

On through the Autumn of 1915 continuous training and route marches were continued. Captain Cullen's men in Pembroke Street and Fred Allen's men in Dun Laoghaire never slackened. They had given their word to take up arms when they were available and consequently they were anxious to learn all the arts of warfare. A long portion of the training and lectures and manoeuvres were what the British would do as per book, and we were training to counteract these hard and fast rules by learning to do something opposite. We carried out night exercises in Dundrum on several occasions, dividing the companies in two and using the Boys' Brigade as scouts. One party using British, book tactics, the other the opposite. The opposite always had the best of it. On Sundays we stretched lines of men across the country as if held by British military. The opposites succeeded in getting through these lines safely, carrying guns. The Boys took an active part in this training, and they certainly put it to good use when it came to the real thing. In the fight for independence and in the Civil War they showed extraordinary ability in keeping their lines of communication open. In some of these manoeuvres Captain Cullen brought out his men from the city, and we had some very instructive battles. Every man and boy, both in the city and county companies, were now first class shots and competitors in shooting were very keen. The Dundrum Company won all County Dublin shooting competitions. Captain Cullen's men in Pembroke Street won the City Cup Competition for all-round efficiency and, again, when these men were put to the test in the War of Independence they distinguished themselves and proved the result of long and continuous training. In various departments K. Company supplied the Battalion Armourer, Jim Lambert. This man also did a lot of Brigade armoury work. It also supplied the assistant armourer, J.F. O'Donnell the Batt. Musketry Instructor, Lynch, Batt. Adjutant, Lieut. Frank Gallagher, Batt. Technical Adviser and Inspector of Guards and H.Q. I/O Thos.J.Cullen and Cpt. John McCluskey, who was taken on special service by Mick Collins as one of his most trusted men. When Captain Thos. Cullen was transferred to the Battalion Staff, Harry O'Farrell, another man who had gone through all the original training, was elected Captain of K. Company. He made an excellent Company officer. We had our I.O. in the Post Office when the famous mails were captured. We had Sgt. Jack O'Connell at Westland Row. We had Jack DArmen and Lieut. Bohen in the Fire Brigade in Tara Street, who did great work for the I.R.A. Peter Keating, a distinguished Headquarters I.O. in the Civil War, and myself, who acted as assistant Q.M., small arms instructor, and G.H.Q. Secret Service agent. All these men with one exception were members of Captain Cullen's Battalion in Pembroke Street in 1915 and 1916, and with numerous other members were standing 'to', awaiting orders and arms. In Easter Week 1916 when Rory O'Connor said 'send them home. We will want them again. We have no arms for them now.' In the War of Independence they purchased and procured arms for themselves. They used them and taught other companies how to use arms.