

The Old Tough

Issue 2: Summer 2020



Editorial

Welcome to the second issue of The Old Tough.

Firstly, we thank those who took the time to give positive feedback on our first issue. We remain open to comments and suggestions for future issues and will particularly welcome contributions of photographs, soldier biographies, articles or other material related to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers in particular.

We also appreciate those of you who have recently renewed your annual subscriptions to the Association. Despite the restrictions of these difficult times, your Association wants to remain active and continue to remember those who fought, died and survived World War 1 as well as their families.

Since its foundation, your Association has had a lot of success in rehabilitating the memory of those who answered John Redmond's call in 1914 to fight for Irish Home Rule on foreign fields. Your Committee has recently considered updating the Association's 25 year old Constitution, and it intends to recommend a revised constitution at our Annual General Meeting later this year. We will probably include an article on our proposals in the next edition of The Old Tough.

In this issue, we include articles on the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association archive, the WW1 medals, the local memorial to the men of the Irish Brigade who died at Colenso in South Africa on 15 December 1899, a moving tribute to the Irishmen who were killed at Gallipoli in 1915, together with our usual features of a Memorial List, some forthcoming Commemorative Events and the Picture Gallery. Please feel free to copy the newsletter to friends and relatives who may share your interest in history and remembrance.

We hope that you find this edition informative.

Editorial Committee

(Paul Appleby, Sally Copeland Keogh, Thomas Murphy)

The RDFA Archives

The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association was established in 1996 to commemorate all Irish men and women who volunteered, served and died in the First World War 1914-1918. The RDFA fulfils its remit by organising public exhibitions, lectures, seminars, visits and the publication of a journal, The Blue Cap. In 2005, the RDFA decided to place its archive with Dublin City Library & Archive, where it is available for public consultation in the [Reading Room](#). The RDFA Archive is managed by Dublin City Archives. Search or browse the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association Archive online at [Digital Repository Ireland](#).

Exhibitions

Dublin City Archives have generated a travelling exhibition based on the RDFA Archive, called Letters from the Great War. For further information, e-mail cityarchives@dublincity.ie.

Collections

The RDFA collects personal papers of individuals who participated in the First World War. Service records for the Royal Dublin Fusiliers are held in [The National Archives](#), Kew, London. Examples of collections held in the Dublin City Archives are:

- RDFA/001: [Monica Roberts Collection](#)
- RDFA/004: [Corporal Henry Kavanagh](#)
- RDFA/014: [Moriarty Collection](#)
- RDFA/017: [The Keogh Collection Postcards](#)
- RDFA/018: [The Gunning Brothers: Gallipoli and the Somme](#)
- RDFA/020: [Irish National War Memorial Committee](#)
- RDFA/035: [Lemass Collection](#)
- RDFA/099: [Private Edward Brierley](#)
- RDFA/103: [Private Patrick Dolan](#)
- RDFA/107: [Rose Mary Savage](#)
- RDFA/109: [Mansfield Collection](#)
- RDFA/111: [Private Daniel Fay](#)

RDFA Journals and Printed Sources

The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association has collected a number of journals and publications produced by a variety of First World War history societies and regimental associations. These are valuable secondary sources for researchers interested in the First World War. The list of RDFA Journals & Printed Sources (PDF, 53KB) can be downloaded from Dublin City Library & Archive. <http://www.dublincityarchives.ie/> Past issues of The Blue Cap can of course be viewed at the Association's own website www.greatwar.ie.

The Irish Brigade Memorial near Colenso in South Africa

A memorial to over 100 men of the 5th (Irish) Brigade stands at Ambleside near Colenso in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. They lost their lives at the Battle of Colenso on 15 December 1899 during the Second Anglo-Boer War.

The War started after the Boers rejected British Government proposals which threatened to curb Boer dominance of the Transvaal. Distrusting the Government's motive in sending extra troops to South Africa, the Boers invaded British-held northern Natal in mid-October 1899 and within weeks had besieged the town of Ladysmith where over 10,000 British troops were based. As British reinforcements flooded into South Africa, relieving Ladysmith became a major priority.

The first attempt at Colenso ended in disaster after several mistakes in troop deployments. On the left flank, the 5th (Irish) Brigade was led away from their intended crossing point of the River Tugela into a loop which exposed them to Boer fire from three sides. The Boers who were dug into trenches on the far bank had few casualties.






Some of the Brigade's soldiers made it to the riverbank, but many became pinned down by Boer rifle fire. Nevertheless one group of Dublin Fusiliers made a determined effort to cross, but some of them became entangled in netting and barbed wire hidden in the fast-flowing current. Among those wounded was a 15 year old bugler, John Francis Dunne of the Fusiliers' 1st Battalion, who had ignored an earlier order to return to the rear. He was later received by Queen Victoria who presented him with a new bugle to replace the one he lost in the River that day.

Relative to other Irish Brigade regiments, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers suffered the most. The adjoining photograph of one side of the memorial near Colenso records the names of 53 men from the Regiment's 1st and 2nd Battalions and six men from the Border Regiment who died that day. Listed on the reverse side (not pictured) are the names of 29 Connaught Rangers and 16 Inniskilling Fusiliers who were also killed. Others died later of their wounds.

After Colenso, two more unsuccessful attempts were made to breach the Boer defences along the River Tugela, before Ladysmith was eventually relieved on 28 February 1900. The siege had lasted almost four months. By then, the Dublin Fusiliers alone had lost over 100 killed and 150 captured in the War, while another 300 had been wounded.



Photos by Paul Appleby RDFA

Medal		Awarded for
1914 Star		For service under fire in France and Belgium, 5 August–22 November 1914. Includes sailors serving ashore.
1914 - 1915 Star		For service in all other theatres of war, 5 August 1914 to 31 December 1915 and for service in France and Belgium, 5 August–22 November 1914
British War Medal		For service abroad (including India) 5 August 1914–11 November 1918, or 1919–1920 in Russia.
Victory Medal		For military and civilian personnel who served in a theatre of war.
Territorial Force War Medal		For members of the Territorial Forces who joined before 30 September 1914 and served in a theatre of war between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918

GALLIPOLI REMEMBERED – Azmak and Green Hill Cemeteries, Suvla Bay, Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey, April 2015

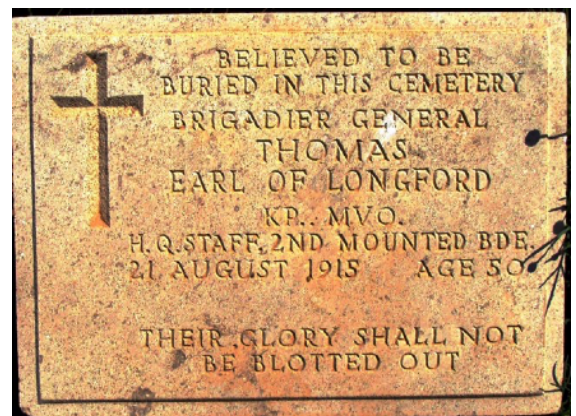
Hey Sarge! Where do you lie? Is it here, or do your bones still lie scattered on this Green Hill near the shores of Suvla? And what about your spirit? Does it now rest easy with those of your wife and children? Since your last days some 100 years ago, has anyone other than your mourning wife and six children in Ireland really cared? Has anyone ever come to lay a flower at your gravestone; shed a tear for the loss of your humanity; appeal for your intervention with the Almighty or pray that you are at peace with your God? In this now quiet spot we well know you're now at peace.

So here we are to ask you for your prayer. As at other sites, here at your gravestone we've laid our small tribute - a St. Bridget's cross centred with a red poppy and Irish harp - along with our own new national ribbon of green, white and orange. We ask for your understanding for our preoccupation with ourselves and our loss of memory of who you were; of why and how you died.

You hailed from Cork city, yet were of the Royal Irish Fusiliers of Monaghan, Armagh and Cavan. How come you lived to the ripe old age of 42 and didn't die young like the thousands of lads of the Irish 10th Division who died around you? But I see you were a regular, like many of the 29th Division who died before you? Were you one of the few old sweats brought in to quell the fear of the new and inexperienced? Or at 42 were you here so that your wife and 6 children in Ireland could continue to put food on the table? But forgive us, for ours is not the right to determine the motives of you or your fellow dead.

We see you only got 3 days at Suvla before you died and that by your side, equal in death, is the memorial gravestone of another old soldier, Thomas Pakenham, Earl of Longford - who died 11 days later - aged 50 years - equal sceptre and spade. Earlier we came across the gravestone of 19 year old Dublin Fusilier, 2/ Lieut H.R.T. Hackett - who is remembered at Azmak - a forgotten place where even the gravestones look tired. Unlike you, he survived the extra months of fear and misery only to die a young man - 6 weeks before this terrible killing ended with evacuation on December 20, 1915.

Up and down the Gallipoli peninsula - from Helles, to Anzac to Suvla and in the surrounding hills we found the resting places of fellow Fusiliers - the 1st Dubs of Dublin and Kildare; 1st Munsters of Cork, Kerry and Munster in general; the Inniskillings of west Ulster; old sweats of whom so few survived the 4 months before you at Helles. Of the 1,012 1st Dubliners who landed at Helles on the tip of the peninsula, only 11 survived the entire Gallipoli campaign unscathed.



Added here at Suvla and Anzac were the 'New Army' battalions of the 10th Irish Division - replacement Dubs, Munsters and Inniskillings; the Connaught Rangers from all over the west of Ireland; the Royal Irish Regiment of Tipperary, Wexford and Kilkenny and the Royal Irish Rifles of Belfast, Down, Antrim, Tyrone; the Leinster regiments of Louth, Meath and Offaly and, of course, your own Royal Irish Fusiliers, who rest among the uncounted Irish who served and died with Anzac, other British and French regiments. Along our way we paid silent tribute at the resting places of Indian, French, Senegalese, Algerian, Moroccan, Burmese, Scot, Welsh, English, Australian, New Zealand, Newfoundland and many other nationalities – all joined as one. In the hills, especially at Canakkale Sehitlei Aniti, Chunuk Bair and Yuri Namut, we remembered the 87,000 Mehmetcik Turk sons from Anatolia, Kurdistan and across the Ottoman Empire - all united in the everlasting - some even buried in graves, but most of whose bones, just like those of their adversaries, still lie shattered in the sacred ground upon which we gently trod.

Does it matter Sarge? Oh yes, for us older guys it matters. Having been given the grace to outlive your 42 summers by many gifted years, we come here - some as retired sons and daughters of the Defence Forces of Ireland - to remember you and ask you to also remember us in your everlasting prayer of peace. It matters to us that you be remembered. For at 42 you died a soldier, remembered and mourned by your wife and six children in Ireland - and now at last by another Irish family - also young once, and soldiers.

Penned by Felix O'Callaghan (Capt Retd) following a combined 36th / 37th Cadet Class Gallipoli battle tour in 2007 and updated following a further Irish-Australian field tour in April 2015 – the Gallipoli Centenary. Photos also supplied by Felix O'Callaghan.

Photo Gallery



The above photograph of jubilant Royal Dublin Fusiliers was originally taken in black and white. It has been altered to include colour similar to that which would have prevailed during WW1. However your Editorial Committee is not aware of the occasion involved. Can you help to identify it? Comments, please, using the subject line 'Newsletter', to rdfa1918@gmail.com.



In memory of the soldiers who are known to have died in the First World War during August and September 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, and who are buried in Grangegorman Cemetery, Blackhorse Avenue, Dublin. May they all rest in peace.

Name	Regiment	Date of death	Age	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Thomas Abel	4th Queen's Own Hussars	13 August 1914	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
James Ford	Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Reg)	13 Sept 1914	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Daniel Robinson	Suffolk Regiment	10 August 1915	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
John Hunt	Royal Dublin Fusiliers	28 Sept 1915	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Robert Oxford	Royal Dublin Fusiliers	1 August 1916	28	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Laurence Murphy	Royal Dublin Fusiliers	24 August 1916	32	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Laurence Doyle	Royal Dublin Fusiliers	6 September 1916	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
John White	Royal Naval Reserve	15 Sept 1916	38	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Joseph Mitchell	Royal Dublin Fusiliers	17 Sept 1916	30	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Arthur E Baker	19th Hussars	27 Sept 1916	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
F Carr	Royal Army Medical Corps	10 August 1917	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Joseph Jennings	Royal Dublin Fusiliers	16 August 1917	23	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Daniel O Connor	Leinster Regiment	19 August 1917	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
P. Dusic	Army Service Corps	20 August 1917	44	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Isaac Matthews	Royal Garrison Art	20 August 1917	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Charles Ballard	Wiltshire Regiment	4 August 1918	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Maurice Brady	Leinster Regiment	26 August 1918	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Wilfred Hay Ruxton	Royal Air Force	29 August 1918	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
James Murphy	Royal Air Force	13 Sept 1918	33	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Edward Hayes	South Lancashire Regiment	27 Sept 1918	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)
Thomas Walsh	Royal Engineers	28 Sept 1918	Unknown	Grangegorman Cemetery (Dublin)

Commemorative Events

National Day of Commemoration

Our annual National Day of Commemoration remembers the Irishmen and women who died in past conflicts and who served with the United Nations. It takes place on the Sunday nearest the date of 11 July which was the date in 1921 that the Anglo-Irish ceasefire was agreed.

Events associated with the National Day of Commemoration were severely restricted this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The principal event took place in Collins Barracks on Sunday 12 July attended by political and religious leaders, members of the Judiciary, veterans of past conflicts and representatives of the next-of-kin of those who died. Although this year's socially distanced ceremony was not open to the public, your Association was represented by our Chairman, Mr Brian Moroney.

On the preceding day, a similarly curtailed wreath-laying ceremony was held under the auspices of the British Legion in the Rose Garden at the Irish National War Memorial Gardens, Islandbridge, Dublin. Some photographs by RTE of this event are below.



Future Remembrance Ceremony in Mount Jerome Cemetery

Your Association has been exploring with the management of Mount Jerome Cemetery in Dublin the possibility of organising a commemoration of past members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers who are buried there. **Details of the arrangements will be posted on our website, www.greatwar.ie, when they are finalised.** In the interim if you know of a former member of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers who is buried in Mount Jerome, please let us know. You can provide his name and any other details by email to RDFA1918@gmail.com or by contacting any member of the Committee.

Disbandment of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers

The centenary of the disbandment of a number of Irish regiments (including the Royal Dublin Fusiliers) takes place in 2022. Your Association wishes to mark this event and is seeking to engage with other relevant parties who may have an interest in participating. In the interim, we are particularly pleased to announce that we have secured the agreement of St Patrick's Cathedral to hold a remembrance ceremony there on the centenary date, Sunday, 12 June 2022.

Representatives of the disbanded Irish regiments and any other parties who wish to be associated with this ceremony are welcome to contact our Secretary, Mr Paul Taylor, at RDFA1918@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events

The following table contains a reminder of some forthcoming events for your diary. Your Committee will make a decision in the Autumn on the arrangements for our Annual General Meeting and traditional Christmas Dinner in December. This decision will take account of the public health guidance in place at that time.

Date	Event	Place
25 October 2020 at noon (provisional)	RDF Remembrance Ceremony	Mount Jerome Cemetery, Harold's Cross, Dublin 6
11 November 2020	Armistice Day	Various Locations
Early December	RDFA Annual General Meeting	Masonic Hall Dublin
Early December	RDFA Christmas Dinner	Masonic Hall Dublin

Contacts

Articles / comments for The Old Tough should be sent, using the subject line 'Newsletter', to RDFA1918@gmail.com

Anyone wishing to join or rejoin the Association should email our Membership Secretary, Capt (Retd) Seamus Greene, using the subject line 'Membership', at RDFA1918@gmail.com

Spectamur Agendo
(We are judged by our deeds)