

The Old Tough

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



Issue 14: Autumn 2024

Editorial

Welcome to the Autumn 2024 edition of our newsletter.

We are pleased to bring you another extensive Old Tough newsletter, and we hope that you find it informative. As will be evident from our six page Dubs' News article, it has been a busy and successful summer for the Association.

We include in this newsletter the story of Corporal Edward Doyle 19877, 1st Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, who was from Bagenalstown, Co Carlow. His grave in Hooze Crater Cemetery near Ypres/Ieper in Belgium was one of those rededicated in July. Those members who participated in our trip to the Somme in September also paid their respects there.

This newsletter also contains a listing of the remembrance and other notable events for the rest of 2024. These include the traditional religious services during November and our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Annual Dinner which are scheduled for Friday, 6 December. In addition, we are holding in conjunction with the National Museum another Open Day in Collins Barracks, Dublin, on Saturday, 16 November next. We hope that many of our members can support us at the Open Day and at our AGM and Annual Dinner, as well as participating in at least one of the remembrance ceremonies during November.

As ever, we welcome feedback from members on the articles in *The Old Tough* and on the work of the Association. Similarly, we remain open to suggestions and contributions from members for future editions of this newsletter or *The Blue Cap*. All such communications can be sent to rdfa1918@gmail.com.

The Editorial Committee

Paul Appleby, David Buckley, Philip Lecane, Thomas Murphy and John F Sheehan

oOo

The views/opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association. While the Association makes every effort to ensure that the newsletter's content is accurate, it cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions or for any effects arising therefrom. All material is copyrighted.

Dubs' News

Trip to Cork, 16 August 2024

11 members enjoyed a trip to Cork to visit Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral and Collins Barracks on 16 August last. The minibus engaged for travel between Kent Station and the various sights necessarily restricted the number of attendees. In Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral, the group viewed the Heroes' Column, the WW1 memorial which contains the names of more than 370 men associated with Cork who died in the Great War. 17 Royal Dublin Fusiliers are named on the Column, the base of which is pictured below.



After lunch, Gerry White, Cork Branch, Western Front Association, led a tour of Collins Barracks highlighting important events and buildings of interest. On 18 May 1922 in the very large barrack square, the Union Jack was lowered for the last time prior to the evacuation of the British Army and the handover of the Barracks to Irish troops. One of the last British officers to serve there was Major Bernard Montgomery of El Alamein fame in WW2. On 28 June 1963, President John F Kennedy landed by helicopter in the barrack square before his visit to Cork City by motorcade. On arrival, he was given a tour of the Barracks and signed the Visitors' Book which is now on display. The Military Museum in the Barracks includes military uniforms dating from the 1800s and artefacts belonging to Michael Collins (including his great coat, two revolvers, rosary beads and personal diary). Then we visited the nearby Cork Military Cemetery Park on Assumption Road in which 83 soldiers (11 of whom are Dubs) are identified. Finally, we saw the War Memorial on the South Mall, which was erected in 1925 and commemorates Corkmen lost in both World Wars. Seven Dubs are named on the Memorial.

Particular thanks are due to John F Sheehan who organised the trip and David Buckley who requisitioned the minibus used to ferry the group around Cork. It is intended to re-run the Cork trip on another occasion to satisfy those who could not be accommodated this time.

Trip to the Somme, 9-14 September 2024

28 members travelled by coach to the Somme last month. The highlight was our visit to five of the six graves of Royal Dublin Fusiliers which had been rededicated in July after documentary research confirmed the identities of the soldiers' remains. As we paid our respects, John O'Brien, Seán Ryan and John Sheehan spoke about the men involved and their families. As John O'Brien remarked, speaking their names is remembering them.

At the Celtic Cross outside Guillemont Church, a special ceremony was held to remember the 1,000 Irishmen from the 16th (Irish) Division who died while capturing Guillemont and Ginchy on 3 and 9 September 1916 respectively. We paraded the Standards of the Association, Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann and the Machine Gun Corps Association on the occasion, and members spoke about the events of those horrific days.

In a packed schedule which dealt with various events of the Battle of the Somme, we visited Bethune Town Cemetery, the 'lost' village of Fay, the picturesque Belvedere de Frise, La Chapelle du Souvenir outside Rancourt honouring the French who died, the Sunken Lane and the adjacent Hawthorn Ridge close to Beaumont-Hamel, the Ulster Tower, Thiepval Wood and the Thiepval Memorial among others. As we travelled from place to place, members gave talks to the group on a diverse range of interesting subjects, including the experience of the King's Liverpool Regiment at the Somme, the discovery of a mass grave at Fromelles 20 years ago containing the remains of 250 Australian and other soldiers who died in July 1916, the South African Delville Wood Memorial and the fighting around the Somme during the German Spring Offensive in March 1918 which decimated the Dubs.

The visit to Sunken Lane was particularly poignant. Our group (see the accompanying picture) stood on the ground where men from the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers were photographed assembling on 1 July 1916. Within minutes, these men went over the top to attack German trenches outside Beaumont-Hamel only to be cut down by German machine gun and rifle fire from Hawthorn Ridge and adjacent points.

Particular thanks are due to Brian and Therese Moroney for their organisation of the superb trip in conjunction with DM Tours, our travel partner. Our driver, David Thompson from Northern Ireland, was excellent throughout. A more extensive report on this trip will be included in the next edition of our annual journal, *The Blue Cap*.



Inter-Faith Ceremony for RIC Volunteers 1914 – 1919, 15 September 2024

On 15 September last, the Historical and Reconciliation Police (HARP) Society held a Remembrance Service at Barberstown Castle, Maynooth, Co Kildare, to remember the 179 volunteers from the Royal Irish Constabulary who were killed in the Great War. 16 of them died while serving with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Many of these men are remembered on the Menin Gate, the Thiepval Memorial and the Tyne Cot Memorial.

The Service to remember their sacrifice was conducted by Fr Joe Kennedy, Chaplain to An Garda Síochána. The names of those who died were read aloud, and many descendants of those killed were in attendance. Our Association's representation was led by our Chairman, Brian Moroney, and his wife, Therese. Our Standard was on display for the duration of the ceremony, thanks to our Standard Bearer, Seamus Greene.

Talk on the Royal Irish Constabulary at the Dublin Festival of History, 30 September 2024

The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association was asked by Dublin City Council this year to participate in the Dublin Festival of History, and Committee member, John F Sheehan (pictured), stepped forward to give a very interesting talk on early policing in Ireland. 60 people attended the event in Pearse Street Library on 30 September last.

As we learned from John, the instigator of professional policing in Ireland was Robert Peel, the Chief Secretary for Ireland. His name gave rise to the slang terms of 'bobbies' and 'peelers' for the police. Peel's initiative led to the emergence of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) in 1814 and later the Dublin and London Metropolitan Police forces. By the 1830s, Catholics were permitted to join the police in Ireland, and by and large, the discipline instilled in the RIC and DMP earned them community respect for many decades.

By the time of the War of Independence however, policing had become a very dangerous profession. Many were killed for no reason other than that they were seen to be supporting British rule in Ireland. When disbandment occurred in 1922, many policemen emigrated to the USA, Canada and elsewhere, some to take on policing roles abroad. A good number, for instance, formed the backbone of a new police service in Palestine.



John expressed disappointment and regret at the failure of the Government in 2022 to proceed with a planned remembrance for the RIC and DMP on the centenary of their disbandment. A significant opportunity was lost to rehabilitate the memory of men who had served the people well for decades. The abandonment of the remembrance also suggested that despite the passage of 100 years, we are still failing today to acknowledge and reconcile our various national perspectives.

As with many other occupations, serving police officers were encouraged to enlist in the Army on the outset of World War 1. While the Irish Guards was the most popular choice for enlistment, policemen enlisted in many regiments. In total, 179 of them lost their lives in the War, 109 of them while serving with the Irish Guards. 16 ex-policemen in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers were also killed.

John concluded his talk with some interesting anecdotes about prominent establishment figures related to policing in the 19th century. All in all, it was a most interesting presentation.

Talk on Dublin Author, Cornelius Ryan, at the Dublin Festival of History, 3 October 2024

Philip Lecane gave a talk on Cornelius Ryan, the author of *The Longest Day* and *A Bridge Too Far*, on 3 October last, in order to help restore this forgotten Irish military historian to public memory 50 years after his death. Both books were later made into all-star films. Cornelius Ryan was born at 33 Heytesbury Street, Dublin, on 5 June 1920. He was educated in Synge Street School, and the venue for the talk, Kevin Street Library, was his local library. His role as a war correspondent attached to the American Army during the Second World War inspired him to write the books. Unfortunately Ryan died at the early age of 54 on 23 November 1974.

Philip's talk was well attended and well received. Attendees included six relatives of Cornelius Ryan and a number of Philip's Association colleagues, including President, Tom Burke. The picture opposite shows the relatives of Cornelius Ryan with Philip Lecane (second left).



Talk on a History of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 4 October 2024

At the invitation of UN Veterans – Post 21 (Wicklow), John O'Brien and Seán Ryan visited the Fisherman's Club in Bray, Co Wicklow, on 4 October last to talk about the history of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and the Machine Gun Corps in WW1. About 40 people were present, and all expressed appreciation afterwards for the quality of the presentation.

Irish Guards Annual Dinner, 5 October 2024

Seamus Greene represented the Association at the Irish Guards Annual Dinner in Wynn's Hotel, Dublin, on 5 October 2024. During the proceedings, the support of the Association was publicly acknowledged.

Talk about the Sinking of the RMS Leinster, 10 October 2024

The 106th anniversary of the sinking of the *RMS Leinster* was marked by a commemorative service at the recovered ship's starboard anchor on Dún Laoghaire's seafront. It was attended by local councillors, diplomatic representatives, descendants of those who served on the *RMS Leinster* and members of the public. Afterwards light refreshments were provided at the National Maritime Museum.

In the Lexicon Library at 11 am, children's author, Carmel Kelly, spoke to schoolchildren about the sinking. At 1 pm, drawing on his two books on the sinking, RDFA Committee member, Philip Lecane, spoke to members of the public about the *RMS Leinster*.

**Change of Treasurer**

Some months ago, our Treasurer, Ms Sally Keogh, notified the Association's Committee of her intention to resign as Treasurer after the end of the Association's financial year on 30 September. Sally recently confirmed her decision, and the Committee unanimously thanked her for her three years' service in that role. Sally remains a valued Committee member, and she will be reporting to our next Annual General Meeting (AGM), now scheduled for 6 December next, on the Association's financial position up to 30 September.

As permitted by our Constitution, the Committee has recently appointed George Jones as Treasurer for the financial year commencing 1 October 2024. George will act in that position until the AGM when the Association's officers for 2025 will be appointed. All appropriate arrangements to effect this change have been made with Bank of Ireland, with whom the Association has its account.

New Email Address for Membership Secretary

Our Membership Secretary, Suzanne O'Neill, now has a new email address for membership and related matters as follows: rdfamembershipsecretary@gmail.com. This new address is now on our membership form and merchandise price list.

A copy of an updated merchandise flyer appears later in this newsletter. You may wish to consider purchasing something in time for Christmas!

Our Brief History of the Dubs also remains available either at €10 (soft cover) or €40 (bound version). Requests for copies can be sent to rdfa1918@gmail.com.

Recent Deaths

The Association was saddened to learn of the death of a former member, Vincent Murtagh, on 19 August 2024. His funeral took place in St Canice's Church, Finglas Village, three days later and was attended by Association representatives. His death notice may be viewed here: <https://rip.ie/death-notice/vincent-murtagh-dublin-finglas-east-566013>.

The Association also wishes to acknowledge the contribution to WW1 remembrance of Liam Nolan, Adare, Co Limerick, who died on 30 June 2024. Liam is a former Chairman of the Association of Disbanded Irish Regiments and worked closely with our Association in 2022 in commemorating the centenary of the disbandment of the six Irish Regiments. Liam was also an active member of the Royal Munster Fusiliers Association for many years. His death notice may be accessed via the following link: <https://rip.ie/death-notice/s/limerick?page=1&firstname=Liam&surname=Nolan&start=2024-06-01+00%3A00%3A00&end=today&sortField=a.createdAtCastToDate&sortDir=DESC&view=list>.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

Acknowledgement

www.warmemorials.ie for the photograph of the base of the Heroes' Column in Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork.

Corporal Edward Doyle 19877, 1st Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers: Killed in Action, 28 September 1918

Paul Appleby and Seán Ryan

Edward Doyle was born in Pump Street, Bagenalstown, Co Carlow, on 20 January 1899. He was one of seven children born to Michael Doyle and his wife, Kate (née Meaney), who married in the town on 21 July 1896.

In the 1901 Census, Edward was 2 years old, living in 7 Pump Street, Bagenalstown, with his father, Michael (a mason aged 29), mother, Kate (30), and brothers, Michael (4) and Patrick (6 months), in the home of Anne Meaney (40), Kate's relative and a dealer by occupation.

In the 1911 Census, Edward was 12, living in 4 Pump Street, Bagenalstown, with his father, mother, siblings (Michael (14), Patrick (10), James (8), Katie (5) and Mary (5)) and their relatives, Annie Meaney (50), a dealer in herrings, and Mary Brophy (28), a servant.

Private Edward Doyle 19877 is recorded as having initially been in the 5th Battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers and elsewhere is indicated as having enlisted at Carlow, although his actual enlistment date is not known. However he first saw service in Gallipoli on 2 August 1915. After withdrawal from Gallipoli, the 1st Battalion was involved in the Battle of the Somme (where Edward was wounded in August 1916), the Battle of Arras in April 1917, the Third Battle of Ypres/Ieper in Autumn 1917 and the German Spring Offensive in March/April 1918. By early Autumn 1918, the Battalion was participating in the 100 days offensive which would end the War.

At some point during 1918, Private Edward Doyle was promoted to Corporal. However on 28 September 1918, he was killed in action near Gheluvelt in Belgium. He was only 19 years old. Although his remains were recovered and interred, his identity was not established at the time.

In early November 1918, Corporal Doyle's death was published in a Roll of Honour list in the *Irish Independent* as follows: 'Doyle, Cpl. E (Bagenalstown)'. His sacrifice was also recorded in Ireland's Memorial Records, 1914-1918.

Consistent with his Will, his mother inherited her son's property. She later received a War pension at her address in Regent Street, Bagenalstown. The 1914-15 Star, British War and Victory medals were also awarded arising from Corporal Doyle's War service.

As a missing soldier who was presumed to be dead, Corporal Doyle's name was recorded on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Panel No 144-145. For many years, a gravestone in Hooge Crater Cemetery near Ypres/Ieper in Belgium indicated his Regiment but not his name.

Recently, researchers identified this grave as that of Corporal Doyle, and when further research confirmed this, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) erected a new headstone there in his memory. The UK Ministry of Defence's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) organised a rededication service at the grave on 11 July 2024, conducted by the Reverend Jason Clarke MBE CF, Chaplain to the 1st Battalion, Royal Irish Regiment (RIR), and attended by representatives from the CWGC, the JCCC, the RIR, the Irish Defence Forces and the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association. The accompanying picture shows Corporal Doyle's grave with its new headstone.



Sources

British Army WW1 records at www.ancestry.co.uk.

'Come on the Dubs!' – A Brief History of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association, 2022.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission, in particular its press release of 12 July 2024 at <https://www.cwgc.org/our-work/news/graves-of-royal-dublin-fusiliers-rededicated-in-belgium/>.

British Army WW1 records at <https://www.findmypast.ie/>.

Ireland's Memorial Records, 1914-1918, page 11, available at www.findmypast.ie.

Irish civil birth and marriage records at <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/en/>.

Irish Independent, 2 November 1918, page 4, available at www.findmypast.ie.

1901 and 1911 Census records at <https://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>.

Corporal Doyle's Will dated 11 March 1918 at <http://soldierswills.nationalarchives.ie/>.



Remembrance and Other Notable Events, November / December 2024

In association with the National Museum of Ireland, the Association will be holding another Open Day in Collins Barracks on 16 November next. An Association talk will be given at noon, and the Museum will give attendees guided tours around their Soldiers and Chiefs Exhibition on Ireland's military heritage. A display of Royal Dublin Fusilier artefacts will be a centrepiece of the Day, and Association members will attend to promote the Association and to advise the public on accessing their ancestors' military records.

On the preceding evening (15 November), our Annual Remembrance Service will be held in City Quay Church, while our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Annual Dinner are scheduled for 6 December next. Further details (e.g., the AGM papers and the cost and payment arrangements for the Annual Dinner) will be issued to members shortly.

The following list summarises all of the known remembrance and other notable events for the rest of 2024 in which the Association expects to be involved. An asterisk (*) beside a date below signifies that the RDFA Standard is scheduled to be present that day.

Date/Time	Event	Place
* Sunday, 3 November, 3.30 pm	Royal Irish Regiment's Service of Remembrance	St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast
* Thursday, 7 November, 11 am	Rededication Service at the grave of Pte Joseph Letty, RDF (Claddagh Branch, Royal British Legion Rol)	Grangegorman Military Cemetery, Dublin 7
* Saturday, 9 November, 11 am (time to be confirmed)	WW1 Remembrance Ceremony	Oldtown, Fingal, Co Dublin
* Sunday, 10 November, 11 am	WW1 Remembrance Ceremony	Killester Garden Village, Dublin 5
* Sunday, 10 November, 2.30 for 3 pm	Remembrance Sunday Service	Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin 8
* Friday, 15 November, 7 pm	RDFFA Annual Remembrance Service for deceased family and friends	City Quay Church, Dublin 2
* Saturday, 16 November, 11 am - 4.00 pm	Open Day on the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and the Association	National Museum, Collins Barracks, Dublin 7
Sunday, 17 November, 10.30 am (details not yet confirmed)	German Remembrance Day	Glencree Centre for Reconciliation, Co Dublin
Saturday, 23 November, 1.30 for 2 pm	Talk on the Dublin Fusiliers buried in Grangegorman Military Cemetery (Western Front Association)	Dublin City Library, Pearse Street, Dublin 2
* Friday, 6 December 2024, 6.30 pm sharp	RDFFA Annual General Meeting, (followed by RDFFA Annual Dinner at 7.30 pm)	Masonic Hall, 17 Molesworth Street, Dublin 2

Members are encouraged to attend as many events as possible in their local areas.

Merchandise Price List

The attractive merchandise which is available to Association members principally comprises a tie, a scarf, a blazer badge and a metal pin as shown in the following photograph.



The current merchandise price list by item number is as follows:

1A.	Member's bundle – option A (tie or scarf, blazer badge and metal pin)	€34
1B.	Member's bundle – option B (tie and scarf, blazer badge and metal pin)	€44
2.	Tie	€24
3.	Scarf	€19
4.	Blazer badge	€16
5.	Metal pin	€10

The above prices include standard postage. If registered post is required, add €7 to the listed price. Destinations outside the island of Ireland may have an additional postal charge.

All enquiries for purchase of RDFA merchandise should be addressed to the Membership Secretary by email: rdfamembershipsecretary@gmail.com or by post to Suzanne O'Neill, RDFA Membership Secretary, c/o The Old Pound, Ballybrittas, Co Laois R32 E1C5.

Please clearly state the destination address in your enquiry. Payment for merchandise must be received by the RDFA via cash, cheque or bank transfer before merchandise is dispatched. For electronic bank transfers, the RDFA account details are as follows:

IBAN: IE57 BOFI 9013 5180 5058 76
BIC: BOFIE2D

Notes of Interest

Whistling down the years

In many parts of Ireland, an outsider who comes to live in an area is called 'a *blow-in*'. An Armagh man living in Naas recently told a member of the Association's Editorial Committee that he is locally known as 'a *whistler*'. The term originated in the time when the Royal Dublin Fusiliers' Depot was located in the town. 'Dubs' returning to barracks would often be heard whistling. The term '*whistler*' came to be applied to outsiders and is still in use today, echoing the time 'The Dubs' served in Naas.

Next-of-Kin Appeal

Recently, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) issued another next-of-kin appeal for the relatives of deceased soldiers: <https://www.cwgc.org/our-work/news/appeal-for-relatives-october-2024/>. There is no Dub on the list this time, but there is a Munster Fusilier by the name of Private Patrick Scanlon 6/851 who died on 20 August 1920. Recent research has established that he is buried in Glyntaff Cemetery, Pontypridd, Wales. We have brought this notice to the attention of our Munster Fusilier Association colleagues who may wish to notify the CWGC of their interest in attending any rededication ceremony at his graveside in due course.

The same appeal asks the relatives of Gunner Michael Sheehan 33566, Royal Garrison Artillery, who died on 24 March 1918 to contact the CWGC. The Commission has confirmed that he is buried in Mount Saint Lawrence Cemetery in Limerick. Although the precise location of his grave is not known, the CWGC is producing a special memorial to commemorate him there.



Spectamur Agendo
(We are known by our deeds)