused to comply with their request, and said on principle we could not put them out whatever the consequence would be.

After burning our house and all that was in it, the military and police came again and dismantled a motor car which was at the time our only means of support.

I regret I cannot send you a picture as our house is after being renovated, but the inside can never be dried; there is no cellar or vault to equal the interior.

On February 28th, 1921, I broke my leg and was laid up 5 months, in or about the 4th April. I received £70 from the distressfund. I also received a loan on two different occasions, the first was £100 and a second £50, making a total of £150. I was also awarded £775 by the Recorder of Cork for damages sustained. Yours, etc.

(SIGNED) MICHAEL HOWARD.