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Drimoleague,
January 11th, 1922.

Dear Sir:

In reply to your letter of the 6th, inst, I wish to state what I had to endure during the recent war, which is as follows:-

There was a policeman fired at and wounded in the village of Drimoleague about 9.p.m. and in about ten minutes after the Black and Tans came up from the Barracks and began firing into my house, which was occupied at the time by myself and my daughter; but luckily we were able to make our escape by a back door, having to crawl on our face and hands from a hail of bullets which were directed at our house, as all the time they thought we were inside. The next day the Military and Crown Forces raided me house, which was situated about half mile from the Village of Drimo. at a place called Gurrane, and enquired for myself and my son, but we had our escape made and were forced to go on the run. On that night - September 29th, Crown Forces came and burned my village house and its contents to the ground. There was no one there on the night in question as we had fled since the night before on account of the firing. Then the farmhouse was left in charge of four girls, and as it was situated less than half mile from the Barracks it was often raided three times a day, so that my girls were forced to go to lodgings in neighbouring houses during the winter months.

Not content with all this my farmhouse was burned on the 1st. June 1921 as an official reprisal, and we were able to save nothing except our own clothes; of course we got permission to save foodstuffs, but I need not tell you that we used to keep only a very small supply as if we had any surplus the Tans knew well how to lay hands on it. Only an eye-witness can realize what those burnings mean when all which you possess is given over to destruction; when you have not as much left as a cup to take a drink, a bed to lie on or a roof over you - save the canopy of Heaven.

Then my son was arrested on June 15th, on the occasion of a general roundup, and up to the time of writing is still a prisoner. When he was arrested I then had my liberty, as it was only a case, like many others if the son could not be found arrest the Father.

Then my girls and myself were forced to live in a little cabin made up for us by the young men of the neighbourhood, and to give you an idea of the extent they tried to persecute us to, Military Lorries came along commandeering men to fill in road trenches, and of course, came to the ruins of my house; but all the men had gone to a place of safety and had to remain in hiding until the lorries had gone away, - when they returned and finished the little temporary cabin. While they were looking for the men one of them used to say to the other, "They made a good job of that burning; that's the only way to quieten those murderers", and a lot more such expressions.

Now I have got a Loan of £100, which has enabled me to rebuild my farmhouse, but my house in the village is still in ruins, and I have applied for a Loan to help to rebuild it; as that was the house I lived in where I carried on the business of a Bootmaker, which, owing to the burning is now completely lost.

I am also getting a weekly allowance of £2. in order to pay men to work the farm, as my own health is not of the best owing to the hardships I had to endure while I was away from home., as I am close on 70 years.

I am sorry I have no picture of my houses. We had one of the Village house but it was destroyed in the second burning; but later on I might be able to get one as a lot of travellers took the picture of the Village one.

I think now I have given you a fairly good account of what I had to endure during the war, so I must close.

Yours sincerely,

James Sullivan.

P.S. I am getting the weekly allowance since the end of August, 1921. You can use my name when writing the book. J.S.