



**Journal of The Royal Dublin
Fusiliers Association .**

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The Blue Cap.

Table of Contents.

Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting on the 25 th of January 1997 at The Dublin Civic Museum.....	1
1 Promote a permanent Museum.....	3
2 Provide historical research.....	3
3 Encourage Teachers to bring School Children.....	4
4 Publish a Journal.....	4
5 Participate in formal Remembrance Ceremonies.....	5
6 Visits.....	5
6 News items.....	6
7 The story of Lieutenant Robert Stanton 6 th Battalion.The Royal Dublin Fusiliers.....	8
8 Publications on the history of The Royal Dublin Fusiliers in possession of Johnathan Maguire.....	11
9 Correspondence from An Taoiseach and Uachtaran na hEireann.....	12

Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting on the 25th of January 1997 at The Dublin Civic Museum.

Tom Burke opened the meeting by thanking the participants who had shown commitment with their attendance. There were others who were interested in the aims of the Association but who could not make the meeting on the day. Tom reiterated his wish that involvement in the Association should be enjoyable and rewarding and not become a monotonous chore. The purpose is to remember those who have been forgotten for a long time, particularly the tens of thousands of Irishmen and indeed many women, who fell in the First World War. Some of the practical things we could do would be the following:

- Promote a permanent museum for the material on display at the current exhibition in the Civic Museum ,and ,for other material that may arise if a secure home is found.
- Provide a historical research center.
- Encourage teachers to bring school children.
- Publish a journal. Suggestions of 3 or 4 per year.
- Participate in formal Remembrance Ceremonies. The 80th Anniversary of the death of Major Willie Redmond will occur at a Remembrance Service in Loere, Belgium, next June.
- Organize visits to the Western Front, Greece, Turkey etc .Mr Eddie Lendrum of the Some Association is planning a trip to Gallipoli this year

The Exhibition will finish at the Civic Museum at the end of March. There have been a number of inquiries about displaying the exhibition around the country .A lecture is planned to coincide with the closing of the exhibition

3 Tom invited comments from all. The following suggestions were made.

- 3.1 Promote the museum project in the context of a general exhibition devoted to Irishmen and women who served in other countries. The National Museum should be approached and asked to include the idea in its plans for Collins Barracks. Sean Connolly is willing to act on this. Johnathan Maguire has already written to many prominent people seeking their support and has got some encouraging replies.
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- 3.2 The current position regarding the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Old Comrades Association should be clarified. Johnathan Maguire said that the Association finished in 1984 and there might be a few veterans still alive as one died only several months ago.
- 3.3 The return of the Regimental Colors might be possible. David Buckley confirmed that they were still in Windsor Castle and had been recently cleaned.
- 3.4 Encouraging senior pupils to visit the exhibition. Paddy Hogarty said that Leaving Certificate students in Kerry had a similar exhibition last year, and that the FCA in Carlow were preparing an exhibition on Irish Soldiers who served in the UN. Included in this exhibition will be a section dedicated to the Leinster Regiment.
- 3.5 Recognize that the links with the UK could be seen in a positive way and use these links to enhance reconciliation and develop further historical research on topics of mutual interest. By way of example, John Sheehan who recently returned from a visit to South Africa, pointed out how South Africa is making good use of its colonial history, and, is preparing to use the centenary of the Boer War to promote tourism.
- 3.6 Set an annual subscription fee of £5.00 to cover postal and initial costs. The usual levee fee of "Hobby" type associations was about £25.00, but this was generally seen by the members as too much at this stage. Those willing were invited to pay the subscription after the meeting to save on administration costs.
- 3.7 The Munster Fusiliers Association has been successful in developing from a modest start and now has a membership of 150 members. They publish a journal twice a year and appropriately hold their AGM on the 25th of April in Limerick. Pat O' Daly who represented the RMF Assoc. stressed that we should emphasize that we are not an Old Comrades Association.
- 3.8 Brian Merry and Ken Devitt kindly offered to print a small journal and RDF Assoc. stationary if material were made available to them.
- 3.9 The Somme Association have blazer badges for the RDF at £10.00 each.
- 3.10 It would be possible to interest RTE in what we are doing if the material is presented in the right way. There is material for a half hour radio programme
- 3.11 It was agreed that an ad hoc Committee would arrange the lecture and act on the suggestions made at the meeting.

1 Promote a permanent Museum.

A working Committee made up of Tom Burke, Brian Moroney, Sean Connolly, Nick Broughal, Johnathan Maguire and Paddy Hogarty recently had a meeting with one of the Curators of the new National Museum at Collins Barracks. Sean Connolly arranged the meeting, the purpose of which was to present a case to the National Museum for the inclusion in the new Museum a permanent display to all the disbanded Irish Regiments, particularly The Royal Dublin Fusiliers. The meeting was friendly and the response from the curator was positive in every aspect. There may be a section of the new Museum dedicated to the disbanded Irish Regiments, as yet no commitment in terms of space has been allocated to the Dubs or indeed any other Regiment. The theme of this military section in the new Museum will be one which represents the human aspects of Irish Soldiering down through the ages and not specifically military hardware. The Museum wants to present a balanced view of the period 1914 to 1918 and is keen to be seen to do so. They value any assistance we can offer them in obtaining this ideal.

The group was brought on a tour of the new Museum and shown the proposed site for the military section. The curator also stressed that the Museum will be very positive in its approach to organizations such as The RDF Assoc. The curator told us that we would be more than welcome, indeed encouraged, to hold meetings, lectures, exhibitions and seminars in the new Museum. These facilities would not be available until 1998/ 99. The committee agreed with the curator that we should present a report to the Museum outlining our plans and ambitions for our associations input to the Museum both in the short and long term. This report is at present being prepared.

2 Provide historical research.

Many people have expressed an interest in learning the mechanics of researching a relative who may have been in the Dubs. Johnathan Maguire will present a paper on this soon. Dates, times and venue for this talk are to be arranged. Johnathan has many rare books relating to the history of the Dubs, he can be contacted at Portadown 0801762851225.

Mr Peter Simkins, Senior Research Historian at the Imperial War Museum in London has agreed to help members of The RDF Assoc on any historical research they are doing. Peter states,

"We will be happy to offer advice on sources and research to any members of the Association and they will of course, be welcome in turn to look at relevant material in the Museums collection. It is however, not possible for us to undertake detailed long term research for them"

Mr Peter Simkins can be contacted at the Imperial War Museum at 0044 171 416 5350.

3 Encourage Teachers to bring School Children.

Paddy Hogarty has been looking after this part of the project. We have written to 33 Secondary Schools in the Dublin Area, specifically targeting the Transition Year and Leaving Cert students. Apart from a few Leaving Cert students of Austin Fennessey who attended a previous lecture to date, not one school has come back and expressed an interest in viewing the exhibition. One school, who was not written to, namely The Wilson's Hospital from Westmeath will attend the exhibition and a talk given by Paddy.

4 Publish a Journal.

This is the first issue of our journal. It is your journal, so if you would like to present any ideas, notices, comments, or indeed publish any research work on past members of the Dubs, please feel free to do so. The journal will be an ideal way of communicating to other members of the association what areas of history you are interested in. It would be nice if each issue had a story about the Dubs, so if you want to write about your Father or Grandfather, start writing. In keeping with tradition, the following is an extract from "Neill's Blue Caps."

Battalion Magazine

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

Well, issue four of "The Blue Cap" is being published in February 1997, exactly seventy five years later.

5 Participate in formal Remembrance Ceremonies.

1. Each November on remembrance Sunday, a service is held in St Patrick's Cathedral. It would be nice if a member of our Association was to parade the Old Comrades Association Color at this service. Arrangements would have to be made with the Dean of St Patrick's and The British Legion.
2. Every year on the first Sunday in June. The Royal Irish Regiments Association hold a commemorative parade to the Cenotaph to remember ALL Irishmen who died in both World Wars. The parade is led by a piper to the Cenotaph. Our Association has been invited to attend this years ceremony. Anybody wishing to attend can contact Mr Brendan Mac Donagh in London Tele No 0044 181 7890540. This might be a nice opportunity to show off the Dubs blazer badges.

6 Visits

1. Mr Eddie Lendrum from the Somme Association is arranging a visit to Gallipoli this summer. Anybody wishing to go with Eddie can contact him at the Somme Association in Belfast Tele No 0801232761600.
2. As an Association it would be nice if we were to plan a visit to the Somme Heritage in Newtownards. It would entail hiring a bus, traveling to the Heritage Center, getting a tour of the Center, lunch at the Center and returning to Dublin. This trip could be arranged for some time in June or July.
3. In the minutes reference was made to a remembrance service to Major Willie Redmond of the 6th Bat R.L.Reg. Anyone wishing to attend this service can contact the following chap in Belgium.

MIR ERWIN UREEL

SCHIERVELDESTRADE 110-112.

8880 ROESELARE.

FLANDERS.

BELGIUM (Tele No 0032 51 205500)

4. A group tour of the buildings in Island bridge can be arranged. If members think of other interesting local places our Association could visit, please let us know. No doubt an eventual trip to the Somme would be nice.

6 News items.

1 The current exhibition at the Dublin Civic Museum will finish around the end of March. The Office of Public Works and The Phoenix Park Visitors Center have kindly given us their facilities to present our exhibition in the Center. It is a beautiful spot, the room is ideal for the exhibition. The Center has a restaurant, audio visual center/ lecture theater and excellent car parking facilities. Should we wish, we can use the audio visual center to present lectures and any audio visual material we may come across about the Great War.

There was one little hitch to this project, the Office of Public Works who is responsible for the Park Center had no secure display cabinets. The National Museum in Kildare Street have offered us the use of 12 glass/wooden coin display cabinets. They will however require a bit of paint, so anyone with a good hand for painting will be welcomed.

The Board of Works are glad to have us use the exhibition room at the Center and have offered us the use of the Center in the Park for several months. A different group of people will now be able to see the exhibition, mostly families out for a Sunday stroll in the Park.

Please tell all your friends and relatives about our move. We hope to be in the Park at the beginning of April, perhaps we could celebrate this opening event in some way, suggestions will be welcome. In the meantime why don't you pay a visit to the Phoenix Park Center and view the new Dubs exhibition center for yourself.

2 The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association has been granted Honorary Corporate Membership of The Somme Association. In turn, the Somme Association, along with the Western Front Association has been granted membership of The RDF Assoc.

3 Anybody who is interested in joining another Association, namely The Gallipoli Association, can do so by applying for membership from the following address

The Membership Secretary, Mr Norman Pollitt, 9 Garnet Court, Marlow-on-Thames, Bucks. SL7 2AN, England.

4 Schull Books, Ballydehob, Co Cork Tele No 028 37317 have informed us that they will issue a discount of 10% to any member of The RDF Assoc who wishes to purchase the history of the 1st Battalion ie Neill's Blue Caps.

5 Mr Robert Stanton, nephew of Lieut Robert Stanton 6th Bat RDF, KLA Suvla Bay, August 1915, tells us that there is a commemorative plaque to some of the Dubs who fell at Suvla on the wall of Haddington Road Church. The plaque is in need of some minor repair. Robert is looking for a spare retired pair of hands to help him restore this memorial plaque. Please contact Robert at Tele No 2691320.

The tune St Patrick's Day was the traditional marching tune of the Connaught Rangers and is to this day the traditional marching tune of The Irish Guards. One can only suppose a note of jealousy behind the "annoyance" of the Irish Guards and Connaught Rangers.

On the 27th of June 1915, the 10th (Irish) Division received its orders to "hold itself in readiness for service in the Dardanelles." (3).

On the 5th of July 1915 the 10th (Irish) Division set sail from Devonport in the south of England, as they set sail, some of the men in the ranks sang "God Save Ireland." (3). Bad planning had resulted in the Division losing some of its fighting units before it had even set sail. It called at Malta and Alexandria before arriving at the island of Mudros in the Aegean Sea.

The Dublin Fusiliers had already been involved in heavy fighting in April at Cape Helles at the mouth of the Dardanelles. This is where the famous Collier Ship, The River Clyde, landed the Dublin's and Munster's on the beaches at Cape Helles. The slaughter that followed this landing is another sad story in this whole tragedy. Stalemate resulted from the tragedy at Cape Helles, the powers that be commanding these men decided to land somewhere else on the peninsula, Suvla Bay, was the place chosen. The objective of the 10th (Irish) Division was to take a hilly ground overlooking the bay, called Kiretch-Tepe-Sirt, they called part this high ground Chocolate Hill and Green Hill. On the morning of the 7th of August 1915, amidst total confusion, the 6th battalion of The Royal Dublin Fusiliers, in which Lieut Robert Stanford was a serving officer, landed on the beaches of Suvla Bay. Their Commander was a man named Brigadier General Hill, it is said that he was ill at the time of the landing and had to be replaced by a General Hammersly. (3) A certain amount of the Kiretch had been taken at great human cost the night before by the 11th Manchester Regiment. At 1:30pm the Munster's were the first of the Irish to advance up the slopes of the Kiretch, followed by the 6th Dublin's. The tragic events on this day are described in great detail by Major Bryan Cooper, the Divisional historian who was there. (3) At the end of that day i.e. the 7th of August, when the roll call was over, Lieutenant Robert Stanton was reported wounded and missing, in fact he was dead. Robert was twenty nine years of age when he died on that famous charge against the Turks by the Dubs on the slopes of Kiretch-Tepe-Sir. His body was never discovered.

On the 16th of August Robert's father John A, received a telegram from the Secretary of The War Office. It stated the following message.

"J Stanton 47 South Mall Cork. Deeply regret to inform you that 2nd Lieut R Stanton 6th Dublin Fusiliers is reported wounded and missing believed killed in action between the 7th and 10th August. Lord Kitchener expresses his sympathy." (4)

On the 19th of August, three days later, Robert's father received another telegram. This time from Buckingham Palace. It stated the following message.

"To J Stanton esq. 47 South Mall Cork. The King and Queen deeply regret the loss you and the army have sustained by the reported death of 2nd Lieut R Stanton in the service of his country. Their Majesties truly sympathise with you in your sorrow" (5)

The envelope in which the telegram came to John A and Kate had the words "No charge for delivery." stamped on the back. how kind it was of his employers to think of that. The effect of Robert's death on the Stanton family, particularly his father John A was shattering.

The fact that the telegram from the war office stated the words "wounded and missing *believed* killed in action" suggested to John A and Kate that there might be a chance of Robert being alive, he may even be a prisoner of war in Turkey.

John A made enquiries about the welfare of Robert, there is no record through whom these enquiries were made. However, the last hopes John A and Kate had about their son being a prisoner of war were shattered, when ,on the 26th of January 1916 ,they received yet another telegram from the War Office from a Major General F.S.Robb It was one of those standard reply letters one receives from faceless civil servants who process the names contained in such letters as if they were processing sheep. Robert was just a name. It stated the following.

"Sir, I am directed to inform you that a reply has now been received to the Enquiry Form relative to 2nd Lt R. Stanton 6th Royal Dublin Fus sent to Turkey on your behalf. The reply has come from the American Embassy in Constantinople. It is regretted that it is to the effect that this Officer has not been made a Prisoner of War. I have the honour to be your obedient servant, F.S.Robb, Major-General, Military Secretary." (6)

One must wonder, had it not been for the terrible wastage of such a valuable generation of bright professional young Irish men. what contribution would they have made to the future development of their country.

May Robert and his comrades who fell at Suvla Bay in August 1915 rest in peace.