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Clonyconry.

January 20th. 1922.

Mr. C.J. France.
Standard Hotel.
Dublin.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 10th. inst. in which you ask me to give an account as to how I suffered as a result of burning during the war. As crown forces had visited my house several times before burning I could not possibly state what trouble and inconvenience they caused me and my brothers and sisters. They first visited my house about the middle of October, brought us out of bed at the point of the revolver; my brother became excited and started to run after going out. A sergeant of the police in khaki fired two shots at him with his revolver, his escape was miraculous he never got hit. I was held then under an armed guard while they were searching the house however, they found nothing and left. They came three times to our house afterwards and we were not there, making a search every time they came and taking any things they met in the line of jewelery, scarfs and womens heavy jumpers. On Christmas Eve they came to our house inquiring for us. I was not far away from the house and saw all there movements it was loot they wanted on that occasion. That day they took away a hat value £2. a pair of rugs I could not say exactly what they were worth, also seven ducks, four hens, three geese. The next visit then was on the 20th. January when they burned the dwelling house and one years produce of the farm. During that day there had been an ambush seven or eight miles away from our place. About eleven o'clock that night we were in bed when we heard the lorries on the road, our house is about 300 yards from the road. The next thing was that they opened the door which was locked by pucking it with the butts of the rifles. I and my brother were up half dressed when they tore in around the room and ordered us out. We left half dressed and were glad to be allowed to go, our sisters bringing our boots and stockings. When we got out the haggard was a mass of flames and smoke. The haggard consisted of a hay barn with about thirty tons of hay. a rick of straw about five tons also a slide rake grinding stone with frame, ladder. hay knife, and some forks and rakes. The dwelling house which was thatched was set fire to from the back and took fire quickly. They immediately left after setting fire to the house. As soon as we found they were gone we got back and by the help of the neighbours around managed to save two rooms, one over the other. In those two rooms we managed to cook and carry on a little business but had to seek a bed every night from our neighbours untill the White Cross came to our aid and we built up again. At the time of burning we had about 34 head of cattle old and young with two horses. As we had no money in bank we had to sell some of the strong ones to buy fodder for the weaker ones. About what money I received from the White Cross as a loan is £175, which went in temporary repairs on the house. Before I got this loan from the White Cross I received in two instalments through the Most Rev. Dr. Fogarty the sum of £25. as temporary relief. As I have to give my brothers and sisters the means to get a decent living the war has disturbed me in my agricultural pursuits in a bad way as all my Capital is gone. I have been awarded £600 compensation if it is ever paid. I think I have told you all or very near it. I am very thankful to you and all sympathizers in America who have stood so loyal to Ireland in there struggle for National Independence. You may use my name any way you wish. I have no objection in saying those were Crown Forces that did the burning. I will now finish with kindest regards.

I remain, Dear Sir.

Yours Faithfully.

(Sgd)

Patrick Hayes.
Broadford.