

**1921 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE**  
**2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY**

**SUMMARY OF SECOND BATTALION DIARY.**

*January 6.*—Major H. L. Wood retired on retired pay. (*London Gazette*, d/5.1.21.)  
"D" Company became known as Captain E. H. Whitfeld's Company.

*January 8.*—Lieut. Haymen proceeded to Rifle Course at York.

*January 14.*—Major J. A. Ballard retired on retired pay with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel. (*London Gazette*, d/13.1.21.)

*January 17.*—Lieut. Whitehead attended Conference of Assistant Adjutants at Hythe, lasting until 22nd.

*January 20.*—Captain A. E. C. Deakin, D.S.O., M.C., proceeded to Colchester on appointment as Education Officer, 4th Division.

*January 22.*—Captain and Bt.-Major R. B. Crosse, D.S.O., attached for Special Duty to Headquarters, Western Command, Chester, with effect from this date.

*January 25.*—Thirty-six recruits were posted from Depot. (Officer commanding party, Lieut. T. Tyrwhitt-Drake, M.C.)

*January 27.*—Notification received that Major Crosse, D.S.O., had qualified in Subject (d) in 'Officers' Promotion Examination, held at Lichfield, on 18.10.20. (Authority, C.R.N.C. No. 213238-(G).)

*February 2.*—Lieut. W. L. Barnard was promoted to the rank of Captain. (*London Gazette* d/5.3.21)

*February 9.* — 2nd Lieut. H. W. Emms, 4th Norfolk Regiment (T.A.), was temporarily attached to the Regiment.

*February 15-18.* — The following attended the Third Brigade Tour (10th Infantry Brigade) at Sheffield:—

Captain E. H. Whitfeld, M.C. ;

Lieut. C. R. Horley, M.C. ;

Lieut. H. Vernon.

*February 21.* — Lieut. T. E. Crimmins, Army Educational Corps, reported for duty as Education Officer.

*February 22.* — "C" Company became known as Major J. W. G. Wyld's Company, Major R. J. Brett, D.S.O., being seconded whilst a student at the Staff College. (*London Gazette*, d/23.2.21.)

*February 28.*— Leave season and winter classes ended.

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*March 1.* — Captain C. B. Crawford, on promotion, was posted from 1st Battalion. "A" and "B" Companies began summer training.

The Battalion Machine Gun platoon was formed. *Officers:* Captain E. H. Whitfeld, M.C.; Lieut. L. W. Giles, M.C. *Other Ranks:* One Sergeant, four Corporals, three Lance-Corporals and 36 Privates.

Lieut. N. G. Clarke promoted to the rank of Captain, with precedence next below W. L. Barnard.

*March 3.*—Notification received that Lieut. W. L. Barnard had qualified in the Promotion Examination for Officers (Subject "A"), held at Strensall on 24.2.21. (Authority, Northern Command Order No. 209, d/3.3.21.)

*March 4.*—Seventy-eight men proceeded on 28 days' furlough prior to discharge.

*March 5.*—2nd Lieut. H. W. Emms ceased to be attached to the Regiment.

*March 9.*—Major J. W. G. Wyld, D.S.O., M.C., was selected for employment with the West African Frontier Force, and was granted leave pending orders for embarkation.

*March 11.*—Lieut. J. Thorne proceeded to School of Military Administration, Chiseldon, to attend Junior Officers' Course.

*March 14.*—Lieut.-Colonel E. R. Clayton, C.M.G., D.S.O., proceeded to School of Artillery, Larkhill, to attend 4th Division Staff Tour, lasting until 16th.

*March 17.*—Major L. Tunnard joined, and took over command of "D" Company.

*March 20.*—Medal Presentation by Colonel-Commandant W. J. Dugan, C.M.G., D.S.O., Commanding 10th Infantry Brigade, of nineteen 1914-15 Stars and one Long-Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Lieut. H. S. Eagle took over the duties of Transport Officer from Lieut. Vernon.

*March 24 to 30.*—Easter leave period.

*April 2.*—Lieut. H. Vernon proceeded to the Depot for a tour of duty. (Posted *vice* Lieut. T. Tyrwhitt-Drake, M.C., to West Africa, W.O.112/43/883 (A.G.2(o)) of 20.4.21.)

*April 7.*—"C" Company became known as Captain W. L. Barnard's Company.

*April 8.*—Reservists called up owing to Coal Strike.

*April 9.*—Lieut. E. K. Blyth (Reserve of Officers) reported for duty.

*April 10.*—Major R. Stephens (Reserve of Officers) reported for duty.

Lieut. E. C. Simmons (Reserve of Officers) reported for duty.

Captain F. W. Chippindale (Special Reserve) reported for duty.

The following Reservists also joined:—118 from the Depot and 51 from Depot, N. Staffs Regiment, Lichfield.

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*April 11.*—Lieut. G. J. Beckett (Reserve of Officers) reported for duty.

Lieut. J. W. Shaw (Reserve of Officers) reported for duty.

Also 55 Reservists joined from the Depot, and 52 were attached from the Depot, North Staffs Regiment, Lichfield.

*April 12.*—Captain W. Clegg (Reserve of Officers) reported for duty.

Captain F. W. Tipping, M.B.E. (Reserve of Officers), reported for duty.

Lieut. E. H. Vigers, D.C.M. (Reserve of Officers), reported for duty.

Lieut. J. W. Wright, M.M. (Reserve of Officers), reported for duty.

Also 217 Reservists joined from the Depot.

*April 13.*—Two Sergeants and fourteen Reservists joined from the Depot.

*April 15.*—Major A. V. Spencer, D.S.O. (Special Reserve), reported for duty.

Captain R. H. G. Tatton (Special Reserve) reported for duty.

Also three Reservists from the Depot.

*April 23.*—The Battalion received orders to be prepared to move at 24 hours' notice, instead of six hours.

*April 27.*—Major R. Stephens was relegated to the Reserve.

*April 28.*—Major A. V. Spencer, D.S.O., was relegated to the Special Reserve.

*May 3.*—Lieut. G. J. Beckett was relegated to the Reserve.

*May 4.*—The North Staffordshire Reservists attached to the Battalion rejoined the Staffordshire Reserve Battalion.

*May 9.*—Lieut. W. A. R. Ames was appointed Assistant Adjutant *vice* Lieut. P. H. R. Whitehead.

*May 14.*—Ten per cent, of the Battalion were allowed on short Whitsuntide leave.

*May 18.*—Lieut. E. K. Blyth was relegated to the Reserve.

*May 19.*—Captain R. H. G. Tatton was relegated to the Special Reserve.

*May 20.*—Captain F. W. Tipping, M.B.E., was relegated to the Reserve.

During this month, besides certain officers being relegated to the Reserve, numbers of men, as shown below, proceeded on leave indefinitely to be relegated to the Reserve after the "Emergency" had ceased :—

49 other ranks on 3.5.21.

45 other ranks on 19.5.21.

2 other ranks on 30.5.21.

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*June 3.*—The demobilization of the Army and Special Reserve were ordered.

*June 6.*—Captain W. Clegg, Lieut. J. W. Shaw, Lieut. E. H. Vigars, D.C.M., and 176 other ranks proceeded to Oxford for dispersal.

*June 7.*—Captain F. W. Chippindale, Lieut. E. C. Simmons, Lieut. J. W. Wright, M.M., and 141 other ranks proceeded to Oxford for dispersal.

*June 11.*—Lieut. R. Blackwell resigned his commission.

*June 16.*—A warning order was received to proceed to Ireland for temporary duty.

*June 18.*—Waterloo Day. Regimental Sports.

*June 25.*—Advance Party, under Lieut. Ames, left for Ireland.

*June 27.*—Lieut. H. S. Eagle was selected for employment with the Frontier Districts Administration, Egypt.

*June 30.* — The Regiment left for Ireland, strength 16 officers, 420 other ranks, and proceeded to Tipperary *via* Milford Haven and Queenstown on 2.7.21. Major Tunnard and 25 other ranks were left as details at Lichfield.

The following letter was received by the Commanding Officer from the Colonel Commandant, Commanding 10th Infantry Brigade, Lichfield:— "As your Battalion is leaving this Brigade temporarily for duty in Ireland, I would like to make it known to all ranks under your command how sorry I am to part with the Battalion, even for what I hope will be only a short time.

"I have a very high opinion of the training and discipline of the Battalion, and I feel confident that whatever duty may come in your way it will be carried out with the same fine soldierly spirit which has always been a special feature in the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry.

"I shall look forward with pleasure to your return to my Brigade. In the meantime, the best of luck to you all."

Lieut. K. S. Wootten was posted to the Battalion.

*July 9.*—The news of an "Armistice" in Ireland was received.

Lieut. K. S. Wootten joined, and was posted to "A" Company.

*July 10.*—"B" Company proceeded on detachment to Cashel.

"D" Company proceeded on detachment to Fethard.

*July 11.*—A Truce was proclaimed in Ireland from mid-day.

*July 14.*—2nd Lieut. J. A. Theobalds was posted to the Regiment from the R.M.C.

*July 15.*—Lieut. C. C. Statt and Lieut. L. S. Dowson resigned their commissions.

*July 16.*—2nd Lieut. D. E. B. Manning and 2nd Lieut. J. E. Dunbar-Kilburn were promoted to the rank of Lieutenants.

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*July 22.*—Lieut. H. S. Eagle was seconded for duty under the Foreign Office.

*July 25.*—Captain and Bt.-Major R. B. Crosse, D.S.O., appointed Temporary General Staff Officer, Third Grade, at Headquarters, Western Command, Chester (having relinquished his previous appointment on July 11).

*July 26.*—"A" and "C" Companies proceeded to Kilkenny on detachment.

*July 27.*—"D" Company proceeded from Fethard to Cashel.

"B" Company proceeded from Cashel to Fethard.

Two platoons "A" Company proceeded from Kilkenny to Callan.

Two platoons "C" Company proceeded from Kilkenny to Castlecorner.

*July 28.* — "D" Company proceeded from Cashel to Tipperary.

*August 10.*—Bandmaster Neville, Band Boys, and instruments arrived at Tipperary. The men of the Band having gone out previously with the Regiment as stretcher-bearers.

*August 10.*—Captain C. Shadbolt, R.G.A., reported for duty, and was attached to "D" Company.

*August 13.*—The Commanding Officer and Adjutant of the 1st Battalion visited the Battalion.

*August 14.*—On account of a partial breakdown in the Peace Conference, precautions were intensified.

*August 15.*—All leave was stopped.

*August 16.*—Captain C. B. Crawford reported for duty, and was posted to "A" Company.

*August 17.*—Lieut. W. T. Yeoman reported for duty, and was posted, awaiting absorption, to "D" Company.

*August 22.*—"D" Company proceeded to Kilkenny.

*August 23.*—Lieut. J. H. Jones, R.F.A., was attached to "A" Company for temporary duty for one month.

"A" Company proceeded to Tipperary.

*August 29.*—"C" Company proceeded from Kilkenny to Tipperary.

*September 22.*—2nd Lieut. J. A. Theobalds reported for duty, and was posted to "C" Company.

*October 8.*—"B" Company (less one platoon) proceeded from Fethard to Tipperary.

*October 10.*—Lieut. G. C. Huggard, on reporting for duty, was posted to "B" Company.

*October 14.*—Lieut. D. E. B. Manning was placed on half-pay.

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*October 17.*—Lieut. C. R. Horley, M.C., proceeded to York for Promotion Examination (Subject "B"), and subsequently qualified.

*October 20.*—Lieut. N. G. Clarke, from half-pay list, on reporting for duty was posted to " D " Company.

*October 21.*—Lieut. N. G. Clarke, from half-pay list, was restored to the establishment with precedence next above Lieut. T. Tyrwhitt-Drake, M.C., and subsequently promoted Captain. (*See this Summary, March I.*)

*October 22.*—Lieut. W. A. R. Ames, Intelligence Officer, proceeded to Chester for four days' Conference on "Intelligence."

*October 25.*—Fifteen recruits joined from Depot in the fifteenth week of their training.

*November 2.*—The Brigade Commander (16th Infantry Brigade) held his annual Inspection of the Battalion.

*November 7.*—One platoon "C" Company proceeded from Tipperary to Killenaule on detachment.

*November 11.*—The Battalion was inspected by G.O.C.-in-C, Irish Command, General the Rt. Hon. Sir C. F. N. Macready, G.C.M.G.

*November 15.*—One platoon "D" Company proceeded from Kilkenny to Callan Police Barracks on detachment.

One platoon "C" Company proceeded from Tipperary to Killenaule.

*November 16.*—One platoon and Company Headquarters "C" Company proceeded from Tipperary to Killenaule.

*November 26.*—One platoon "B" Company proceeded from Fethard to Tipperary.

One platoon "C" Company proceeded from Tipperary to Fethard.

*November 28.*—"A" Company proceeded from Tipperary to Kilkenny.

"D" Company proceeded from Kilkenny to Tipperary.

*December 5 to 8.*—Lieut. W. A. R. Ames proceeded to Hythe for Conference of Assistant Adjutants at Small Arms School.

*December 9.*—Twenty-four recruits arrived from the Depot.

*December 21.*—The Kilkenny and Callan detachments were withdrawn.

*December 22.*—The Killenaule detachment was withdrawn.

*December 23.*—The Fethard detachment was withdrawn.

*December 30.*—2nd Lieut. J. A. Theobalds was transferred from "C" Company to "A" Company.

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**THE 52ND IN IRELAND.**

ON June 18, 1921, while at Lichfield, the Commanding Officer was warned that the 52nd would be moved to Ireland at an early date, under active service conditions.

At 8 a.m. on the 25th an advance party, consisting of 2 officers and 20 other ranks left Lichfield for an unknown destination in Ireland, embarking at Fishguard the same evening.

On the 26th this party arrived at Cork, and on the 27th it proceeded to Tipperary, its final destination.

The next week was spent by the advance party in taking over West Camp and preparing for the arrival of the main body. The only incident that occurred was that five armed men came into the camp, two nights before the Regiment arrived, and fired at a sentry. They managed to escape unhurt.

The 2nd Battalion left Lichfield on June 30, its strength being 16 officers and 420 other ranks; the details left behind consisting of 1 officer (Major Tunnard) and 36 other ranks. The Battalion embarked at Milford Haven on S.S. *Brandenberg*, and disembarked at Queenstown in the early hours of July 2, arriving at Tipperary the same afternoon by two trains.

It was at about this period that the rebels had started mining the railway lines and blowing up troop trains; consequently, the most careful precautions were taken. The line was patrolled by troops from Queenstown to Tipperary, and each train was preceded by a pilot engine, besides being escorted by an aeroplane.

The country round Tipperary at this time was divided into areas, each under the nominal control of a Battalion. The boundaries of areas usually coincided with those of District Inspectorates of the R.I.C., and the country to the south of Tipperary as far as Mitchelstown was under the 2nd Battalion Green Howards, while the 1st Lincolnshire Regiment occupied an area including the towns of Tipperary, Fethard, Cashel, Mullinashone and Killenaule. The intention was that the Regiment should reinforce these areas in order to enable small columns to be sent out which would hearten the loyalists, prevent terrorism, and deal quickly and immediately with any disorder. Operations were to begin on July 10. The various Company schemes were as follows :—

(i) "A" Company was to be based on Tipperary for work in the southern portion of the Tipperary District Inspectorate, which was administered by the 2nd Green Howards.

(ii) "B" Company was to be based on Cashel for work in the Cashel District Inspectorate, administered by the 1st Lincolnshire Regiment.

(iii) "C" Company was to be based on Tipperary for work in the northern portion of the Tipperary District Inspectorate.

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(iv) "D" Company was to be based on Fethard for work in the Killenaule District Inspectorate, which was administered by the 1st Lincolnshire Regiment.

On Saturday, July 9, the first intimation of a Truce was received; consequently the operations which were to have been carried out by "A" and "C" Companies were cancelled. Nevertheless, "B" and "D" Companies proceeded on the 10th to march to their respective destinations. These two companies billeted for the night of 10th-11th in the workhouse at Cashel, and then marched on to Fethard early on the morning of the 11th.

At this time the Regimental Transport was supplemented by three Crossley cars and one Ford Ambulance, and the orders for moving along roads were as follows:—

- 1.—No car was to be allowed out alone, and convoys were never to be less than three cars, unless accompanied by an armoured car.
- 2.—Men were to face outwards, with their rifles loaded and ready.
- 3.—At least 200 yards interval was to be maintained between each car.
- 4.—In the front car a Very pistol was carried, from which a light was to be fired should an ambush be suspected.
- 5.—The officer in charge of the party was always to travel in the rear car.

By these means it was hoped to defeat the rebel ambushes as this system permitted a party to be held ready for immediate action. A determined counter-attack, even if only carried out by three or four men, was more than the faint-hearted rebels could stand, consequently, the danger of the whole party being caught in an ambush was very small.

In order to cope with the numerous broken bridges, trenches and other obstacles on the roads, every car carried planks long enough to cross a gap about 6 ft. wide.

In order to safeguard the Truce, Liaison Officials were appointed from the Irish Republican Army; they were, however, quite useless, as they never really carried out their duties.

On July 27 the following moves and changes took place:—

- (i) "A" and "C" Companies moved to Kilkenny in relief of one company of the Devonshire Regiment and took over the detachments at Callan and Castlecomer.
- (ii) "B" Company moved by route march to Fethard.
- (iii) "D" Company moved into Tipperary to carry out musketry, billeting as before for one night at Cashel Workhouse.

August 1, therefore, found the Regiment distributed as follows:—

- (i) At Tipperary: Regimental Headquarters and "D" Company.
- (ii) At Kilkenny: Company Headquarters and two platoons of "A" Company; Company Headquarters and two platoons of "C" Company.
- (iii) At the Courthouse, Callan: two platoons of "A" Company.
- (iv) At the Police Barracks, Castlecomer: two platoons of "C" Company.
- (v) At the Artillery Barracks, Fethard: "B" Company.



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In the meantime the Conference in London had not been proceeding smoothly, and on Sunday, August 14, the code word came through that a breakdown of negotiations was likely. As a result of this all leave was stopped, and schemes were prepared for the Companies to act as soon as the "flag fell."

During the month of August a new scheme for the protection of Irish ex-soldiers was devised. During hostilities and even after the Truce the loyal Irish ex-soldiers (if they had escaped being shot) were so bullied and boycotted that they either had to starve or go over to the rebels; consequently, it was decided to allow them to enlist in Regiments stationed in Ireland for a period of six months, and to be used as fatigue men.

On August 22 "D" Company, having finished its musketry, relieved "A" Company at Kilkenny. Shortly afterwards the Devonshire Regiment relieved the 2nd Battalion from finding the Castlecomer detachment, which was withdrawn to Kilkenny on August 27, the whole of "C" Company returning to Tipperary the next day.

By this time the schemes for Zero Day were practically completed, and were as follows:—

- (i) Regimental Headquarters were to move to the Artillery Barracks at Fethard.
- (ii) "A" Company was to move to Cashel to operate in the New Inn Rosegreen Area in conjunction with the 31st Brigade R.F.A.
- (iii) "B" Company, already at Fethard, was to form a block on the lower slopes of Slievenamon in conjunction with a drive which was to be carried out by the 1st York and Lancaster Regiment and the 98th Battery R.F.A.
- (iv) "C" Company was to be used for collecting the wheels off all motor-cars in Tipperary, and was then to proceed to Mebarnan House, which was to be occupied as its base. Flying column work would then be carried out in the Cashel District Inspectorate.
- (v) "D" Company, Headquarters, and two platoons were to move from Kilkenny to Callan, where they would occupy the Bank of Ireland.
- (vi) A search of the whole village of Mullinashone in conjunction with a flying column of the 1st Lincolnshire Regiment from Cashel was then to be carried out.

During the month of September no inter-Company changes took place, as the condition of the country was in no way improving.

Sinn Fein Courts were being held in Tipperary and all outlying districts: minor breaches of the truce were occurring as a matter of ordinary daily routine, and the outlying detachments were powerless to do anything to stop them. The only action that could be taken was to send in an official complaint which was passed on to the Liaison Officers but which seemed to produce little effect.

On September 28 a serious shooting affair broke out in Tipperary, the result of which was one civilian killed and four wounded, including a garrison policeman belonging to the Lincolnshire Regiment. One of the rebels was tried by Field General Court Martial and sentenced to penal servitude for life.

The chief rebel occupation at this time was to dig up all their "heroes" and re-bury them in the cemetery of their native town. Huge funerals were organized, and all the local companies of the I.R.A. attended them.

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Early in October, owing to the bad weather, "B" Company (less one platoon) which had been living in tents, was brought in from Fethard, the other detachments being located as before.

At the end of October the state of the country was going from bad to worse. There was still a great difference of opinion as to the result of the Peace Conference; but it was a very noticeable fact that whenever the Press reported favourably on the Conference the rebel leaders became much more conspicuous, but when a breakdown seemed likely they very seldom appeared openly. Their *moral* could not be considered as good.

Great dissatisfaction was growing up amongst all classes owing to the high-handed actions of the I.R.A. in commandeering food, house-looting, and levying. Even the rebels themselves began to wonder how the Crown Forces kept the Truce.

Although the extremist party was in the minority, it was quite obvious that they still ruled the country.

The following Proclamation which was posted up in Tipperary, and obeyed by every one through sheer terrorism, is typical of the situation :—

IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY HEADQUARTERS, SOUTH TIPPERARY BRIGADE.

PROCLAMATION.

In commemoration of the death of Brigadier Sean Tracy who died fighting for Ireland on 14 October, 1920, Tuesday next is hereby proclaimed a General Holiday throughout the South Tipperary Brigade area.

By Order,  
O.C. 3rd Tipperary Brigade.  
15 October, 1921.

At the beginning of November a most flagrant breach of the Truce occurred at the huts occupied by the Green Howards, in the adjoining camp. Thirty-six rifles and two Lewis guns were stolen from a company store-room at night by I.R.A. thieves. The Liaison Officials promised the return of these rifles, but, of course, they were never brought back.

During the month of November the Regiment was allotted an administrative area consisting of the districts of Killenaule and Cashel as far west as the River Suir. Consequently the detachment of the 1st Lincolnshire Regiment at Killenaule was relieved by a detachment from "C" Company, consisting of 1 officer and 20 men.

Superior authority also decided that areas should be administered by police or military, and not by a combination of both, which had been the practice hitherto. All the police in the Regimental area were, therefore, concentrated at Cashel under the District Inspector. In consequence of this, Headquarters and two platoons of "C" Company moved from Tipperary to the Police Barracks at Killenaule, and one platoon of "D" Company moved from the Workhouse at Kilkenny to the Police Barracks at Callan.

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The other moves which took place during the month were as follows :—

- (i) One platoon of "B" Company at Fethard was relieved by a platoon of "C" Company from Tipperary.
- (ii) "D" Company was relieved at Kilkenny and Callan by "A" Company.

December 1 therefore found the Regiment situated as follows :—

- (i) Regimental Headquarters, "B" and "D" Companies at Tipperary.
- (ii) Headquarters and three platoons of "C" Company at Killenaule.
- (iii) One platoon of "C" Company at Fethard.
- (iv) Headquarters and one platoon of "A" Company at the Workhouse, Kilkenny.
- (v) Three platoons of "A" Company at Callan.

At the end of November two interesting incidents occurred :—

Firstly, on November 22, when "D" Company were finding the Kilkenny Prison Guard, 43 political prisoners, led by Father Delahunty, the Callan parish priest, escaped by making a tunnel underneath both walls out into the road—44 prisoners tried to escape, but as the forty-fourth was trying to get out the tunnel fell, and he was caught by Lieut. Clarke.

As the Guard furnished was only concerned in-preventing prisoners from climbing over the inner wall, no blame was attached to the Regiment, but the Governor of the prison was relieved of his appointment.

The second incident was more serious, and constituted a flagrant breach of the Truce. For some time two well-known rebels had been trying to buy ammunition from N.C.O.'s stationed at Callan. These N.C.O.'s reported the matter to Lieut. Yeoman, who laid a trap for them, and actually caught two I.R.A. officials red-handed receiving ammunition. The arrest of these two men led to great dissatisfaction amongst their friends and relations in Callan, and it was quite obvious that Lieut. Yeoman's life was in danger. On December 1 he was sitting in a smoking-room of an hotel in Callan with Lieut. Kilburn, when six armed men walked in and told him to put his hands up. This he refused to do, and the rebels immediately opened fire. Lieut. Yeoman, who had been warned that something of this nature might occur, was sitting facing the door with his revolver ready, and consequently was able to retaliate at once. It was believed that three of the rebels were wounded. Seven shots were fired at Lieut. Yeoman, and he was lucky in not being hit.

In London, at the beginning of December, the Issue of the Conference appeared hopeless. The general opinion was that nothing would prevent a breakdown; nevertheless, on the morning of December 7, the plenipotentiaries signed an agreement to the effect that Ireland would become a Free State and that Ulster was to have the option of coming in or remaining as it was. Even then it was not certain whether the Dail Eireann would accept the terms or not. As late as December 16 an I.R.A. despatch rider was captured in the Regimental area by the Cashel police, carrying orders to all battalion engineering officers to the effect that all police barracks and military detachment posts were to be mined, and the operations were to take place in the next fortnight. However, the detachments did not remain out long enough for this to be carried out, for on December 19 orders were received to bring in the detachments as soon as possible and let the rebels rule their own towns as best they could.

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The moves took place at once, and on December 21 "A" Company was withdrawn from Kilkenny and Callan. On December 22 "C" Company was withdrawn from Killenaule, and on December 23 the Fethard detachments came in. The Regiment was now complete for the first time in six months.

Christmas Day passed off without any breach of the Truce.

The New Year began with the Treaty still unratified by the Dail Eireann. The resignation of Mr. De Valera, however, hurried matters on, and the Treaty was ratified on January 7 by a majority of seven votes.

After the ratification, schemes were brought out for the evacuation of Ireland, and on January 9 warning orders to move were received by the regiment. On January 20 the Regiment left Tipperary and embarked at North Wall for Liverpool, arriving at Lichfield once again on the morning of the 21st.