

History Project!!

By: Aine O'Brien

The Black and Tans were a force of Temporary Policemen recruited to assist the (RIC) Royal Irish Constabulary in their fight against the (IRA) Irish Republican Army in the war of Independence.

The Black and Tan's were particularly known for their cowardly attacks on Civilians and their property.

I met with an elderly neighbour and asked about her memories of this time, and especially about the Black and Tan's.

Nora was born in the 1920's and as a child remembers listening in from the top of the stairs on stories by locals about the Black and Tans. She lived over the family Pub so as you can imagine the stories would have been very colourful and she would have heard things that she should not have heard.

Here are some of her stories:

They (Black and Tan's) would enter the pub and march to the counter and place a gun on the counter-top to frighten the barman, and demand whiskey and stout. They would drink as much as they could and march back out without paying.

They would do the same to the Grocery shop demanding food.

Nora said that the locals hated the Black and Tans because of this:

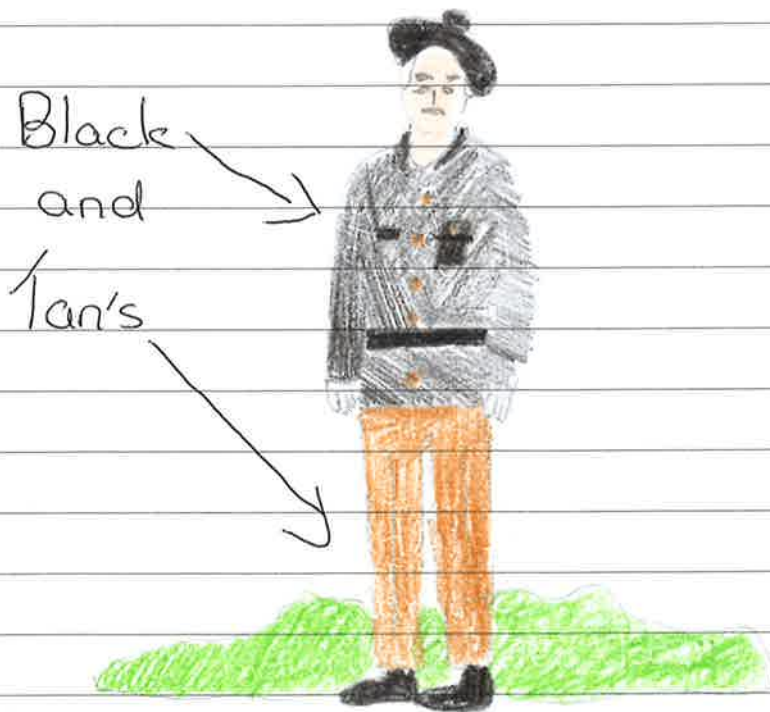
They would help the (IRA) by hiding their guns in all sorts of places like in manures heaps, in potato fields in under ground hideouts, under floor boards and hay stacks. They (Black and Tan's) set alight many hay stacks for this reason.

"I remember hearing stories of how one nasty group of Black and Tan's used a local farmer's cows for target practise for their rifles killing several of his good milkers".

"Local families hid the (IRA) men also. These were called "Safe Houses". The people in the house had to keep a list of who normally lived in the houses and anyone extra would be dragged out and possibly shot".

"We couldn't even visit our neighbours to socialise. We call this socialising "Scriochting".

Scriochting was when we swapped stories of what was happening in the area (~~It was a bit like reading the Bandon Opinion nowadays~~). We also played cards sang songs. "However during the Revolution these meetings were few and far between because of the fear the Black and Tan's had put on us".



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