

THE BLUE CAP

The Story of Sergeant James Doherty. 22688 "A" Company 6th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. The 10th (Irish) Division. Mediterranean Expeditionary Force 1915.

James J Doherty was born in Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim in 1896. His father's name was Michael Doherty from Co. Leitrim, and his mother's name was Suzanne Purcell from Co. Tipperary. Between them they reared three sons, James, Mel and Kevin. His parents ran a small bakery in the town. James was educated at the local Presentation Brother's School and thereafter at St Mel's College, Longford where, due to his academic abilities, he achieved the position of monitor which was a scholarly position in the College for promising young teachers. However, probably with the spirit of adventure that overtook most young men of James's age at the time, he joined the army at the age of nineteen in the early months of 1915. He was one of the many thousands of young Irishmen who answered Kitchener's call in August of 1914. James joined one of the service battalions of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, namely the 6th battalion.

After some basic training in Cork and finally at the Curragh, the 6th Dublin's became part of the famous 10th (Irish) Division who, under the command of General Sir Bryan Mahon, who fought at Kiretech - Tepe - Sirt at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula in August of 1915. The 6th and 7th battalions of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, along with the 6th and 7th battalions of the Royal Munster Fusiliers made up the 30th Brigade, all Irish volunteer battalions. According to the history of the 10th (Irish) Division in Gallipoli, written by Major Bryan Cooper in 1918, the men prepared for the first day of the battle of Kiretech - Tepe - Sirt, as follows. The 15th of August was not only a Sunday, but also the day known in Ireland as Lady Day in Harvest, a great church festival, and the chaplains had endeavoured to arrange service for their battalions. "They had to be hurried, but nevertheless Canon Mc Lean was able to administer Holy Communion to some of the officers and men of the 6th Dublins and Father Murphy visited the



Private James Doherty. A Company. 6th battalion the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

other battalions in the 30th Brigade, and gave them absolute. Then, at peace with God, they turned to face the enemy." The killing, on both the Turkish and Allied sides, was horrendous. According to official War Office records published in 1921, over a couple of days fighting, the 6th battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers alone lost six of their commanding officers, and, over one hundred and forty other ranks. James survived the butchery of Gallipoli and was moved with a depleted 6th battalion to another area of conflict in the Great War, a place called Salonika, situated on the Greek north western side of the Aegean Sea. In a letter written by James to his mother at Easter 1916, he describes the country side in which they camped:

"The country is so mountainous, consequently marching is a bit difficult. We are well grubbed only of course we have not so many dainties as when in Cork, and of course we can't expect them.....the Connaughts are here camped beside us, and I met several of the boys, young Moran (Stephen), Sonny Coles, Jimmy Finn etc....no matter where you go you meet the mountains, and they are higher than Shee More." The war in Salonika is a fascinating and tragic story in its own right. In summary, the military planning of the campaign, the achievements, and the loss of men in Salonika was no improvement on Gallipoli. The 10th (Irish) Division, in which the 6th battalion played a major role, was used and abused from the beginning to the end of the war in Greece and later in the Middle East. Over one hundred members of the 6th battalion lost their lives fighting in Salonika. By some fortune of grace, James survived the cold of winter and mosquitoes of the summer in Salonika and moved on to Palestine with his battalion as part of a much depleted and pitiful 10th (Irish) Division. Amidst all this war and bloodshed, James still had time to think of home and family. James wrote to his brother Kevin who was ten years of age at the time, enclosing a six shilling to buy sweets. The letter was written by James on the 19th of April 1918, from Palestine, or as James calls it in his letter, the Holy Land:

"....do you eat as much sweets as ever, how would you like to be out here for a few feeds of oranges, they are very plentiful but eggs are 6d each so now aren't you glad your still at home.....give a big kiss to Dad and Mammy."

According to Kathleen Coleman, James's niece, who now lives in Carrick-on-Shannon, 'James wrote several letters home to his mother comforting her that he was *"all right"* and that he was not going to do anything stupid.' As mementoes of his journeys with the 6th Dubs, James sent various items home from Salonika and Palestine. From Salonika he sent home Greek money notes. From Jerusalem, he sent a set of Rosary Beads to his sweetheart Molly Farrell, and to his mother, he sent a Crucifix made from ivory. Molly did not wait for James to come home. She married another chap while James was away at the War in the Middle East. We know from the diary that James kept that he was a Quarter-Master Sergeant. He kept some accounts of clothing, example *"Puttees to 23882 Donovan"*, *"Trousers, socks, 1 shirt, puttees to 20038 Williams"*. These entries are stated as *"Exchanges"* in his diary. James returned to Ireland when the war ended in 1918. With a sound education under his belt he applied for a job with the Longford Customs and Excise as a Surveyor. The appointments procedures were slow. In 1919 James had a positive reply from the Customs offering him a job. Regrettably, James had emigrated to America and word about his success came too late. By 1930, James had secured a good job in an Attorney of Law Office in New York. On New Year's Eve, 1931, James was knocked down by a taxi and died on the 6th of January 1931. It was a tragic end to a life that had survived the madness of Gallipoli, Salonika and finally Palestine. His mother, Suzanne, once said that James came back to her in a dream. She described his attire and could remember him saying something to her, perhaps he told her he was *"all right."*

Private Christopher Rogers.6088 G Company 2nd battalion the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

It is truly astonishing to think, that on the 10th of January 1998 a meeting between two people over a cup of tea in a Dublin Pub named Grogan's in South William Street, would never have occurred had the Great War of 1914 - 1918 ever taken place. Eighty years after this terrible war ended, and all that has happened in the world since, here were two people meeting to talk about the tragedy that fell upon a Dublin family because of that war, and perhaps close a chapter in that families history. The story which led to this meeting is a complicated web of names and acquaintances all of whom in one way or another are all related to each other. However at the centre of this web of names lies one man, Private Christopher Rogers of the 2nd Battalion the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Christopher was born in Dublin in 1880. Before the Great War broke out in August 1914, Christopher worked in Dublin where he married a young Dublin lady named Mary Ellen Page. They lived at 10 Vancies Buildings, Bishop Street where they brought two little children into the world. In the age old Irish tradition of naming the first boy after the Father, the little boy was named Christopher, and, for the same reasons, the little girl was named Mary Ellen, whom, is still alive today at the age of 86. On August the 4th 1914 the Great War broke out and within a few days a General Mobilisation began. Christopher joined the 4th Battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers.

The 4th battalion was an extra reserve battalion designed to service with men the regular 1st and 2nd battalions of the regiment. Because there were many ex regular soldiers in these reserve battalions which were numbered the 3rd, 4th and 5th, they were also used as training battalions for new volunteers who joined the service battalions numbered 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th. Being a member of this 4th battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers was a part time job and it meant an extra £1 or £1 and 10 shillings if you attended six weeks training camp which took place every year normally at the Curragh. If Christopher was a Kitchener volunteer, in normal circumstances such a volunteers training would last approx. six months and he would therefore not have been in France until January 1915 at the earliest, Christopher was in France before the 8th of December 1914. This we know from an Army Form B.104-81 dated 8th of December 1914, which shows he received a gunshot wound to the hand while in France. Therefore, it is very possible to assume, although not absolutely certain, that Christopher was a member of this extra reserve 4th battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers before the war broke. He may not have needed any training and was therefore sent to France as soon as possible.

He spent some time at Aghada training camp in Cork with the 4th battalion. From Aghada he wrote home to Mary Ellen although he addressed the letters to *Dear Lizzie.*, Lizzie would reply to him as *Dear Christy*. The conversations in the letters between Christy and Lizzie were typical of the simple small talk between any man and his wife, idle gossip about the neighbours and friends such as Tilley Mac Loughlin getting married, reassuring her that he was in good health, and hoping she was too. In one letter to Christopher, Lizzie replied, '*you will be surprised when you see the children. Mary Ellen is always watching the letter man for a letter from Daddy. Christy is getting big running about.*' It is possible to conclude that Christopher left for France to join the 2nd battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers early in November 1914.

The official history of the 2nd battalion for early November states, '*Just before leaving the neighbourhood of Armentieres a draft of 100 non commissioned officers and men, mostly from the 5th Battalion of the Regiment arrived under Lieutenant Hall.*' Christopher may have been a member of this draft from Ireland.

On the 2nd of December 1914 Christopher wrote from the Front to his brother Dan. One can only assume it was from the Front due to the fact that it had no return address written on the letter. It was army regulations not to have return addresses written on letters sent home for fear of the letter falling into enemy hands, thereby giving away the position of the soldiers regiment at the date of sending the letter. In the letter he told Dan that he was '*at present in the best of health.*' During the month of December 1914 the 2nd battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers were in the Trenches around the village of Nieppe which is approximately two miles north west of Armentieres in France. Sometime after he wrote to his brother Dan, Christopher received a gun shot wound to the hand and was admitted to No 11 General Hospital Boulogne. There is no record as to how long Christopher spent in Hospital. Mary Ellen knew he was in hospital. She wrote to him saying that he should put in for a pass home for a few days. '*Dear Christy, you should put in for a pass for a few days. Horace is after getting five days home and is gone back. He told me he never seen you out there.*'

It was in this letter that Mary Ellen told Christopher about her fear of the letter been opened. It was the last letter she wrote to Christopher. For Christopher and Mary Ellen the month of December 1914 should have been spent getting their little children and home ready for Christmas. Decorations, a Christmas cake and maybe a pudding, the Santa that was to come to young Christy and Mary, simple happy things most young families do in the weeks coming up to Christmas. Such are the tragedies of war that these simple happy activities were not to happen for Christy and Mary Ellen. It was to be a lonely Christmas for Mary Ellen and the children. Indeed it was to be a lonely Christmas for thousands of families all over Europe. When Governments and men cannot peacefully agree on their differences and go to war, do they realise the sadness and misery they create. The evil this war created filtered down to the back streets and tenement houses of Dublin and destroyed this simple and happy family. What right did the people who created this madness have to destroy the lives of millions of families similar to Christopher and Mary Ellen Rogers.

What relevance did their greed and grand political design have on Mary Ellen sitting at the fire on Christmas Eve in 1914 alone with her children while her husband took part in a conflict that had nothing to do with him or his family. On New Years Eve 1914, the official history of the 2nd battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers reads, *'There was quiet in the Front Line during the last few days of the first year of the Great War, and the battalion diary under date of December 31st, 1914, contains two words only -no sniping !'* On the 13th of February Christopher Rogers was killed in action fighting with the 2nd battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers near the French village of Nieppe, he was 35 years of age. The official history states. *'During the greater part of the first three months of the year 1915 the battalion remained in the Nieppe area, moving up to the Front Line and back again into reserve, and one reads daily in the war diary of heavy shelling, of intermittent sniping, of reports that the enemy has been heard engaged in mining: but of major operations of any kind there is no mention.'* Christopher died on the 13th of February. The next day Pte Austin Dunleavy from Talbot Street died, the next day Pte Joseph Brennan from Edenderry died, the next day Pte John Mc Cormack from Monasterevan died, and so the killing went on and on and on. These four men, all members of the 2nd battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers, were buried beside each other.

So what did this madness achieve for Mary Ellen, and her young children ?, *nothing only misery*. Like tens of thousands of other women, it left her a broken woman with two young children. It left the two children without a Father. There was no point in young Mary Ellen waiting for the letter man to arrive with a letter from Daddy anymore, Daddy wasn't coming home. The last time young Mary saw the letter man he brought her the news of her father's death. Forget the moral platitudes of reasons for people going to war, such as honour, justice, and duty. Children waiting for a letter to come from their Daddy and it never coming because their Daddy is dead, *is* what war is about. The day Mary Ellen said goodbye to Christopher from their home in Vancies Buildings, Bishop Street, Dublin, he no doubt kissed his wife and young children goodbye, it was the last time they kissed each other. Like thousands of his comrades, Christopher went to his grave without the comfort of a family funeral.

He was buried with Austin, Joseph and John in Prowse Point Military Cemetery in Belgium . His young widow went on to rear her two children and as time went on, probably out of loneliness , she remarried. Young Mary Ellen and Christy lived on in turn to rear their own families. Young Christopher died in 1990 and young Mary Ellen celebrated her 86th birthday on the 23rd of January 1998. Thus, in the context of this sad story, did it matter how these two people came to meet over a cup of tea in Grogan's of South William Street.



Mr Christopher and Mary Ellen Rogers with children
Christopher and Mary Ellen.

Collins Barracks. The Committee met twice with Ms Mairead Dunlevy, the Curator of the Industrial and Fine Art Collection at the new National Museum facility at Collins Barracks. The final planning for the use of this fine complex of buildings was still incomplete but the case for a military component had been agreed. A decision is expected early this year. We made a strong case for including the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and the Irish

involvement in the Great War in any Military section. Our association could assist by facilitating access to suitable display material. She gave us a tour of the buildings and the lecture theatre which could be made available to groups such as ours. We also attended the final parade when the Army marched out for the last time under the same arch used by the Dublin Fusiliers on their way to Gallipoli. We were invited to meet the Irish Army committee which has been promoting the permanent military exhibition in Collins Barracks. This will present our heritage in terms of the military history of Ireland, the role of Irish soldiers in foreign armies and the history of the Irish Defence Forces in Ireland and on peacekeeping duties through out the world. As our objectives coincide with those of the committee, we agreed to work together. The planned location of military records in Collins Barracks is an opportunity to provide public access to the military records of all those who served in the First World War. We have also offered to assist in the establishment of a military museum in the Curragh Camp.

Office of Public Works. Two members of the Committee met with the Chairman of the Office of Public Works to explore the possibility of finding a venue for a professional exhibition about the Dublin Fusiliers pending any long-term plan. We thanked the OPW for their major contribution to our work by the magnificent restoration of the Islandbridge memorial. We got a positive response and a number of possibilities will be explored. A very ambitious idea would be to develop the Magazine Fort as a museum and to construct a pedestrian bridge from it to the memorial park. This would have to cross a busy road and the Liffey. When you next visit the park, think about this. Any suggestions from members are welcome. In summary, there is now a growing awareness of our Association and our interest in a suitable permanent home for the items of historic value which we have collected. The task of dealing with eighty years of neglect will not be easy.

Historical research into The Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Since our last meeting several folks are actively involved in researching the history of the old regiment. Mr Austin Fennessey is at present researching the history of the famous 'D' Company of the 7th Battalion who fought in Suvla Bay August 1915.

I am currently researching for publication purposes a history of one man's experience in D Coy 7th Dublins (The Pals). His name is Hugo Latimer, a Bank of Ireland Official, who enlisted as a private in September 1914. Any information relating to the day-to-day life of the Pals would be gratefully appreciated and acknowledged. In particular I am looking for copies of unpublished diaries, letters, personal memoirs and photographs. Please contact Mr Austin Fennessey, 22 Portersgate Drive, Portersgate, Dublin 15. Tele No : 01 8208686.

Mr Bob Stanton, nephew of Lieutenant Bob Stanton, 6th Royal Dublin Fusiliers, killed in action, August 1915 Suvla, is currently doing some research into the Dublin Fusiliers who are mentioned on the War Memorial in St. Mary's Parish Church, Haddington Road in Dublin.

More than ninety Irish soldiers killed in the Great War of 1914 - 1918 are named on a bronze memorial plaque mounted on the south west wall of St. Mary's Parish Church, Haddington Road Dublin, in the good care of the Very Rev. Fr Bernard Brady. Nineteen Dublin Fusiliers are remembered there. The plaque notes initials, names and battalions. The Register at the National War Memorial Gardens at Islandbridge, Dublin gives the name, rank, battalion and date killed in action, of soldiers fighting with Irish Regiments in the Great War. The following are the names of the members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers who are mentioned on the plaque at St. Mary's. Pte J.J Dawson, Pte P Doyle, Pte P Geraghty, Pte JM Guinness, Pte P Kavanagh, Pte J Keogh, Pte W.J Manning, Pte J Mc Donnell, Pte F O'Donnell, Pte J Molloy, Pte R Murphy, Pte P Roche, Pte J Ward, Cpl O'Brien, Sgt L Murphy, 2nd Lieut. Thomas Kettle, 2nd Lieut. Roche Brerton, 2nd Lieut. Robert Stanton, Capt. C Martin. I am interested in recording family details, etc, before my uncle and his comrades are completely forgotten. Hence, I would appreciate if there are any members of the families of the above named men to contact me at 33 Nutley Park, Dublin 4. Tele No, Dublin 01 2691320. The plaque is in need of a simple refurbishment. Relatives might like to join with me some Saturday afternoon to give it a clean up.

Tom Burke is presently conducting a statistical analysis of the men killed in the Great War. The research is based on Commonwealth War Graves Commission data. It is a computer based study which will hopefully present social history and geographical data on the total number of men KIA or died from wounds who were Dublin Fusiliers. The research is at the half way stage and so far the statistics and information coming out is very interesting. The work will take another eighteen months, at the end of which Tom hopes to publish the data.

Philip Lecane has been conducting a social history study of Dublin Fusiliers and men of other Irish regiments who came from the Dun Laoghaire area. Philip will publish his findings in the next edition of the Blue Cap.

Stephen Chambers of 71 Station Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5EX, England, is seeking any information about A/CQM Sgt O. Doyle 'X' Company 1st Bat RDF . No 9897 or 10839. He may have served in Gallipoli. Any information would be appreciated.

Paddy Hogarty has been busy researching memorial wall plaques in the various Churches around Dublin City .See Paddy's article below on his findings so far. If there are any references on Churches in your locality with Dublin Fusiliers mentioned on it, please contact Paddy at Dublin 01 - 8476945.

Dublin War Memorials . During the last year I visited many churches ,colleges and institutions by invitation to view wall memorials to former members of staff and pupils who died in two World Wars .With the exceptions of the Garrison Church Arbour Hill, St Mary's Haddington Road Dublin and the Church of Our Lady in Fairview Dublin, all other memorials are to be found in Protestant Churches, ie Church of Ireland, Anglican or Presbyterian. Others are to be found in colleges or business premises. The majority of the Memorials are executed in brass or bronze, however there are two Churches in Howth, Dublin i.e. St. Mary's Church of Ireland and the Presbyterian Church, in which the memorials are made from wood.

My first visit was to Mount Temple Comprehensive School, formerly the Mountjoy and Marine School, situated on the Malahide Road in Dublin. In the early part of the century it was a Church of Ireland Boarding School. There are three memorials to be found in the old school building. The first memorial lists all the staff and pupils who served in WW1, the other two lists those who were killed in WW1 and WW2. Second Lieut. James S Emerson , 9th battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, who won his V.C in France on the 6th of December 1917,he was an ex student who came from Collon near Drogheda. His name is inscribed on the War Memorial situated on the main Dublin road into Drogheda from the Dublin side of the town. There are in total thirty four Dublin Fusiliers mentioned on this memorial.

Lieut. Kenny won his V.C in India in 1920. He was serving with an Indian Regiment. Both VC's were posthumously awarded. Several of the pupils won Military Crosses. Capt. William Kee won a M.C serving with the 7th battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers at Suvla Bay in 1915.He survived the Gallipoli campaign and went to France . He died of wounds in a prisoner of war camp in Germany on the 24th of March 1918.The school had seventy six pupils killed in the Great War, six of whom were Dublin Fusiliers.

The Church of Our Lady in Fairview, Dublin remembers the parishioners who died the Great War with a number of brass plates on the Church seats . The plates are to be found on the seats on the centre naïve near the High Alter. There are five names on individual plates, two of them are Dublin Fusiliers . Lieut. John Doyle, D Company, the 6th battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers killed in action at Gallipoli 9th August 1915. He has no known grave and is remembered on the Memorial at Haider Pasha Cemetery, Turkey, Panel 190-196. The other is Sgt. James J Byrne, a Dublin Fusilier aged 20, killed in action in France 21st of September 1917. He was from 17 Philipburgh Avenue ,Fairview, Dublin. He is buried in Croiselles British Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais, France.

The new hotel in Upper Merrion Street, Dublin 'The Merrion' ,was formerly the offices of the Irish Land Commission. It was known as Mornington House, as it is believed that the Duke of Wellington was born there and worshipped in St Ann's Church in Dawson Street Dublin. The Land Commission offices consisted of three

houses, in one of which is erected a Memorial Plaque erected by the employees of the Land Commission in memory of their colleagues who died in the Great War of 1914 - 1918. The memorial occupies a place of honour in the new Wellington Suite of the Hotel. The memorial is made from a material called Alabaster, it contains thirty one names, twelve of whom are Dublin Fusiliers. One interesting name is that of Pte. Francis Brennan, an employee of the Land Commission and a volunteer in the 10th battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. He was killed in the fighting in Dublin in Easter Week 1916. His family came from Usher's Island in Dublin City. He is buried in Blackhorse Avenue Military Cemetery, Dublin.

The Presbyterian Church in Howth has a memorial made of Oak. There are only two names on it. The south window of the Church was erected by the Howth congregation to the '*Glory of God and in grateful memory of those who gave their lives in the Great War 1914 - 1918.*' One of the names on the Church memorial is that of 2nd Lieut. Ronald G. Hunter of the 1st battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Lieut. Hunter who came from Baymount in Sutton Dublin, died of wounds on the 25th of April 1918. He was nineteen years of age. He died in a prisoner of war camp in Germany and is buried in Berlin South- Western Cemetery. My last call on this leg of my journey around Howth was to St. Mary's Church of Ireland Church. The Memorial in this Church is made from oak and it contains the names of eighty eight people from the parish who participated in the Great War, eight of whom were women. The congregation lost ten men in the conflict, none of whom were Dublin Fusiliers.

May I thank all those clergymen and priests who were extremely courteous to me on my ramblings. I hope to present more stories of my further ramblings in our next edition of the Blue Cap.

Trinity College Dublin. Dr Gerald Morgan, Fellow of Trinity College Dublin, and member of our association, has, through sheer persistence, achieved his objective in getting the names of three non- academic members of the staff of Trinity College, who were killed in the Great War included in the Roll of Honour displayed on the walls of the 1937 Reading Room. The names of the three men are.

Private John Collins, a printing-house employee. Army number 24930. 10th battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers killed in action in France on the 21st of November 1917. Born in St. Finbar's, Cork.

Private John James Currey, a printing-house employee. Army number 18292. 10th battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers attached to the 1st battalion the Royal Munster Fusiliers. Died of wounds in France on the 26th of September 1918. Born at Canal House, Dublin.

Sgt. George Marsh, Porter. A member of the 21st Lancer's. Died from shell shock on the 6th of March 1918 at the 4th London General Hospital.

New book on Irish soldiers of the Great War. Congratulations to Myles Dungan on the publication of his latest book titled 'They shall grow not old.' Many thanks to Myles for giving the Royal Dublin and Royal Munster Fusiliers Associations a mention.

Guide to research. We would encourage you to start researching your relatives, or indeed any aspects of Irish participation in the Great War. It's great fun and you are entering into virgin history. If you are doing this work please keep us informed as we may be of some assistance. If you intend to do or are doing family research on Irish soldiers of the Great War, we would recommend the following book. '*Army Service Records of the First World War*' by Simon Fowler, William Spencer and Stuart Tamin. It is available from the Sales and Marketing Dept, Public Record Office, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU, England. Price approx. £stg 8.00. Perhaps you would like to publish your findings in The Blue Cap.

Schools. Our committee made contact with thirty two Secondary Schools throughout the City informing them of the exhibition in the Dublin Civic Museum and Phoenix Park Visitors Centre.

The response was poor. This poor response may be due to the pressure of exams and an overloaded curriculum. Several Dublin schools did respond and , three or four students used material on display for their Honours Leaving Certificate history projects. (Two are now studying history at Trinity College Dublin). Thanks to Austin Fennessey for informing many of his history teaching colleagues about the exhibition. We are at present in the planning stage of offering Secondary Schools an essay Competition. The theme would be Ireland and the Great War. Money prizes would be given to 1st, 2nd and 3rd. Perhaps you might know a potential sponsor. The National Council for Curriculum Assessment at Dublin Castle are investigating the possibility of working with their counterparts in the Dept of Education in Northern Ireland to produce a National Schools booklet on Irelands participation in the Great War.

Remembrance Ceremonies. One of the main activities of our association is to be present at Remembrance Ceremonies. Since our last edition of the Blue Cap ,members of our association have been present at the following Remembrance Ceremonies.

1 The 75th anniversary of the disbandment of the Irish Regiments organised by the Royal Munster Fusiliers Association in Limerick , June 1997. A wreath was laid by a member of the RDF Assoc.

2 The 80th anniversary of the death of Major Willie Redmond organised by a Belgium group in Locre, June 1997. A wreath was laid on behalf of the RDF Assoc.

3 A remembrance ceremony at the Menin Gate, Ypres. A wreath was laid by Mr Tom Burke and Councillor Sam Foster ex Deputy Lord Mayor of Enniskillen in November 1997 at the Menin Gate, Ypres , Belgium. The three Mac Donnell brothers (2nd battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers) from Bride Street, Dublin, who were killed in action near Ypres between April and May 1915 , were especially remembered.

4 In October 1997, Nick and Norah Broughall laid a wreath at the Helles Memorial in Turkey in honour of all Irishmen ,in particular the Dublin Fusiliers who died at Gallipoli.

5 A wreath was laid at the Cross in the War Memorial Gardens Islandbridge Dublin. It was laid on the Saturday prior to Remembrance Sunday 1997.

6 Members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association attended a Mass at City Quay R.C. Church, Dublin at 8:00pm on the Saturday prior to Remembrance Sunday. The Standard of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Old Comrades Association was paraded by Seamus Green.

7 Members and friends of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association attended a Ceremony of Remembrance at St. Patrick's Cathedral Dublin on Remembrance Sunday, November '97. The service was attended by the newly elected President of Ireland , Mrs Mary Mac Aleese. The Standard of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Old Comrades Assoc. was paraded by Mr Seamus Green. Twenty five members of our association who's fathers were Dublin Fusiliers attended the service. For the first time in their lives, they wore their father's medals in public. A wreath was laid at the war memorial in St. Patrick's with a simple message inscribed , 'Welcome Home Boys.' At all of the above ceremonies wreaths were laid with the Dublin Fusiliers crest at the centre of the wreath. We would hope that members of our association will attend the services at City Quay and St. Patrick's on Remembrance Sundays in future.

Pilgrimage of Nick and Norah Broughall, members of RDF Assoc. to Gallipoli in October '97 .In October 1997 my wife Norah and I joined a pilgrimage to Gallipoli organised by the Somme Association, Belfast. We joined a distinguished gathering of Mayors, Deputy Mayors, Aldermen and Councillors from Newtownards, Carrickfergus, Cookstown, Larne, Craigavon, Lisburn, Armagh and Derry. Norah and I were the only representatives from the Republic of Ireland . The visit was to remember the men of 10th (Irish) Division who had given their lives in that ill-fated campaign.

The group was led by Mr David Cambell and Mr Billy Ervine of the Somme Association, the guide was Mr Eddie Lendrum from the Somme Association and a local Turkish guide named Bulent. We flew from Belfast via London to Istanbul. From Istanbul it took a coach drive of approx. five hours to Gallipoli (Galibolu). The first site visited was the Memorial at Lone Pine where there are the graves of one thousand one hundred Australian and New Zealand soldiers. Engraved on the Memorial are the names of four thousand three hundred and ninety two soldiers who have no known grave. Side by side with the many ANZAC Memorials are those dedicated to the Turkish fallen. Within site of Lone Pine there is a striking memorial to the 57th Turkish Regiment. From Lone Pine one can see other Memorials and smaller cemeteries such as Johnson's Jolly so named after an Allied commander who said his guns would 'Jolly up the Turks'. Quinn's and Courtney's Post are nearby. At Chunuk Bair, the New Zealand memorial has the words inscribed 'From the uttermost ends of the Earth.' In the immediate area, the reconstructed trenches are a stark reminder of how close the opposing sides were to one another. At this site one is also reminded of Kemal Ataturk's order to his troops to fight and die...and they did in great numbers. On the following day our party travelled down the peninsula to the Turkish national memorial known to the Turks as the Canakkale Martyrs Memorial, it is a huge structure over forty meters high overlooking Morto Bay. It is lit up at night and is visible for many miles across the Dardanelles. Below the structure is a Museum which holds Dublin Fusilier items recovered from the battle field. The French memorial is not too far away.

On to Cape Helles and 'V Beach' where the Dubs and Munsters died as they disembarked from 'The Clyde', which by the way went back into service on the high seas after the war. The cemetery, which is right on the beach, has six hundred and ninety six men buried there. It was a moving experience reading the names on the grave stones. There were three Ryans, L, J and T of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers buried side by side with other Dublin Fusiliers named Lynch and Morris. Alongside them was Pte Phelan of the Munster Fusiliers. Up a rough slope to the base of the thirty meter high Helles Memorial dedicated to all Army and Navy men who had fallen in the campaign - twenty thousand, seven hundred and sixty three names are inscribed, among whom is Lieut. Robert Stanton B Co. 6th battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers, killed in action at Suvla Bay in August 1915. Myself and Norah laid a wreath at the Helles Memorial on behalf of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association, I wonder when the last one was laid. On inspection of the names in the registers, the familiarity of their origins brought the closeness of this war home to Norah and I. Names like Philip Bannon from Parnell Street. Willie Birmingham from Upper Leeson Street. Edward Desmond from Killester (Dublin). Tom Donnelly from Chapelizod (Dublin). Willie Ryan from the Land League Cottages Ballyfermot (Dublin) and so on. A Service of Remembrance was held at Green Hill and wreaths were laid on behalf of the various councils in Northern Ireland. At Green Hill Cemetery is the grave of the Dublin born Earl of Longford, father of the present Lord Longford.

Looking at the final resting places of those who died and the memorials erected to the range of nationalities who partook in this conflict. The absence of any Irish memorial specifically to the 10th (Irish) Division is apparent, and indeed very sad. There is a memorial to the 10th (Irish) Division somewhere in the Balkans, if anyone knows exactly where it is and its condition perhaps you could contact me. However, it is planned to erect a memorial on Chocolate Hill adjoining the Green Hill Cemetery overlooking the Salt Lake and Suvla Bay. This project is being undertaken by the Somme Association. The RDF Assoc. will co-operate in this project as well. The monument will be a traditional Irish Cross similar to the Cross at Guillemont. Every support should be given to this project. For my wife and myself, it was a very moving and interesting visit to the Dardanelles and we were very pleased to have the opportunity in company of those of our friends from Northern Ireland to make common cause in remembering those who died just as those of the 10th (Irish) had made common cause so many years before. It is indeed appropriate to end with the words of Kemal Ataturk's eulogy at Ari Burnu. *Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives....you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehments to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours. You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far away countries wipe away your tears, your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives in this land, they have become our sons as well.*

Social Events of 1997. Trip to Somme Heritage Centre, Co. Down. By far the highlight of the past year was our day trip to the Somme Heritage Centre in Newtownards Co. Down. Brian Moroney presents his recollections of the day. On Saturday the 13th of September, 54 members and friends of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Assoc. embarked on a historic and thoroughly enjoyable day trip to the Somme Heritage Centre, Newtownards, Co. Down. A planned break took place at the Louth County Museum in Dundalk where the RDF exhibition was on show. The staff at the Museum took a keen interest in this exhibition which they presented very professionally. On the day of our trip, the staff kindly offered our touring party light refreshments. We would like to thank the curator Ms Sally Anne Miskella and her staff for their kindness and professionalism. From Dundalk to Newtownards and to a museum that is solely devoted to the Great War. Once again we were met with nothing but warmth and a meal that threatened to kill by kindness. Brought on a guided tour, we were transported back in time to 1914, from a small village square in the Ulster countryside to the battlefield of the Somme. A thought provoking tour that does not avoid the issue of Home Rule and the 'Irish Question'. The tour concludes with an audio visual slide show across a recreated battlefield that tells the story of the Somme. If the show concentrates on the fate of the 36th (Ulster) Division, it does not neglect the 10th and 16th (Irish) Divisions either. After the tour through the trench system, dark, noisy and evocative, we had time to wonder at the exhibits on display and enthuse over the museum's excellent computer system that is simple to use and readily available to all. Mr Tom Burke, RDF Assoc. Chairman, marked the occasion of our visit by presenting the curator of the centre, Mr Alan Mac Farland with a piece of Dublin crystal suitably inscribed from the RDF Assoc. As Tom made the presentation we were surrounded by wall panels which told the story of every Irish Regiment

which served in the British Army. Plain, unadorned straight forward, they reflected Tom's presentation speech. We do not ask a man's religion nor his politics, we simply seek to remember the history of these men as human beings, who, for many years have been lost in a kind of no-man's land of Irish history. If we seek revision it is only that of the truth, and to tell it as it was and not cloaked in some sort of political correctness tailor-made to suit a particular agenda. Mr Mac Farland was deeply touched by our sentiments and gift, he thanked us for our visit and looked forward to meeting us again. Homeward bound, satisfied in body and mind we asked our weary travellers for their comments on the day. The most popular and telling response was, *'let's do it again, but next time make it the battlefields of Flanders.'* In conclusion we would like to thank all those who travelled for your co-operation in making our first 'Field Trip' enjoyable and a success.



Some of the members and friends of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association who visited the Somme Heritage Center in Newtownards Co. Down in September 1997.

Drama: Absent Comrades. This was the title of a Play written by a brilliant young Cork writer, Bill Murphy. It was part of a 'Cease-fire' trilogy of plays presented by the Focus Theatre in Dublin back in August '97. The play was about four members of the Dublin Fusiliers set in a trench the night before the big push on the 1st of July 1916 before the battle of the Somme. It dealt with the human misery and sadness the war in France inflicted on these men all in different ways. It presented the dichotomy within each man's conscience about the Easter rising in Dublin. The setting design was superb, with the stage so close to the audience, one felt one was part of the drama in the trench. Notification about the play was sent to all of our members, many of whom went along to

see it. Congratulations to Bill and the Focus Theatre on a fine piece of work. The play can be seen as yet another contribution to creating an awareness in Irish society about our involvement in the Great War.

Exhibitions. Phoenix Park: From March to September, 1997 the exhibition of stories and memorabilia to the Dublin Fusiliers was on display at the Visitors Centre in the Phoenix Park in Dublin. The Centre is set in a beautiful wooded area adjacent to Ashtown Castle. It provides a small restaurant. The exhibition received a great response from the public. It was on display right throughout the summer. Many family day trippers to the park dropped in or discovered by accident the exhibition. It was in the Phoenix Park that several school trips paid a visit to the exhibition. Our visitors book contained names from all over the world. In the winter of 1914 -15, the 7th battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers conducted some *musketry* training in the Phoenix Park prior to their departure for Suvla Bay. It would seem in the Summer of 1997, the Dubs were back in *The Park*. Our thanks must go to the curators of the Visitors Centre and to the Office of Public Works in Dublin for offering our association this fine facility.

Dundalk. From the end of September to the end of November 1997, the exhibition was presented at the Louth County Museum in Dundalk. The exhibition was opened by the Minister for Social and Family Affairs Mr Dermot Aherne T.D. Particular thanks must go to Sally Anne, Martin and Jill for presenting the exhibition in such a professional manner. It created such an interest in Dundalk, they were sorry to see it go.

Dublin. In January 1998, a wall mounted script / pictorial exhibition to the Dublin Fusiliers was on display at the Bank of Ireland Arts Exhibition Centre in Foster Place, Dublin. In February, a script / pictorial exhibition to the Dubs will be presented at the Raheny Public Library, Dublin. Over the coming months, this particular exhibition to the Dublin Fusiliers will be presented in Public Libraries throughout Dublin city and county.

Kilkenny City. By kind invitation of the Kilkenny Historical Society, from March to April 98 the exhibition will be presented at Rothe House in Kilkenny City.

Mr Bill Fay RIP August 1997. One of our founding and active members, Mr Bill Fay, passed away on Friday the 28th of August 1997. Bill's father and two uncles were Dublin Fusiliers. Bill's story will appear in the next edition of the Blue Cap. His sister, Mrs Lillie Redmond has gladly taken over the interest Bill showed in our efforts to keep the name of men like her father alive. On behalf of the members and friends of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association may we extend our sympathies to Bill's wife Susane and her family. *Ar dheis De go raibh a Anam. (May his soul be on the right hand side of God.)*

Christmas 1997. Our association ended the year with a test run on a Christmas Dinner and Lecture. It was a marvellous success. The plan was to offer our members a Christmas Dinner on Friday the 5th of December and a Christmas Lecture the next day at the Civic Museum. Seventy three people booked their place at the Dinner, our toast after dinner was to the men of the Dublin Fusiliers who never came home. The lecture, titled 'Raising Kitchner's Army' was brilliantly delivered by Mr Peter Simkins, Senior Research Historian at the Imperial War Museum, London. Approx. one hundred people attended the lecture. All told, the weekend was a great success and all who attended enjoyed the experience. Judging by the response, it will certainly be on the cards for next Christmas.

Forthcoming events for 1998. Lectures and Exhibition. As I am sure you well know, 1998 will be the 200th anniversary of the 1798 Rebellion. The country will be saturated with events to commemorate this event, and rightly so. However, 1998 will also be the 80th anniversary of the ending of the Great War on November the 11th 1918. One could argue which had the bigger impact on Ireland, 1798 or 1918. All over Europe, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, there will be events arranged to commemorate the ending of the Great War. We in the Republic of Ireland must not yet again be seen to show any indifference to the death and sacrifice of thousands of Irishmen and women from the north, south, east and west of Ireland. So to commemorate this event in the Republic of Ireland, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association has decided to commemorate the event with a series

of public lectures and an exhibition of stories and memorabilia to ALL the Irish Regiments who participated in the Great War. The project is at the planning stage at the moment and will be finalised in the next few weeks. We hope to run three lectures with a theme of how the war effected Ireland. There will be more of an emphasis on the social history of Ireland and the effect of the war as distinct from the military history which has been the subject of the lecture series we have previously presented. There will be some time given to military history. The exhibition and lecture series will be opened by President Mary Mac Aleese on Tuesday the 8th of September at 7:30pm. Details of the schedule of events covering this project will be sent to members when the planning is complete. We would like to thank sincerely the Ireland Funds for making a contribution to the costs incurred in presenting this project .

The Messines Tower . Mr Paddy Harte and Mr Glen Barr have together been working on a project to construct a Memorial Tower at Messines in Belgium . the tower will be built near the sector where the 36th (Ulster) and 16th (Irish) Divisions fought side by side in June 1917 at the Battle of Messines. The tower will be situated in a Peace Park which we hope will be visited by people from all over the island of Ireland as a place of reflection and reconciliation. Although the Irish Government has kindly contributed £150,000.0 to the project, it is not a Government project. Most of the costs are been funded by private companies from both sides of the Border. May we wish Glen and Paddy every blessing and success in this venture. The RDF Assoc, which has two members represented on Messines Tower Committee , will do everything we can to assist Paddy and Glen in their work. The Tower will be opened officially in November 1998.

Trips. Due to the volume of work which is required to present the exhibition and lecture series for the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the ending of the war, the RDF Assoc. committee has decided to postpone a trip to France and Flanders for this year. It will be on top of the list for the summer of 1999. However ,as mentioned above, the Memorial Tower which is hoped will be ready for official opening in November 1998 would be an interesting trip to go on . Anyone who is interested in attending this ceremony should contact Mr Tom Burke, Chairman the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association, The Civic Museum,58 South William Street ,Dublin 2 as soon as possible.

Membership. Membership Fees of £Ire 5.00 are due for 1998,we would be obliged if you could return the attached membership renewal form along with your fee. The association depends, and will only survive on your contribution.For historical research purposes we would like to purchase from the Public Records Office at Kew an entire copy of the regimental records of the 1st,2nd,6th,7th,8th,9th and 10th battalions of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. As an association, this information would be invaluable for historic research purpose. This will cost money, exactly how much as yet we do not know, however each member would need to make a contribution in order for the association to purchase a copy of these records.

Royal Dublin Fusiliers Neck Ties. Many of our members are now sporting their new Royal Dublin Fusiliers neck tie. They are an exact replica of the old regimental neck tie worn on ceremonial occasions. We have sold approx. eighty and have forty in store at a cost of £Ire 7.50 .Anyone interested in obtaining a tie, please contact Mr Seamus Green at, 01-2988326,or book one on the membership renewal form attached.

Committee Members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Assoc. We have on file approx. two hundred and fifty people who have expressed an interest in the RDF association, not all of these folks have contributed a membership fee. The association is run by the Chairman. Mr Tom Burke, Secretary. Mr Sean Connolly , committee members Mr Seamus Greene, Mr Brian Moroney, Mr Paddy Hogarty, and Mr Nick Broughall. All of the above can be contacted through the Civic Museum, 58 South William Street, Dublin 2. Telephone number 01- 6794260. A sincere vote of thanks must go to these men for their dedication and work throughout the year. Gratitude must go to many other folks such as Pat Lynch and Charlie Goodwin who helped out in some small but significant way in making last year a success.

Spectamur Agendo.