

# Southern Ireland Neutral Lives in Fear of Invasion

This is the 15th of a series of stories about a trip to London and return, taken by a group of Canadian newspapermen at the invitation of the British Government. It is written by Hugh Tompkins, who represented the Canadian Weekly Newspapers' Association.

Every day of the six weeks or more spent away from home seemed to provide something new and different, but nothing was quite so unexpected as a two-day holiday in neutral Eire, or Southern Ireland. It was not by choice of mine. I would rather it had been Scotland, but this short, peaceful interlude in the off part of the Empire which stays neutral, was not only interesting, but I look back on it with pleasure.

It was a Tuesday afternoon when I left London, along with seven other Canadian editors. Our hosts put us on the train and had us good-bye, sending us away with more presents—this time envelopes with enlarged pictures of ourselves during our travels in England.

That night was never to be forgotten. Two huge German land mines floated down out of the air and arrived in Bournemouth at the same time as we did. That experience has been discussed more fully in another of these stories.

I was up early the next morning, having slept fairly well on a mattress on the floor, in spite of the rasping sound of shovelling broken plate glass off the streets in the darkness. There was some difficulty about shaving in a bathroom full of broken glass and with only a dribble of cold, rusty water from one tap, but the lady manager of the wrecked hotel had her staff well enough organized to give me the best breakfast I had while in Britain.

The British Overseas Airways crew picked me up at the hotel and drove through streets of stores, without glass in the windows, and past English cottages looking out on the Channel, to Poole.

The next morning, while undergoing one more lengthy customs examination near the docks at Poole, the air raid sirens began to wail again. The natives looked on us with some suspicion. Air raids had been scarce in those parts, and this was the second in as many days. But I did not share their idea that these few Canadians were important enough for the Germans to send over raiders just to get us. Still, it did add a bit of excitement to the going-out in a trim motor boat, through the waters of Poole Harbor, dodging the searchlights and mine fields, to where the winged hatteries of the air, the short Sunderland flying boat, "Champion," rode at anchor.

In the draw for seats, I landed in what was called the spar compartment of the ship. I was all alone in a fair-sized room, full of baggage and sacks of mail. The seat was comfortable, and the steward came and served an excellent meal on light plastic dishes. But though we flew for two hours and a half over what is probably some of the most interesting scenery I saw, nothing at all came of it. Two windows were painted over with thick black paint.

I hadn't realized on the trip from New York to Lisbon to England, how difficult it is to travel around wartime Europe. In a way that was little short of miraculous, as I learned later, the British Council had waded aside the difficulties on that trip.

The return voyage wasn't quite so easy. As I sat alone in the spar compartment of the huge "Champion," I read a little booklet prepared by wartime travellers by the British Overseas Airways, and marvelled that I had got out of England at all. Our good ship would refuel in Ireland and take off for Portugal. The next morning, I would be in Lisbon and by Sunday, I would be home in Canada or so I thought.

Truly the Emerald Isle

It was early afternoon when the great ship glided down to the water so carefully that there wasn't even a house in the ears. I stepped out into daylight again.

We were in the estuary of the Shannon river at Foynes Island on the river bank, two hundred yards away, was a big concrete and timber pier, with a neat little customs house at the land end. Behind that were two or three buildings where a couple of railway cars were being loaded with peat. On both sides of the river were hills just as green as you could have desired. So it was the land!

I never ceased to admire the last launches of the British Overseas Air ways. It took only a few minutes to reach land. The wait in the customs house seemed unnecessary, but when the examination took place it was brief and informal. Men in green put a few chalk marks on my brief case and club bag, already decorated with an imposing array of medals, stickers and official seals. This made one more entry in my passport.

None of us knew that we were to stay over night in Ireland instead of going on to Lisbon. When a sufficient broke the news, we did not like it

The countryside was green enough, but uninviting.

Two modern buses waited outside. The only thing unusual was the name of the company printed in two languages, English and the strange old text of the Gaelic language. Not till then did I realize that Southern Ireland was bi-lingual. "Sure," says an Irishman, "we can be illiterate in two languages now."

It was a drive of twenty miles to Adare, where we were to spend the night, but the roads were winding and narrow, with walls along each side, and plenty of stones still left in the fields. The tiny whitewashed cottages were picturesque but poor. By the time we pulled into Adare, the speedometer must have indicated 30 miles at least.

Late that night, I walked with B. K. Sandwell and the constable of Adare, past a thatched cottage, past an old Norman tower, now part of a Catholic church, past ancient trees with six-foot trunks, and on down the main street of the village. The chief was full of Irish lore and a bit of a poet. He said that Adare was the most beautiful village in the whole world. Probably he's right.

A Strange and Ancient People

I went to Ireland with a prejudice against the country. I had just come from England, where the people were fighting for their very lives and for the freedom of the world. Here, next door, was Ireland, not only neutral but refusing even the use of ports to fight submarines. Yet these Irish still enjoyed the privileges of Empire. I came away with the feeling that Ireland is beautiful and the Irish people are kindly, hospitable, but beyond the understanding of a Canadian with Scottish blood. Here in Sweet Adare, the Irish people did not seem to understand what was going on in the world today. They lived in the far past. One might have thought that Cromwell had come that way just last year and laid waste the old Black Abbey and the Franciscan Abbey and the White Abbey, not forgetting Desmond Castle, down by the stone bridge over the river.

Of course, De Valera boasts that Ireland will defend itself against any attack, from any source. It's rather pitiful. Down by the bridge, there were some tank traps. At least, that was evidently what they were intended to be. A Bren gun carrier might have some difficulty knocking them down; a driver of a medium tank would hardly notice them.

In the last two weeks in England, the night was impressive. In Ireland, too, the army held manoeuvres. Word had been sent to Adare to have food enough on hand on Friday for a couple of battalions, but they did not come. The following Monday, they arrived. There was no food. Asked why they didn't come on Friday, the colonel said it rained that day, so they postponed the exercises. Apparently the Irish don't realize yet that modern wars don't stop because it rains.

But though De Valera may speak of repelling an enemy, the people of Ireland know their danger, and are not frankly that they themselves are helpless to meet it. Littered with their mothers at the golf course, and they asked if I thought Hitler was going to attack Ireland. I wasn't very hopeful. One of them said she had three little boys at home.

The constable, a veteran of the last war, said 150,000 men from Southern Ireland are in the British Active Forces. They slip away to Ulster to see a football game and forget to come back.

And down in the village pub one night, Gratian O'Leary of O'Leary, a pure blooded Irishman of the third generation in Canada, stepped in the long and poetry of Ireland, waxed eloquent on our last night in the village. He said that Hitler was the Cromwell of today, going about burning churches. I missed that speech, but I know how eloquent Gratian can be and I wasn't surprised that he had the men of Adare all anxious to enlist at once against this modern destroyer of religion.

The Most Picturesque Village

I have said that the village constable thought Adare the most beautiful spot in all the world. That statement needs to be amplified.

The bus that took us to Adare drove up in front of a picturesque inn, the Dunamary Arms. The sign said what a fine hamlet like Adare did with a large inn like that was something of a mystery until I learned that it belonged to Lord Dunraven and was used on occasions to accommodate his hunting parties. Now it houses the passengers flying over the road to Atlanta. In the pages of its register there are many famous names. The inn was comfortable and not too modern. Its lounge was full of easy chairs and Chesterfield sofas. In front of a peat fire, sitting in a wicker chair and eating one could talk to the girls, who were quite capable of their own. In that little Irish village I was surprised to find a young American pilot, now taking planes across the Atlantic, who was quite familiar with the landmarks of

my own little town of Fergus. He had flown over it often.

I don't suppose anything as lovely as Adare "just happened." I suspect that many Earls of Dunraven poured the profits of their Welsh mines into this village. I know that they built two of the ancient abbeys, one on the other to the Anglo-Normans. And they laid out their "domes" so that there were views down elm-lined streets and past thatched cottages, with honeysuckle growing up the walls. I even suspected that old thatched cottage that stood directly across the way from the inn could never have attained that appearance of extreme age and yet be so well kept, without being planned that way.

Whether the cottage was old or not, there were plenty of authentic ruins. The ancient stone bridge over the Maigue river had been there for six hundred years or more. No two of its seven arches quite matched the others in size or curvature, though they had stood through the centuries. Beside the river, just upstream from the bridge, were the ruins of Desmond castle. I liked them best of all. In the library of the castle, I found a book with the plans of the castle, dating back to about 1100. From inside those walls, many a Fitzgerald or Desmond sallied forth to terrorize the countryside. Enough is left to be able to see all the rooms of the old castle, with the help of Lord Dunraven's little signs on the wall, and the use of a bit of imagination. One rainy afternoon, I climbed to the top of the tower, looking out through the loop-holes where archers once shot their arrows—and stories, like Ivanhoe, that I hadn't read since high school days, came crowding back. I plucked a tiny fern out of a crack in the rock and put it inside an envelope in my pocket. Back home, three weeks later, I found it all dried out, but when it was planted again, it grew.

There was just one thing in Adare that didn't seem to fit in the picture. That was the manor house itself. It dates back 80 years or so, and looks something like a wedding cake. On the front wall is an imposing gable, with a high school days, came crowding back. I plucked a tiny fern out of a crack in the rock and put it inside an envelope in my pocket. Back home, three weeks later, I found it all dried out, but when it was planted again, it grew.

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Perhaps, if you're Irish, you know the poem by Gerald Griffiths: "Oh! Sweet Adare! Oh lovely vale! Oh! soft retreat of sylvan splendour! Nor summer sun nor morning gale E'er hailed a scene more softly tender."

**Good Hay and Pasture Essential Milk Production**

Hilton farmers are planning to sow the largest acreage of spring grains that they have sown in many years, is the consensus of opinion of the Hilton Agricultural War Service Committee, states Agricultural Representative, J. E. Whitelock, who is acting secretary to that committee. In any event, there was a much larger acreage planned last Fall than for the present year. That is due to the fact that we had an extremely favorable fall for getting this work done and is, unfortunately, states Mr. Whitelock, directly tied up with the fact that there were few satisfactory catches of seeds last year and furthermore, a large percentage of our old meadows were badly winter killed a year ago. The farm survey recently completed by the committee indicated that Hilton farmers are determined to produce to the capacity of those food products as urgently required by the Empire. These include milk, bacon and eggs. This survey taken from between 40 and 50 per cent. of Hilton's mixed farmers indicates they are planning to step up their number of milk cows 12.4 per cent. over 1941. Sows planned for this year show an increase of 11.3 per cent. over 1941 and hens 28 per cent. increase over 1941. This is most desirable and to be highly commended in view of the fact that our Federal authorities are asking for 500 million pounds more milk than we produced in 1941 in order to furnish the increased requirements of cheese and concentrated milk products for Britain. While comparatively little of our milk in Hilton is made into these products, nevertheless the more milk we produce here the more will be released elsewhere for the manufacture into these products.

The planned increase in milk cows while most desirable does, however, present another problem from the standpoint of the hay and pasture situation. Aside from our reduced acreage in these crops, our meadows certainly, in most cases, went into the winter in a weakened condition due to close grazing last fall and consequently it is the opinion of the Agricultural War Service Committee that some consideration on many farms should be given immediately providing it has not already been done, to stimulating the productivity of existing pastures, and meadows and also to supplementing existing acreages in hay and pasture with some annual hay and pasture crops. The question of stimulation of existing meadows and pastures by means of top dressing with manure or commercial fertilizer or a combination of both and the subsidies to be paid on such stimulation will be dealt with in another article. At this time, they do feel it wise to suggest that many farmers should give consideration to planning on supplementary annual crops for hay and pasture. While such annual crops cannot take the place of more permanent stands, nevertheless under favorable conditions, annual pastures can and do produce a tremendous bulk of food. Prof. Geo. Rathby of the Animal Husbandry Department, O. A. C. recommends Sudan Grass which should be sown at the rate of 30 lbs. per acre about the end of May on a good firm, well prepared seed bed, and should not be sown too deep. The recommended depth being not over 1 1/2 inches deep. In Prof. Rathby's opinion it should not be pastured until belly deep for cattle. At the O.A.C. last year 8 acres of Sudan Grass saved the day for them from the standpoint of their dairy herd stated Prof. Rathby and furthermore, their cows certainly milked well on it.

From the standpoint of hay, annual crops are not the best, nevertheless oats at 3 bus per acre and cut in the milk stage has real possibilities. Other crops for this purpose include millet at 20 to 30 lbs per acre. Soybeans also make excellent hay but present a problem when it comes to curing owing to their sappiness and consequent tendency to mould in cold and even after being placed in the barn. If tripples are available, soybeans can then be made into excellent hay.

In brief, officers of the Agricultural War Services Committee point out that late sown fields of grain are seldom profitable and consequently on many farms consideration might well be given to sowing the last field to annual pasture or annual hay crop and consideration might also be given to sowing an extra acre or two of corn which can be utilized for green feed or silage as required.

**Food Conscience Is World's Need**

Would be Temperate These Times, He Says Not Eat and Drink Unwisely

JERUSALEM, (CP)—What people need in these days of food rationing, black markets and high prices is a "food conscience," according to Dr. Graham Brown, Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem.

"A food conscience will observe food regulations and prices and it will refuse to evade these for personal, family, institutional or communal advantage," he said in a message published in a monthly diocesan leaflet.

"A food conscience will condemn the speculator, the unscrupulous middleman and the profiteer," he continued. "A food conscience will do as it would be done by." It will not seek to trade on friendship with the shopkeeper or to obtain special treatment as a privileged customer.

For Fair Deal

"A food conscience will scorn to hold the poor to ransom by dealing on the 'black market,'" said the Bishop. "A food conscience will desire all to have an equal share of the basic foodstuffs. It will not seize everything it wants when this would mean that some 'key person' or family would have to go short.

"A food conscience will be temperate. It will not be greedy. It will not indulge anxiously in food or drink at any time. A food conscience will avoid waste in any form, either in purpose, in cooking or in clear up. A food conscience will accept restrictions, heed precautions and follow advice about diet."

**PLANE FIRES HOUSE**

BIRMINGHAM, (CP)—Occupants of the British plane were killed when it crashed and burst into flames near here, setting a farmhouse on fire.



**SPEAK DISTINCTLY DIRECTLY INTO THE MOUTHPIECE**

**Clear telephone lines for ALL-OUT PRODUCTION**

Your telephone is part of a vast interlocking system now carrying an abnormal wartime load. Don't let needless delays hold-up messages on which production efficiency may depend.

**OTHER "WARTIME TELEPHONE TACTICS"**

1. BE SURE you have the right number... consult the Directory.
2. ANSWER promptly when the bell rings.
3. BE BRIEF. Clear your line for the next call.
4. USE OFF-PEAK hours for your Long Distance Calls.

These things may look trifling, but on 5,000,000 daily telephone calls, they are very important.

**On Active Service Giving Wings to Words**

# Vote 'YES' ON APRIL 27th

**Every Elector of Acton and District is requested to vote and vote "Yes" on Monday, April 27th because:**

- (1) Your sons, husbands, brothers, and relatives overseas expect you to vote yes. Are you going to fail them?
- (2) Every political party expects you to vote yes.
- (3) The returned men expect you to vote yes.
- (4) Your council expect you to vote yes.

**By Voting 'Yes'**

You give your government a free hand to conduct the war in whatever manner may become necessary.

**By Voting 'No'**

You will give Hitler and Hirohito the opportunity they are seeking.

Acton and district has had as many or more men join our armed services as any other community in Canada. We have put every war effort over the top. Let this one be 100 per cent.

# Vote and Vote 'Yes'

**Acton Committee for a 'Yes' Vote**

J. M. McDonald, Chairman, G. J. Duff, Secretary, A. Mason, Geo. Fountain, F. L. Wright, W. J. Kerr, J. H. Boulton, C. F. Leathland, W. J. O. Oakes, Miss L. Mason, R. K. Arnold, Chas. Beckwith, Mrs. F. Wilds, J. E. Gamble, Mrs. M. M. Letch, R. H. Elliott, A. C. Gray, W. J. Benson.

## Britain's Needs Mean Good Times For Irish Hunts

**United Kingdom's Food Importing Firms Turn to Eire for More Wartime Meats**

DUBLIN, (CP) Agents for British meat importing firms are securing Eire for rabbits, crows and horses "large, meaty animals preferred."

Hard pressed by the meat shortage, British chefs are said to have discovered ways of putting the crow and horses on London's west-end menus which may set a new fashion in eating after the war.

Thousands of young men in Eire spend the days and nights rabbit hunting. A pair of rabbits is worth four shillings about 80 cents, in almost any Irish market town and country agents for the rival British buyers now taking up strategic positions at cross-roads and bridges with a view to intercepting the hunters on their way to market.

Crows fetch nine-pence each and there are hopes the market may widen for blackbirds and larks. Horses are fetching high prices because of the gasoline shortage, but this does not deter would-be purchasers.

A sidelight on Eire opinion just now is that no advertisements have been seen, although offers have been made for crows and horses. Britain's food problems aren't publicized in Eire.

**Echo in Parliament**

Quite recently, there was a scene at the Dail Eire's parliament, about the traffic. A government backbencher noted for the extremity of his views, said the English were doing a first class job in clearing out the crows and rabbit pest and he hoped they would soon be in the market for rats too.

An ex-loyal major of Dublin, Alderman Albie Byrne, objecting strenuously, threatened to leave his seat to take action. Both were advised by the neutral speaker to leave the House, and they did so by different doors.

Mr. de Valera's deputy, Dean P. O'Kelly, who led the Irish delegation to Ottawa in 1941, was senator and apologized all round explaining that everyone who knew the backbencher in his own party realized he was a "buffoon."

But the Gen. Sir Kilist the story.

**FEATHERING THEIR NESTS**

LONDON, (CP) Several fine villas are under construction in German-occupied Norway for German officers, and it is reported they have been "taking over" many privately owned pleasure-craft for their personal use.

**Shoe Collars Wartime Idea**

LONDON, (CP) Collar shirts have made their appearance in London shops. These novel and attractive collars designed specially to enable women to make one pair of plain coat shoes take the place of several are made of a strong, durable fabric or a strong, durable fabric.

Many of these collars are studded with brass buttons, are decorated with ornamental facings and are carried out in a wide variety of colors.