

IMPOSING SCENES

Mitchelstown, Sunday.—Unique and memorable were the scenes at Ballylanders yesterday when two Irish Volunteers, Capt. Wm. O'Riordan, Cullane, and Section Commander Thos. Howard, Glenbrohane, were finally laid to rest in the Republican plot at Ballylanders graveyard, beside their comrades, Messrs Thomas Murphy and Ned Tobin.

Fully twenty thousand people participated in the funeral, including about two thousand Volunteers, in charge of their various section commanders. All was unison, solemnity, precision, and perfect discipline, and everything passed off without a hitch. The procession took three hours to pass a given point, and was estimated to be nine miles long.

The funeral started from Herbertstown after Office and High Mass, the bodies having been disinterred from their temporary resting place the previous night and taken to Ballylanders, eleven miles away. All along the route, and in Ballylanders itself, crowds lined the roads with every species of vehicle, and all shops were closed. About twenty clergy took part, amongst whom were the following—Rev. Father McGrath, P.P.; Rev. Fathers Ryan and Kennedy, C.C.'s, Herbertstown and Hospital; Rev. Fr. Ryan, P.P., Knocklong; Rev. Fr. Humphries, C.C., Knocklong; Rev. Fr. Coleman, C.C., and Rev. Fr. Hartnett, C.C., Glenroe; Rev. Fr. Lee, P.P., Kilsfinane; Rev. Fr. Higgins, C.C., do; Rev. Fr. Barry, P.P., Ballylanders; Rev. Fr. O'Brien, C.C., Ballylanders; Rev. Fr. Hayes, C.C., do; Rev. Fr. Moloney, Duluth, U.S.A.; Rev. Fr. Murphy, Clare; Rev. D. Duggan, C.C., Newport; Rev. Fr. Crowley (Ballylanders), U.S.A. Mission; and Rev. Fr. Hayes (Ballylanders), U.S.A. Mission.

After the clergy came a section of the Volunteers, with Brass Band playing the solemn strains of the Dead March. Next came the hearses containing the coffins, which were enveloped in Republican flags, and surrounded by a guard of honour.

The funeral service over, an oration was given by the officer commending as to the virtues and gallantry of his deceased comrades and then the remains of the dead Volunteers were for the last time committed to mother earth. Three military officers and about ten R.I.C. saluted the remains as they were borne past them. The weather was splendid, and no untoward incident occurred. No arms were carried.

Our Tipperary correspondent wires:—Striking scenes were witnessed in East Limerick on Saturday at the funerals of two members of the I.R.A., William O'Riordan and Thomas Howard, whose remains were disinterred and taken yesterday to Herbertstown Church. The former was a native of Glenbrohane, and the latter, who held the rank of captain, belonged to Cullane, Ballylanders. Both were aged about 25, and had taken an active part in the Volunteer movement. They fell at Lockelly, between Emly and Knocklong, on 2nd May last. As the result of a fierce fight, their bodies, together with the remains of two of their comrades who also fell, were rescued and carried away. The disinterment of the remains of Riordan and Howard, and their reinterment on Saturday at Ballylanders was made the occasion of a demonstration on a gigantic scale. Throughout the whole brigade area of East Limerick business was entirely suspended, and not only thousands of Volunteers but the whole populace turned out in Elton, Bruff, Bruree, Kilmallock, Knocklong, Galbally, Kilsfinane, Ballylanders, Kilbehenny, and even in Mitchelstown, Kildorrery and Emly, which are outside the area, the shops were closed and shuttered, and work in the fields was at a standstill. At the Requiem High Mass in Herbertstown the church was crowded.

The procession, which took five hours to do the eleven miles' journey to Ballylanders, was about seven miles long. The coffins, borne in two biers, were draped in the Republican colours. Behind the biers marched 2,500 Volunteers with cycle and cavalry corps, and a big muster of the Cumann na mBan. Thousands of the general public followed in cars and on foot, and perfect order and discipline were maintained. The Kilsfinane Brass and Reed Band played funeral marches and religious music along the way. Magnificent weather favoured the occasion, the sun shining brightly from a cloudless sky throughout the day. A lorry with a party of police and some military officers was drawn up in

the vicinity of Ballylanders, near the point where the funeral procession entered the village, but their presence did not give rise to any incident.

The chief mourners for Capt. O'Riordan were: James O'Riordan and Mrs. O'Riordan (parents); John and Michael O'Riordan (brothers); Bridget O'Riordan (sister).

For Mr. Howard the chief mourners were: John Howard (father); Mrs. Howard (mother); John, James, Jerry and Patrick (brothers); Mary and Nonie (sisters).

The interment took place in the old churchyard at Ballylanders. Both bodies were laid in the Republican Plot, where also lie the remains of two Volunteers, David Tobin, Glenbrohane; and Thomas Murphy, Ballylanders, who were killed last Christmas. They were in Tobin's parents house when a party of military approached. The youths made a dash for liberty, the military fired and Murphy was killed. Tobin, though also hit, was able to make his way up the mountain and got away. Next morning he was found dead near his parents residence with his coat off and laid under his head. He had evidently crawled back down the mountain and being unable to go further from loss of blood, had lain down to die.

Amongst the wealth of wreaths contributed in memory of O'Riordan and Howard, was one beautiful one from their comrades of the East Limerick Brigade. The inscription on both breast-plates stated that they were killed in action. In chief charge of the procession and funeral arrangements was the Brigadier Commandant of the East Limerick Brigade. With him was the vice-Brigadier. These and the other principal officers were in uniform with mourning armlets. The clergy already mentioned, were present at the burial service.

Standing by the open grave the Commandant said that on that day he and his comrades were assembled there under the shadow of a heavy and deplorable loss. They were laying there in their last resting place the bodies of two very sincere, ardent and very brave men, who had fought in the cause of Ireland's liberty, and fought with right good-will. It was to him (the speaker) a very sad moment and yet a very glorious moment, that he stood there over all that was mortal of his two comrades, to pay some small tribute to their great work. Captain O'Riordan was a personal friend of his, as indeed were all the men under his command, and he had always found him a true and upright soldier. He died the death that he would have wished to die as a soldier fighting for his country.

Section Commander Howard was another brave man who joined their flying column on the very first day it was formed in East Limerick, and never once faltered in his duty. With all his strict devotion to duty, he was always buoyant and gay, and was known as the most humorous soldier of their brigade. Since the fight began in East Limerick some had fallen on their side, but, thank God, they were only a few. There were two others laid to rest some time ago in the adjoining grave—Murphy and Tobin. He (the Commandant) was unable to attend their funeral as the war was on at the time, but he wished now to pay a tribute to their courage and devotion. "I will not detain you," he continued, "except to say this—if you want to know what Ireland wants, what the young men of Ireland want, what they will have, and what they will be satisfied with—it is the ideal and the hope that these men died for. We do not know how the negotiations are going. We are not asking how the negotiations are going. We are standing by, ready for peace, and ready for war. There is not, I believe, in the whole world a more peace-loving people than the young men of Ireland at the present day. There are not to be found in the whole world young men of military age who would like more to see an era of peace ushered in than the young men of Ireland to-day; but there also are not to be found in the whole world men more steadfast, more ready, more earnest, and more brave and honourable in their work than the young men of Ireland will be if the call to war comes." In conclusion, the speaker counselled the people to disperse quietly, and maintain the same admirable discipline they had shown throughout the day.

A firing squad then discharged six volleys over the grave, and the people went quietly away.