

# THE BLUE CAP

JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL DUBLIN FUSILIERS ASSOCIATION



VOL. 12. DECEMBER 2005

## **The Dead of the Irish Revolution, 1912-25.**

### **Scope and Aims.**

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The turbulent years from 1912 until 1925 witnessed the 1916 insurrection, the Irish War of Independence, transition to self government and a bitter civil war. Commonly termed the Irish Revolution, these formative years continue to intrigue the public consciousness. The success of Neil Jordan's film *Michael Collins* reaffirmed the undying appeal of these emotive episodes. Irish history sections in bookshops throughout the world are dominated by biographies and memoirs of participants, traditional narrative accounts, and, more recently, regional and local studies of this period. From a scholarly perspective, the availability of a vast array of archival material over the past three decades has transformed the historiography of the Irish Revolution.

Yet despite the abundance of writing on the subject, remarkably no attempt has ever been made to present and document a comprehensive list of *all* fatalities which are attributable to Irish political violence between 1912 and 1925. Only limited attempts have previously been made. For instance, *The Last Post* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Dublin, 1976) lists the republican dead but it contains considerable inaccuracies and omissions. Richard Abbott's laudable *Police Casualties in Ireland 1919-1921* (Cork, 2000) portrays only part of the story as a description of the associated British military, IRA and civilians casualties was beyond the scope of that work. Consequently, there has been no agreement among scholars on so rudimentary and vital a fundamental as the number of lives claimed, let alone their identities and the circumstances of their deaths.

In the autumn of 2003, an IRCHSS-funded project: *The Dead of the Irish Revolution, 1912-1925* set out to provide an exhaustive survey of such fatalities based on authoritative and scholarly research drawing on a range of original sources. Broadly speaking fatalities may be divided into four typologies: British military, Civilian, Non-British military and Police.

There is great interest in British military history, particularly that of World War One. However, those military personnel who served in Ireland, often only weeks after the Armistice, have attracted little attention. If they are mentioned at all, the Irish troubles of 1919-21 are given the briefest half-page reference in regimental histories. No campaign medals were awarded to those who served in Ireland. Only some of those who lost their lives have been catalogued by the Commonwealth Graves Commission. All the indications are that those who died in British military uniform while on service in Ireland have not received due historical attention or recognition. Perhaps even more neglected are those British military killed between July 1921 and June 1923, some of whose bodies were not returned until the mid-1920s.

This project makes a determined effort to distinguish civilian from Irish military fatalities which in previously published works are often simply lumped together as 'civilians.' A true picture of the type of fatalities has therefore been distorted. The Headford Junction ambush in County Kerry in March 1921 is a well known incident of the Irish War of Independence in which thirteen people were killed or died of wounds. Eight of these fatalities were British military. Of the remaining five, three were civilians and only two were IRA volunteers. As casualties of political violence, children are rarely afforded a proper place in the historiography of conflicts but in this project such erasure is arrested.

In the same way certain shootings were not isolated incidents. In some cases one person's death prompted a reprisal and to treat one without tracking the other is to tell only half the story. In Castlerea, Co. Roscommon, members of the Auxiliary Division, Royal Irish Constabulary killed an IRA volunteer named Patrick Conroy and a local Protestant farmer named James Monds in the early hours of 7 April 1921. The Active Service Unit of the South Roscommon Brigade, IRA sought retribution and entered Castlerea on the evening of the 7<sup>th</sup> seeking British soldiers. In the ensuing shootout Lance-Corporal Edward Weldon was shot through the heart, another soldier wounded and a civilian, Mrs Mary Anne McDonagh, fatally wounded. She was guilty of nothing other than the misfortune of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Each of these fatalities has his or her personal story: where they lived, where they died, if they were married, how they made their living, whether they had any children and so on. But there is also the interconnected story of their deaths. By viewing things in this way, *The Dead of the Irish Revolution* provides a sombre account of what in modern military parlance is regarded as 'collateral damage'.

### Some Blue Caps.

Among the growing list of fatalities assembled by this project are a number of members of The Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Close readers of H. C. Wylly's *Neill's "Blue Caps"* Vol. III. Schull Books, Cork, and *The 1916 Rebellion Handbook* will be familiar with those Dubs who were killed or died of wounds during the Easter Rising:

**Brennan**, Private Francis (25244) 10<sup>th</sup> (Pals) Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers from No.24 Usher's Island, Dublin. Aged 18 when killed, he is buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Blackhorse Avenue. Grave Reference. RC.468. Pte. Brennan's nephew is member of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.

**Burke**, Lance Sergeant Frederick William Robert. (25692). 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Age 21. Born at Quetta, Baluchistan. His father was Major John Burke D.S.O., M.C., D.C.M. of 62 Grove Avenue, Twickenham. Buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Grave Reference. CE642.

**Byrne**, Private James (18259). Served at Depot in Naas. Age 19. Born in Dublin. Buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Grave Reference. RC483.

**Coxon**, Private Richard (22164). 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Grave Reference. RC479.

**Ellis**, Private Alfred (21735). 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Age 19. Son of Alfred and Sarah Jane Ellis from Leeds. Formerly (97706) the Royal Field Artillery. Buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Grave Reference. SWS185.

**Gray**, Lieutenant George. 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Age 22. Formerly a dental student. Son of Alexander (RIP) and Helen Ross Gray from Newcastle-on-Tyne. Killed by a sniper on the railway line up from Broadstone facing Kelly's Lane, Phibsborough. His name is on a memorial in the Parish Church of St. George and St. Thomas in Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin. He is buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Grave Reference. C.E. Officers 46.

**Hare**, Sergeant Henry (6745). 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Age 40. Born in Dublin. Buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Grave Reference. RC482. Sgt. Hare has the same regimental number as Pte. Martin Walsh M.M, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers from Kilrush, Co. Clare, killed in action facing Wijtschate in Flanders on 1 June 1917. Sgt. Hare was the husband of Rosana Hare, 109 Cupar Street, Belfast. Sgt. Hare's granddaughter is member of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.

**Humphreys**, Corporal John William (19222). 'A' Company, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. 'Shot through the head in Westmoreland Street at noon on Monday before fighting commenced while returning unarmed off furlough... Information received from Mercers Hospital.' WO35/69. Age 29. Born in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. Son of Robert (RIP) and Marguerite Elizabeth Warfield of 13 Swanage Road, Wandsworth, London. Listed in Soldiers Died Part 73 as born in Dublin and in CWGC born in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. Buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Grave Reference. RC484.

**Lucas**, Private Francis (17687). 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Age 41. Born Leeds. Buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Grave Reference. RC480.

**Neilan**, Lieutenant Gerald Aloysius. 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Mount Harold Terrace, Dublin. Killed by sniper on Usher's Island on Easter Monday. Ex-student of Clongowes Wood. His brother, A. Neilan, took part in the Rising with the Volunteers and was deported to Knutsford Detention Barracks. Lieut. Neilan is buried at Glasnevin (Prospect) Cemetery, Dublin. Grave Reference. St.Brigid's SH20521.

**Thompson**, Private J. A. (24923). 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Buried at Kinawley C of I Churchyard, Co. Fermanagh.

**Watchorn**, Private Abraham (25026). 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Age 21. Born in Wicklow. His father, also named Abraham, lived at Williamstown, Rathvilly, Co. Carlow. Buried at Grangegorman Military Cemetery. Grave Reference. CE625.

More difficult to trace are those one-time members of the regiment who died in other circumstances. *The Dead of the Irish Revolution* has uncovered the stories of four such Blue Caps who were killed during the War of Independence: two were members of the Auxiliary Division, RIC and two were civilians.

**John Donohoe** was the son of Bartholomew Donohoe a shoemaker from Ratoath in County Meath. He served as a private with the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, The Royal Dublin Fusiliers, was wounded during the 1916 rebellion, and also subsequently wounded in France. After the Armistice he transferred to the Royal Field Artillery and was demobbed in March 1921. Three months later, he was taken from his home in Rathoath and shot dead. Bartholomew Donohoe told a Court of Inquiry at Dunshaughlin into his son's death that shortly after midnight on 14 June there was a knock on the door. An armed masked man in a trench coat asked for his son and ordered the older man back to bed. At about 4:00 a.m. shots were heard about fifty yards from the house. The medical examiner found four entrance bullet wounds on the body. At the time of his death,

Donohoe was around twenty years of age and unemployed. The Court brought a verdict of wilful murder against some person or persons unknown.

**Francis Joseph Farrell** was born in Dublin and served with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers before receiving a commission as a Lieutenant in the Tank Corps. Like many other officers he joined the Auxiliary Division after demobilisation and was attached to 'F' Company. On 14 March 1921, he was a member of a police patrol of two lorries and an armoured car that went to search St Andrew's Catholic Club, 144 Brunswick Street. At the time, this was occupied by members of 'B' Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Dublin Brigade, IRA. The IRA guard on sentry duty fired at the police patrol when it reached the corner of Erne Street. The driver of the leading lorry drove straight at the attackers allowing the Auxiliaries to dismount and rush the IRA men. A hand-to-hand struggle ensued leading to a number of deaths. Three civilians and three members of the IRA were killed or subsequently died of their wounds. Temporary cadet James Leonard Beard was shot in the head and Temporary cadet Farrell was severely wounded in the chest. Both were admitted to King George V Hospital. Farrell died shortly after admission at 10:00 p.m. and Beard the following evening at about the same time. At the time of his death, Farrell was twenty-eight years of age, single, and had just over five months' police service.

**William Alexander Mac Pherson** had been a career soldier with twenty-four years' military service. He had been a sergeant with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, The Royal Dublin Fusiliers. His last attachment had been with The Royal Corps of Engineers. Mrs Margaret Mac Pherson of 4 Bridge Street, Mallow told a Court of Inquiry at Mallow, County Cork on 9 July 1921 into her husband's death that he had been suffering from illness contracted in India and had been awaiting hospital treatment. He was unemployed being unfit for anything but light work. At around 2:00 p.m. on 7 July one of her children told her that two neighbours had seen someone resembling her husband being bundled into a trap on Mallow Bridge. William Mac Pherson's body was found on the roadside at Knockpogue, about two miles from Mallow, at around 8:10 a.m. the following morning. He had been shot in the chest.

A label attached to the body read: 'Convicted spy, spies and informers in Mallow beware we are on your track. IRA.' Mac Pherson had no record of any political activity. The Court brought a verdict of wilful murder against some person or persons unknown. During his ten years' of military service

**Christopher Wainwright**, a native of Lancashire, had been a captain in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and the Royal Irish Rifles. He had been mentioned in despatches. He joined the Auxiliary Division as a temporary cadet and was attached to 'C' Company with the police number 72850. He was one of seventeen Auxiliaries killed during the Kilmichael ambush near Macroom, County Cork on 28 November 1920, the details of which have been well rehearsed elsewhere. At the time of his death, Wainwright was thirty-six years of age and had four months' police service.

The four examples above remind us of the countless numbers who passed through the ranks of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. It also serves to indicate the depth and breadth of information *The Dead of the Irish Revolution* project hopes to document for each fatality enumerated. This is no small task given the many hundreds involved. Some of these are, of course, well known. But many other fatalities of Irish political violence are not even recalled in historical footnotes. Yet they too have a story just as compelling or harrowing or ordinary.

Note. My thanks to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association for supplying some extra information on the above soldiers.

### **A Dub's Black and Tan.**

We received the following interesting email from Mr. Roger Davenport, Swallow Place, London.

I have just been looking at the RDFA website, which is very interesting. I didn't realise that the memory of the Irish Regiments, and particularly of the service of Irish men & women in the Great War, is being kept alive after so many years. I have an interest in the RDF, which stems from a curious meeting many years ago. In 1970/71, I was a young insurance broker

working in Gravesend in Kent. Our office was round the corner from the old Milton Barracks, which were then home to the Welch Regt. After some months the Welch Regt. marched through the town and went off to be amalgamated into the Royal Regt. of Wales and the barracks were empty. One lunchtime I went for a walk, and seeing that the gates were open and someone sweeping leaves, I went in to try and find out if another regiment would be moving in. The answer was negative but I struck up a conversation with the elderly caretaker, who told me that he had served in the 1914-18 war with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, then with the Black & Tans, then with the Royal Ulster Rifles, with whom he went through the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. The conversation stuck in my memory and I have often speculated on the fate of the old man who, after the army he had served for so long moved on, was left sweeping up the leaves. The barracks were demolished a few years later to provide a new housing estate. I have never mentioned this story to anyone as it is of little interest to most people, but you somehow seem to be a suitable repository.

## Nobody's Children.

*Tom Burke*

*The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

On Wednesday 16 November 1927, the Irish government was defeated on a motion put down by Captain W. A. Redmond who appealed to the Executive Council, to 'appoint a Commission to inquire into the circumstances of British Ex-Servicemen in the Free State.' (1) The Government suffered a defeat on the motion and faced a vote of no confidence. The vote *for* the motion was sixty-six and *against* was sixty-four. During the debate, the Fianna Fail TD for Donegal, Mr Frank Carney spoke in favour of Captain Redmond's motion. 'The Irish Times' reported.

A good many members were surprised when Frank Carney rose on the Fianna Fail benches to support captain Redmond's motion. Mr Carney was a non-commissioned officer in the British Army himself, and, as he told the House, his only brother lies buried off Cape Helles, one of the heroes of the Gallipoli landing. As a matter of fact, there are more British Ex-Servicemen on the Fianna Fail benches than in Government. Despite the fact that the Opposition eschewed the Poppy on Remembrance Day, while a dozen Government supporters wore it, there are at least six ex-soldiers among Mr De Valera's followers. There were thousands of Ex-Servicemen in the Free State, who do not belong to any organisation, and their cases might be lost sight of. It had been said that fifty per cent of the Ex-Servicemen had been members of the National Army (*Army of the Irish Free State*) and he was inclined to think that the other fifty per cent had been members of the IRA (Laughter). He declared that the Connaught Rangers who had staged a mutiny in India in order to aid their country at a critical period, had been disgracefully treated by the Free State Government and they should be included in the deliberations of the proposed Committee. (2)

Owing to the loss of his brother and being an ex-British Army N.C.O himself, Frank Carney's sentiments towards his old comrades were quite genuine. Every member of the Fianna Fail and Labour Parties in the Dail that day voted *for* the motion. Despite the defeat, the Executive set up a committee to investigate grievous claims made by Irish Ex-Servicemen who served in the British Forces during the Great War. The members of the Committee were Mr. Cecil Lavery K.C (Chairman), General Brown-Clayton from Co. Carlow who represented the Royal British Legion in the Irish Free State and Mr. P. Baxter, former member of the Dail for Cavan and ex-leader of the Farmers Parliamentary Party. The fourth member was Mr. M. J Beary, Secretary Dept. of Finance. The following was their terms of reference. (3)

1. To determine the nature and extent of the claims made by such Ex-Servicemen against the British Government in respect of rights alleged to have arisen out of past services.
2. To determine the nature and extent of their claims, if any, against the Government of the Irish Free State in respect of alleged discrimination against them in regard to employment on public works or otherwise.
3. Report to the Irish Executive Council. (The Dail or Irish Parliament).

In conducting their enquiry and presenting a report, the Irish Government were very sensitive not to upset their relationship with the British Government. In a letter from the Department of the President of the Irish Executive dated 29 November 1927 to the Chairman of the Committee on the matter of committee procedures, the Irish Government believed that the holding of public sittings was undesirable because such sittings could be used to voice criticism of the British Government in the matter of their treatment of Ex-Servicemen. It also might prejudice rather than assist claims. They also suggested that Ex-Servicemen bring their grievance through Ex-Servicemen's organisations rather than as individual cases for fear of being snowed under with claims and paperwork.



The letter was signed by Diarmuid O'hEigertuigh. Runai. (Dermot Hegarty. Secretary) (4)

This element of secrecy did not go down too well with some Ex-Servicemen. At a meeting of the Ennis Branch of the Royal British Legion held on 9 December 1927, chaired by the Right Hon. Lord Inchiquin, Patron of the Branch, a unanimous resolution was passed by the members opposing such a policy of secrecy. Their objection was that the alleged false promises on houses and jobs made by the British Government to their members and thousands like them throughout Ireland should be publicly exposed. (5)

The Committee met at No. 5 Ely Place in Dublin and at their first meeting on 8 December 1927, they agreed to analyse Ex-Servicemen's grievances under the following headings.

1. Employment in Public Works - Equal treatment in the matter of preference for members of the National Forces and British ex service men.
2. Housing - Soldiers and Sailor Trust - Inadequacy of program - excessive rents etc.
3. Pensions.
4. Emigration schemes.
5. Unemployment benefit - Ineligibility of ex-British Soldiers for benefit in the Free State.

On 12 December 1927, the Committee placed notices in the Press asking British Ex-Servicemen to contact them with their grievances and asking for evidence to be presented through organisations such as the Royal British Legion. They declined to advertise the fact that they would look at individual cases. Notices appeared in 'The Irish Times', 'The Independent' and the 'Cork Examiner'. Mr Baxter, (committee assailant) suggested that the majority of British Ex-Servicemen did not belong to the British Legion or any other Ex-Servicemen's organisation. He instanced the case of, 'British Ex-Servicemen who served in the IRA and would be unlikely to submit their grievances through an organisation such as the British Legion.' (6) The problem of so many individuals who were not members of Ex-Servicemen's associations was taken up by



*Brigadier-General E. L. Sullivan, C.B., C.M.G., laying a wreath on the Cenotaph on the South Mall, Cork, on Remembrance Day.*



*Ex-Servicemen sounding the Last Post at the conclusion of the Ceremony at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day in Cork.*

Remembrance Day in Cork, November 1934. Over 1,000 Ex-Servicemen and their relatives marched to the Cenotaph on the South Mall in Cork.

Capt. Redmond and the Fianna Fail T.D, Mr. Frank Carney. In November 1927, Redmond received fifty letters from Ex-Servicemen asking him to act on their behalf.

He passed the letters on to the British Legion for their notice. Mr. Carney suggested advertising in local provincial newspapers calling on individual Ex-Servicemen to send in their grievances. Applicants had to submit four copies of their claims in typescript or print form. (7) For men who were not members of the British Legion, submitting four copies of a typescript proved a bit difficult since many of them were unemployed, poor and living in poverty. Some of the Ex-Servicemen's organisations to submit statements to the Committee were. (8)

The Royal British Legion, Irish Free State.

The National Federation of British Ex-Servicemen.

The Civil Service Clerical Association.

The Ex-War Dept. Workers Association.

The Municipal Ex-Servicemen's and Dependents Assoc.

The Assoc. of Ex-Civil Servants (London)

The Non -Permanent Government Clerks Assoc.

British Ex-Servicemen's Branch.

Ex-RIC Army Service Men.

The Committee held eighteen meetings in total and sat listening to submissions by Ex-Servicemen's organisations and individuals from 8 December 1927 to 18 November 1928. At their last meeting on 18 November, members of the Committee signed the report they had compiled based on their findings. Despite their request in the Press for Ex-Servicemen not to present claims and grievances to the Committee on an individual basis, 539 individual Ex-Servicemen wrote to the Committee with their complaints. Of that 539 individual cases, 438 were claims against the British Government of which 337 were related to war pensions and sixty-seven related to houses and land. Seventeen cases related to compensation claims for loss of employment by ex-British Civil Servants due to the establishment of the Irish Free State and seventeen were recorded as 'Miscellaneous.' Eighty-one claims were made against the Irish government. These claims mainly related to allegations of preference in employment given to Irish Army Ex-Servicemen in favour of British Army Ex-Servicemen. The balance of claims was not within the terms of reference of the report. (9)

The report stated that, the number of British Ex-Servicemen ordinarily resident in the Irish Free

State in November 1928, was 150,000. (10) Under the five agreed headings in which the analysis of British Ex-Servicemen's grievances living in the Irish Free State was carried out, the following is a summary of the main findings outlined in the report issued by the committee to the Irish Executive Council in November 1928.

### 1. Employment in Public Works.

During the Civil War in Ireland (June 1922 - May 1923), the Irish Free State Army had grown approximately to 52,000 men and 3,000 officers. When this war ended in May 1923, keeping the Army operational was a huge drain on State finances. Acting under Government instructions, the Minister for Defence and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces, General Richard Mulcahy, began a process of demobilisation and by January 1924, G.H.Q. wanted to reduce the force down to 30,000 men and 1,300 officers. Final projections were for an army of 18,000 men. (11) The result of this demobilisation was that there were now thousands of poorly compensated National Army Ex-Servicemen joining the already high numbers of unemployed. In Dublin alone, one estimate put the number of unemployed British Ex-Servicemen at 30,000. (12)

In order to soften the blow of redundancies in the National Army, the Irish Government decided that the following order of preference regarding employment in connection with works carried out of public funds should be observed. (13)

1. Members of the National Forces with dependants.
2. Ex- members of the National Forces without dependants.
3. Civilians with dependants.
4. Civilians without dependants.

The Committee received evidence from British Ex-Servicemen that if work was available on Local Authority road and relief schemes, preference was given to National Army Ex-Servicemen. The British Legion accepted that, 'while it recognised the obligation of the Free State Government to give preference to ex-members of the National Forces in employment schemes,' they suggested that equal preference should be given to British Army Ex-Servicemen given the fact that they 'are Irish citizens who are

living under great difficulties.’ The British Legion also acknowledged that, ‘on the part of the Free State Government, there was no discrimination against British Ex-Servicemen in connection with employment on road relief schemes etc.’ (14) Moreover, following a personal investigation carried out in the Irish Free State by Lieut.-Col Crosfield, D.S.O, Chairman of the Royal British Legion, in a report dated August 1926 he stated that, ‘ he could find no instance of such discrimination.’ (15)

However, when it came to picking men for road works at local level, statements were submitted to the Committee from British Ex-Servicemen that, ‘there was often discrimination by the Foreman of Works against British Ex-Servicemen.’ (16) On 20 January 1928, Mr. Peter Smith wrote to the Committee from Stonepark, Co. Roscommon. He served in France, Mesopotamia and Palestine and was suffering from gunshot wounds and malaria. Writing on behalf of County Roscommon Ex-Servicemen on the issue of Ex-Servicemen’s employment, Mr. Smith noted. ‘We have little to say as employment in this town and district are almost nil, but whatever employment is going, the Free State Ex-Servicemen get the preference.’ (17) The following is another example of alleged employment discrimination faced by British Ex-Servicemen at local level. (18)

23<sup>rd</sup> January 1928.

Dear Sir,

In response to a personal appeal by the British Postmaster General, Mr Herbert Samuels in 1915, I volunteered for service with the Forces in the War and enlisted in the Irish Guards and served in France and Germany and returned to civil life on demobilisation. In 1919 I resumed my work as auxiliary postmen. A vacancy for an established postman existed in the office and I acted on the route for three months. I was ill through war service for twelve months and was placed on lighter duties until my health was recovered.

In 1922 I was medically examined and was pronounced fit for the duties of the vacant appointment.

On proceeding to perform the route I was threatened and told that, ex-British soldiers were a thing of the past. The same had happened to two other men who attempted to perform the route previously and owing to the state of the country at the time, I knew this would be certain death if I attempted to carry on. Consequently I was not appointed. My chances of securing an established appointment are now nil, as with the change of government, vacancies will only be given to telegraph messengers who are ex-National Army men.

I am at present acting on an established postman’s route and am quite competent of discharging the duties and have no doubt that under the old regime I would have already an established appointment. I have nineteen years service in the Post Office.

Yours,

Daniel Slyne.

Auxiliary Postman.

Inniskeane, Co. Cork.

The Committee obtained some statistics on the number of men employed by Government sponsored County Council road and other construction schemes for the period December 1926 to April 1928 inclusive. The average number of men employed by the Councils each month on these schemes was 17,674, of which 1,740 were ex-members of the National Forces, roughly ten per cent. Based on the fact that the number of National Ex-Servicemen employed in such schemes is so small, the Committee concluded on the complaint of discrimination that, ‘there appears to be no real foundation for the complaint.’ (19) In an open letter to ‘The Irish Times’, one well versed and perhaps disillusioned British Army ex-Serviceman wrote of the Captains of Industry whom at remembrance time would ease their conscience by giving a, ‘large price for their poppy to a pretty girl and can always be depended upon to speak gracefully and patronisingly about the lads and their sacrifices, yet will turn down an ex-Serviceman who appears before him in his office with a quest for a job.’ (20)



A considerable part of the Committee's time was devoted to investigating claims relating to issues of employment in the Irish Civil Service by British Ex-Servicemen. Concerns were raised about conditions of employment and compensation for loss of employment due to the transfer of power. As part of the scheme for demobilisation of the Army after the Great War, the British Government reserved all temporary clerical posts in Government departments for Ex-Servicemen. (21) They set up the Lytton Commission to study this policy and the Commission recommended that seventy-five per cent of clerical vacancies were to be filled by Ex-Servicemen. The Ex-Servicemen who received these Civil Service jobs were known as Lytton Entrants. (22)

In May 1923, there was constant agitation amongst Civil Servants in Britain on the issue of pay. The British Government, through the advice of a committee named the Southborough Committee, awarded a scaled salary increase for Lytton Entrants. (23) In Ireland, due to the change of administration, the Irish Lytton Entrants did not receive the rise in salary awarded to their colleagues in Britain and this was the source of their complaint to the Ex-Servicemen's Committee. The report issued by the Committee on Ex-Servicemen stated that the salary review committee in Britain, i.e. the Southborough Committee, did not come into existence until 2 May 1923 and their recommendations on pay increase to Lytton Entrants was not sanctioned by the Treasury until the 7 July 1923. By that time, a new Provisional Government had been established in Ireland. Up to November 1928, there was sixty-five British Ex-Servicemen permanently employed in the new Civil Service of the Irish Free State. With regard to the salaries of these men, the report acknowledged that the Irish Lytton Entrants were worse off than their British colleagues. However, their conditions of service were not altered. They were now part of a new administration and had to accept that reality. (24)

Because the Lytton Entrants were permanent Civil Servants, they at least had the security of a steady job and regular income. However, the situation regarding temporary Civil Servants was quite different. On the change of administration these men lost their jobs and had to re-apply to the Irish Civil Service for their job back. According to the report, these temporary ex-Civil Servants felt

very grieved with both the British and Irish Governments. Their main grievance towards the British Government was that when the Treaty was negotiated they, i.e. the British Government, did not 'procure any provision binding upon the Irish Free State Government for continued security of tenure of transferred temporary ex-Service officials such as was enjoyed by ex-Service temporary officials retained in the service of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.' (25) Their grievance towards the Irish Government was that it had dismissed temporary Civil Servants and had given no compensation after doing so. Also, when State examinations for permanent Civil Service positions arose, the dismissed men had to re-apply like all other Irish citizens. They were however now in competition with younger and perhaps brighter school leavers and Irish army Ex-Servicemen.



Members of the Leinster Regiment Old Comrades Association distribute Christmas Parcels in December 1938.

In June and July of 1925, the Irish Civil Service held entry examinations. They were open to all candidates between eighteen and fifty-five years of age on 1 June 1925 who had served on that date for not less than six months in a temporary capacity. (26) The British ex-Service personnel sitting these examinations alleged they were at a disadvantage because the examiners awarded a bonus of ten per cent of the marks if the questions were answered in the Irish language. Moreover, bonus marks were also awarded for those whom had served in the Irish National Army. It would not be a wild assumption that it was unlikely many of the ex-British temporary Civil Servants could speak the Irish language.

To add insult to injury, the Association of Non-Permanent Government Clerks claimed that, 'not withstanding the disabilities under which they suffered in the 1925 examination' they were 'denied admission to the subsequent limited competitive examination held in May 1927, though the ex-National Army men were admitted to both'. (27) The Association also claimed they could not sit the British exams either on the grounds 'that they were no longer serving in Government Departments in Great Britain.' (28)

In replying to the allegations made by the Association of Non-Permanent Government Clerks on the issue of Civil Service entrance exams held in 1925, the report stated that the same disadvantages applied to non-permanent members of the Irish Civil Service who were *not* British Ex-Servicemen. On the issue of ex-members of the National Army getting a head start with extra marks, the report stated that these marks were not included in the marks needed to pass the exam. The extra marks awarded to ex-National Army men came into play when the man had in fact passed the exam and was only used merely to 'determine the position of ex-members of the National Forces in the list of successful or qualified candidates.' The exam was taken by 1,250 candidates of whom 652 qualified and were made permanent. Of the 652 successful candidates, 120 received the Service marks awarded to Irish Army Ex-Servicemen. The number that failed to qualify was 598 of which 155 were ex-members of the National Forces. (29)

In July 1927, there was 658 British Ex-Servicemen serving as temporary clerks in the Irish Civil Service. By March 1928, that figure was reduced to 158. By way of an explanation for the reduction, the report stated that some of the men obtained permanent positions, no numbers were given, some had resigned and some had died. They could not put a figure on the number who were 'discharged.' (30) At least sixty per cent of the non-permanent clerks in the British Civil Service secured permanent posts in Britain. (31) One can only assume the number in the Irish Free State was much less. One of those 'discharged' statistics was Mr. Edward Gaffney from No. 2 Ossory Road in the North Strand area of Dublin City near Annesley Bridge. On the advice of Major Tynan of the British Legion in Dublin, Mr Gaffney wrote to the Committee at Ely Place. (32)

2<sup>nd</sup> March 1928.

Dear Sirs,

I have been advised by Major Tynan to place my case before you and earnestly hope you will give your kind attention to same. For twenty-one years I have been employed in the Royal Army Ordnance Department at Islandbridge during which time I was assistant foreman in the Barracks and Hospital Store. I went to Woolwich Arsenal and was employed during the Boer War. During my employment I was a very conscientious worker as my enclosed papers can testify. In 1922 owing to the change of Government, I was thrown out of employment without any just cause or reason as I had given the utmost satisfaction all through my long service. For five years I have tried every means in my power to obtain a means of livelihood but without success. After five years of extreme privation and hardship my wife has died, I am absolutely destitute without a penny to procure even food and no chance whatsoever of employment. Although I can, I am willing to work at anything that will provide me with the absolute necessities of life, i.e. food and shelter. I have written to Capt. Redmond to pass my letter on to the Service Man's Committee and I have been advised by the latter to state my case to you. I am earnestly hoping you will not turn my case down, I am at the end of everything and cannot be sure if I can continue to exist without work or keeps of some kind. I shall be so very grateful for anything that will keep me to carry on; I am willing to take any kind of employment.

Thanking you in anticipation, yours respectfully, Edward Gaffney. PS . I was never in the Army, I was employed as a civilian, I have no pension. I got £55 - 9s-5d bonus in March 1923.

The question of compensation to temporary British ex-Civil Service clerks in the Irish Free State became a court case which was ongoing at the time of writing the report. Consequently no recommendations or suggestions were made on behalf of these men to either Government.

The report concluded that the position of ex-temporary Civil Servants, including the British ex-Service men 'is undoubtedly a difficult one.... Many of them certainly suffered by the change of policy in the Civil Service consequent on setting up of the Irish Free State. In the British Civil Service, Ex-Servicemen were first in order of preference for absorption into the permanent service and last for dismissal whereas, in the Irish Free State Civil Service, another class, ex-members of the National Forces, had certain limited advantages in examinations and had a preference for retention when discharge became necessary. It is hard to find the remedy.' (33)

## 2. Houses and Land.

Under the Irish Land (Provision for Sailors and Soldiers) Act of 1919, up to 31 December 1923, a sum of £2,071,000 had been spent by the British government on land purchase and the construction of 1,508 houses in the Irish Free State and 408 in Northern Ireland, i.e. a total of 1916 houses. (34) Under British administration, building was initiated by the Irish Local Government Board and continued after Irish independence by the Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust which had members appointed by the Dublin, Belfast and London Governments. The actual target set by the Trust up to the end of 1923 was 2,626 houses in the Irish Free State and 1,046 in Northern Ireland, i.e. a total of 3,672. (35) In order to complete its target of house building and indeed carry on building, the Trust received from the British Government in March 1925, a final grant of £1,300,000 'over and above the sum of £2,071,000 which had been spent under the Act of 1919 in full and final settlement of all claims on his Majesty's Treasury.' (36)

By March 1926, the Trust had completed 1,692 cottages in the Irish Free State and 733 in Northern Ireland making a total of 2,425 cottages. (37) By the time the Committee on Ex-Servicemen had presented their report to the Irish Executive in November 1928, 1,923 cottages had been built in

the Irish Free State and 880 in Northern Ireland. (38) Even if the Trust did reach its target of building cottages in the Irish Free State for the Ex-Servicemen who lived there, sadly the target of 2,626 houses split between 150,000 Ex-Servicemen meant many were left out. On the grant issue, the report stated that, 'in our opinion, the amount of money provided by the British Government was inadequate to provide satisfactory housing accommodation for British Ex-Servicemen in the Free State of the class for whom the houses built by the Trust would be suitable.' (39)

The Committee stated in their report that during the years of the Great War, 'those acting on behalf of the British Government in Ireland, in connection with recruitment of men for the Forces, made certain promises... to provide cottages for Ex-Servicemen... It was alleged that the promises in general were that such men would be adequately and properly housed and if necessary special legislation would be passed to provide a house.' (40) This allegation was repeatedly made by the Ex-Servicemen in their statements to the Committee. However the Committee noted in their report that, 'we have not received any evidence that such promises were made in any formal manner or with sanction of the British Government. However, the Act of 1919 recognised the obligation on the British Government to provide houses and gave the impression that all fit and suitable Ex-Servicemen would be provided with houses.' (41)

The housing of Ex-Servicemen was also an Irish Government's problem and the report acknowledged this fact by stating that the Ex-Servicemen in the Free State 'have the benefit with the rest of the community of all housing schemes for the relief of the housing problem'. In 1926, 781,800 persons were living in overcrowded conditions in the Irish Free State. There was 2,761 families, each numbering nine persons, resided in two room dwellings. In Dublin City the number of persons housed in dwellings with four or more persons to the room was 66,454. (42) In September of the same year, 'the Dublin Corporation had 547 British Ex-Servicemen amongst their tenants or tenant purchasers. (43) The main problem the Committee identified was not only the lack of houses but also the high level of rents amongst the tenants of Trust dwellings.

Mr Peter Smith, a British Ex-Serviceman from Stonepark, Co. Roscommon in his letter to the Committee complained of the trap he found himself in over the high rent on his Trust cottage. (44)

The cottages built in this district for Ex- Servicemen are in our opinion much too highly rented. They are in a very backward place with very inferior plots, mostly rock attached. It is absolutely impossible for a man in receipt of a few shillings a week pension or with no pension to pay the rent for one of these cottages and exist. The Land Trust let the cottages to men in receipt of very small disability pensions knowing very well that it was utterly impossible for them to pay the rent. When these unfortunate men fall into arrears with their rent, they are evicted.

For the unemployed veteran, his problems went around in circles. No job meant an inability to pay a rent, hence obtaining and holding on to a Trust house was a difficult task. Despite forty-three pages in the report on the issue of Ex-Servicemen's houses and land, the Committee's only suggestion on housing which was at least positive, was to reduce the rates on the houses run by the Trust. (45)

Some Ex-Servicemen's houses were built in the countryside but most were built in small estates near cities and towns. The largest housing development undertaken by the Board of Works was at Killester where 247 houses were built for Ex-Servicemen. Killester, with its own branch of the British Legion, was indeed an interesting project and worthy of note. Situated about six kilometres north of Dublin City, it was known to those who lived there as 'The Killester Colony.' Construction of the houses, which were mainly cottages, began in 1920. In true military tradition, the layout of these houses was in accordance with army rank. There were three neighbourhood groupings within the scheme of house. Ex-officers mainly occupied 'The Demesne', which contained the largest houses. 'Abbeyfield', which had the smallest houses were occupied mainly by privates and 'The Orchard' built in 1928, completed the development. Eventually, the Trust who ran the

Estate had 289 houses at Killester. Like the railway workers at Inchicore, the veterans at Killester had a Legion Hall which, unlike Inchicore, was not burned down and is still there to this day currently being used as a children's ballet dancing school. Despite the idyllic country surroundings and nice bungalows in which to live, Killester did have its problems; most of all was the high level of rent the men had to pay. In 1926, the rent crisis at Killester resulted in a rent strike during which threats of eviction were carried out by the Trust. Following negotiations between the Trust and the British Legion, the rates at Killester were reduced. Along with the Ex-Servicemen's houses came further development in Killester with the construction of St. Brigid's Catholic Church in 1924 and in 1928 a local school opened. (46)

### 3. Pensions

By far the biggest grievance the committee investigated was the issue of Ex-Servicemen's pensions. In 1917, the British Government set up a separate Department of State namely the Ministry of Pensions to deal with all claims from disabled officers and men and from widows or dependants of deceased officers and men, arising out of service in the Great War. Due to 'ceaseless negotiations' between the British Legion in the Irish Free State and the British Government, the Legion declined to give evidence to the Committee in relation to Great War pensions. (47) The main complaints on pensions furnished to the Committee by individual British Forces Ex-Servicemen living in the Irish Free State ranged from cases where men had received no pension at all, to disability pensions that were cut off, to cases where the pensions received were totally inadequate. Of 268 individual pension cases listed in the Committee's archive file, 151 were from men who were either in receipt of a disability pension in whose opinion was totally inadequate, or from men who had their pensions terminated. Seventy-five were from cases of men who had no pension at all or who did not receive their full entitlements. Nineteen were from relatives of men who were killed in the war, the balance were miscellaneous claims. (48)

Private John Loughnane served in the 6<sup>th</sup> Royal Munster Fusiliers. He received no disability pension. He enlisted on 14 August 1914 and served with his regiment in the Dardanelles and

Serbia. He was wounded in September 1915 and spent three months in Hospital. Upon recovery he was transferred to the Royal Irish Regiment. He suffered from Malaria from April 1916 to November 1917. (49)

At this time I was sent to Palestine and the attacks were not so frequent. When I was being demobbed I did not understand that I should have made an appeal for a pension and since my return I have had several attacks of malaria and am at present three months ill and attending two doctors. I would be very grateful if you would get my case opened.

Private P. Byrne, 1<sup>st</sup> Irish Guards, enlisted in July 1915 and was sent to France. He was wounded in July 1916 and again in 1917. Recovered and marked fit on discharge from Hospital, he was sent back to France. He too wrote to the Committee. 'Sometime in late 1918 I was sent to hospital without reporting sick and detained in a mental hospital for nearly twelve months.' The Thurles Branch of the Royal British Legion made an appeal for a disability pension on behalf of Guardsman Byrne. The Committee noted in their reply to the Thurles Branch that, 'this man's case should be re-considered as he is incapable of making any statement on his own as he is still mentally deficient'. (50)

The cases of Mrs. Johanna Cleary and Mrs. P. Mc Grath were particularly sad cases of inadequate pension entitlements. Both cases were submitted to the Committee by Captain (Retd.) J.F Knox R.N of the Thurles Branch, Royal British Legion, dated 2 March 1928. Mrs. Cleary lost her three sons in the war. They were Thomas, Joseph and Patrick. Tom was a regular soldier and served with the 1<sup>st</sup> Leinsters. He was the first of Mrs. Cleary's sons to die on 12 May 1915. Joseph served with the 6<sup>th</sup> Royal Irish Regiment and was the second to die. He died of wounds a little over a year later on 31 May 1916. Patrick served with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Irish Regiment and was killed during the German March offensive on 21 March 1918. (51) Mrs. Cleary was in receipt of eight shillings a week in total as a pension for the loss of her three sons. Her husband was old and unable to work. She complained bitterly that with eight shillings a week it was impossible to make ends meet. In

their study of the case the Committee admitted that she had grounds for complaint. Mrs. Mc Grath lost two sons in the war and was initially awarded a total pension of £1 per week. By March 1928, this had been reduced to five shillings a week and was totally inadequate to provide her with the necessities of life. (52)

Wounded men were given a disability pension for a period of time and cut off with a gratuity at the end of this time. The disability pension wasn't for life. An example of this was the case of Mr. Patrick Coyle from Henry Street, Roscommon. He enlisted on 17 September 1909 into the Connaught Rangers. He served all through the Great War in France and the Dardanelles. He received a gunshot wound to the lung that caused him great pain in the years following the war. Granted a disability pension of seven shillings and six pence per week for eighty-seven weeks and a gratuity of ten pounds, his disability pension was cut off in 1923. Several attempts to have his case reviewed were unsuccessful. Another pension case is that of a Dublin Fusilier named Joseph O'Connor from Leixlip, Co. Kildare. (53)

19<sup>th</sup> December 1927.

Sir,

I, Joseph Connor No. 12828. Private J Connor, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, state that I joined the Army voluntarily in 1914 and served until December 1918 on demobilisation. I left my own house where I was living with my mother who has fifty acres of ground. When I returned my younger brother was married, I only got a very paltry sum on my return. If I stayed at home I would probably have fallen in for this farm. I am now in very strained circumstances and will be glad if you will have my case considered at the commission about to be appointed for the British ex- soldier. I am to add that I had a small pension and they took it from me and gave me forty pounds which owing to living with my brother I had to pay for board and lodgings for a considerable time back. Thrusting this case will get your kind attention, my disability is getting a lot worse.



Joseph O'Connor, Cappagh,  
C/O British Legion (Irish Free State)  
Mountrath Branch, Leixlip, Co.  
Kildare.

Regarding those men who had not received any pension at all, according to the Committee, the source of these problems originated from the fact that many of the men were unaware of their entitlements. Hence the importance of the St. Vincent De Paul Society and institutions including the Royal British Legion in informing the men of their entitlements. 'The Irish Times' acknowledged the work of the St. Vincent De Paul Society with Ex-Servicemen in an article on the 15 November 1927. (54)

On the issue of pensions and related entitlements such as Health and Unemployment Insurance, the men themselves were not alone in their ignorance. The Royal British Legion in their submissions to the Committee alleged on the issue of Health Insurance and Unemployment Benefit, that Ex-Servicemen, who by 'reason of their service in the British Army were compulsory contributors' to Health and Unemployment Insurance schemes, were, 'not eligible for benefits in respect of the contributions paid to the British schemes during service in the British Army when on discharge became permanent residents in the Irish Free State.' (55) The Committee in their report established that this allegation was not true and in fact pointed out that in relation to Health and Unemployment Insurance, reciprocal arrangements between the Irish and British Governments were in place since January 1924. (56)

This reciprocal arrangement however did not exist between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland. The Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress at its annual congress in Belfast in August 1928, condemned the rejection by the Minister of Labour for Northern Ireland of all proposals by the Minister for Industry and Commerce of the Irish Free State for reciprocal arrangements between the two Governments in respect of Unemployment Insurance and his failure to put forward alternative proposals. (57) By way of an explanation as to why there was such ignorance of pension and other entitlements amongst British Ex-Servicemen in the Irish Free State, based on individual statements given by the men themselves, the

Committee suggested that because a large number of the men did not belong to organisations such as the British Legion etc., and, were scattered around the country, bringing notice to them of their pension entitlements was difficult. By contrast in Britain, the Committee suggested, because the Ex-Servicemen were geographically concentrated and organised, they, i.e. the Ex-Servicemen living in Britain, were more aware of their entitlements. The Committee also suggested that owing to the 'disturbed state of the country in the years 1918 to 1923', i.e. the War of Independence and Civil War, normal postal services were disrupted and letters dealing with pensions went astray. (58) In some cases, the IRA got hold of such letters and knew who were the British Ex-Servicemen in their locality. Martin Forde from Listowl, Co. Kerry never got his pension because of IRA harassment. (59)

23<sup>rd</sup> December 1927.

Sir,

I wish to lay before your committee the following facts. I had a total of nine years 316 days in the British Army, three years 259 days which was spent in service abroad, and I belonged to the Labour Corps, Private H19896. In July 1917, I came home from France on a months leave. I was going back to my unit when at Newcastle West Co. Limerick, I was prevented from travelling from the British authorities in consequence of an outbreak of measles in the later town and had to return home and I was informed by them that I would be notified when I could travel, but I never received any notice. I was anxious to get back to my unit and wrote several times to the War Office but got no reply and returned my Pay Book with Captain Reid on his return to England from this town but never heard a word since. Then the troubles started in Ireland and early in 1918 the Mails were raided and the IRA came to me and informed me if I rejoined the Army it meant instant death, so through fear I never did. I never got a penny gratuity or anything else so I would be grateful to your committee to

work up this for me and get my gratuity for me for which I would feel very grateful. Thanking you in advance and awaiting your reply, yours respectfully.

Martin J Forde, Church Street,  
Listowl, Co. Kerry.

During that 'disturbed period', Ex-Servicemen were fair game for the IRA. At least eighty-two were killed by the IRA prior to the Truce of July 1921, this figure excludes ex-RIC army veterans. In total approximately 150 Ex-Servicemen were killed during that 'disturbed period'. (60) One Ex-Serviceman, Mr. William Callan from Williamstown, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, joined the Royal Dublin Fusiliers in November 1915. His treatment by the IRA seemed light compared to others. In his submission to the Committee he wrote. (61)

16<sup>th</sup> December 1927.

Dear Sir,

The following is a statement of evidence which I propose to submit for the consideration of the above committee. I joined the British Army, the Dublin Fusiliers, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 1915 and served with the Expeditionary Force in France for three years. I contracted appendicitis while serving in the trenches and was discharged following the termination of hostilities. On my return to civil life I found my job gone and as the superior was anti British in his views, my application for my old job was turned down which left me no alternative to try and seek employment as best I could in the midst of an unsympathetic community. Failing this I applied to the British Premier and was given land under the land settlement scheme for British ex Service men and an annuity which rendered the holding absolutely unsolvent. ....Owing to the hostile activities of the IRA in the year 1921, that is to say the first year we had the land, it was rendered useless as we had no capital to work the land and even

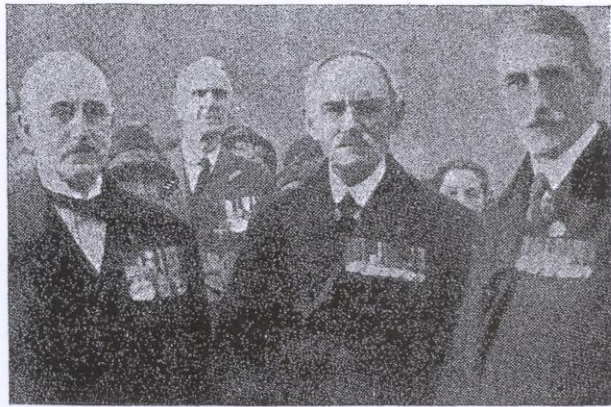
prevent it from setting or selling meadows. This discrimination was carried out by means of threatening letters circulated and in all cases signed by order of the IRA, which can be still produced if required.....Signed, William Callan.

Mr Peter Lesley M.M. from Tyfarnahan, Crooked Wood, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath joined the Leinster Regiment in November 1914 and served in Gallipoli and France. He lost a leg in battle and was discharged in May 1919. He was awarded the Military Medal with two Bars. Under the 1919 Act, Peter was awarded sixty-two acres of land that he found he could not manage. He sent in a letter to the Committee claiming the IRA broke six windows in his house that cost him £12 to repair. (62)

The Committee also suggested that for the same reason, i.e. the 'disturbed state of the country', notices placed in the Irish Press by the British Ministry of Pensions, 'were not brought to the notice of the men concerned.' They concluded on the pensions issue by stating that, 'nothing was brought to our notice to indicate, that as regards War Pensions, Ex-Servicemen in the Irish Free State are treated in any way differently from such men in Great Britain.' (63) They reckoned that because the administration of War Pensions was such a huge undertaking, it was inevitable that some 'cases of hardship' would arise and in any event such cases were 'in no sense peculiar to Ex-Servicemen living in the Irish Free State.' (64)

Yet, despite this ignorance of Ex-Servicemen about their pension and disability entitlements, there was, according to the British Ministry of Pensions, five advisory War Pension committees operating in the Irish Free State in 1928 with a total membership of sixty-two persons. In addition there was 524 voluntary workers appointed by these committees whose function was to advise and assist Ex-Servicemen. According to the Ministry's own figures, during the month of September 1927, they dealt with 3,602 cases in the Irish Free State, 456 applications were also dealt with and 1,711 disabled men examined. (65) The Irish Government TD for Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, Mr. W. P Shaw, defended the work of the Pension Committees and stated that if more people, particularly Dail Deputies, took a keener

interest in the work of the Pension Committees, more money would be available from the British Ministry. He also appealed for volunteers to assist the committees in their work. (66) To conclude on pensions, the Committee on Ex-Servicemen's report suggested that individual pension claims should be sent to the Ministry of Pensions in London. (67)



A very rare photograph. From left. Major- General Sir William Hickie, 16<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division, Major-General Sir Bryan Mahon, 10<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division and Major-General Sir Oliver Nugent, 36<sup>th</sup> (Ulster) Division in 1925

#### 4. Emigration.

Under the Empire Settlement Act of 1922, certain financial provisions were made to assist Ex-Servicemen in the United Kingdom to migrate to countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The Act was passed on 31 May 1922. British Ex-Servicemen living in the Irish Free State were not eligible for any benefits under the Act and this led to some grievance amongst the Ex-Servicemen mainly targeted against the British Government. Their claim was, that during the Treaty negotiations, the British Government knew an Irish Free State was going to be set up and they made no provision in the Treaty for their Irish Ex-Servicemen in the Empire Settlement Act. The Committee suggested in their report that the British Government should extend the benefits of the Act to their Ex-Servicemen living in the Irish Free State. The Committee also noted there was no widespread demand for the Empire Settlement Act to be extended to British Ex-Servicemen living in the Free State. (68)

#### 5. Special promises for employment and housing.

In relation to the allegations of special promises made to some Ex-Servicemen, according to statements given to the Committee, it would seem that at the time of their recruitment into the British Army and Navy etc., some men were promised special treatment for their services. Their grievance was that when the war ended, the promises were forgotten about or denied they were ever made. In nearly all the individual letters sent to the Committee by Ex-Servicemen in relation to houses and jobs, the men claimed before they volunteered that they were promised jobs and houses when they came home. Here are a few examples. (69)

7<sup>th</sup> May 1928.

Dear Sir,

The following is a statement of evidence which I wish submit to support my claim for resettlement under the Soldiers and Sailors Act 1919. I joined the West Yorkshire Regiment in January 1916. I was on active service until demobilisation in 1919. When I joined the Army I was promised by the British Government that they would re-start me in civil life and I claim that I have a right to the full implementation of that promise by giving me money to start a holding from the Irish Land Commission.

Yours faithfully, Mathew Brady.  
Delvin, Co Westmeath.

15<sup>th</sup> March 1928.

Dear Sir,

The following is a statement of evidence of my claim which I wish to submit for the consideration of the above committee. I joined the Army, the Inniskilling Fusiliers in 1916 and served for three years, was badly wounded and honourably discharged. Since then I am looking for resettlement under the 1919 Act and I claim that I am entitled to a holding or money to restart me in civil life as was

promised by the British Government during the war.

Yours faithfully George Anderson.  
Clenarney, Delvin, Co. Westmeath.  
11<sup>th</sup> February 1928

Sirs,

I wish to bring before your Commission the grievances of ex-soldiers of the British Army residing in the Irish Free State. Now gentlemen, after the war we were promised homes fit for heroes to dwell in and we are living in hovels in many cases not fit for human habitation. Various inspections for Trust sites for soldiers dwellings have been made here. They have looked at sites, departed and that is all the results of their visits so far. .... We are gentlemen your faithfully servants, Mr Peter Donnelly for Monaghan ex Service men. Glasslough Street, Co. Monaghan.

From the above letters to the Committee, it seems that promise making was a process that begun at the outbreak of war and continued on through the war and even on after the war. Whether promises were made to men before they volunteered or not, the report presented no evidence that these promises were officially sanctioned by the British Government. However, for one man to claim he was promised a house or a job might be questionable, but, for so many men, recruited at various places all over the country to make such a claim, would suggest the men were telling the truth. It would seem that some of the recruiting sergeants had the same hymn-sheet from which to sing their recruiting song. Whether the eager recruits to Kitchener's army were deliberately misled or not, the evidence would suggest that they felt misled. In their efforts not to embarrass the British Government, the authors of the report could not make this claim and so the matter of promises was left non-proven. Perhaps in hindsight, there may be some element of truth in Mrs Sheehy Skeffingtons's statement when she spoke at a rally in Foster Place in November 1932. She 'grudged no honour to the dead who believed they fought for a good cause, even though they were dupes'. (70)

RIC men who joined the army seemed to be given promises as well which were never fulfilled. On the 10 November 1914, the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, Mr. Nevill Chamberlain, wrote to his County Inspectors in relation to members of the Force volunteering for the Army; 200 RIC men joined the Army and mainly enlisted into the Irish Guards. There were also about 100 RIC Reservists serving in the Army at the time. Chamberlain told his Inspectors that he was. (71)

Gratified to be able to inform you that my proposal has been sanctioned...and such volunteers who will join the Army under this agreement will receive privileges as regards pay and pension on the line of those conferred on Reservists by the Irish Police Constables (Naval and Military Service Act, 1914). This means that they will, on return to the Force get the benefit of their previous service in the Royal Irish Constabulary and also of their service in the Army for the purposes of pay and pension.

For his 'proposal' to be 'sanctioned', Chamberlain must have made his proposal to somebody higher than himself either in Dublin or in London. What followed was an agreement between Chamberlain and his superiors, which included the terms on offer in relation to pay and pensions. In October 1915, Chamberlain wrote to his County Inspectors again on the issue of RIC men enlisting into the Army. He wrote that any RIC man joining the Army, 'should fully understand that their temporary absence will in no way militate against their future prospects as regards promotion in the Force.' On the contrary, in fact any RIC man's willingness to 'fight for his country will give him an additional claim to advancement in the Royal Irish Constabulary.' (72) Fifty of the 200 ex-RIC men who joined the army were killed during the War. (73)

Submitting his statement to the Ex-Servicemen's Committee in March 1928 on behalf of the RIC Army Volunteers, their representative James Hurley from Thurles, Co. Tipperary, stated that some of the 150 RIC survivors of the War were 'to-day without any pension at all and had these men stayed at home they would have had a

pension from the RIC.' He also stated that in a circular issued by the Inspector General of the RIC in September or October 1914, that any member of the RIC who joined the Army 'will on his return to the Force be entitled to special privileges such as half his Police pay, special promotion, Army service to count as Police service.' (74)

Hurley's claim that his comrades were promised half their RIC pay while in the Army led to an investigation by the Committee. In May 1928, writing as 'an old inhabitant of Dublin Castle', Mr. W. Doolin, an official from the Irish Department of Finance, 'unofficially' wrote on behalf of the Committee to a Mr. S.J Baker at the Home Office in London enquiring about the authenticity of this promise of half pay. As far as Doolin could ascertain, no such circular was issued to the Dublin Metropolitan Police. (75) Baker's reply was that he could 'find no trace of any statement which could have given rise to an impression that any such payment would be made and that it seems to me to be inconceivable that the Inspector General or anyone else in authority could have made a promise which there was no statutory power to fulfil.' He, Baker, reckoned Hurley's claim was a 'garbled version of the circular of the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1914.' (76) The Committee's report concluded that, 'our investigations lead us to the conclusion that all promises made to members of the Royal Irish Constabulary on enlistment were fulfilled up to the time of disbandment of that Force.' (77)

Some ex-RIC men who joined the Army did receive a pension, but it only lasted for five or six years after the war ended. Corporal Joseph Dunne from Kilmacrennan, Co. Donegal served in the RIC before the war and during the war served in the Leinsters and the Labour Corps. After the war he did not return to the RIC pleading ill health. The real reason he did not go back to the RIC was, as he wrote himself, due to 'National sympathies'. He luckily obtained clerical work with the Letterkenny Fisheries Board in Co. Donegal. He received an RIC pension of £20-2s-1d from 3 September 1919 to 21 August 1926 and an Army pension of eight shillings a week, roughly the same, for roughly four years after the war. In 1926, both sources of income were cut off. (78)

For other RIC men who joined the Army, when the war ended, they had little choice but to go back to what they knew best despite the fear of being killed by the IRA. Things however had changed in their old place of work. On such dark deeds, one ex-RIC man even pointed the finger of guilt towards members of the Irish Government. Patrick Mead was an ex-RIC man who enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He was later transferred to the London Irish Rifles and finished the war serving with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Leinster Regiment. He served in France, Salonika and Palestine. (79)

9<sup>th</sup> of January 1928.

Dear Sir,

The statement of evidence which I propose to submit for the consideration of the above committee effects the terms of reference both with the British and Irish governments on leaving the Army following the declaration of peace. I found on my return to civil life that the reception given to ex- British service men in the particular locality where I resided was one, which I least expected would be given any man who fought for his country. Contempt, to say the least of it was what I received. I was therefore compelled to seek a living for myself, wife and family in some other sphere of life where Ex-Servicemen would be better recognised and not treated with scorn as I found awaiting my return. Having left the army with an exemplary character I decided to join the R.I.C. In this I was successful and again had established myself in a lucrative position until the Anglo - Irish war made it impossible for me to remain with that Force. Whilst at home on leave for a few days with my wife and children my house was surrounded by armed men who discharged shots all around, took me out and under the threat of being shot compelled me to give up my only means of living. These men were acting under direct orders from members of our present government. As I had no other means of living, I



solicited time to consider from the men who raided me and was given twelve hours to make up my mind under threat of death. I remained at home, at the same time I fortified all compensation regards the British Government. I can produce independent evidence of persons who were in my house the night of the raid to testify to the accuracy of this statement. I claim that my whole future career has been ruined by the action of the IRA on that occasion and I submit that I am firstly entitled to compensation as the direct cause of losing my livelihood was brought about by members of the present Government then acting as officers of the IRA. I would be glad of a personal interview if necessary. Signed Mr Patrick Meade, Williamstown, Claddagh, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

Based on Chamberlain's memo to his County Inspectors in November 1914, it would seem that the RIC men who joined the Army assumed they would get half their RIC pay and pension as well as an army pay and pension. This was not to be. The assumption made by the RIC men was a reasonable one to make, after all, if Guinness employees and Jameson employees could obtain half their pay while away at the Front, why couldn't RIC men. Sadly, if one believes the British Civil Servant, Mr. S. J. Baker, the RIC men's assumption was unfounded, the origins of which have yet to be established.

### Conclusion.

The report produced by the Committee on the claims of British Ex-Servicemen living in the Irish Free State ran to ninety-seven pages. In general, under its terms of reference, the Committee identified and presented the difficulties British Forces Ex-Servicemen were confronted with in relation to pensions, housing and jobs.

Generally speaking all the grievances and disabilities complained of were grounded on claims to special treatment by reason of promises given or of war services generally, or were the result of the severance of the Free

State Government from that of the United Kingdom. (80)

These problems were not the sole property of British Ex-Servicemen and 'were in no sense peculiar to Ex-Servicemen living in the Irish Free State.' (81) The report failed to present the real story of misery and dejection experienced by the men as described in their individual letters to the Committee, some of whom have been presented in this text. The report also fell very short on recommendations. On the issue of pensions, although some issues were clarified, their main recommendation was that the men should take up their case with the British Ministry of Pensions. On housing, they found no evidence of promises made by the British government to give Irish men houses or land for their service before or during the War. Their only recommendation was that the Irish Soldiers and Sailors Land Trust should reduce their rates. On the issue of unemployment, as per the promises made to the men on houses and land, the Committee found no evidence of British promises made here either. The report established that since there were so few cases of 'alleged' discrimination in Irish Free State sponsored construction projects, the matter was insignificant and no further action was taken.

The treatment of the majority of British Ex-Servicemen in the years after the War was a classic case of falling between two stools of Government. One stool being the Irish Government and the other being the British. They were, as Mr. M. Heffernan, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Irish Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs called them in November 1927, 'nobody's children'. (82)

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## **2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Michael J.L O' Driscoll.**

*Dan O' Driscoll.*

*The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

Michael Joseph Leo O' Driscoll was born at 42 East Essex Street in Dublin on 16 July 1892. His father's name was Michael also and his mother's name was Margaret Burke. Michael went to school in Strand Street until he was fourteen years of age. Like many young boys in those days, at the age of fourteen, Michael left school and got a job in Smiths umbrella shop at 28 Essex Quay where he worked for about five years making and mending umbrellas. Like a lot of young men consumed with a spirit of adventure, he decided to join the army. On 26 October 1912, Michael enlisted into the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and was given the rank of Private and the regimental number 8771. He signed on for six years in the regular army after which he would go onto the Reserve. When the war broke out in August 1914, he was still with the 4<sup>th</sup> Dublins. On 3 May 1915, he was promoted to the rank of Corporal. Just over a year later he was appointed to the rank of Sergeant and on 9 March 1916 was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Dublin Fusiliers. At that time the 1<sup>st</sup> Dublins were at Suez on their way to Alexandria where they would board ship for Marseilles. They were making their way to France having spent the previous few months battling through the tragedy of the Gallipoli campaign.

Michael met up with his battalion in France. He came through the Battle of the Somme but was admitted to a field hospital suffering from exposure as a result of the terrible winter of 1916/17. On 2 January 1917, Michael applied for a commission into the infantry. Two days later he came back to Dublin and on 28 January 1917, he married his childhood sweetheart named Mary O'Brien in the Church of St. Michael's and Johns. His application for a commission was successful and on 11 February he was transferred to the 21<sup>st</sup> Officer Cadet Battalion. He was sent to train in a place called Haig Hutments in Crookham in Hampshire. On 30 May 1917, he was commissioned as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant into the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers and was transferred to Glenfield Camp, Clonmany, Co. Donegal. Shortly afterwards he was sent to Belgium and served with the Royal

Irish Fusiliers (The Faughs) in the Third Battle of Ieper, more popularly known as Passchendaele. He was one of the lucky ones. Amazingly he survived the Somme, Passchendaele and the German and British offensives of 1918. His war ended when he was shipped home to Calais on a hospital ship on 1 November 1918. When he reached Southampton, he was sent to the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital suffering from dysentery. My father was demobilised on 5 September 1919 and relinquished his commission on 17 June 1920. In the early 1920s, my father and mother, with their young family, moved to a new house in the parish of Marino on the north side of Dublin City. Ironically, German contractors built the houses. As a child, we knew the houses as 'the Jerry built houses.'



2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Michael O'Driscoll in the uniform  
of a Royal Irish Fusilier.

My father worked in the large Dublin department store in Mary Street named Todd Burns. Pennys now occupy the site. The Irish Volunteer, Harry Boland, worked in Todd Burns as a Cutter in the tailoring department.

My father devoted much of his spare time to the Catholic Boys Scout movement in Dublin. He and an ex-Army Chaplain friend of his named Fr. Mc Grath, formed a branch of the Catholic Boy Scouts in the parish of St. Michael and Johns on Essex Quay in Dublin where he was married. At that time, my father was affectionately known as MOD. Fr. Mc Grath and my father got an ex-Army drummer and an ex-Army piper to teach the boys in the Scouts music. They became a very popular marching troop in Dublin. Among their many highlights was their participation in the Eucharistic Congress in 1932. In 1934, my father led the troop of Dublin Boy Scouts on a pilgrimage to Rome. There was a great turnout of well-wishers who waved him and the boys goodbye from the Dublin docks. It took them three days to get to Rome.

My father would very rarely talk about the war and I never knew the full story about the German rifle that we had mounted on the wall in our house. It wasn't until I met a man at my mother's funeral that I found out the history of the rifle, the man, who knew and served with my father in France, told me my father was a very brave man. 'Sometimes at night', he said 'your father would ask for volunteers to go out on reconnaissance raids on the German line.' The Germans no doubt done the same thing too and the groups of men would, on occasion, meet each other in the dark. The story goes that one night my father heard a German voice calling out from behind. The voice cried 'Halt'. My father dropped his weapon and put his hands up in the air to surrender. One of my father's men nearby didn't surrender. He shot and killed the German soldier. The rifle belonged to that young German. He once told us that some of his soldiers had no gas masks. He said they kept a bucket of urine in a part of the trench in case of a sudden gas attack. The urine was used to soak a handkerchief or rag in and hold it over the men's nose and mouth and breath through it until the gas passed.

Another story he told me was one time when he was in Beggars Bush Barracks in Dublin. He and a colleague of his were sent out to arrest a deserter and bring him in. They arrested the man and he pleaded with them, not to make a show of him and he would go quietly. This was agreed. As they were bringing him back to the barracks on a tram, didn't the man jump from the ram and escaped,

never to be seen or heard of again. Michael had a good laugh telling this little story. No doubt there were many more stories, some probably too sad and gruesome for my young ears.

In the 1930s, when I was a child, the abiding memory I have of my father is that of him being a very sick man. Like many an ex-Serviceman of the Great War, he spent a lot of time in and out of hospital. He suffered a lot with bronchitis. He never really got over the effects of a gas attack he had come through. Moreover, having been weakened by dysentery at the end of the war didn't help him either. The war my brave and dear father had come through finally took its toll and he died on 7 January 1941 in the Adelaide Hospital in Dublin. He was just forty-eight years of age. My mother, Michael's childhood sweetheart Mary O'Brien, died seven years later in 1948. My father had expressed a wish, that when he died, he would be buried with his comrades in the Military Cemetery at Blackhorse Avenue in Dublin. Michael's wishes were respected and he was laid to rest in the presence of his family, his friends, the Boy Scouts whom he loved and his old friend Fr. Mc Grath. Michael Joseph Leo O' Driscoll, MOD to his friends, one of Dublin's finest men, may you rest in peace.

Note. The dates associated with my father's military career were obtained from records at the British Ministry of Defence.



**Lieutenant David Devlin M.C.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers.**

*Michael D. C. O'Devlin*

*The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

My grandfather, David Devlin, was born on 16 May 1894 at Number 4, Kenmare Street, Belfast, the eldest son of Thomas Henry and Margaret Jane Devlin (nee Freeland). He was a keen swimmer and water-polo player, as were his brothers. He attended Esdale College and Connell's Institute in Belfast before becoming a Clerk in the Civil Service, initially in London, where he joined the Civil Service Cadet Corps. He was transferred shortly afterwards to Dublin in August 1913 where he became a Clerk in the Veterinary Division of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, Ireland.

Although working in Dublin, he was attested for the Territorial Force on 8 April 1914, joining the 6<sup>th</sup> (Territorial ) Battalion, 42<sup>nd</sup> Highlanders, The Black Watch at Perth, giving his age as nineteen years and ten months. He gave his address as 127 Upper Rathmines, Dublin. As the regiment only recruited men from its recruiting area, he declared he had been born in Aberfeldy, Perthshire. His Regimental Number was 265288 and his height was recorded as five feet and eleven inches.

On the declaration of war, the Territorial Army was mobilised, mainly for home service. The 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> (Perthshire) Battalion of the Black Watch was mobilised in Tay Street, Perth, as part of the Black Watch Brigade. On 6 August, the battalion was at Queensferry as part of the Forth Defences and in November it was assigned to the Tay Defences. It was during this time that he met his future wife, a Miss Alston Wilson. She was a Red Cross Nurse in Dundee for most of the war. On 6 April 1915, the battalion joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Highland Brigade, Highland Division at Bedford for service at the Front.

The Brigade embarked at Folkstone for France, landing at Boulogne on 2 May 1915. Pte. David Devlin came to France with his Black Watch battalion as a member of 'C' Company. On 12 May, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Highland Brigade became the 153<sup>rd</sup> Brigade of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division. The 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Black Watch battalion remained with this brigade for the remainder of the war. His record states that

he was wounded on 23 June 1916 and shortly afterwards was promoted to Corporal. He was evacuated, and by the time he returned to his battalion at Halloy, the battle of the Somme had begun. By the time he During the early stages of the Battle of the Somme. As part of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division, the 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Black Watch moved to Merricourt to take part in the Somme offensive. From Merricourt it marched to Mametz Wood where it went into the reserve line on 21 July 1916. Four days later on 30 July, the Black Watch attacked the eastern corner of High Wood.

The name 'High Wood' more than likely derived from the fact that the wood was at the top of a slope on slightly higher ground. In fact, the elevation is not that great, but in a relatively flat landscape, height and therefore improved vision, was of great advantage. The real name of High Wood, as used before the War and as marked on French maps today, is Bois de Fourcaux, relating to pitchforks. The Germans held it in July 1916 and were not about to give up this height advantage lightly. High Wood was the last of the major woods in the Somme offensive of 1916 to be captured by the British. The fighting in Mametz Wood was grim, and in Delville Wood it was terrible, but they eventually fell, as did Trones Wood. Following a creeping barrage, the infantry attack on High Wood on 30 July began in the evening at about 6:10 p.m. Like most German defences along the Somme front, machine-guns in the Wood that were not knocked out by the British barrage, held back the Black Watch who had to withdraw. By dawn on 31 July they had suffered close on 230 casualties. At the end of this July attack there were few gains and High Wood remained firmly in German hands. Despite a whole series of attacks spanning two months to take High Wood, it didn't fall until 15 September 1916 when the attack was led mainly by the 47<sup>th</sup> (London) Division. It was never fully cleared after the war and it is estimated that thousands of dead soldiers, British and German, still lie today in High Wood.

On the day the Black Watch attacked High Wood, David Devlin was promoted to Corporal. Many years after the war, David recorded the memory of this attack in a poem he wrote titled, *Defeat at High Wood*. (See Poetry section in this edition of *The Blue Cap*.)

Following a visit in the 1930s to the recently built Scottish National Memorial in Edinburgh, David Devlin commented on the friezes portraying the war.

A younger generation and those who failed to serve may have needed the beautiful friezes to tell the story line by line. But it was no sculptured column of route that I saw, it was the living column, smoking, sweating, swaying, rhythmically along the road in the direction of the evil-smelling horror that was High Wood. Meaulte had been the rallying point for the survivors of that futile attack, but the Memorial that afternoon was surly the rendezvous of those others. And they were there; many I knew and had last seen in the dun smoke of the barrage lying slackly prone on the matted grass of neglected and tormented fields. I all but saw the familiar faces, all but heard their familiar greetings.

Following its withdrawal from High Wood, the battalion marched to Meaulte on 1 August and on 6 August to a camp between Buire and Henencourt. They were later moved to the Armienteres sector near the Belgian border. They were moved about quite a bit over the next few months. More than likely they, like many battalions after the Somme, were given some time out to regroup. By the end of October 1916, the Black Watch were in Forceville and it was from here that David was evacuated to a Field Hospital suffering from pleurisy. He was sent back to a hospital in England to recover. He also spent some time recovering in Scotland after which he went on leave to Belfast for a few days around the end of November. While he was away, his battalion, as part of that famous 51<sup>st</sup>(Highland) Division took part in the battle to take Beaumont Hamel at 'Y' Ravine on 13 November 1916, the day the Battle of the Somme officially ended. Black Watch suffered a loss of 226 casualties. The village of Beaumont Hamel was one of the first day objectives that faced the 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Dublin Fusiliers and other battalions of the 86<sup>th</sup> Brigade in the 29<sup>th</sup> Division back in July. It didn't fall until 13 November. At 5:45 a.m. on the morning of 13 November 1916, the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) and 63<sup>rd</sup> (Naval) Divisions attacked the Germans in their last defiant fortress at Beaumont Hamel. The assault commenced over a depressing and dripping

battlefield that was shrouded in fog. This effectively covered the movement of the troops who burst upon the surprised Germans. Across the River Ancre, units of the 63<sup>rd</sup> (Naval) Division battered their way into the German front line. In a driving snowstorm that turned to sleet and then rain, the 10<sup>th</sup> Royal Dublin Fusiliers, supported by two tanks that got stuck in the chalky mud, played an important roll in taking Beaumont Hamel.



Lieutenant David Devlin M.C.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

On 30 December 1916, David Devlin completed an application form for admission to an Officer Cadet Unit, giving his address as Upper Prince Edward terrace, Blackrock, Co. Dublin and his father's occupation as an engineer. He indicated a preference for to be commissioned into the infantry, listing the following regiments in order of preference; The Royal Dublin Fusiliers, the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and the Royal Irish Regiment., David's application for a commission was successful and early in 1917 he joined the No. 18 Officer Cadet Training Battalion at Prior Park near Bath in England.

Here, he completed a course that lasted approximately four months. The next entry in his file states he was discharged to a commission on 28 August 1917. It is unclear why, after finishing his four-month training period that he wasn't sent to a battalion until late August. There is a possibility that his appointment was delayed on account of ill health. He was commissioned a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant and sent to the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Luckily for him he wasn't sent straight to a Dublin's battalion in France or Flanders which by that time had taken part in the Battle of Wijtschate and Messines (Mesen) Ridge and later in mid-August at the practical annihilation of the Dublins' battalions on the Frezenberg Ridge.

When David joined the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, they were re based in Aghada, Co. Cork. In November 1917, the battalion moved to Pembroke and in December to Gateshead. In May 1918, the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion absorbed the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> (Reserve) Battalions and spent the rest of the war in the Grimsby area as part of the Weelsby and Waltham, Humber Garrison. It is believed that the reserve battalions of the Irish regiments based in Ireland were moved to Scotland and England because of the political unrest in Ireland following the Easter Rebellion in April 1916. On 29 August 1918, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. David Devlin was posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Dublin Fusilier in France as a platoon commander, almost a year after his posting to the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion. At that stage in the war, the battalions at the front were crying out for experienced men, particularly officers. Again, it may have been his poor state of health that may explain why he spent almost a year with the Reserve battalion and not with a battalion in France. It had almost been two years since he was at the front with the Black Watch. By that time the war had changed drastically. David had missed another major battle; this time it was the German March offensive of 1918. This battle drifted into failure over the summer months and by the time David joined up with the Old Toughs, they were on the counter-attack eastwards. They had been removed from the 16<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division and put into the 149<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 50<sup>th</sup> Division. In October 1918, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dublins were back fighting the Germans near the village of Le Cateau. Ironically it was near this same French village they had started their adventure in the Great War

back in August 1914. The only official entry in the battalion war diary of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dublins that mentions David Devlin is in the Appendix for November 1918. 'Awards for gallantry in the field during operations of October and November were granted to the under- mentioned of the Battalion ....M.C. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Devlin.' The award of the Military Cross was published in the London Gazette on 8 March 1919, page 3239.

For gallantry and devotion to duty on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 1918 NE of St.Benin When his company commander had been wounded and the Company had lost direction to a fog, and was being enfiladed from a farmhouse occupied by machine gunners, he corrected the direction by compass, and organised an attack on the farmhouse which he captured with three machine guns, thus assisting the advance of the Battalion which had been held up. Subsequently when his men had advanced into our own barrage and became disorganised, he withdrew and reorganised them with coolness and complete disregard of the great personal risk which he incurred.

Not bad for a man that was not in the prime of health. On the last day of the war, the Old Toughs were near Dourllers north of Avesnes in France. On Sunday 1 December 1918, the Old Toughs went to Church in Avesnes. During January and February 1919 they were stationed at Le Quesnoy, where in due course demobilisation and Schools of Instruction to prepare soldiers for civilian life were organised. 'A' and 'D' Companies of the battalion were formed of those non-commissioned officers and men who were employed in a trade or had settled occupations before enlistment and whose re-employment in civil life was assured. 'B' Company took all serving soldiers attending the battalion school. 'C' Company was made up of those men with or without trades who had no prospect of work on return to civilian life. By the end of January 1919, the strength of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Dublins was reduced to four officers and 109 men of other ranks. A confidential report on 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Devlin by the Commanding Officer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dublin Fusiliers, Lieut.-Colonel. Weldon, dated 21 December 1918, recommended David for promotion, notes his proficiency in French and his capacity for hard work.

The report stated David was. 'An excellent officer – full of confidence, personality, drive and tactful, a born leader.' There is no doubt that David Devlin had a love and command of the English language. His powerful use of language in his poem on High Wood demonstrates that ability in abundance. His talents were spotted and put to use in the Schools of Instruction where he helped men who were not exactly gifted in the Queen's English in the skill of letter writing, a skill that many of them would need in the years ahead when they went looking for work.

David was demobilised on 22 January 1919. A note from his commanding officer at Le Quesnoy dated 21 January 1919 stated that David.

Afforded considerable help in the organisation of the Battalion schools under the Education Scheme. Devoted himself with great energy and ability to the different classes under his care. His chief subjects were English literature, shorthand and precise writing and essay writing, and in all these subjects his pupils made excellent progress. In military matters he was an exceptionally good instructor in bombing and all its branches. He has plenty of tact and personality, is a real leader of men, always cheerful in adverse circumstances.

After he was demobilised, David returned to Dublin and his job in the Civil Service. Accompanied by his mother, he was decorated with the Military Cross by King George V at Buckingham Palace on 22 May 1919. He relinquished his commission on 1 April 1920 and was granted the honorary rank of Lieutenant. At that time, his next of kin address was listed as Thomas Henry Devlin, 7 Donegall Square West, Belfast.

David married the Red Cross nurse he met in Dundee, Miss Alison Evelyn Wilson, the eldest daughter of Gavin Laurie by his second wife, Allison Johnston Russell, in June 1920 at St. Fillan's Church, Newport-on-Tay. (The church is now demolished, along with a stained glass window, given by the Wilson family in memory of their son, Gavin Arthur Wilson, who died of wounds while serving with the London Scottish during the war. Their eldest son, Gavin, was born in Dublin in April 1921 and in the summer of the

same year, David Devlin gained a First Class Honours Degree and was awarded a Junior Moderatorship in Mental and Moral Philosophy at Trinity College, Dublin, having studied while working and coping with a young family in a city in some turmoil leading up to the establishment of the Irish Free State.

While David was working in the Civil Service in Dublin, he lived in Monkstown. His next-door neighbour was the anti-Treaty Irish Volunteer, Rory O'Connor. Each man was aware of the other man's history; O'Connor, knew that his neighbour was a Protestant British Army ex-Serviceman and working in the Civil Service. Devlin was aware of O'Connor's republican links and anti-treaty stance. One winter morning in 1920 or 1921, while walking to work as usual, a man in an overcoat with his hat pulled down bumped into David Devlin and at the same time said to him. 'Not that way this morning Mr. Devlin.' As Dublin at the time was a dangerous place, particularly for men with Devlin's credentials, David heeded his warning and took a roundabout route to his office, to find out as he approached that a group of republican irregulars had ambushed some Government officials near his destination. He realised, having recognised the voice, that the unknown man who had warned him was his next-door neighbour, Rory O'Connor. On 9 December 1922, Rory O'Connor along with three other anti-Treaty republicans was shot on the orders of the Irish Free State Government. They were captured by pro-Treaty forces at the Four Courts in July that year.

Having been given the option of staying within the new Irish Free State or moving to Northern Ireland on partition in 1922, David Devlin chose to transfer to the Northern Ireland Civil Service in the Ministry of Commerce, where he worked for the rest of his working life in spite of recurring ill-health. He had a new house built on the Circular Road near Strathearn on the outskirts of east Belfast that was called Windy Knowes. From the house were distant views of Belfast Lough. It was here that their children were born and brought up. He was a keen gardener and built an extensive garden with a pond and a tennis court. He took up bee keeping as his father had done before him. He continued to write both poetry and prose. Visiting the grave of his nephew, Gavin Laurie Wilson, after the war, he recorded his thoughts in a poem

titled *Bac-du-Sud 1936*. (See Poetry section in this edition of the Blue Cap)

In researching my grandfather's record of service, I was also drawn to that of my maternal grandfather, Captain Harry Williams M.C., 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. He was one of four brothers, all of whom served in Irish regiments. He was the sole surviving son of the Derry family, all old boys of Foyle College. (See poem written by Michael O'Devlin titled *Captain Charles Beasley Williams* in poetry section in this edition of the Blue Cap.)

My grandfather, David Devlin died at the age of sixty-seven on 23 December 1961 after working in his beloved garden. He is buried at Dundonald New Cemetery, Belfast. His wife Alison died in Belfast in 1987. May they both rest in peace.

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**William Joseph Nagle.  
'D' Company, 'The Pals',  
7<sup>th</sup> Royal Dublin Fusiliers.**

*Bob Nagle*

*The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

In autumn 1914, William 'Billy' Joseph Nagle, an enthusiastic Dublin Rugby Footballer, volunteered to join 'D' Company of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers, better known as The Pals. During August and September, the President of the Irish Rugby Football Union, F. H. Browning, was raising volunteers and encouraging men to enlist in the Army. In the ranks of this group of three hundred young men were many rugby players and other sportsmen - many of them from the middle class best-educated young men of Dublin. Billy was a dairy farmer from Sillogue in north county Dublin, near Ballymun in fact. He had recently become head of his family after his father had passed away only a few months earlier. He played for St Mary's College second XV in the competition final of 1910-11 and his winners cap is still in our family.

During training, 'D' Company inevitably played rugby and he was photographed with the team and the 31st Infantry Brigade in the Irish Life on 12 March 1915. In April 1915, after a few months basic training at the Curragh, The Pals marched through Dublin to cheering crowds and left for England to join the muster of Lord Kitchener's New Army at Basingstoke.

The Pals went into action in August at Gallipoli on the Aegean coast of Turkey and not in France as they had expected. In burning heat and with inadequate water they were quickly in the midst of a number of fierce battles with a strong enemy who controlled the high ground they sought to conquer. Within a few weeks, only seventy- nine of the original Pals were left. The rest were either killed, wounded or down with dysentery. Somehow Billy had managed to survive and was promoted to Lance Corporal after the savage fighting on the slopes of Kizla Dag where the Dub's excelled but suffered greatly.

He moved off the peninsula in October 1915 with the 10th (Irish) Division he went to Salonika in Northern Greece to join the French forces fighting the Bulgarians in Serbia. A grim cold winter was soon upon them as they fought in their tropical

uniforms in polar conditions until forced to retreat with heavy losses from Lake Doiran back to Salonika.

At the front, where exactly is not stated, more than likely France, rugby continued. A press cutting from the early months of 1916 titled, 'Rugby Football in the War Zone' found him playing as a forward for the RDF against the Munster Fusiliers. Jasper Brett who was capped for Ireland played too.



2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. William J Nagle. 'D' Co. 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Dublin Fusiliers and 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.

Just for the record, the Dublins beat the Munsters twelve points to nil. Sometime in 1916, he was transferred to the equally famous 16<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division in France and was attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. He was commissioned 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in December 1916. He fought with the Inniskillings at the Battle of Wijtschate in June 1917 and at the Third Battle of Ieper later in 1917.

Somehow Billy survived to the very end of the War although he was wounded, possibly at Passchendaele. He remained in France after the armistice working at the large transport depot in Ardrique and it was there that in September 1922 he married Kathleen Lewis. In 1924, they settled in Limerick and in 1928, Passage West Co. Cork where he worked for the oil company, Castrol-Wakefield. He brought home from the war two hammered trench-art brass shell cases embossed

with *Ypres 1914-18* that are still polished and cared for by me. Billy and Kathleen had seven children but their family life was cut short when Billy died of pneumonia at the young age of forty-two in February 1933. They had been married only eleven years. Was he yet another tragic belated victim of the Great War.

My grandfather is buried just inside the gates in the old cemetery at Passage West in the gentle hills above the village. His tombstone records; *William Joseph Nagle, Bellvue Park Passage West, formerly of Dublin*. No mention of soldiering or great deeds or even the game of rugby football, which took him along with the Pals into the War to end all Wars and eventually back home to a new Ireland that few of his comrades lived to see.

Note: Billy's grandson, Bob Nagle, presented the story of his grandfather to the members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association's event titled; *'What did you do during the War Grandad'* at the Dublin City Library and Archive, Pearse Street, Dublin, on 15 October 2005.



KILLINEY LADIES' HOCKEY TEAM.



Photographs

College Studios.

RUGBY FOOTBALL TEAMS OF "D" COMPANY R.D.F. AND 31st INFANTRY BRIGADE.

Rugby Football Team of 'D' Company 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Dublin Fusiliers and paper cutting, unknown source, on the rugby match between the Dubs and Munsters in a 'war zone.' Note L.-Cpl. W. Nagle.

**FOOTBALL.**

**RUGBY.**

**RUGBY FOOTBALL IN THE WAR ZONE.**  
**ROYAL DUBLIN FUSILIERS v. ROYAL MUNSTER FUSILIERS.**

The following account of a match played on 27th February near the firing line in one of the theatres of war has been supplied by a member of the R.D.F.:—The game proved very interesting and fast throughout. The forwards of both teams were evenly matched, but the Dublin backs combined better, thus establishing their superiority in the first half. Kee scored a try from a forward rush, and Brett (the old Irish International) converted nicely. Ten minutes later, Brett surprised everyone by dropping a beautiful goal from a very difficult position. Half-time score:—Dublins, 9 pts.; Munsters, nil.

The second half was more evenly contested, the Munsters playing better together, but they were unable to pierce the Dublins' defence. Bayley scored a good try for the Dublins, but failed to convert. Result:—

Dublins .....	12 pts.
Munsters .....	Nil.

The R.D.F. team—Back, Sergt. T. S. Dale; three-quarters, Pte. Bayley, Lt. J. Brett, Lt. C. Harvey, Lt. R. Kelly; half-backs, Lt. Hare, Lt. M'Ferran; forwards, Lt. J. Clarke, Sergt. Dodd, Sergt. Dowling, Sergt. A. J. England, Lt. Kee, L.-Cpl. W. Nagle, Lt. Taft, Cpl. W. Young.

## **Remembering Cpl. George McIntyre. 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers.**

*Fearghal O'Boyle*

*The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

On Saturday 5 November 2005, members and friends of Blaugh Orange Hall, situated between Coleraine and Bushmills, unveiled a Roll of Honour to two of their fallen Brethren; Fusilier Frank Daly 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers who died in Italy in 1943 and Cpl. George McIntyre 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Dublin Fusiliers who died in Belgium in 1917.

George McIntyre is an interesting character for a number of reasons. He is recorded as being thirty-nine when he died yet his nephew James McIntyre believes this to be a mistake, believing that George may have been as young as twenty-one or twenty-two. James' own father, also James, served during the Great War with the 10<sup>th</sup> Inniskillings, the backbone of which was the Londonderry UVF, so how did an Orangeman from Coleraine end up with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, rather than the Inniskillings which his brother and so many of his neighbours and fellow Orangemen had joined?

Like many veterans, James McIntyre never spoke much about his experiences during the War to his family, and unfortunately he never spoke about the reasons his brother was in a different unit. The family also told me that George had previously served at Gallipoli and the Somme. Cpl. McIntyre is buried at Dozinghem Cemetery, north-west of Poperinghe in Flanders. He died on 6 October 1917. The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Dublins had taken part in the attack on Broodsinde two days earlier and we can surmise that he was wounded during the attack and brought to an Advanced Dressing Station that was based at Dozinghem where he succumbed. During the attack on 4 October, a fellow N.C.O. of the 1<sup>st</sup> Dubs, Sgt. Jim Ockenden, won the Victoria Cross.

The unveiling ceremony was preceded by a short religious service and a parade of standards from the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Association and the local branches of the Royal British Legion. The Last Post, Minutes Silence, Act of Remembrance and Reveille were observed. Fearghal O Boyle, a 'Dub' now based in

Inishowen, Co Donegal, then laid a wreath on behalf of the RDFA. The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Association laid a wreath in memory of Fusilier Daly, and the families of both men also laid their wreaths. The service ended with God Save the Queen and a Benediction.

Speaking after the unveiling, George Duddy, the Worshipful Master of the Lodge, said that any member of the Dubs Association who wished to view the Roll of Honour when in the area would be very welcome. His number is with the Secretary of the R.D. Fusiliers Association. Sean McIntyre, a grandnephew of Cpl. McIntyre said that this was a great occasion for his family as they had nothing belonging to him to remember him, but now this Roll of Honour would ensure that his name and memory would live on.

As a southerner, I was struck by the warmth and friendship that the Brethren of Blaugh L.O.L. 266 showed to me at this very moving event. It was a fine example of Major Willie Redmond's dream of building a bridge of respect and understanding between the north and south of Ireland. It also struck me of the fact that nationalist Ireland had forgotten the sacrifice that so many of our people had made during the Great War. And here I was in an Orange Lodge, invited there by people of a different tradition to my own, to remember one of their members who served in the Dublins. The spirit of brotherhood forged between Irish soldiers from all over Ireland who fought and died side-by-side, was with us again that Saturday afternoon. Spectamur Agendo.

Following the unveiling Fearghal posed for photographs with members of the McIntyre family, the organiser George Duddy of the Blaugh LOL 266, Betty Gallagher and representatives of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Association and the Royal British Legion.

**They are not forgotten:  
Memorials to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.  
Part 7.**

*Philip Lecane.  
The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

This column has been published for several years. The intention was to record memorials on which the names of men from the Royal Dublin Fusiliers were recorded. A number of members were kind enough to send in pictures of the graves of individual *Dubs*. Unfortunately, for space reasons, it was not possible to publish these.

Two developments in recent times have led me to conclude that a regular column recording memorials to men of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers is no longer necessary. Firstly, submissions for the column have dried up. Secondly, has been the advent of the excellent website on Irish war memorials by Michael Pegum, a member of the RDFA. Michael's website is working to record memorials to the Irish who were killed in all conflicts in Ireland and abroad. His website has a comprehensiveness that this column, focusing only on the *Dubs*, could never hope to achieve. I congratulate Michael on his dedication and hard work. His website has created a very important source on Irish history. The site can be accessed at [www.irishwarmemorials.ie](http://www.irishwarmemorials.ie) and I strongly urge members to support the site by making submissions to Michael.

While this column, as presently constituted, will cease as a regular feature, I welcome any future submissions on war memorials containing the names of men of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. If I do receive notice about *Dubs* on memorials, I will certainly publish such notices in *The Blue Cap*. I also welcome submissions on memorials to men of the Madras Fusiliers and the Bombay Fusiliers. (These were the forerunners to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalions Royal Dublin Fusiliers.)

In saying goodbye to this column as a regular feature, I close with a few pieces of information, none of which meet the criteria of "*Memorials that mention men of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.*" May I also bring to your attention Ken Kinsella's article on the Great War Memorial at Kilgobbin.

Carlow War Memorial  
(Tom Burke, RDFA)

Location: Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow

Memorial: The memorial is a stone arch that records the names of 408 men from Co. Carlow who were lost in the Great War.

Point of note: The names of the three McCudden brothers, who were killed serving with the Royal Flying Corps/Royal Air Force, are recorded on the memorial. Their father came from Co. Carlow.

Exact from the Carlow Nationalist, September 2002: "*Carlow is the only county in the country with a 'County War Memorial.'* The memorial was recently unveiled in Leighbridge during Carlow's floral festival. John Kenna carried out research of the 500 names that appear on the memorial. The memorial is a very important step in recognising hundreds of men who fought and took part in World War One from Carlow town and county." A website on the memorial can be accessed at.

[www.rootsweb.com/~irlcar2/Carlow\\_WW1.htm](http://www.rootsweb.com/~irlcar2/Carlow_WW1.htm)

Graves of two RDF veterans

As previously mentioned, for space reasons it has not been possible to publish details of the graves of individual *Dubs*. Their details are usually available on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website. Early last year, RDFA member Tom Brooks of Ontario, Canada sent information to the late Pat Hogarty on the graves of two RDF veterans.

Location: Holy Cross Cemetery, Yonge Street, Thornhill, Ontario, Canada. According to Tom Brooks, Thornhill is located just above the northern boundary of the city of Toronto.

Private Thomas Farrelly, died 10 June 1967, age seventy-two.

Private John Kennedy, died 2 March 1961, age seventy-one.



### The 29<sup>th</sup> Division Memorial

On 13 March 2005 The Gallipoli Association laid a wreath on behalf of our association at the 29<sup>th</sup> Division Memorial. The memorial is situated in the centre of a large roundabout on the A45 about five miles (Eight Kilometres) east of Coventry. Thanks to our colleagues in The Gallipoli Association for helping us commemorate the men of 1<sup>st</sup> Bn RDF who died in Gallipoli while serving with the 29<sup>th</sup> Division.

While researching the 25 April 1915 landing at Sedh-el-Bahr I came across a booklet that I recommend to our readers. "*The story behind the Monument: The 29<sup>th</sup> Division in Warwickshire and north Oxfordshire January-March 1915*" was written by Chris Holland & Tony Jordan was published in March 2005. Tony's father Bob was a member of 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Munster Fusiliers who took part in the landing at Sedh-el-Bahr.

Following discussions with Tony it has been agreed that members of the RDFA living in the Republic of Ireland may obtain a copy of the booklet by sending €10 (that's euro, not sterling) including p&p to Tony Jordan, 435 London Road, Stretton on Dunsmore, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV24 9HW, England. Please let him know that you read about his booklet in Philip Lecane's column in *The Blue Cap*. RDFA members from elsewhere who are interested in a copy may Email me (Philip Lecane) at [rdfa@eircom.net](mailto:rdfa@eircom.net) and I'll get a price for you from Tony. Alternatively, they may write directly to Tony (please enclose an international reply coupon).

*'Garrison Church is a little gem on  
Surrey/Hampshire border.'*  
(Dan Finnigan, RDFA member.)

The above heading appeared on an article that was published on 25 November 2005 in a local English paper named *The Herald*. RDFA member Dan Finnigan of Aldershot, is a regular contributor to the paper's "Peeps into the Past" column. The article is about the garrison church of Deepcut Barracks, Blackdown near the Surrey/Hampshire border. According to Dan, "St Barbara's Garrison Church is a wooden structure covered in corrugated iron, and it has stood on the spot since 1901. With its unusual striking white exterior and warm bright interior, this is an exquisite little gem,

and was originally named St. Michael and All Angels Garrison Church, Deepcut, Farnborough. Back in those early days, Deepcut was a huddled military camp with primitive roads and muddy tracks, housing just a few infantry units and a detachment of the Royal Field Artillery." The article states that; "In 1905 the Crown donated an acre of land alongside the Church for a burial ground, which was duly consecrated and is still occasionally used to date. Among the units stationed at Deepcut during the Great War was the 9<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers of the 48<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 16<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division. They came to Blackdown from Ballyhooly, Co. Cork in September 1915, and departed three months later in December for Le Harve, France, and the Western Front leaving behind two of their comrades who lie buried in the little cemetery. They are 19531 Pte. Denis Lynch died on November 6, 1915, aged 35 and was interred four days later. 16178 Pte. James Monaghan, from Virginia, Co. Cavan, died on December 18, 1915, also aged 34, and was interred December 20. They are buried side by side in the R.C. Plot 'C'. Father Cotter officiating both times." The article has a photograph showing both graves.

The article continues; "Another connection with Dublin is the stained glass windows in the east end of St Barbara's Church. They were the three windows formerly in the east end of the garrison church, Richmond Barracks, at Portobello, Dublin (now named Cathal Brugha). The windows depict St. George, Christ in Glory, and St. Patrick, and were unveiled at the service of Harvest Thanksgiving on October 1, 1922, a beautiful memento of Ireland. 1922 was the year of the partitioning of Ireland."

I will finish with two further pieces of information from Dan Finnigan's gem of an article. He tells readers that scenes from an episode of *Inspector Morse* were once filmed there. Towards the end of Dan's article he states; "In January, 2003, a new stained-glass memorial dedicated to the 16<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division in memory of all Irish men who gave their lives in the Great War 1914-1918, was installed by the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association in the garrison Church in Cathal Brugha Barracks, Portobello, Dublin where the East windows of St. Barbara's originated."



In a letter to RDFA, accompanying a copy of the article, Dan Finnigan paid tribute to the late Pat Hogarty, "A tireless worker for the 'Dubs Association and a grand man, whom I was personally proud to know."

### **New Plaque for Great War Memorial at Kilgobbin.**

*Ken Kinsella*

*The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

At the monthly meeting on 6 June 1924 the Rathdown Rural District Council granted permission to Mrs. Belinda Barrington Jetters, "Clonard House", Sandymount, Co. Dublin to erect a Celtic cross at Kilgobbin cemetery (old) in memory of the officers and men from the district who fell during the Great War.

The handsome Celtic cross crafted from local Barnaculla granite had a limestone plaque on which twenty-nine names were inscribed. One additional name was added to the new plaque. With eight decades of wind and rain sweeping down from the Dublin Mountains beating against the memorial, it is not surprising that the inscriptions became effaced and some names were partly obliterated. A local stonemason, Gerard Doyle, carefully cleaned the limestone plaque and repaired an ugly crack at its base. While this improved legibility and the overall appearance of the plaque, it became obvious that it would continue to crumble in the short-term and begin to disintegrate in a year or two.

A replacement became the only option worth considering but finding €3,000 for a new plaque was not going to be easy, even in our Celtic Tiger Economy. The cemetery is in the care of the Culture, Community Development & Amenities Department of Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council and a meeting with its Senior Officer, Mr. Richard Shakespeare proved to be most encouraging. He gave his permission for the replacement to take place and indicated that he would look positively at funding the restoration project. Joe O' Higgins of Shanganagh Marble and Stone submitted a quotation to Mr. Shakespeare who agreed that the project would be funded from the Heritage Officer, Mr. Tim Carey's budget.

Because of the building development, 'The Rectory' now taking place in the field adjoining the cemetery, this beautiful memorial, which was previously not visible from outside the cemetery is now going to become very much part of the community in Kilgobbin / Stepside. It is fortuitous that the open area of the new development will be situated at the cemetery end and part of the memorial's large base will be within the landscaped area offering clear views of the plaque. I have already spoken with the developers, Albany Group, about landscaping around the base of the memorial and they have agreed to meet again in July when the development is near its conclusion. When landscaping is completed, the memorial will benefit from a general cleaning including the railings, which will be wire-brushed and painted. It is expected that the work will be completed in time to hold a short ceremony at the memorial in November 2006. I regret the typographical error in one of the names on the plaque, which was entirely my fault.

The new plaque may be viewed on Michael Pegum's website [www.irishwarmemorials.ie](http://www.irishwarmemorials.ie)

In conclusion, I wish to thank Richard Shakespeare, Tim Carey and Rosaline Dunphy of Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council Heritage for funding the project, together with Sean Connolly, Rob Goodbody, Michael Pegum, Gerard Doyle and Alan Geraghty for their encouragement and valuable advice.

### **Golden Ball and the Great War and the Kilgobbin Memorial.**

In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Golden Ball was a tiny village with a population of approximately sixty-five people. Four of its few young men, close neighbours and friends, died in the Great War and are commemorated on the beautiful granite memorial at Kilgobbin cemetery. One of the men, John Doyle, Service No. 9311, 184 Golden Ball, brother of Denis Doyle, was attached to a Reserve Battalion, Irish Guards, and died from Scarlet Fever on 7 September, 1915 at Beddington Isolation Hospital, having enlisted forty-seven days earlier on 22 July.

The remaining three men were attached to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Irish Guards, which was decimated in the First Battle of Ypres in October/November 1914.

Private Edward Byrne, Service No. 3049, 69 Golden Ball, enlisted 23 May 1908 and was killed in action on 1 November 1914 at Zillebeke Wood, near the village of Klein Zillebeke, seven kilometres south-east of Ypres.

Private Denis Doyle, Service No. 4003, 184 Golden Ball, enlisted on 5 January 1912, the same day as Edward Farrell, and was killed in action on 2 November 1914 on the fringe of Zillebeke Wood.

Private Edward Farrell, Service No. 3999, 67 Golden Ball, enlisted on 5 January 1912 and was killed in action on 6 November 1914 at Zillebeke Wood.

The men have no known graves but are commemorated on Panel 11 of the War Memorial at Menin Gate, Ypres, Belgium where officers of the local Fire Brigade sound the Last Post at 8 p.m. every night of the year.

## Dublin's war memorial gets €3.6 facelift.

The above headline appeared in *The Sunday Times* of 26 June 2005 above an article that began: "*Tourists cannot find them and the public have stopped visiting: now Dublin's War Memorial Gardens are to undergo a €3.6m revamp to woo back visitors.*" The article said that lighting "*will be erected along the walls of the Kilmainham Park to make it stand out in the night skyline*". The rest of the article gives a history of the Park and quotes from architects involved in the project. All very good news indeed.



Zillebeke Wood, Flanders.



Private Edward Farrell 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Irish Guards.

**Poetry****At Basra where jackals whined.**

By  
Tony Quinn.

In memoriam, Herbert (Bertie) Tierney, Dublin  
Pals and Cheshire Regiment, missing believe  
killed in action, Mesopotamia, ( now Iraq ), Spring  
1916.

Your name I read on stone –  
At Basra's lonely scene,  
A Dublin Pal, Bertie Tierney,  
Missing, Spring nineteen sixteen.

Your mother read your censored notes –  
From parched Gallipoli,  
To fight in England's war  
You crossed the Persian sea.

You survived the Dardanelles  
But many fell at Suvla bay,  
And like Ledwidge of the Boyne  
You lived to die another day.

Your fate was sadly sealed –  
In the ancient vale of fears  
Where Eden's garden grew,  
With Eve the first mother's tears.

Relieve Kut el Amara –  
The battle orders pealed,  
While hungry jackals whined  
On Ares the war gods fated field.

You'll walk no more in Dublin –  
Nor sail its pleasant Bay,  
But sleep in Basra's fields  
Where jackals no longer prey.

**Elegy For Dalkey War Dead.**

By  
Tony Quinn.

In the nave of Patrick's church  
Names on sun-lit marble etched,  
Poppy-wreathed, blood symbolic,  
Sixteen men from Dublin town  
I intone in hushed refrain:

Atkinson, Barton, Betts, Bethune,  
Butler, Cathie, Bethune again,

Curtain, Empey, Fawcett, Green,  
Hitchins, Mc Cracken, brave Hollwey  
Reg Jeffares and John E. Powell  
( a padre like Willie Doyle).  
God rest your gallant souls.  
If you served near Suvla's shores  
did you recall Killiney Bay?  
Do you sleep in Flanders fields?  
where gore-red poppies sway?  
Nurse Jones one woman named  
did you tend the battle-maimed  
along the Somme where bodies lay?  
Did you lose your lives in vain?  
As war clouds now eclipse again  
for global peace we all pray,  
but we still remember you all  
Dora Jones and sixteen men  
etched on a Dalkey church wall.

**Private James Murray**

By  
Pol O Muiri.

In loving memory of Private James Murray, 9<sup>th</sup>  
Royal Dublin Fusiliers, killed at Guillemont, 6  
September 1916.

An uncle without a name  
A country ghost  
A disowned soldier  
From Dunlewy to the Farset  
From the Farset to France  
There remains nothing of him now  
But a name carved on foreign stone.  
The generals took him from this world  
Like the little people would kidnap  
A newly-born child from a mother's cradle.

I look for his spirit in the Chapel in Albert,  
In lit candles and the salvation of prayer.  
I stand, as he stood, under the gaze  
Of a golden angel that did not fall nor surrender  
As men made pieces of men  
In the name of the Father and the King and the  
Kaiser.  
I search for his memory on the plains of the  
Somme  
In fields between Guillemont and Ginchy  
In the limbs of trees that grow no more  
In the clothes of a regiment that survives no more  
In mute trenches, in green grass, grass as green  
As the glens of Donegal.

**Tear for a Fusilier.**

by

Eugene Rooney of Dundalk.

One mid summer's evening  
As the Sun was going down  
I strolled into a cemetery  
On a hill in Dundalk town.

It's just a little graveyard  
That holds no kin of mine  
With crumpled, broken crypts and graves  
Fresh and new at one time

A sense of sadness fills me  
As I think of lives once lived  
There is no more pain or sorrow  
As they never have more to give

Then standing up beside a wall  
A young soldier's grave I see  
Away from home in foreign lands  
He fought for you and me

God called him home so early  
And for this I shed a tear  
Thank you for your sacrifice  
Young brave Irish Fusilier.

**Defeat at High Wood.**

By

Lieutenant David Devlin M.C.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

A cloudless July day, the hot sun thrust  
His skewers of fire relentless, straight and deep  
Onto Earth's open wounds. Enmity lay,  
As in the sleep that follows sated lust,  
In brooding hush.  
Pregnant the smoke stained sweep  
Of summer sky with fate, the light of day  
Was compact more than night of nameless fears  
That stole, like ghosts, a-tiptoe through the heart;  
Sinister, too, the shell-ploughed honest clay:  
Sleep-hungry eyes in faces lined with tears  
Of searing sweat no solace could impart-  
A peace, wherein no benediction lay!

The spirit that erstwhile informed that slope,  
That habited those woods and underlay  
The lingering fragrance of the countryside,  
Seemed to have fled and taken with Him Hope.  
Stifled all instinct in the soul to pray,

For God had hurried thence and Joy had died!  
Why Him upbraid? For all the fertile lands  
That billowed from Mametz to Delville Wood  
Were trenched with scars where men,  
His image, moved  
Alert with red, iconoclastic hands  
And minds inflamed in murd'rous attitude  
To kill – themselves and all they nobly loved.

The guns profane the groves that poets say  
Were His first temples. Here and there a tree  
Bare-armed laments for Beauty laid in faggots  
Upon the pyre of war. The brambles sway  
Heavy with horrid fruit. Let not God see  
Us others crawl these creviced sores like maggots!

**Bac-du-Sud 1936.**

By

Lieutenant David Devlin M.C.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

The following poem was written by Lieut. David Devlin M.C. following a visit to the grave of his nephew, Gavin Laurie Wilson, many years after the war had ended.

Horizon to horizon not a hedge  
Recalling home except these four alone!  
Then homelier these, even were they not grown  
To house within their green familiar edge  
So much of home. The gridded headstones dredge  
the pools of memory of laughing boys –  
crusading children who, forsaking toys,  
lie here, of Peace the unremembered pledge.

Yet somewhere, wise beyond all years, they know  
We err who count a race by distance run  
A country's pledges kept or conflicts won  
Of greater moment than a soul's. And so,  
In greener fields where guns have never boomed,  
Their interrupted laughter is resumed.

The following poem was written by Michael O'Devlin, grandson of Lieut. David Devlin. Many readers will have experienced the emotions that the Great War can still generate across the passage of time. For my part, I was moved to record some thoughts while looking at a faded snapshot of one of my grandmother's four brothers who fought in the Great War, a young man on a beach in Donegal, just prior to the outbreak of war:

**Captain Charles Beasley Williams.**

By  
Michael O'Devlin.

With tousled hair and frank, disarming look,  
You gaze forever, caught in that still moment  
We hear in a sea-shell, faint but clear;  
And I smell the salt air, hear the gulls cry,  
Listen to the distant breakers on the strand.

Ominous the rumble as you trudged along the  
Menin road  
Then stumble darkly up the line towards Hooze.  
Did the birds sing on that August morning before  
the shells came?  
As you moved around your Irishmen, smiling,  
Your luck was out - you died in Flanders mire,  
Making a go of a bad position;  
An invitation for an afternoon of 'hate'.

And when they brought you back, behind the line,  
They put you gently down to rest  
Amongst your men from North and South;  
Under the stars' soft gleam, the chink of spade,  
Unhurried, tender shadows, muffled voices,  
Marking the spot with cross and map  
To make a garden of that little world.

Long months of battle, rain and snow  
Have left no trace.  
Listed with the missing, your name is etched in  
white.  
Look for it – there, do you see it?  
Up high, high, where your glance will play,  
Long after we forget.

[Captain Charles Beasley Williams, 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal  
Irish Rifles, killed in action, Hooze, 24 August  
1915, aged 20.]

**A Lad Enlists.**

By  
Lieutenant David Devlin M.C.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

In 1941, David Devlin's eldest son Gavin, volunteered for the army. When Gavin returned to his regiment after a period of leave, David wrote the following poem titled *A Lad Enlists*. When writing the poem, he may well have had his young nephew, also named Gavin (Laurie Wilson) who was killed in 1918.

With hardly nineteen summers to his name  
He joined the army - left the home a boy,  
Left boyhood too, behind, laid down the toy,  
Walked from Youth's  
Dreaming at the call that came,  
The "Follow Me" more potent far than Fame  
Or Glory's voice or the compelling coy  
Whisper of young love - and with quiet joy  
Gave up the lesser for Life's greatest game.

The soldier may come back, but for the lad  
Is no return except in outward seeming;  
His wondering smile, eager as lovers' kissing  
War counts among its dead; his boyish glad  
Belief in fairy worlds whose colored gleaming  
Played in his glance, is numbered with the  
missing.

## Where Heroes Sleep.

By  
Ken Kinsella

I wrote these simple verses in memory of four young soldiers from Golden Ball, Co. Dublin, who died in the Great War. It also acknowledges the part played by Flemish people who have worked hard to ensure that the memory of all those who died in the Great War will never be forgotten.

Oh Flanders Fields your secrets keep,  
Beneath your meadows our heroes sleep.  
No stone or cross where they now dwell,  
In your place of peace that once was hell.

In blood soaked trenches, they would never see,  
Their Three Rock Mountain or Kilakee.  
That sacrifice of young life's blood,  
Now almost forgotten, misunderstood.

And yet, noble Flemings still remember  
Why they died in that November,  
When everyday down all those years,  
At Menin Gate they shared our tears.

Here is one such Fleming mentioned in Ken's poem. This is Erwin Ureel, a dear friend and member of the RDFA who lives in Roeselare in Flanders. A few years ago, the remains of a soldier from the Black Watch Regiment was discovered near Polygon Wood. Erwin met some of the burial party and he promised them that he would play a lament on his pipes on a November night every year in memory of the Scottish soldiers who died in Flanders.





## Highlights of the past year 2005.

*Sean Connolly*

### *The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

The written word has been invaluable to us in our research on the Irish men and women of the First World War. With that in mind, we believe that it is important to record the activities of the Association so that future generations have some evidence of what we have done to increase the awareness of this important part of our history. In a few years time, what happened in 2005 will blend with the other years and few will be able to recall the Association's activities with precision. For the record, the following is a brief summary of the Association's work and activities for the year 2005.



RDFA group at the Menen Gate Ceremony in April 2005.  
Joe Gallagher, Pat Cummins, Erwin Ureel, Seamus Greene,  
Nick Broughall and the late Pat Hogarty.

The opening of our exhibition in the Passchendaele Memorial Museum 1917 marked an important achievement for our Association. As a joint cross-border project in co-operation with the Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum in Armagh, we put on display a range of objects, photographs, personal stories and graphics that explained the part played by Irish soldiers in the area around the Ieper/Ypres salient. The exhibition told the visitor something about the men and women represented by the long lists of names, regimental numbers, graves and memorials in the vicinity. There was a formal opening ceremony on Friday 22 April, which was attended by some 300 guests. The Irish Ambassador to Belgium, Mr Barrie Robinson, was present, so too was the Mayor of Armagh, Mr Eric

Speers. Our Chairman opened his address in Flemish, an unexpected accomplishment that was very much appreciated by the audience. There was a memorable concert in the local church on Saturday organised by our good friend Erwin Ureel. He combined words, music and images to tell the story of the Irish soldiers who fought and died in Flanders to a spellbound audience.

The museum has a good reputation and its excellent displays and re-creation of the soldier's life in a bunker attract a constant stream of visitors. The team that installed the exhibits included Dave Buckley whose knowledge, time and effort were big factors in the success of this venture abroad. Our thanks too go to Amanda and Arthur from the Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum who brought the exhibition from Armagh and Dublin to Zonnebeke and who kindly assisted David. The attendance of a large group from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland at the opening ceremonies was the subject of much positive comment. Thanks to those members of the RDFA who travelled to Zonnebeke.

The 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli was marked by the Remembrance Service in St Anne's Church, Dawson Street, on 25 April 2005, the actual day of the attack. The many Royal Dublin Fusiliers who died on that day and during subsequent failed campaign were in our minds. [Members can now see the Gallipoli stained glass window memorials in St Annes Church on Michael Pegum's outstanding website [www.irishwarmemorials.ie](http://www.irishwarmemorials.ie) ]

The Annual General Meeting of the RDF Association was held on 28 May in the John T. Gilbert Room, Dublin City Library and Archive. The outgoing committee were returned to office. The meeting was followed by a showing of Oliver Murphy's award winning DVD, *'The Clouds of War'* about the past pupils of Belvedere College S.J, Dublin, who took part in conflicts during the last century.

About fifteen members made the weekend visit to London on the 11-12 June to participate in the wreath laying service at the Cenotaph. This was organised by the Combined Irish Regiments Association, London with whom we have developed a good friendship. Our standard was carried by Capt (retd) Seamus Greene.

In that month, we also had an exhibition on the Irish in Gallipoli in the Dublin City Library and Archive. On 1 July, the Connaught Rangers Museum was opened in Boyle by Brig.- Gen John Martin, (retd) Irish Army. The Band of the Western Brigade provided the music for the occasion when a DVD of the CRA's trip to Flanders was also launched. On the same day, Fearghal O'Boyle represented the Association at a commemoration for the 182 soldiers from the Inishowen Peninsula who were killed in the Great War. Seven of them served in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers



David Buckley RDFA.  
Assembling the exhibition in Zonnebeke, April 2005.

On 10 July, we had a good turnout for the National Day of Commemoration at The Royal Hospital, Kilmainham. John Bowman mentioned the grandfather of one of our members in his commentary. In the afternoon, there was a ceremony in the Irish War Memorial Gardens at Islandbridge to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ending of the Second World War. Government Ministers attended and the Irish Army provided music and catering. 'August is a wicked month'. Everybody was shocked by the sudden death of our founder

member, Pat Hogarty. There is a separate obituary in this edition but the comment must be made that the loss of Pat was, and is, felt deeply by all of us.

Our exhibition on Gallipoli in the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), The Royal Hospital, Kilmainham in Dublin was completed during August and opened to visitors. The design by Barbara Kenny of the Office of Public Works and Wendy Williams is very attractive. We have received many favourable comments. It is well worth a visit and we would like to thank Catherine Marshall of IMMA for her co-operation and direction of the project.

As well as presenting two exhibitions on the Gallipoli campaign, to mark the ninetieth anniversary of the Gallipoli landings in April and August 1915, several members of the RDF Assoc. and the Connaught Rangers Association visited the Gallipoli Peninsula in September 2005 where they laid wreaths at the Helles Memorial, The Canakkale Martyrs Memorial and Chocolate Hill Cemetery. There was a joint wreath laying ceremony at the Canakkale Martyrs with the Governor of Canakkale and representatives from the Dubs and Connaught Rangers Associations.

We made a donation to the Third International Conference of the Society for First World War Studies that took place in Trinity College in September. This was a superb seminar organised by the post-graduate history students of Trinity under the guidance of Professor John Horne.

The 15 October was a special day for two reasons. With the theme, '*What did you do during the War Granddad?*' Four members of the Association told the stories of their grandfathers who served in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Ms. Margaret Stewart spoke about Boer War veteran Pte. Henry Stewart. Bob Nagle, who was visiting from Australia, told us about Lieut. William Nagle who survived Gallipoli and the Western Front. (See story in this edition) The tragic experience of Lance Cpl.. Charles Heatley, who came through Gallipoli only to die on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, was narrated by Fred Heatley. (See The Blue Cap Vol. 11. December 2004, Pages 24 to 27 for story of Lce. Cpl. Fred Heatley – Gran's Widow's Penny.)

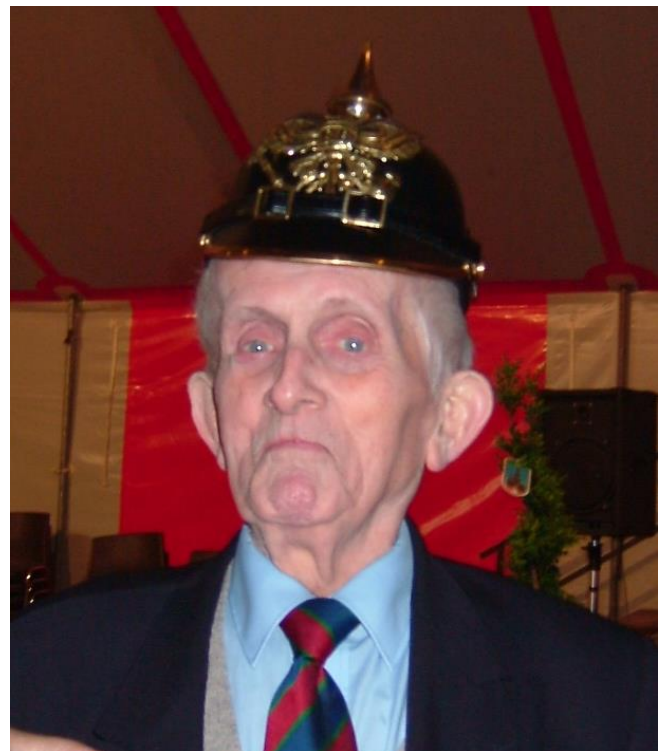


Sgt. Andrew Kinsella's service from 1915 to his death in the German March 1918 offensive was related by Sean Connolly. The reaction of the audience will encourage other members to tell similar stories.

The presentations were followed by the formal launch of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Archive at the Dublin City Library and Archive. The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Councillor Catherine Byrne, accepted the donation of an archive of soldiers and airmen's letters sent to Miss Monica Roberts, who organised gifts and comfort parcels for prisoners of war. Her daughter, Mrs Mary Shackelton who made the donation, was the guest of honour at the reception that followed. [One of the first students to use the material came especially from Oxford. He considered his trip very worthwhile.] The launch of this archive is a major achievement for the Association. We now have a repository for all the letters, diaries etc that have been donated to us over the years. The archive rooms are state of the art and we would now ask those members who wish to donate material to the archive to do so and contact us immediately. You can contact Tom Burke at 7 Ayrfield Road, Ayrfield, Dublin 13. We wish to build this archive for students of history so as future generations will know about the history of the regiment and about Ireland's participation in the Great War. The Royal Dublin Fusiliers association wish to sincerely thank Ms Mary Clark, Dublin City Archivist for accepting and promoting our archive.

The advance interest in the lecture scheduled for 5 November was so great that we decided to find a larger venue. Prof. Richard Holmes, CBE, Cranfield University, has a reputation as an exceptional speaker. The 168 who came to the Masonic Hall in Molesworth Street to hear him speak on the experience of 'Tommy', know that he deserves it. His expert knowledge was conveyed with eloquence, compassion and humour. It was one of those occasions that nobody wanted to end. Though much in demand, he volunteered to speak to us because of his high regard for the forgotten Irish soldiers of the Great War. This was his first visit to Dublin and it was a prestigious achievement and a pleasure for the RDFA to have Richard with us. He has been a member of the Dubs Association for the past several years.

On 11 November, many members went to the Mass at City Quay Church, the commemoration at Islandbridge on 12 November and the Service in St. Patrick's Cathedral on 13 November. Our Chairman and Secretary's absence was noted but they were on duty overseas as part of the expeditionary force to retrieve the exhibition material from Zonnebeke. During that trip, Erwin Ureel, our honorary Belgian Dublin Fusilier, diverted us to the cemetery at Polygon Wood at 11:00 p.m. on 11 November where Erwin played a bagpipe lament for an unknown Scottish soldier buried there. Perhaps the many unknown Irish soldiers lying nearby heard the slow air played in deep winter under a glowing white moon.



Unidentified German infiltrator at Zonnebeke  
( Pat Cummins RDFA)

Our Donegal member, Ferghal O Boyle laid a Poppy wreath on behalf of the Dubs Association at the Cenotaph in Londonderry / Derry during the annual November commemoration. He represented our Association at the dedication of the Roll of Honour to two members of the Blagh Orange Hall, which is located between Coleraine and Bushmills. One of them, Cpl. George McIntyre was serving with the 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Dublin Fusiliers when he was killed in Belgium in 1917. Our special thanks go to George Duddy and the members of the Blagh Orange Lodge for their

kind invitation and courtesy shown to Fearghal (See Fearghal's article on Cpl. George Mc Intyre.)

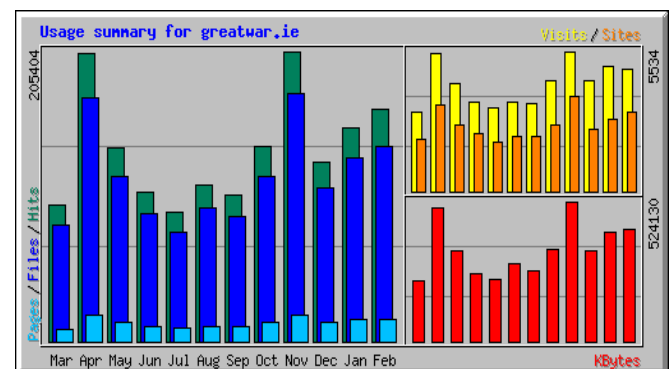
Congratulations to our member, Ms. Tracey Mc Rory on the launch of her musical CD titled *Boys of the Island*. Tracy is a wonderful violinist who works with a cross-border reconciliation group based in Donegal. Her uncle was a Chaplain assigned to the Connaught Rangers and was wounded at Passchendaele on 21 October 1917. He was sent home to Dunree, Co. Donegal. Last year, Tracey brought several groups of young Irish people from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to visit our exhibition in Zonnebeke. On 10 November 2005, she played her violin at the Passchendaele Museum 1917 where the exhibition was presented. The following night, by invitation of the Last Post Association, she played at the Menin Gate and at the Great War Remembered Concert in St. Martin's Cathedral in Ieper (Ypres). The Last Post Association have invited Tracey back to play at next year's November ceremony and concert. Well done Tracey from all your friends in the Dubs Association. For copies of Tracey's CD, please contact her at 07813642540.



Professor Richard Holmes C.B.E in full flow at his marvellous lecture in Dublin.

The Association's Annual Dinner was held on 2 December in the Masonic Hall, Dublin. Over 200 attended. Old acquaintances were renewed and new friends made in the enjoyable atmosphere created by the general goodwill and the good staff work of Brian Moroney and his wife Therése. We are fortunate to have so many talented entertainers among the membership. Our thanks go to Mr. Louis O'Connell for presenting the RDF Assoc. with his watercolour painting titled *Poppy Day*.

A number of invitations to speak about the Great War during the year were accepted by members of the Committee. Tom Burke presented a lecture on the Royal Dublin Fusiliers to the Officers and men of 'C' Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, Cathal Brugha Barracks. Many thanks to Capt. Sean Murphy and Lieut.-Col. Behan for the invitation. Philip Lecane spoke to several historical societies around Dublin on the sinking of the R.M.S. Leinster and Seamus Greene presented a lecture on the Dubs to the Clontarf Historical Society. Nick Broughall presented a lecture on Gallipoli to the Ireland-Australia Association. Finally the most unusual venue was the Training Unit in Mountjoy Prison where a lecture was presented on the Irish in the Great War by Sean Connolly. A less public but significant event was the arrival of Leonhard Liam Steffen, who was born to Gunda and Martin Steffen, our good friends in Bielefeld. Martin's academic sojourn in Ireland obviously made an impression. Our website continues to attract a steady stream of visitors. During April and November, which are the peak month, we had an average of over 180 visits per day.



Graph showing 'hits' on our website between March 2005 and February 2006. November is always very high on the 'hit' list.

## Books Notice

*Nick Broughall*

*The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

**Siegfried Sassoon: A Biography.** Author. Max Egremont. Not only a life of one of the first soldier authors to put into print the horrors of the Great War but also a glimpse into the ways of those in his circle; writers, poets, eccentrics and dwellers of the "big houses". Awarded the Military Cross and twice wounded he penned *On Passing the New Menin Gate*:

And here with pride  
'Their name liveth forever', the Gateway claims.  
Was ever an immolation so belied  
As these intolerably nameless names?  
Well might the Dead who struggled in the slime  
Rise and deride this sepulchre of crime.

**Siegfried Sassoon. A Biography.** Published by Picador. 597 pages. Price. £20 sterling

**Wigs and guns: Irish barristers and the Great War.** Author. A. P. Quinn. Congratulations to Tony Quinn on his labour of love in putting together in such great detail a record and remembrance of those members of his profession who served and lost their lives in the various theatres of war. He also lists in an appendix the names of solicitors and solicitors' apprentices who were killed in action. The text of letters and postcards written from the Front is also recorded. This commemorative volume is included in the Irish Legal History Society series published by Four Courts Press. Information: [www.four-courts-press.ie](http://www.four-courts-press.ie) 208 pages. Price. €45.00

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers and The Tragedy of Mouse Trap Farm April and May 1915.** Author. Tom Burke MBE. Our Chairman Tom has given us a very detailed account of the terrible happenings in that area in April and May 1915 when the German gas attacks took the lives of so many men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dublins and other regiments. This booklet of less than 50 pages, gives the names and family details of many of the fallen. Extracts from letters and first hand accounts of some of those involved in the fighting. It also gives references to the author's sources. Published by the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association with support from the Department of

Foreign Affairs Reconciliation Fund. Price. €7 or £7 plus Post and Packing.

**A Journey of Remembrance. Walks in the footsteps of Bandon Soldiers.** Authors. The Bandon War Memorial Committee. This latest book issued by the committee is a combination of a guide to the war cemeteries and memorials to the men of Bandon who fell in both World Wars is to be formally launched at the end of March 2006. Price. €10. Information from the Secretary, Billy Good, 23 Oliver Plunkett Street, Bandon, Co. Cork

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Irish Rifles in the Great War.** Author. James W. Taylor. Following on his history of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Royal Irish Rifles in the Great War, Jim Taylor, a member of the RDF Association, completes his account of the two regular battalions of the Royal Irish Rifles.. Biographical details on over 320 officers and some other ranks are given. They suffered in excess of 1,400 fatalities, including men from every county in Ireland. Published by Four Courts Press. 362 pages. Price. €30.00

**The Traumatic Memory of the Great War in Louis-Ferdinand Celine's ' Voyage Au Bout De La Nuit'.** Author. Tom Quinn. A member of the RDFA, Tom Quinn has produced this first full-length study interpreting Celine's great novel through his traumatic war experiences. It makes an important contribution to studies of the memory and literature of the Great War; to Celine studies, as well as to studies of trauma, memory and identity. Edwin Mellen Press. Price. £79.95

**Young Tigers and Mongrel Foxes. A life in politics.** Author. Paddy Harte. Paddy's sterling work in recording; listing and publishing the names of those men who died in the Great War, from Donegal, Dublin and elsewhere is well known. In this book he tells of his own life in the political arena. Published by the O'Brien Press.

**Spies in Uniform. British Military and Naval Intelligence on the Eve of the First World War.** Author Matthew S. Seligmann. Mr. Seligmann's book is a significant new contribution to understanding Britain's reasons for going to war in 1914. It is the first book to make systematic use of the intelligence gathered by naval and military attaches and concludes that the British

government's perception of a German threat before 1914, far from being mistaken or invented, was rooted in hard and credible intelligence. Published by Oxford University Press, 288 pages, 1 map. Price. £55.00

**Remembrance. A Brief History of 'The Blue Caps' The 1st Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers 1914 – 1922.** Author. Patrick Hogarty. Our late comrade Paddy has left us a lasting memory, of himself, and of the 1<sup>st</sup> Dubs in this book. Kevin Myers in his Foreword writes "Here is a unique insight into something of what happened to the sixteen or so thousand men, the vast majority of them Irish, and most of those from the recruitment areas of Dublin, Kildare, Carlow and Wicklow, who served in one of the greatest units of the British Army of the twentieth century: The First Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers." Information from Mrs. Majorie Hogarty, telephone number. Dublin 01-8476945.

**The British Auxiliary Legion in the First Carlist War, 1835-8.** Author. Edward M. Brett gives an account of foreign volunteers who fought in Spain including four designated Irish regiments in the Legion. Published by Four Courts Press. Pages 208 including 16 pages of colour illustrations. Price. €45.00

Irish military historian, **Dr. David Murphy**, is currently working on two interesting projects. The first project will be published by Osprey in their Elite series titled, **Irish Regiments in the World Wars**, due out in December 2006 – just in time for Christmas! The second project is a gazetteer of Irish regimental service from 1690 to present. Publisher, exact title and timing all to be decided but David hopes to have this work published by the end of the year too. It will cover all Irish regiments - in the French, Spanish, Italian, British and American armies, among others and each regiment will get its own summarised history.

Another forthcoming publication to look out for this coming Christmas is a work by **Philip Orr**. The subject of this publication is a history of the 10<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division. Philip wrote an excellent account of the 36<sup>th</sup> (Ulster) Divisions' tragic first day on the Somme, 1 July 1916. Philip will be presenting a lecture on the Battle of the Somme at our Somme event in Dublin on 30 September 2006.



## FROM THE REGIMENTAL ARCHIVES

Philip Lecane

*The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

Corporal of the Madras Fusiliers.

With a few notable exceptions, the members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association are amateurs in the field of historical research. Many of us have jobs that occupy our time Monday to Friday. This limits the time we can spend on researching the history of the *Dubs*. This has, understandably, meant that our focus has been on the regiment's service in the First World War; it was during this period that the relatives of many of our members served. It may then surprise some readers to learn that the First World War was just a four-year period in what was approximately 250 years of regimental history. No, that wasn't a misprint. The *Dubs* and the regiments from which they trace direct descent have a history of approximately 250 years. So, while *The Blue Cap* will continue to focus on members' chief area of interest – the regiment in World War 1 – this column will widen the focus and look at other periods of regimental history.

If you have any items relating to the *Dubs* or it's predecessors I would like to hear from you. I may be contacted through the association's address, which appears elsewhere in *The Blue Cap*.

*The Blue Cap.*

Neill's '*Blue Caps*' by Colonel H. C. Wylly C.B. is the official history of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. It was originally published for private circulation in 1924. Appendix Eighteen of Volume III has the following entry.

## Battalion Magazine.

Early in 1922, the desirability of issuing a Battalion Magazine was brought forward and the Commanding Officer asked Capt. A. L. Elsworthy, M.B.E., to assume the duties of Editor. The Magazine was first issued in the month of February 1922, and was called *The Blue Cap*. It was decided to make an issue monthly and to distribute it among past and present *Blue Caps*, thereby maintaining the traditional *esprit de corps* of the *Blue Caps*. Unfortunately after the issue of three numbers, the order for disbandment came along and terminated what was already proving to be a valuable asset to the Battalion. To stress the continuity of the historical connection with the original regimental publication, the first issue of *The Blue Cap* that was published by the Royal

Dublin Fusiliers Association was Volume 4 in 1997.

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The following appeared in *The Times* on  
Friday 9 March 1900

The Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

A correspondent signing himself 'An Old Mull' writes: --- *"It may have escaped your notices that the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, which was especially honoured by General Buller by being detached from its own brigade to lead the march into Ladysmith (as related by your own Correspondent) is the same regiment which, when it was the Madras Fusiliers, headed the Relief of Lucknow in 1857 under the gallant Neil. After the mutiny the Madras and Bombay Fusilier Regiments became the 102<sup>nd</sup> and 103<sup>rd</sup> Foot respectively, and as territorial regiments, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers – and they now have for their colonel-in-chief Sir J. B. Spurgin, K. C. B., who fought with them at Lucknow. It was a fitting honour for them, and the name of Ladysmith should follow that of Lucknow in the noble scroll of battles emblazoned on their colours."*

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From *The Times* Monday 3 July 1911.

The Duke of Connaught at Aldershot

New Colours for the Royal Dublin Fusiliers

The Duke of Connaught visited Aldershot on Saturday afternoon and presented new Colours to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. The old Colours were presented to the battalion, then the Royal Bombay Fusiliers, by his Royal Highness, as Prince Arthur, at Parkhurst on August 19, 1871. Both Colours bore evidence of the campaigns in Egypt (1885) and South Africa, and of expeditions on the Indian frontier and in the Aden Hinterland, through which they have passed with the battalion: indeed of the King's Colour very little more than a few fragments remained. His Royal Highness, who was accompanied by the Duchess of Connaught, drove to Aldershot by motor-car, and, on arrival at the Queen's Parade, where the battalion was assembled, was received by Lieutenant-General Sir H. L. Smith-Dorrien,

Major-General C. D. Cooper, C.B., Colonel of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and Lieutenant-Colonel W. Bromilow, commanding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.

After the consecration service, which was conducted by Bishop Taylor-Smith, Chaplain-General, assisted by the Rev. P. F. Raymond, Senior Chaplain, and the Rev. B. W. Stothert, C. F., the Duke presented the new Colours, which were received for the battalion by Lieutenants E. F. E. Seymour and T. J. Leahy. The Duke of Connaught then addressed the battalion. He said:

*"It affords me, as your Colonel-in-Chief, the greatest satisfaction to present you on this occasion with new Colours, to replace those which I had the honour to present to you 40 years ago at Parkhurst. Since those day, the regiment has had reason to be proud of the distinctions which are on those Colours, and which have added fresh laurels to its roll of fame. An old regiment as you are – raised as far back as 1661— you have shown in recent years in South Africa that the spirit which animated the Bombay and Madras Fusiliers exists among you today. I feel in presenting you with these new colours that I am giving them into the hands of men who will know how to honour and respect them. We see in them the symbols of the country we love and of the Sovereign we serve, and I am sure that should you be called upon to fight for your country you will show the same bravery and the same devotion to duty that your regiment showed in the past."*

Lieutenant-Bromilow briefly replied. After the presentation a reception was held in commemoration of the regiment's 250<sup>th</sup> year of existence. Besides the Duke and Duchess of Connaught there were among the guests Colonels Bird, Brind, Frankland, Hickley, Pearse, Riddell, and Tempest-Hicks, all ex-commanding officers of the regiment, Lieutenant-General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, Surgeon-General Sir Thomas Gallwey, Lieutenant-General Sir James Grierson, Brigadier-Generals T. L. N. Moreland, F. I. Maxse, and Davies.

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RDFA Chairperson is living proof  
that reincarnation is possible  
-- or he is a lot older than he looks

Most members are aware that our chairperson Tom Burke is the driving force of the association. But it wasn't until recently that evidence emerged as to the real reason for his devotion to ensuring the "*Dubs*" are remembered.

"*Neill's Blue Caps*" shows that from 1846 to 1852 Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Burke commanded 1st Bn. Madras European Fusiliers –forerunner of 1st Bn. Royal Dublin Fusiliers. So now we know why he is so keen about the association. But we still don't know whether he is a reincarnation or is really, really old.

No evidence has yet been uncovered as to whether any of the rest of the committee previously served with the regiment. But it seems that at least one association member served at an earlier date than even our chairperson. In 1775 two companies from the regiment were ordered to go from Madras to Bombay under the command of Captain Myers. They took part in several actions. Unfortunately "*Neill's Blue Caps*" doesn't say who the enemy was. On 18 May 1775, Captain Myers was killed in action. Amazingly, the place where he was killed was named Arras.

## In Memoriam.

*Seamus Greene*

*The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.*

**Mrs. Aida Finlay** died suddenly on 3 October, 2005. Aida's husband Denis has been a staunch member our association from the outset.

**Mrs. Patricia 'Patsy' O'Shannon.** The RDFA Committee and members wish to extend our sympathies to our dear member Cathal O'Shannon on the death of his wife Patsy who died on 26 February 2006 at the Blackrock Clinic in Dublin.

**Comdt. (Retd) Canice Mansfield** (Reserve Defence Forces formerly the F.C.A) died suddenly on 9 August 2005. Canice was one of the many former members of the now defunct 20<sup>th</sup> Inf. Bn. (FCA.) whose interest in soldering led them to join the RDFA. Like many of his army colleagues, he was also an active member of the Military History Society of Ireland.

**Cyril W. Forde** died 16 March 2005. He was the brother of Brendan Forde, who has been a loyal member of the RDF Association for many years. Their uncle, Pte. Frank Forde, 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers, age sixteen from Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, was killed the Battle of the Somme on 10 September 1916. Frank Forde is buried in CWG cemetery at Tranchee De Mecknes in France.

**Capt. (Retd) Jim Graham and Michael Doyle.** We also wish to acknowledge the passing of these two stalwarts of the Combined Irish Regiments OCA. For several years, Jim and Michael were very instrumental and helpful in arranging many of the RDFA group tours to London to take part in the Combined Irish Regiment's wreath laying ceremony at the Cenotaph. Jim was a regular attendant at our national Day of Remembrance in the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, after which he would visit the National War memorial at Islandbridge. Jim was a giant of a man from Coleraine who served in the Ulster Defence Regiment. When I first met him in London, he shook my hand and said, 'You're amongst friends here – *failte*.' Faugh a Ballagh lads.

**Pat Hogarty** died 24 August 2005. Pat, or Paddy as his friends better knew him, was one of the founding members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association. His influence on the development of our association was immeasurable as indeed was his personal commitment to researching Ireland's forgotten soldiers and nurses of the Great War. Paddy self-published two books one each on the regular Battalions of the Dublins. His depth of knowledge concerning military matters was profound and his willingness to share it with others was inspiring. His mind and memory was razor sharp. On one occasion, I recall hearing him being interviewed on one of Dublin's local radio stations: the interviewer, himself a former Irish Army Air Corps Commander, expressed astonishment that Paddy could speak entirely from memory when answering questions relating to the Great War.

After retiring from Dublin Corporation, he travelled to Gravesend, the location of Milton Barracks, where the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion was based for several years before the Great War. There he carried out extensive research and made numerous friends in the process, including Tom Larkin of the Gravesend Historical Society. Paddy was instrumental in having a memorial erected to the 'Old Toughs' that was unveiled by the Mayor of the local council. As a result of his research in Gravesend, he set about writing his book on 'The Old Toughs.' This has been a remarkable success and will provide future researchers with a font of information on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. Paddy subsequently published his second book, this one on the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 'The Blue Caps', thereby leaving posterity a record of each of the regular Battalions of the Dublins or Dubs. . Members will recall that Paddy's article on the VAD nurses was featured in the commemorative booklet that was issued to those who attended the formal opening of Island of Ireland Peace Park in Mesen (Messines) in Belgium.

Paddy was a hard working member of our committee and I can honestly say his humour at our meetings was infectious. When he got into debate, you knew Paddy was in full flow when you heard his foot tap on the floor in harmony with the words coming from his mouth. Once you heard the foot tapping, it was time to shut up and listen to the master. His opening line was always. 'Now listen to this.....' and away he would go.

Often during a heavy discussion on a vital topic such as who did or didn't take sugar in their tea, or whether it was 6:00 a.m or 5:30 a.m on the morning of 21 March 1918 that the Germans launched their attack on the Dublin's line at Malassise Farm, Paddy would deviate for a minute or two and tell us a yarn about a character he once worked with in Dublin Corporation. Always, and I mean always, at the end of the yarn, he left us in knots of laughter. On our field trips to the battlefields, Paddy came into his own, he simply loved it. His choice of Irish and Scottish regimental pipe band marching music and of course Glen Miller on the bus always got us into the right mood. Often, Paddy got very emotional saying goodbye at the end of many of our trips, such was the make of the man. The day he discovered his uncle's grave in St. Patrick's Cemetery near Loos was one I shall never forget.



This is the only way Pat Hogarty would like to be remembered by his friends in the RDF Assoc., sporting his Dubs tie on a sunny day on an Irish battlefield in Flanders, telling us what happened here in 1917. *'Now listen to this....'*

One of Paddy's many roles on the committee was as a representative of the RDFA committee at many functions/ceremonies. On several occasions he laid the RDFA's wreath at the Remembrance services in St Patrick's Cathedral and also at the Cenotaph in London. At many of these events he was accompanied by his wife, Majorie, who was his rock of support. To Majorie, daughter Una and sons Aidan and Terry may we extend our deepest sympathy. On behalf of the committee and every member of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association

who knew Pat Hogarty, may I say it was an honour and privilege to know you Paddy. I know wherever you have gone since leaving us, you are not alone, you are amongst your old pals now. Farewell dear friend.

*Ar dheis Dé go raibh siad go léir i gconat*

## Notices.

Information please. Anthony P Quinn, Rosbeg, Saval Park, Dalkey, Co. Dublin, writes regarding Great War dead from the Roman Catholic Parish of Dalkey, Co. Dublin. My book : Wigs and Guns, Irish Barristers and the Great War has recently been published and I wish to undertake a similar study on Great War casualties from the Roman Catholic parish now based in the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption, Dalkey. There are no memorials in most Roman Catholic churches, including Dalkey, although a local priest, Fr. Willie Doyle S.J, a renowned chaplain was killed in Flanders during August 1917. Parochial records would not necessarily cover those who died abroad. Any suggestions of how best to approach my research would be appreciated and acknowledged.

Information please. Philip Lecane. Did you have a relative who landed at 'V Beach'/Sedh-el-Bahr? On Sunday 25 April 1915 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers landed from rowboats at 'V Beach', near Sedh-el-Bahr, on the tip of the Gallipoli peninsula. Meeting heavy Turkish fire, many of them were killed in the water and on the beach. Their '*cousins*' in 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers came ashore from the *SS River Clyde*. Encountering similar fire, many of them were also killed.

I am researching the 'V Beach' landing with a view to publishing a book on the event. I would like to hear from anyone who may have had a relative in the Dubs, the Munsters, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Hampshire Regiment, the Anson Battalion Royal Naval Division, the Royal Naval Armoured Car Division etc. --- in short, anyone who landed at 'V Beach' and who either survived or died in the landing. All help given will be acknowledged in the published work. I can be contacted at [rdfa@eircom.net](mailto:rdfa@eircom.net) or through the association's address, which appears elsewhere in *The Blue Cap*. Many thanks, yours sincerely, Philip.



I am undertaking a study of the impact that the First World War had upon Tipperary, and would greatly appreciate any assistance your readers can offer by way of letters, photos, reminiscences or other information relating to this topic. I can be contacted at 086-8656156, at the address below or at [jdennedy.ie@gmail.com](mailto:jdennedy.ie@gmail.com) – Yours, etc, JOHN DENNEHY, C/O Department of History, Tyrconnell, University College Cork.

Finally, all members are encouraged to submit articles to *The Blue Cap*. Articles for publication may vary in length -- from a few lines to several pages. In the latter case, if necessary, the editor may decide to publish the article in two or more parts. There are a few *Guidelines for Contributors* that reflect *The Blue Cap* style and format of publication and we would like contributors to adhere as close as possible to these guidelines. If you have an article you would like to have published in *The Blue Cap*, please send us notice about the article by Email or in writing to the Secretary. We will in turn send you our *Guidelines for Contributors*. Thank you for your continued support.

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**Spectamur Agendo.**