

Stories from the War of Independence 1919-1921

The Black and Tans conducted several raids on the house of Mia O'Sullivan in Coolagh, Ballydehob and eventually burned it down. The story goes that Mia O'Sullivan was a 'big' IRA man at the time. In retaliation for this house being burned down, the IRA decided that three Protestant houses in the area should subsequently be burned. The first house selected was that of Woods in Fortview and it was burned down. The second house selected was that of Shannons in Gurteenakilla. The IRA members came to Shannons' gate with petrol and all that they needed to burn the house down. One of the men who arrived at the gate was McCarthy Casey who said he was not going to burn down this house as it belonged to William George Shannon who was well known in the area for his cures for sick animals. The IRA men departed from the Shannons' gate without setting the house on fire. The third house selected was that of Sam (Son) Daly in Lisheenacreagh, Ballydehob. It was burned down.

Sam(Son) Daly knew that he was a marked man by the IRA. He had been spotted talking to a policeman in Bantry and the conclusion was reached that he was an informer. He knew that he was followed home from Bantry fair by a number of people (who shadowed him for various parts of the trip) including a woman from Cumann na mBan as they wanted to determine who he was and where he lived. After this Sam Daly slept in the hills for several weeks instead of at home in his own bed.

There were two graves in a field in Rahine, Church Cross, Skibbereen and it is thought that these bodies were buried there by the IRA during the 'troubles'.

Another story of the time hails from Durrus and demonstrates some of the devious things that were done. This man did not get on very well with one of his neighbours. He 'thought' that the IRA were going to raid the local post office on a certain date, so he wrote a letter (to whom it is not clear) with the names of the lads in the IRA that he alleged were going to commit the robbery and signed the letter with the name of the neighbour he could not stand. Needless to say he caused a whole lot of bother for his neighbour!

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