

August 29, 1920. All his razors were stolen, money equivalent to \$18 and other articles to a total value of \$290. In reply to his complaint to the military commander, he received the written assurance of an Imperial British Staff Captain that nothing had been taken. His home was then raided on September 13 and jewellery and other articles stolen.

Robbing Prisoners with Violence.—A not uncommon form of robbery was practised on men assaulted and dragged from their homes during raids. A typical instance of this was described by Miss Craven, of Washington, D.C. Miss Craven was visiting her parents at Headford, Co. Galway, when "Black-and-Tans" raided the house at noon on September 17, 1920, and dragged away her younger brother, who was not connected with the Sinn Féin organisation, though an older boy was a Volunteer. His parents found him on the road later, beaten and bruised, with two of his teeth knocked out. His watch and seventeen shillings had been stolen. During the raid some money and small gold pins were stolen in the house.

Robbery.—The habit of looting and robbing the raided in their homes seems to have inculcated the practice of highway robbery. According to the testimony, it was an ordinary event in several cities, particularly Cork, for pedestrians to be held up and robbed on the streets by soldiers or police. Lord Mayor O'Callaghan testified that the "Black-and-Tans" were particular offenders in this respect: "Passing on the streets, these men challenge the passers-by and order them to hold up their hands while their pockets are gone through. In many cases all the contents of their pockets are stolen, any money especially."

A sworn deposition of a typical highway robbery was presented to the Commission from John Creed, 56 Grattan Street, Cork. On the evening of December 10, 1920, he was held up by two men wearing light raincoats and soft felt hats—the ordinary mufti of the "Black-and-Tans." They carried revolvers, and pointing them at him they demanded "Hands up!" and searched him, taking nearly \$100 which he had on his person. The man who took the money had a decided English accent.

Highway Robbery at Stated Hours.—Highway robbery would seem to have been part of the regular daily routine of some of the Imperial British forces. Harold Johnson, American sailor on the steamship Westcannon, testified that the hold-ups in Cork would start about 3.30 in the afternoon. He used to go out to watch them. Emil Pezolt, his shipmate, an American, testified that he was held up and beaten by "Black-and-Tans" on the evening of the big fire; his watch, about \$30 in money, and even his seaman's passport were stolen.

Robbing Women.—John Charles Clarke, American, testified to seeing men in the R.I.C. uniform holding up women at the pistol's point and searching them on the streets of Cork. He saw these "police" pull rings off women's fingers, and he saw one of them tear the earrings from a woman's ears. One of the women thus held up was crying, and Mr. Clarke testified that the "policeman" pointed his gun at her, saying: "Shut up or I will give you the contents."

Assaults on Women.—Daniel J. Broderick, an American, told of a raid on the house of a Mrs. Hartnebt, at Abbeyfeale. Her boy was in bed ill on the upper floor while the soldiers wrecked the lower storey and set the house on fire. Before leaving one of the soldiers struck Mrs. Hartnebt over the head with the butt of a rifle. Mr. Broderick saw the wound. It was three or four inches long.

The testimony shows that women and girls have been searched by members of the Imperial British forces, the privacy of their bedrooms has been invaded in the dead of the night, and their hair cut off; but in no case has the crime of rape been specifically charged by Irish witnesses before us against the Imperial troops. The fact that for four years and a half an army of at least 78,000 British was occupying Ireland without provoking charges of major sensual offences against Irish women is remarkable. It would seem to us the only bright spot in the darkness of war. And it would appear the more remarkable when that army is proved to contain drunkards, highway robbers, gunmen, and petty thieves. It would seem to your Commission that the credit for the sparing of Irish womanhood must be attributed at least in part to the officers commanding the Imperial British forces in Ireland. Only a drastic ordinance against sexual crime could be powerful to restrain some of the criminals which that army demonstrably contains. It would seem a regrettable corollary to the credit we would like to extend to the Imperial British High Command for controlling the sensual licentiousness of its men, that we would need equally to hold it responsible for the crimes the men are permitted to indulge in, sometimes even in the presence, if not with the connivance, of subordinate officers.

Imperial British Officers

The morals of the British officer would appear to us to have suffered less than those of the rank and file.* The officers seem more sober than the men. John Tangney, a former member of the R.I.C., testified that County Inspector Lowndes and the two young military officers in charge of the party that raided Ballylorby "got stupidly drunk." But Mr. Dempsey testified that the officer at the sack of Mallow remained sober. The officers were also more honest. In one case testimony was adduced concerning a British major stealing £75. In many instances robberies were committed by troops under the command of officers, and in some cases looting seemed to be specifically directed and controlled by officers. The testimony concerning this aspect of the British officers' behaviour is, however, too fragmentary to allow us justly to form general conclusions.

Assault on Hunchback by Three British Officers.—It was, however, clearly proved that in many cases the known sportsmanship of the British officer had become degraded by his "duties." We have the deposition of Sean Murphy, of Brandon, concerning his interview with James Murphy, a hunchback, who declares that three British officers beat him and attempted to hang him in a raid on his home at 5.30 a.m., November 10, 1920. In his deposition Sean Murphy states:

"James Murphy is a little hunchback who resides with his sister, who is not very strong. I saw the shirt which he was wearing that morning. It was completely clotted with blood on the front and back. I also saw the piece of rope. He was in bed when I saw him, and his nose was very badly torn. He complained of pains in his head and back, and as a result of his treatment he is very nervous. I know James Murphy personally. He is a very quiet, inoffensive man."

Torturing Prisoners.—Lord Mayor O'Callaghan presented the written statement of Thomas Hale, of Knockscuva, near Bandon, Co. Cork, who, with a man named Harte, was arrested July 7, 1920. Hale states:

"When I was undressed they strapped my hands behind my back with leather straps, and put them around my neck and mouth. Harte was also strapped in a similar position. I was not in a position to defend myself, and Lieutenant A. hit me several times in the face and on the body. Captain B. said: 'You have some documents from the adjutant-general, per Michael Collins.' They dressed me again, tied my hands behind my back with leather straps, and also dressed Harte. Captain B. said: 'You will be shot.' They put straps around my legs as well as round Harte's legs."

Eventually the two men were tied together and marched to a lorry, prodded by bayonets. Harte stated that he was hit in the nose by a gun-butt. They were taken to the barracks in Bandon and then assaulted several times. Harte had several teeth knocked out. They were lined up, as if to be shot, but were beaten instead. In the course of trying to extract information from them about certain Republican leaders, Captain B. got a pair of pliers. Hale's statement continues:

"Captain B. said: 'What position does your brother John hold and where is he staying?' I said: 'I refuse to give you any information about him.' He then turned to the officer whom he sent for the pliers, and he started bending and twisting my fingers at the back. He gripped them at the back, placing one portion of the pincers against one side of my nail and the other portion of the pincers against the other. He brought the blood to the tops of several of my fingers, and for some time afterwards my fingers were black on the tops owing to congealed blood there. I was feeling extremely weak, almost fainting, and the blood was dropping down my legs. I was asked several questions about other individuals and about military matters, but refused to give any information."

"Captain B. also put the pinchers on my thighs, but my senses were becoming quite numb."

"Another officer then untied my hands and told me to pull up my trousers. Captain B. said: 'The court is closed for the finding.' He said: 'Stand up,' as my knees were somewhat bending, 'and we will see what a Tommy can do to you.' I was hit several times in various parts of the body, but especially in the face, and he broke the four teeth in my upper jaw. I was then knocked down on the ground. I was absolutely exhausted and nearly fainted, and my senses were beginning to go. He hit me on several occasions while I was on the ground. After a few minutes, one of the officers said, 'That's enough.' I was then dragged up, and led out of the room. My hands had not been retied since they had been undone in order

* The auxiliaries, called cadets, are mostly ex-officers, serving in the ranks.

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