

The Old Tough

Newsletter of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association
(Registered Charity No 20038816)



Issue 3: Spring 2021

Editorial

Welcome to this first edition of The Old Tough for 2021. It's been about six months since we issued the last Summer 2020 edition. This gap was due to the need to focus our attention on gathering content for The Blue Cap 2020. We think that the effort was worth it, and from the feedback received, we believe that you, the membership, also appreciated our bumper 25th anniversary Blue Cap issue.

This Old Tough resolves a mystery as to how a Dublin Fusilier, recorded as dying in France in March 1918, came to be buried in Cork. We also include an extensive Dubs' News article on recent developments in your Association. Other features in this edition include:

- additional information on the construction of the Fusiliers' Arch in Dublin which was covered in Issue 1 of The Old Tough;
- the identity of the 43 Dublin Fusiliers who died in late August 1914 in the Battle of Le Cateau. This rounds off the recent article on the Battle in The Blue Cap for 2020, and
- the ranks in the British Army during WW1.

We hope that you enjoy it. As ever, we welcome feedback or contributions to future editions of the newsletter. You may contact us at rdfa1918@gmail.com.

Feel free to copy the newsletter to friends and relatives who may share your interest in history and remembrance.

The Editorial Committee

**Paul Appleby, Sally Copeland-Keogh,
Thomas Murphy and John Sheehan**

24936 L/Cpl Harry Eason, RDF

Ben Glascott

Thomas Henry Walter Eason, known as Harry, was my grandmother's brother. Harry was born on 20 August 1886 in the Parish of St Anne's, Shandon, Cork, the son of William and Agnes Eason. He enlisted in the 10th Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, in Dublin on 13 November 1915, aged 29. However his short service form dated 16 November 1915 gives his age as 25 years and 3 months. I do not know why he misstated his age in joining up.

The 10th Battalion was known as the 'battalion of shopkeepers'. It was a service battalion, that is one raised for the duration of WW1 and composed almost entirely of volunteers. It was part of the 63rd (Naval) Division. With about 18,000 members and 13 battalions, it was uniquely composed of marines, sailors and 4 battalions of Army, including the 10th Dublins. It saw action at the end of the Somme campaigns in 1916, the 3rd Battle of Ypres in 1917 and the Battle of Cambrai, also in 1917.

When Harry died on 23 March 1918, he was 31 years old. However the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) records him as 30. Ireland's WW1 Memorial Record at Islandbridge states:

"EASON, HENRY. Regimental No. 24936. Rank, Lance-Corporal, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 10th Batt.; died, France, March 23, 1918; born Shandon, Co. Cork."

What caused me to research his service history was that as a family we always knew that he was buried in St Luke's

Cemetery, Douglas, Cork. We could not understand the apparent contradiction of death in France and burial in Ireland, as it was not normal practice to repatriate those who died or were killed abroad.

The precise details of Harry's Army service are difficult to decipher on occasion because of the condition of the records. However following enlistment and training, he seems to have had some home leave from 13 to 18 August 1916, after which he was immediately sent to the Front: "Embarked Southampton 18 August; landed Le-Havre 19 August". He was promoted 'in the field' to Lance-Corporal on 17 March 1917. Service in France is confirmed by a further note on his record: "22.9.17 Leave to uk - returned from leave 5.10.1917".

On 1 February 1918 he reported sick, and on 9 February he was referred to hospital. The 'casualty' date is shown as 6.2.1918. By 14 February the diagnosis was one of Bronchitis and altered on 20 February to Pneumonia. By 25 February to quote the actual record, he had his "diagnosis changed" to Pulmonary Tuberculosis. There appears to be a reference to hospitalisation in Rouen on 28 February prior to transfer to England on the 'SS *Western Australia*' and admission to Bermondsey Military Hospital on 6 March. Harry died there on 23 March 1918, and the cause is recorded as Acute Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

It is because his death took place in England that his body was brought back to Cork as the Army considered it to be 'Home' at that time. Harry was afforded a Military Funeral in Cork on Thursday, 28 March 1918. The details are recorded in the '*Cork Examiner*' of 2 April 1918. There is one family photograph of the hearse at the entrance to St Luke's Cemetery which confirms the reference in the press report to the flag-draped coffin. The press report and photographs of his Funeral and headstone are included below.

Harry's was the first of the five graves with military associations to be opened in St Luke's. We as children and young adults could easily recognise it by the CWGC headstone, although the inscription faded over the years. However

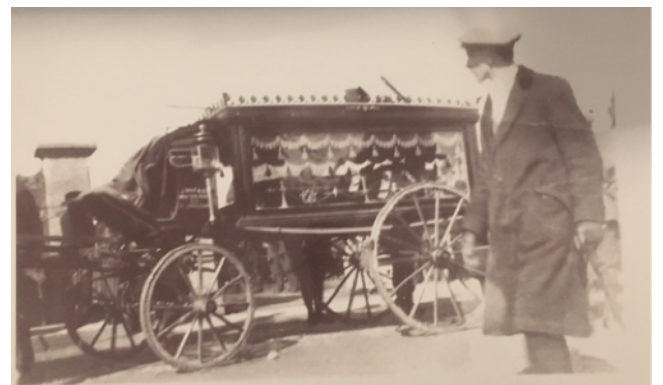
we were pleased that the CWGC replaced the original one a few years ago with a newly cut full inscription.

My grandparents spoke little of Harry in the years that I and my sibling grew up in Cork. Like many of their generation, they may well have known the lines written by AP Herbert in his poem, '*After The Battle*':

*"We have done well: we like to hear it said
Say it, and then for God's sake, say no more,
Fight, if you must, fresh battles far ahead,
But keep them dark, behind your chateau door."*

Despite this, Harry's story now lives on. My cousin's son is a history teacher in Belfast, and he possesses Harry's Service and Victory Medals. The point he makes to the children of today is that it was not just men from Northern Ireland but from the whole of the island of Ireland who served in WW1 - what was then hoped to be the war to end all wars.

Thanks to Michael Lee of the RDFA for his help in uncovering the real 'story' behind Harry's death and subsequent burial in Cork. Thanks also to Tom Burke, RDFA, for information on the War record of the 10th Battalion.



MILITARY FUNERAL IN CORK
The remains of the late Lance-Corpl. Harry Escoe, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, arrived in Cork on Thursday from England, and were subsequently removed to Douglas for interment. The deceased young soldier was accorded a military funeral, the remains being met at the station by a party of the King's Regiment from Victoria Barracks, with firing squad, and on the shoulders of six men of the party the coffin, which was draped with the Union Jack, was borne to his last resting place. The cortege was an extremely representative one, and included a very large number of the deceased's fellow-members of the I.C.I.O.Y.M.A., who joined in this final tribute of respect to one whom they proved a true comrade. The funeral service was conducted by the Rev. Mercer R. Wilson, and at the conclusion a volley was fired over the grave and the "Last Post" sounded. The chief mourners were—Messrs B. G. Glascock (brother-in-law), G. Glascock (nephew), Wm. Clarke (cousin), George Anderson, and J. B. Fowler. Amongst the general public present were—H. H. Dunne; Hon. Sec. I.C.I.O.Y.M.A.; D. Kilroy; R. W. Jones; P. Laird; J. Blenners; J. Reave; W. Jeffrays; J. S. Booth; etc., etc.

Additional Information on the RDF Arch, St Stephen's Green, Dublin

John Sheehan

The height of the Fusiliers' Arch is 32ft. 6 ins., and the breadth 27 ft. 3 ins., the proportions being exactly the same as in the Arch of Titus in Rome. It springs from rusticated piers, each intersected by a pedestal and a pair of pilasters supporting a Doric entablature. The frieze bears on its four elevations the names in gold lettering of the principal actions in which the Regiment took part, viz., Talana, Colenso, Tugela Heights, Hartshill, Ladysmith and Laing's Nek. The entablature is surmounted by an attic storey bearing two inscription panels. The obverse contains these words:-

Fortissimis suis Militibus Hoc Monumentum Eblana Dedicavit, MCMVII

(meaning 'This Dublin Monument is dedicated to the Bravest of Soldiers, 1907')

On the reverse is the following inscription:

***In Memory of the Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Men
of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers who fell in the South African War, A.D. 1899-1900***

The front keystone supports a bronze cartouche, flanked by branches of bay, bearing the Arms of the Regiment. Within the entrance, which is 12 ft. wide, are inscribed the names of the officers and men who fell during the War. The main structure is of grey granite from the Ballyknockan Quarry, Co Wicklow, and the inscription panels are of sheephouse limestone from Drogheda. The site was granted by the Commissioners of Public Works. The Architect was J. Howard Pentland, Esq., R.H.A., F.R.I.B.A., and the Contractors were Messrs. Laverty & Sons of Belfast and Dublin; Messrs J. & C. McGloughlin of Dublin supplied the wrought-iron railings and gates.



Royal Dublin Fusiliers' Memorial Arch.
Opening Ceremony by H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught, Monday, August 19th, 1907.

As shown above, the Arch was unveiled by Field-Marshal H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught K.G., Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment, on 19 August 1907. On the inside of the Arch are recorded the names of 222 Commissioned Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks who died. The listed Commissioned Officers and their places and dates of death follow:-

Captain & Bt. Maj. J. E. MacBean, D.S.O., Nooitgedacht, 13 December 1900)	1st Battalion
Captain A. H. Bacon, Colenso, 15 December 1899)	
Lieut-Colonel C. G. H. Sitwell D.S.O., Hartshill, 24 February 1900)	
Captain G. A. Weldon, Talana Hill, 20 October 1899)	
Captain C. A. Hensley, Upper Tugela, 20 January 1900)	
Lieut. R. C. B. Henry, Colenso, 15 December 1899)	2nd Battalion
Lieut. T. B. Ely, at sea, 15 April 1900 (died of disease))	
2 nd Lieut C. J. Genge, Talana Hill, 21 October 1899)	
2 nd Lieut. J. T. Dennis, Aliwal North, 2 May 1900 (died of disease))	

The Ranks of the British Army during the First World War

There were two distinct tiers within the British Army's rank structure, namely commissioned officers and other ranks.

British Army Commissioned Officers

- Second Lieutenant (2/Lt)
- Lieutenant (Lt)
- Captain (Capt)
- Major (Maj)
- Brigadier (Brig)
- Colonel (Col)
- Lieutenant-Colonel (Lt/Col).
- Major General (Maj Gen)
- Lieutenant General (Lt Gen)
- General (Gen)
- Field Marshal (FM).



Other Ranks

The entry rank in the British Army for an enlisted soldier was private (Pte) and a private could then be promoted through the ranks in the following order:

- Lance Corporal (L/Cpl)
- Corporal (Cpl)
- Sergeant (Sgt)
- Sergeant Major (Sgt Maj)
- Warrant officer (2nd Class)
- Warrant officer (1st Class).

Warrant officer was the senior non-commissioned rank, with specialist roles in combat and combat-support arms (including in war for ammunition resupply and prisoner handling) and in the technical and non-combatant services who may be responsible for discipline within the unit.

How the British Army was organised during the First World War

Rank	Command	Approximate number of men under their command
Field Marshal	Army group	2,000,000
General	Army	300,000
Lieutenant-General	Corps	60,000
Major-General	Division	12,000
Brigadier	Brigade	3,500
Lieutenant-Colonel	Battalion Commanding Officer (CO)	1,000
Major or Captain	Company or sub-unit	200
Lieutenant or Second Lieutenant	Platoon	50
Sergeant	Platoon second in command	
Corporal or Lance Corporal	Section	12
Private	None	0



The Dubs who died at the Battle of Le Cateau, 26/27 August 1914

(Key: HBC = Honnechy British Cemetery, 8 kms south-west of Le Cateau;
FSJM = La Ferté-Sous-Jouarre Memorial, 66 kms east of Paris)

Number	Rank	Name (Age, where available)	Home Location	Memorial Site (Grave, if applicable)
	2 nd Lt	JGM Dunlop (28)	Hollywood, Co Down	HBC (IIC 9)
10539	Sgt	Frederick Rodney Betts (23)	Harwich	HBC (IC 15)
7558	Sgt	Michael Coyne (29)	Portlaoise, Co Laois	HBC (IC 50)
9250	Sgt	A Hutton	Highbury, London	HBC (IC 13)
10062	Sgt	Edward John Shakespeare	Dublin	FSJM
10476	Cpl	Alfred William Merryweather	Kingston-on-Thames	HBC (IC 40)
11521	L/Cpl	J Boland (20)	Upr Dorset St, Dublin	HBC (IC 26)
11604	L/Cpl	Richard Carroll	Dublin	HBC (IC 53)
5502	L/Cpl	Addie Codger	London	FSJM
9484	L/Cpl	Patrick Corcoran	Dublin	FSJM
7218	L/Cpl	Alfred William Creamer (26)	Clacton-on-Sea	FSJM
7953	L/Cpl	Henry John Leetch (26)	Hounslow, Middlesex	HBC (IC 31)
10462	Pte	R Black	Belfast	HBC (IC 12)
9461	Pte	James Brogan	Dublin	HBC (IC 32)
9369	Pte	Michael Butler	Dublin	HBC (IC 44)
7996	Pte	Thomas Byrne (28)	Boyne Place, Drogheda	HBC (IC 27)
9578	Pte	William Clarke (26)	Talbot St, Dublin	HBC (IC 39)
11372	Pte	Thomas Condon	Cork	FSJM
8950	Pte	Michael Dalton (35)	Hacketstown, Co Carlow	FSJM
9318	Pte	James Dowling	Mountmellick, Co Laois	HBC (IC 49)
8871	Pte	Michael Dowman	Dublin	FSJM
11623	Pte	William Dunne	Kilmainham, Dublin	HBC (IC 37)
7932	Pte	George Frazer (26)	Lr Pembroke St, Dublin	HBC (IC 18)

Number	Rank	Name (Age, where available)	Home Location	Memorial Site (Grave, if applicable)
7636	Pte	Martin Geoghegan (33)	Bridewell Lane, Carlow	FSJM
11188	Pte	AW Harper (or Arthur Harker)	West Bromwich	HBC (IC 23)
8771	Pte	Richard Heffernan	Glasgow	FSJM
7628	Pte	William Higgins	Not known	FSJM
8514	Pte	Patrick Kennedy (29)	Glasgow	FSJM
10620	Pte	William Kennedy	Dublin	HBC (IC 48)
11396	Pte	James King	Clarence St, Dublin	HBC (IC 33)
9546	Pte	Patrick Kirwan (26)	Dublin	FSJM
9037	Pte	Thomas McClean	Raheny, Dublin	FSJM
10316	Pte	Joseph Magee	Randalstown, Co Antrim	FSJM
9531	Pte	James Martin (25)	Finglas, Dublin	HBC (IC 16)
11379	Pte	Peter Morgan	Dublin	HBC (IC 21)
8619	Pte	George Perceval Newton (30)	Ballybeg, Co Wicklow	HBC (IC 22)
7981	Pte	John Roche	Cork	HBC (IC 24)
9579	Pte	Matthew Sharkey (26)	Foley St, Dublin	FSJM
9251	Pte	John Sheeran	Dublin	HBC (IC 36)
9575	Pte	Robert Tate (25)	Dublin/Durban, Sth Africa	HBC (IC 17)
11496	Pte	Albert Tuite (25)	Ballyglunin, Co Galway	HBC (IC 28)
10149	Pte	William Whelan (24)	Castledermot, Co Kildare	FSJM
8966	Pte	Samuel Willoughby (27)	Hacketstown, Co Carlow	FSJM

Sources:

www.cwgc.org (accessed on 31 January 2021);

Hogarty, Patrick, *'The Old Toughs' from Milton to Mons and the Western Front 1911-1918: A Brief History of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion* (2001), page 82.

Dubs' News

Annual General Meeting

The Blue Cap 2020 which you received in December contained news on our Association's activities up to the end of November. Since then, the Association had a successful Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 12 December 2020. This was organised via Zoom, and about 20 members attended. It was wonderful to see and talk to the friends that we have missed meeting personally over the last year due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

The AGM adopted the Association's latest Financial Statement and the Secretary's Report on Activity in 2020. It also approved a new Constitution for the Association which replaces our original 25 year old Constitution. This was the culmination of a good deal of work by your Committee last year. The Meeting also re-elected the outgoing Committee and elected John O'Brien as a new member to the Committee.

Since then, two of your Committee, Philip Lecane and Seán Slattery, have separately decided to step back from the Committee for the time being. We thank them for their longstanding contributions to the Association and look forward to meeting them again in the future. We wish them both well.

2022 Centenary

Our planning for the centenary of the disbandment of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and other Irish regiments in 1922 continues apace. In response to representations from your Association, the National Museum has recently confirmed its intention to organise a small scale exhibition to mark the event in July 2022. The Dublin City Library and Archive are also planning to mount an exhibition on the disbandment of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers in 2022, and your Association has indicated its willingness to assist. While planning continues on a remembrance trip to England next year, your Committee has recently decided that the Association should prepare a booklet on the history of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers to coincide with the centenary events next year. Work on this will start shortly.

Remembrance

Unsurprisingly, the Covid-19 pandemic continues to undermine our plans for tours in 2021. We have postponed to 2022 a mooted trip to Salonika due to the uncertainties surrounding the prevalence of the virus and the roll-out of the vaccination campaigns in Ireland, Greece and Macedonia later this year. More optimistically, your Committee is working on options for possible day-trips within Ireland later this year as the prospects for a return to a new form of normality improve. We will keep you advised of developments.

Three members of our Association (John O'Brien, Aidan Kavanagh and Seán Ryan) have been doing sterling research work lately on the former Royal Dublin Fusiliers who are interred in family graves in Mount Jerome Cemetery in Dublin. So far about 15 men have been identified. If you are aware of a former Dublin Fusilier who is buried in Mount Jerome, please provide what you know to John, Aidan and Seán at the following email address: rdfajob@gmail.com. They intend producing an information booklet on all the men involved and their families, the cost of which will be supported by the Association. When circumstances allow, it is also intended to hold a remembrance ceremony in Mount Jerome to honour all those involved.

Charities Governance Code

As many members will know, your Association is a registered charity, and all charities registered with the Charities Regulator become subject to the best practice provisions of the Charities Governance Code this year. Following recent preparatory work, we are pleased to report that we have recently indicated to the Charities Regulator that we are fully compliant with the Code. One

of the requirements of the Code is greater transparency, and we have now committed to placing additional information about the Association on our website, www.greatwar.ie. This work is in hands. Before long, our website will contain copies of the following:

1. The Association's recent Financial Statement adopted at the 2020 AGM;
2. The Secretary's Report on Association Activity adopted at the 2020 AGM;
3. Our new Constitution;
4. The draft minutes of our AGM on 12 December 2020;
5. Our Activity Plan for 2021-2022;
6. Your Committee's new Code of Conduct;
7. The two editions of The Old Tough issued in 2020;
8. The Blue Cap 2020, and
9. The 2021 Membership Renewal Form.

Other Plans

We thank those who have acted to renew their membership of the Association in 2021, and we of course welcome new members too. Despite the challenges of these times, your Committee has a busy schedule of work ahead. As well as the items mentioned earlier, we plan to publish three editions of The Old Tough this year (Spring, Summer and Autumn), and you are likely to see two Blue Caps. The first Blue Cap will be a Tom Burke special rounding off the Dubs' involvement in World War 1 which will issue shortly, and the second edition will issue before Christmas.

Upcoming events will be listed in our next edition of The Old Tough.

Recent Deaths

Finally we want to bring to your notice that Madeline Cunningham passed away peacefully on 5 February 2021. Madeline was the wife of Kevin Cunningham, one of our most respected and popular longstanding members. Our sincere condolences go to Kevin and his family on their loss.

It is with great sadness that we have learned of the death of our esteemed friend and colleague, Tony Behan, who passed away on 26 February. A long time friend of our Association, he will be forever remembered by us for his rendition of 'The Suit' at our Annual Christmas Dinners, his jovial personality, his interest in Irish history and in particular that of his beloved Dublin. Above all he was a true and kind gentleman. May he rest in peace.

Recent Talk on 'The Irish Soldier at Gallipoli'

Mr Ian Binnie of The Gallipoli Association recently gave an informative talk on 'The Irish Soldier at Gallipoli'. This dealt with the devastating losses suffered by many Irish regiments (including the Dubs) in that ill-fated WW1 campaign in 1915. If you missed it, you can now view the talk via the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rqLLDisPDk&feature=youtu.be>.

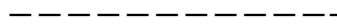
Photo Gallery



The photo above shows a Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion, Colour Party at Le Quesnoy, France, after the Armistice in 1918. If you have any information on the men involved, please let us know at rdfa1918@gmail.com.



Happy St Patrick's Day, Everyone, and Keep Safe.



Spectamur Agendo
(We are judged by our deeds)