

DEATH OF A REVOLUTIONARY - FINA PART

A brief meeting - but the memory lingers

Frank Aiken tells his story of the incident



LIEUT. CLANCY continued...
...in the Defence Force, from which he retired with the rank of Captain. He died in 1956. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Lena Clancy, and by a number of sons and daughters. His eldest son is Vary Rem. Bro. Leo Clancy, Provincial, St. John of God's, Stillorgan, Dublin.

MR. FRANK AIKEN, T.D., former Minister for External Affairs in successive Fianna Fail governments from Mr. de Valera to Mr. Lynch—was Minister in Mr. Lynch's first cabinet—spoke to Ned Murphy about the day on the Knockmealdown when Liam Lynch was shot—

Comdt-General Aiken told me of those last hours. An I.R.A. Army Council meeting had been summoned for a place in the Knockmealdown foothills in March, 1923.

Among those who attended were Liam Lynch, then Chief of Staff, Mr. Aiken, Sean Hyde and the late Bill Quirke. The late Mr. Sean Hayes was also present and this group remained on in a farmhouse after the official business had been done. They were awakened just before dawn and they continued to make their way through the mountains in a south-westerly direction towards Mellary.

They had not gone very far when they came under rifle fire, probably when the dawn revealed them to the troops. The fire continued for a considerable time and then ceased suddenly.

After a few minutes there was a single rifle shot and Liam Lynch stumbled. Bill Quirke, Sean Hyde and I saw him fall and went back. He was obviously badly hurt and in considerable pain.

They picked him up, Sean Hyde and Bill Quirke carrying him by the arms, and Frank Aiken holding his legs and they continued to make their way through the mountains. They came to a clear place where there was no cover and here they came under heavy fire, this time Lewis gun fire.

The group took cover behind a large rock from which the bullets knocked large splinters. The gun was sweeping both sides of the rock.

After a while the gunfire ceased. The party prepared to resume their journey but Liam Lynch, now in pretty bad shape, asked to be left behind, saying that the soldiers would attend to his wound. It was decided to do as he asked and Bill Quirke and Sean Hyde went on.

However, Frank Aiken, as he told me, had a thing about leaving military papers to be found by the enemy. He returned and, lying beside his comrade, searched his pockets and took over what papers he found. During their flight across the mountains the men had been saying the Act of Contrition. Frank Aiken said it again and then bade farewell to his friend. He never saw him again.

When telling me the story, Mr. Aiken wondered if Liam Lynch in his wounded condition would have survived if he had not been subjected to being carried across the mountain. It is evident that he had lost a lot of blood and was badly weakened but, in such conditions, the only thought of his comrades was to get him to a place of safety away from the advancing enemy.

He kept link with Collins
In the rather Hemingway-esque prose of a Capuchin Annual article of the time: "And today Maurice Twomey is in jail because he was not shot with Liam Lynch in 1923. Circumstances have changed, we are told, and so have men. But the methods of British coercion never change. They are everywhere and always the same."

In the Black and Tan War Liam Lynch was head of the Cork No. 2 Brigade of the I.R.A. He led the raid on Malloy Barracks and, as Maurice Twomey later said, "beat Strickland to the ropes."

Trinity College issued 100. As recently as 1958 the Dublin Theatre Festival was totally abandoned because of the proposed presentation of a play by the playwright of actor Allan McClelland's dramatic work, "Ulysses". Two years earlier it had been put on an English course in a Cambridge College.

The first final edition in England appeared in 1936, after a text copy had been posted from Paris, plainly marked as being a copy of "Ulysses". It was not confiscated, and the printing went ahead.

KILKENNY-BORN Journalist Ned Murphy remembers, as a teenage member of the new National Army, meeting Liam Lynch on a spring evening in Castlecomer in 1922.

"On that evening a Crossley car carrying four officers was held up by a National Army patrol just as it entered Castlecomer on the way to Kilkenny and the south."

The officers stepped out and identified themselves, Liam Lynch introducing himself as Comdt-General Lynch. He said the party was returning to Cork but, on instructions, they were given an escort and sent into Kilkenny barracks where

Col. Comdt. John T. Prout, formerly an officer of the New York 69th Regiment, was in charge. "That evening Liam Lynch wore a trench coat and under it officers' boots and leggings. His headgear was a tribby hat."

"Except for his colouring he bore more than a slight resemblance to Mr. de Valera being of like size and having a similar bone structure. He spent that night as a guest in Kilkenny barracks and resumed his journey to Cork the following morning."

"Even in that short meeting one could sense the vitality and dedication of the man who was to be one of the legends for his exploits against the Crown Forces."

'The man who beat Strickland to the ropes'

ON APRIL 7, 1935, Maurice Twomey, now a retired Dublin business man, who, incidentally, is in hospital recovering from a traffic accident, unveiled a watch-tower memorial to Liam Lynch near the spot where he fell on the Knockmealdowns.

This is his version of the events of April 9-10, 1923:

"On the night of April 9-10, 1923, General Liam Lynch and a party of officers were billeted a little south of Goatenbridge, at the foot of the Knockmealdown mountains. At 4 a.m. scouts gave the alarm. A column had appeared on the road moving towards Goatenbridge. We rose and moved to a house higher up the mountainside. Daylight came, and looking to the north we saw in the valley below us, three columns of 'Staters'. We were not much alarmed. A report had been received the evening before that a valley to the south-west of us was to be rounded up and we thought that the forces below us were concentrating to move on it."

"About 8 a.m. as we were about to have a cup of tea, a scout from the East ran in to tell us that another column of 'Staters' was coming about 1,000 yards away across the mountains to our left-rear."

"Our only line of retreat was thus threatened, and sending word to the scouts watching to the west, we dashed up a glen towards the mountains. On reaching the head of the glen we halted to wait for the

two scouts who were armed, one with a Thompson and the other a rifle. We numbered seven—General Lynch and five other officers, armed with revolvers and automatics, and an unarmed local Volunteer. We were carrying a great number of important papers, which we wished to save at all costs."

"We were only a few minutes at the head of the glen, with no sign of the scouts coming, when the 'Staters' appeared over a rise and our first shots were exchanged. We dashed on again, up the mountain, a shallow river-bed affording us cover for about 250 yards. When we reached the end of the river-bed we had to retreat up a bare, coverless shoulder of the mountain."

"This was the 'Staters' chance. About fifty of them had a clear view of us at between 300 and 400 yards range and they rattled away with their rifles as fast as they could work their bolts. Our return fire, with that range, but as we staggered on up the mountain we fired an odd shot to disconcert their aim."

"We had gone about 200 yards up the shoulder an dthe 'Staters' had fired over a thousand shots at us without effect, when a lull came in the firing."

"After twenty seconds silence, a single shot rang out, and Liam fell, saying 'My God! I'm hit lads!'"

"One officer was helping him along at

the time as he had been nearly exhausted with the run up the riverbed.

"Three more of us gathered around him and found that he was badly wounded through the body. Our grouping together was a signal for intense fire from the 'Staters'. We picked Lynch up and carried him along, one saying and he repeating the Act of Contrition. He was in great agony and the carrying hurt him terribly."

"Several times he told us to leave him down; and at last, after carrying him about a couple of hundred yards further, again Liam told us to leave him down and ordered us to go on, saying, 'Perhaps they'll bandage me when they come up.' We laid him down, took his notebook and his automatic and left him."

"It would be impossible to describe our agony of mind in this paring with our comrade and chief. Even in the excitement of the fight we knew how terrible was the blow that had fallen on the Nation and Army in being deprived of its leadership. His command that we should leave him would have been disobeyed, but the papers we carried must be saved and brought through at any cost. All would be lost if they were captured."

"As we ran on again, the reason for the lull was made plain to us for a few minutes a machine gun added its crackle to the crackle of rifles—the 'Staters' had been waiting for it to come up. The ground

round us was being splattered with bullets as thick almost as a shower of hail stones; but after firing two papers the machine gun jammed and we escaped over the shoulder without further casualty. After sighting nine more columns of 'Staters' and having an encounter with one, in which they came off second best, we arrived, nineteen hours afterwards, at the edge of the round up area."

"Liam died that evening. When the 'Staters' reached him on the mountain, there was an unnecessary delay of six hours in taking him to a house and treating him. But, to their credit be it told, when late that evening he reached the hospital in Clonsilla, everything possible was done to save his life."

"That is the story of the death of General Liam Lynch. The man who beat Strickland to the ropes' died as he wished, on an Irish mountain, fighting the enemies of his country. Who can explain why he, to save whom every man in the Republican Army would have died, was killed, and not one of those who escaped? His comrades on his last engagement believe that God in His wisdom, having decided it was wise we should fall then, found it necessary to remove His faithful servant Liam Lynch. And we have an explanation for our escape and the escape of every other volunteer in the Republican Army. It is—that we still have work to do for the cause for which Liam Lynch and our other dead comrades gave their lives."

Rage greeted Joyce's classic

By J. J. FINEGAN
FIFTY YEARS AGO today was published in France the most celebrated literary work of the present century—the novel "Ulysses," about a single day in the life of Dublin in the month of June, 1904, written by James Augustine Joyce, the writer, who, although in self-imposed exile, had Dublin in his bones to the end of his life.

No other novel, before or since, brought such violent reactions. An Irish writer, Shane Leslie, called it "a shocking sea of impropriety."

However, distinguished French critic, Valery Larbaud, declared that with this book, "Ireland makes a sensational re-entrance into high European literature."

Henry Miller, the American author, later to write controversial sex novels like "Tropic of Cancer" and "Tropic of Capricorn," compared "Ulysses" to a vomit.

Wyndham Lewis, the English essayist and critic, dismissed "Ulysses" as, "the last stagnant pumpings of Victorian Anglo-Irish."

Even members of the author's own family were not impressed. Joyce inscribed the first copy to his wife Nora, but she didn't read it. Joyce's Aunt Bessie read it. Joyce's Aunt Josephine was scandalised, and she lent it to as not to have it in her home.

Joyce's father, after staring at the sections of the novel, said: "He's a nice sort of blackguard."



JAMES JOYCE

FIFTY YEARS OF 'ULYSSES'

at Folkestone, when an effort was made to import the novel into England.

Lynch the soldier!

15,000 at memorial

Liam Lynch was a native of Angle-boro', Co. Limerick, and worked for a time in a hardware store in Mitchelstown before becoming involved in the National Movement.

He had so much success on the military side of the Republican movement, that the different brigades of the Volunteers were moulded into divisional formation in 1921 he became Commandant-General of the First Southern Division.

Ernie O'Malley headed the Second Southern and Frank Aiken the First Northern.

He was Maurice Twomey, and was therefore "Irregular"

Government as a subversive. On the eve of the unveiling on April 7, 1935—which took place before 15,000 people—houses where Lynch, Twomey, Aiken and others had been using as places of refuge 12 years before were unveiled by Special Branch of the first Fianna Fail Government as they had been raided by the army of the first Government of the new Free State! They were seeking Maurice Twomey. He was later interned.

Ernest Hemingway, then a young man in Paris, said that young man had written "a most wonderful book" Gertrude Stein thought people liked it because it was incomprehensible. She added: "Joyce's influence is local."

Bernard Shaw thought it "a record of a disgusting phase of civilisation, but a truthful one." He did not burn the book, as is sometimes alleged.

Copies of that edition came to Dublin, but so far as I know, were kept under the counter. Not until 1951 did I see it displayed openly. This was in the Dublin Bookshop, Bachelor's Walk.

The book has been translated into several languages, including Japanese, where 2,000 copies were sold in six

George Moore's comment was "How can one plough through such stuff? Joyce is a nobody from the Dublin docks; no family, no breeding."

The first review in the Observer in English was in the first issue of the month after publication, written by Sylvia Huddleston, a well-known English journalist and writer based in Paris, who acknowledged Joyce's genius, but criticised the vulgarism. Joyce was criticised as "the review brought 136 orders in a single day."

W. B. Yeats had read a chapter or two in serial form in the Little Review and thought it "a mad book" but later having read the complete book commented: "It is a work perhaps of genius, intensity any novelist of our time."

Next days Joyce went to Miss Day's shop and helped her with the post. He also scribbled the order list daily.

Information in the first Irish Government, visited Joyce Government Affairs, visited Joyce

psychologist Carl Gustav Jung said: "I have learned a great deal from it. It is now required reading for some Irish colleges, although not yet, so far as I know, in Belvedere, Joyce's alma mater."

In his final years Joyce was delighted to find that he shared