

The Old Tough

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



Issue 4: Summer 2021

Editorial

Welcome to the Summer edition of The Old Tough. We believe that we have got an interesting selection of features in this newsletter. These include articles on:

- the memorial in the College Green branch of Bank of Ireland to the officials of the Bank who died in World War 1 (WW1);
- the association between the families of former Royal Dublin Fusiliers and a fatal tenement collapse in Dublin in 1963, and
- the fate of the family of two Toohey brothers killed in WW1.

Other items of interest include:

- a Belgian historian with links to our Association, Francis Devlamynck, is seeking our help to identify the recipients of *Ireland's Memorial Records 1914-1918* (illustrated by Harry Clarke and printed in 1923) which lists the names of over 49,000 Irishmen and others serving in Irish regiments who lost their lives in WW1;
- a new book by Graeme Sheppard ('The Bulgarian Contract') which deals in part with the fighting in Salonika in late 1915 in which the Dubs were involved;
- the short film (*The Rose and the Fusilier*) which was made in 2015 by the Newtownabbey Arts and Cultural Network about the Dub and his wife who were killed in Hulluch, northern France, and Dublin respectively in late April 1916;
- a listing of all the Dubs who died at Hulluch in April 1916, and
- a photograph from the Association's trip to France and Belgium in 2018 which should bring back pleasant memories for those of us who attended.

We also have a short article (Dubs' News) on recent Association developments and future plans.

We hope that you enjoy this newsletter. We thank those who have contributed articles to this edition. As ever, we welcome feedback and contributions to future editions. You may contact us at rdfa1918@gmail.com.

The Editorial Committee

Paul Appleby, David Buckley, Sally Copeland-Keogh, Thomas Murphy and John F Sheehan

The Bank of Ireland Memorial at College Green, Dublin

The Bank of Ireland in College Green Dublin is passed by several thousand people every day but how many know of the World War 1 Memorial Tablet and Roll of Honour which is located just inside the door as you enter from College Green (see photographs below).

I first became aware of it as a child of about 10 years of age when my father brought me to see it and since then I have had a lifetime interest in Irish men who served and lost their lives in WW1. In the last 25 years particularly so in the members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. These Memorials were erected in October 1920 to remember the members of the staff of Bank of Ireland who were killed and to their gallant colleagues who fought with them in 1914-1918. In his speech at the unveiling the Governor of the Bank of Ireland said: “We welcome those who have come back to us. We mourn for those who shall return no more but we trust that those we call the dead. Are breathers of an ampler day, For ever nobler ends”.

In July 1914 about one third of the staff were of military age, some were members of the volunteer force and a few were Army reservists but the great majority knew nothing of the art of war. The Bank made an order granting half pay and a guarantee of re-instatement after the War to the staff who enlisted. During the period of war 190 men almost one third of the staff served in the forces, 189 volunteered and only 1 was called up under the Military Services Act.

Men of every rank offered their services from directors to porters, married or single. They served in several regiments including the Royal Flying Corps. Many of them gaining commissions while in several cases men who enlisted as privates preferred to remain in that rank. Distinctions gained by Bank of Ireland men numbered 40, an ex-official of the Bank, Lieut. Edmund de Wind RIR, who resigned from the Bank prior to the War in order to emigrate was awarded the Victoria Cross but lost his life in the gallant deed.

47 were wounded, 9 taken prisoner by the Turks and 8 by the Germans. 16 of the staff were killed in action, 8 died of wounds, 7 died on service, and 2 were reported missing.

The members of the RDF who lost their lives are as follows:

Name	Date of death	Place of death
Capt. William Percy Butler	23 rd April 1917	Gaurelle
Second Lieut. Arthur Vivian Green	17 th August 1917	Ypres
Second Lieut. David Noel Karney	21 st March 1918	Hindenburg
Private Cecil William Murray	16 th August 1915	Gallipoli, Kis-Lar-Dagh
Sgt. Richard Sealy Swan	15 th August 1916	Salonika
Private Thomas Arthur Symes	18 th August 1915	Suvla Bay



Enlisted in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers:

- Herbert James Adams
- Robin Cecil Anderson
- John Frederick William Brown
- Alexander Burke
- John Whitmore Burland
- James Henry Dorrity
- Thomas Albert Glanville
- Edmund Richard Gray
- Charles Dacre Harvey
- Hugh Graham Latimer
- Samuel Le Bas
- George Herbert McElvany
- John McKenzie
- Charles O'Neill
- Thomas Rothwell
- Albert Mausel Smith
- Andrew Ernest Walker



In May of this year our Association lost one of its long standing members, Norman Adams, whose father was one of these men, Herbert James Adams, who enlisted in the 7th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers in September 1914 and took part in Suvla Bay landings in August 1915 and subsequent operations at Gallipoli being wounded in action at Chocolate Hill. After recovery he served with the 10th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers during the 1916 Rising and was discharged unfit for further service in May 1916.

Sources:

- The Great War 1914-1918 BOI staff service record.
- Irish War Memorial Records
- Neill's Blue Cap, H.C. Wylly
- Crown and Company, Mainwaring
- Medal Index Cards
- The Pals at Suvla Bay, H. Hanna

John F Sheehan

Linked by Tragedy

Seán Connolly

The September-October 2020 edition of History Ireland has a well illustrated article on a Royal Dublin Fusilier, James Murray. He served in the 2nd Battalion during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). When he returned home, he married Mary Staunton in Westland Row Church in 1904, and they lived in very poor conditions in Turner's Cottages in Ballsbridge. Other Royal Dublin Fusiliers also resided there. His daughter, Mary, died of pneumonia in March 1907 shortly after her first birthday, and his wife died one month later. In April 1909, their son, James, aged four and a half, died when his clothes caught fire while he was alone in their flat in Grant's Row. His grandmother had slipped out to the shops, and a neighbour heard the child screaming.

James married Jane Byrne in Haddington Road Church in May 1912 and started a new family. He re-enlisted on 29 March 1916 when he had three children under the age of four. He served in the 8th Battalion and was awarded the Military Medal as well as two Hickie parchments. After the War, he lived in Upper Erne Street before moving to 3 Fenian Street. James died on 13 April 1949. His widow, Mary, continued to reside there until 12 June 1963 when the whole dilapidated tenement collapsed killing two and injuring seven.

Most of James's possessions were lost in the collapse. The author of the article, John Murray, a great-grandson of James, was reunited with his missing Victory Medal in 2019.

The two children killed in the disaster were Linda Byrne (8) and Marian Vardy (9). They were returning from a sweet shop on the corner. Linda was a granddaughter of Patrick Byrne who died of wounds on 30 March 1918. He had served with the 8th Battalion, the 8th/9th and was with the 20th Entrenching Battalion when he died. He is buried in Namps Au Val Cemetery, near Amiens, which was the temporary location of a Casualty Clearing Station during the German March offensive in 1918. Linda was a sister of our late Association member, Des Byrne, who wrote a moving book about his grandfather which he dedicated to Linda and his mother and father. Des gave a memorable lecture on his grandfather in Pearse Street Library on 17 October 2009. This was close to Fenian Street, the location of the tragic event.



<https://comeheretome.com/2013/08/26/the-tenement-crisis-in-dublin-1963/>

Privates Thomas and Joseph Toohey, Royal Dublin Fusiliers**By Jon Toohey**

Given the sacrifices that the Dubs had made at Gallipoli, it was appropriate to have a Dub's descendant read the words "They shall not grow old..." at the event marking the centenary of the Gallipoli Campaign on 25 April 2015, when Queen Elizabeth II laid a wreath at the Cenotaph in London. Private Thomas Toohey of the Dubs was killed in action on 25 April 1915 at V Beach on the first day of the Gallipoli Campaign, aged 22. One hundred years later, his great-grandnephew, Michael Toohey, also 22, read those words which end "...we will remember them".

Thomas had a younger brother, Joseph, to whom he had been very close and ten days after Thomas's death, Joseph signed up. He was wounded at the Battle of Passchendaele in 1917, patched up, sent back and killed with the Dubs on 21 March 1918 – the first day of the German March offensive.

The deaths of Thomas and Joseph were not the first that the Toohey family had experienced. No less than five of their siblings (Margaret, Emily, Patrick, Agnes and Alexander – there may have been more) had already died as children in the slums of the Dublin tenements. Their father had died in 1900, and Thomas and Joseph were 'boarded out'. The 1901 Census records them, aged 8 and 6, together on a farm many miles outside Dublin – it is not known what their experience there was, but many of the 'boarded out' were treated little better than slave labour on the farms.

Even before their father died, their mother, Emily, was frequently recorded as a visitor to the North Dublin Union (NDU) poorhouse. She was there in 1905 and gave birth to her youngest child – Alexander – with the added stigma of illegitimacy. At the time infant mortality was a known concern at the NDU, and a Government report revealed that in the three years ended 1904, 40% of infants born in the NDU never reached their first birthday. By reaching the age of one, Alexander had survived a not dissimilar attrition rate to those his older brothers would face in the War – but they did not survive. Alexander's great-grandson is Michael.

Soon after the War, Emily's three surviving children all emigrated – two (Eleanor and Alexander) to South Africa and one (William) to London. Emily remarried and remained in Dublin where she died in 1945. Before her death, she sent the medals of Thomas and Joseph to Alexander for safekeeping.



Michael Toohey reciting "They shall not grow old ..." at the Cenotaph in London in 2015 while wearing the medals of his great-granduncle, Thomas Toohey

Dubs' News

Events in 2021/2022

Thankfully, the difficult Covid-19 situation is easing as the roll-out of the vaccination programme gathers pace. In anticipation of a more open society in the latter part of the year, our Association has been considering what events might be able to take place. Three are currently being planned:

- a remembrance ceremony for the former Royal Dublin Fusiliers and their families who were interred in Mount Jerome Cemetery, Harold's Cross, Dublin. This will be an outdoor event in the early Autumn, comprising a tour and talk at the graves of the families involved;
- a trip to Durrow, Co Laois, to view a painting of the 1st Battalion of the Dubs before their departure to South Africa at the start of the Anglo-Boer War in late 1899 and to see artefacts relating to local man, Jack Moyney VC, and his service in World War 1. This proposed trip is also envisaged for the Autumn;
- the Association's Annual General Meeting and Annual Dinner in early December. A provisional booking has been made with the Masonic Hall.

Clearly all of these plans are dependent on the Covid-19 situation continuing to improve and on the prevailing public health guidance at the time of the proposed events. Needless to say, we will keep you advised of developments and hope to have more definite arrangements to report in early Autumn.

Planning for 2022, the year when we will mark the centenary of the disbandment in 1922 of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and five other Irish regiments, is continuing. Details will be advised to you in due course.

Tom Burke's Blue Cap on the Events of 1918

Following requests from members for a printed copy of this important Blue Cap, arrangements for printing are now in hand. It is hoped that that the printed copies will be distributed in early July to those members who sought one.

Recent Deaths

We were saddened to learn of the sudden death of one of our loyal members, Norman Adams, on 3 May last. He was a jovial gentleman, a regular attendee at our Annual Dinner and extremely proud of his father's connection with the 'Dubs'. Sadly, Norman's wife, Patience, also passed away unexpectedly a few short weeks later on 22 May.

We were also very sorry to hear of the death on 15 May of Kay Spain, the wife of our popular member, Gerry Spain, who is a longstanding supporter of the Association and its activities.

We recently learned that Jim Ockendon Jnr. and his wife, Joyce, have passed away. They were both members and supporters of the Association for over 25 years. Jim was a son of Jim Ockendon VC, one of the Dubs to win a Victoria Cross in World War 1.

On behalf of the Association and its members, our Chairman, and Treasurer have conveyed our sincere condolences to the families and friends of Norman, Kay, Jim and Joyce.

In addition a friend of our Association, Jacky Platteeuw of the Last Post Association, also died earlier this year. He was a major force behind the daily WW1 remembrance ceremony at the Menin Gate in Belgium. He was always very helpful to the Association whenever we visited to pay our respects to the Dubs who fell in the War.

May they all rest in peace.

Request for Assistance: Ireland's Memorial Records, 1914-1918

Members of the Association will know that *Ireland's Memorial Records, 1914-1918* (illustrated by Harry Clarke) lists the names of over 49,000 Irishmen and others serving in Irish regiments who lost their lives in WW1. Only 100 copies of this eight volume publication were printed in 1923.

We recently received an email from Francis Devlamynck, a Belgian researcher with links to our Association, who is seeking our help. Francis has identified where about 40 of the 100 published copies are, and before the centenary of this publication arrives in 2023, he is seeking to identify the locations holding the remaining copies.

Together with important repositories (like the National Library, Dublin, the Linen Hall Library, Belfast, and some international museums and libraries), many Church of Ireland institutions (including St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, St Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny, and St Columb's Cathedral, Derry) are known to possess a copy. One of our members thinks it likely that other Church of Ireland dioceses may have received one almost a century ago.

If you have information on the locations of copies of this historic publication (whether in religious or other institutions), please email us at rdfa1918@gmail.com, and we will collate the information and pass it on to Francis. We hope to persuade him in due course to allow us to publish the updated results of his research in a future edition of our annual journal, The Blue Cap. He previously published a lengthy article on the subject in the 2015 yearbook of the In Flanders Fields Museum.

New Book: *The Bulgarian Contract* by Graeme Sheppard

Graeme Sheppard has provided us with the following introduction to his new book which sounds like an interesting read:

"The Bulgarian Contract: the Secret Lie that ended the Great War does a rare thing: it provides new-found evidence that truly alters our knowledge of how and why the World War ended precipitously on 11 November 1918 (with the Central Powers still on enemy soil) rather than carry on into 1919. Author Graeme Sheppard unearths how two young British officers, serving on the Macedonian front with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and the Connaught Rangers, witnessed a clever act of political propaganda and misinformation that propelled Bulgaria out of the War in 1918. Both men spent three years as POWs deep behind enemy lines having been taken prisoner at the Battle of Kosturino in 1915, where the majority of their outnumbered Irish units were either killed or injured. The freezing night of December 7th, 1915: *'Hill 526, named Crete Rivet by the French, had not been taken by the enemy, orders were for two companies to creep forward, occupy it, and hold at all costs. So we slipped and scrambled up the steep backside of the hill, with lots of fluent curses from my Dublin men'*. The Bulgarian Contract: politics, revolution, treason, and deceit; how the Great War was won and lost on the Macedonian front. See <https://www.thebulgariancontract.com/>."



SOLDIERS SERVING WITH THE 8TH & 9TH BATTALIONS ROYAL DUBLIN FUSILIERS WHO DIED DURING THE GAS ATTACK ON HULLUCH ON THE 29TH APRIL 1916



8TH BATTALION
Pte. Patrick Andrews, Dublin - A/Cpl. Anthony Ashton, Preston - L/Cpl. Robert Baird, Wicklow - Pte. Edward Boyce, Co. Wicklow - Pte. John Brennan, Co. Donegal - Pte. Michael Byrne, Dublin - Pte. William Byrne - Pte. William Cahill, Dublin - Pte. Patrick Callaghan - L/Cpl. Brian Callender, Templeogue, Co. Dublin - Pte. Christopher Carroll, Co. Meath - Pte. James Carroll, Dublin - Pte. John Cole, Dublin - Pte. James Connell, Co. Down - Pte. Philip Connor, Sandyford, Co. Dublin - Pte. Daniel Conroy, Co. Carlow - Pte. Denis Conway, Co. Tipperary - Pte. Cornelius Cotter, Cork - Pte. David Cummins, Co. Wicklow - L/Cpl. Christopher Daly, Co. Wicklow - C.S.M. John Docherty D.C.M., Co. Donegal - Pte. Michael Donohoe, Co. Kildare - L/Cpl. Jeremiah Doyle, Co. Wexford - Pte. John Doyle, Dublin - Pte. Patrick Doyle, Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin - Pte. Hugh Dunne, Co. Meath - Pte. Joseph Dunne, Chapelizod, Co. Dublin - L/Cpl. William Eivers, Mullingar - Pte. Joseph Finegan, Dublin - Pte. Thomas Fitzharris, Dublin - Pte. Christopher Gallagher, Dublin - Pte. Patrick Gilmore, Co. Down - Pte. James Gooley, Co. Galway - Pte. Edward Gray - Pte. James Haid, Dublin - Pte. William Hanlon, Dublin - Pte. Andrew Harte, Co. Wicklow - L/Cpl. George Harvey, Sussex - Pte. David Hayes, Dublin - Sgt. Thomas Hayes, Co. Antrim - Pte. Thomas Henry, Dublin - Pte. Michael Hickey, Dublin - Pte. Luke Hyland, Co. Down - Pte. Stephen Joyce, Dublin - Pte. Thomas Kane, Dublin - Pte. Michael Kearney, Dublin - A/Cpl. Thomas Kelly, Dublin - Pte. James Kennedy, Dublin - Pte. William Lambert, Ballybrack, Co. Dublin - L/Cpl. Laurence Lee, Co. Cork - Pte. Thomas Mackin, Co. Louth - Pte. Hugh McAlindon, Co. Tyrone - Pte. Feragil McCahill, Co. Donegal - Pte. Stephen McHugh, Dublin - Sgt. Joseph McKinley M.M., Dublin - Pte. Alexander Miller, Dublin - L/Sgt. Sylvester Mullen, Dublin - Pte. James Murphy, Dublin - L/Cpl. Christopher Murtagh, Dublin - Pte. John Naylor, Dublin - Pte. James Nolan, Dublin - L/Cpl. Patrick O'Driscoll, Sandyford, Co. Dublin - Pte. Francis O'Frill, Dublin - Pte. Michael O'Neill, Dublin - Pte. Alexander O'Reilly, Co. Derry - Pte. Henry O'Reilly, Dublin - Pte. Peter Paul, Dublin - Pte. James Pickett, Co. Galway - Sgt. William Quigley, Donnybrook, Dublin - Cpl. Francis Rooney, Co. Leitrim - Sgt. Joseph Russell, Dublin - Pte. Thomas Russell, Dublin - Pte. Patrick Sheridan, Dublin - Cpl. John Simpson, Co. Wicklow - Pte. Edward Spillane, Dublin - Pte. Guy Ernest Strangways, Dublin - Pte. Frederick Taylor, Dublin - Pte. Michael Taylor, Roscommon - L/Cpl. Thomas Terrett, Dublin - Pte. Harold Thorpe, Manchester - Pte. Michael Tracey, Dublin - Pte. Francis Trimor, Belfast - Pte. John Wallace, Dublin - Pte. Jacob Walsh, Shankill, Co. Dublin - Pte. John Weir, Co. Tyrone - L/Cpl. Peter Wood, Salford.

9TH BATTALION
Pte. Leo Flanagan, Dublin - Pte. Christopher Grimes, Co. Kildare - Pte. Edward Humphrey, Dublin - Pte. Patrick O'Dowd, Finglas, Co. Dublin.

While the Easter Rising was raging in Dublin, the 16th (Irish) Division faced their German opponents around Hulluch in northern France. Prominent among the Division were the 8th and 9th Battalions of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

On 27 April, the front line included the 8th Battalion, and knowing that a German gas attack was imminent, preparations were made to withstand it. At 04.35 that morning, the Germans opened up with intense machine gun fire and a bombardment before unleashing chlorine gas. The combined gas and smoke cloud drifted on the wind over the British lines, and the basic gas mask available to the men (see the accompanying photo) failed to protect them properly. Men suffered agonising deaths.

A further German gas attack followed two days later causing many more casualties.

In all, more than 330 died (including about 90 Royal Dublin Fusiliers), and over 900 men were wounded during those attacks. Many of the wounded died prematurely in the following months and years from the permanent damage caused by the gas to their lungs.

David Buckley



Photo Gallery



Some of the RDFA Tour Party in L'Eglise Saint-Martin in Noeux-les-Mines, France, 26 May 2018

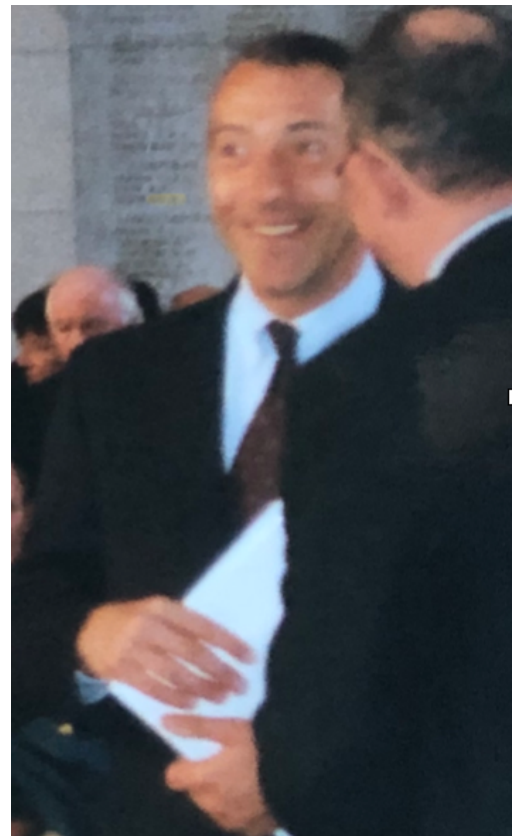
During World War 1, this Church was regularly used to celebrate Mass for the 16th (Irish) Division. At the suggestion of Fr Willie Doyle SJ VC, a chaplain with the 16th (Irish) Division, the officers, NCO's and men paid for the marble statue of Our Lady of Victories in the background of the photo. On the day that the new statue was delivered to the Church, Mass was about to be celebrated. So the workmen were asked to return with it later which proved to be very fortuitous.

Shortly after the Mass ended, a shell fired by a German Naval Gun virtually destroyed the Church. Therefore, it was only after the War when the Church was rebuilt that the statue was eventually installed where it now stands.



The late Norman Adams

(With thanks to Old Wesley Rugby Club for the use of the photograph)



The late Jacky Platteeuw of the Last Post Association (standing facing the camera)

The Rose and the Fusilier Film

Our Association President, Tom Burke, recently drew our attention to the short film made in 2015 by the Newtownabbey Arts and Cultural Network entitled *The Rose and the Fusilier*. This recalls the tragic case of the husband and wife who were fatally wounded on the same day, 29 April 1916. Private John Naylor died in Hulluch, northern France, while his wife, Mary, was shot in Dublin on the last day of the Easter Rising. They left behind three children.

The film was featured in an Irish Times article on 22 October 2016 which may be viewed here: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/story-of-husband-and-wife-killed-separately-at-easter-1916-to-be-screened-1.2839021>.

The film itself is available via the following link: <https://www.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3D2q7-ubGSnLE&usg=AOvVaw1WhsuF1ePkknypmuljgVZP> It is worth checking it out.

The following was the invitation which was issued for a special viewing of the film in 2016.



Invitation ~ Cuireadh
to a special screening of
The Rose & the Fusilier
Saturday 22 October at 12.00 pm
IFI, Eustace Street, Dublin 2

Produced by NACN Theatre Company from Newtownabbey, County Antrim, this is a true story of the Naylor's, a Dublin family tragically affected by events of 1916

Admission is free, come early to ensure a place

Supported by Dublin City Council's
Commemoration Programme
Is cuimhin linn 1916 - 2016

Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Spectamur Agendo
(We are judged by our deeds)