

IN THIS ISSUE: FAMILY HISTORY • THROUGH THE LENS • EYEWITNESS



# IRELAND'S MILITARY STORY

ISSUE 3/AUTUMN 2016 RRP: £6.25/€7.50

## HMS CAROLINE

THE LAST SURVIVOR  
OF THE BATTLE OF  
JUTLAND

## PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

BROTHER COLUMBANUS  
DEEGAN  
ONE IRISHMAN'S  
JOURNEY FROM DUBLIN  
TO HITLER'S GERMANY  
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## IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS

THE IRISH GREAT  
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## IRISHMEN IN THE TRENCHES

THE SOMME MUSEUM

## LIEUTENANT TOM KETTLE

IRISH VOLUNTEER,  
DUBLIN FUSILIER, PATRIOT  
By Brendan O'Shea

## REMEMBERING THE SOMME

AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY  
OF IRELAND

## IRELAND'S BATTLEFIELDS AND THE WALKS AROUND THEM

THE BATTLES OF ARKLOW

ISSN 2009-8847



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## EDITOR'S NOTE



Over the weekend of August 27th - 28th, Ireland's Military Story had a stand at the Game and Country Fair in Birr, Co. Offaly. The gardens and grounds are beautiful.

There has been a castle on the site since 1170, when the Anglo-Normans settled the area. From the 14th to the 17th century the O'Carroll family ruled from here over an area known as Ely O'Carroll. Today it is owned by the seventh Earl of Rosse.

Being a history publication naturally people step in for a chat. Within a short time, I was educated on the Duke of Cumberland Column in Robert Emmet Square, and the Manchester Martyrs Memorial in Market Square, both in the centre of town. What an amazing eclectic mix of history in such a small area. And to think that is without even scratching the surface.

On the Saturday I was reacquainted with Marie Hawkins. Marie is the daughter of John Hawkins who had served with the Australian Army during the Korean War. I had the privilege of meeting John, many years ago in his home town of Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford. John passed away several years ago, but his memory and recorded story lives on.

As the two days went on I was inundated with people looking to find out how they could research their relatives that served in the Irish Volunteers both during 1916 and the War of Independence, the Great War, and the Irish Defence Forces during the early Free State and Emergency period. One gentleman had three uncles who served from 1914 - 1918. Another gentleman's relative had served in the Royal Navy, while another man's grandfather had served in the American Army during that same period. All wonderful stories in themselves, now even more so because as one gentleman said to me, 'after all these years we can now openly talk about our relatives who served during the war. When I was growing up these men were rarely mentioned'.

As all the commemorations this year have shown, today we can remember them.

Yours in history,  
Wesley Bourke

*Wesley Bourke*

Interested in submitting an article or photographs? Here at Ireland's military story we welcome submissions from our readers. For further information please contact the editor at: editor@irelandsmilitarystory.ie or visit www.irelandsmilitarystory.ie

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**Front cover**

The Aftermath of Battle: Brian  
Kenny of the Irish Great War Society.  
Photograph by Ken Mooney.

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# WITH THANKS

**We would like to thank the following for their support in this issue.**

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 The Royal Airforce Association  
 The Royal British Legion  
 The Somme Association

Special thank you to Mount Joy Prison Museum for their help with our Summer issue.

# Letters to Editor

Dear Sir,

The article by Pat Dargan 'Last Out: The Royal Munster Fusiliers on the Italian Front' in the Summer 2016 Issue 2 in 'Ireland's Military Story: Reveille' significantly adds to the history of the regiment. There is very little known about the existence of the 1st Garrison Battalion and its comparatively short life span except maybe that which is contained in the 'History of the Royal Munster Fusiliers' Volume II 1861-1922.

Mr. Dargan has placed his father's service in the battalion very well and its activity from its establishment during the month of April 1917 to its involvement in Italy from January 1918 to the armistice in November 1918, its return to England in 1920 and disbandment on May 4th, that same year. Mr. Dargan's father like many other ex-servicemen who fought in the First World War did not speak of their experiences, except to their fellow comrades. That this was so, maybe because they were of the view that those who did not serve would not have understood what they went through in that conflict. There was also the fact that the political situation had changed dramatically in Ireland and men who served in the British army kept quiet in fear of what may have happened to them. Mr. Dargan in his article refers to the seven battalions that were raised during the war of which the 1st Garrison Battalion was one. The others were the 6th and 7th Service Battalions raised in August 1914, the 8th Service Battalion raised in September 1914 and the 9th Service Battalion raised in October 1914. All of these battalions were later to be subsumed into the 1st and 2nd regular battalions. Nothing appears to be known about the 10th Battalion and the 2nd (Home Service) Garrison Battalion which had an extremely short existence. It was formed during the month of January 1918 and disbanded during the month of December 1918. Mr. Dargan is correct in stating that the six Irish regiments of the British Army were disbanded on the establishment of the Irish Free State, however, it was during the month of July 1922 that this occurred, the colours of the regiments were presented to King George V in June 1922. The South Irish Horse not having colours presented the King with a silver plate.

Dr. Tadhg Moloney,  
Limerick.



# DISPATCHES

## Somme Centenary Commemorative Service – St. Anne’s Cathedral

In early July commemorations took place throughout Ireland, the United Kingdom and France to mark the sacrifice made by those who took part in the Battle of the Somme.

On July 3rd, the Northern Ireland First World War Centenary Committee held a service of commemoration, in St. Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast, to mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme and in particular the service and sacrifice of the 36th (Ulster) Division. *(Photos by Patrick Hugh Lynch, Dept. of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht)*



## HMS Caroline Commemorates 10,000 Irish Sailors in World War I

HMS Caroline, one of the world’s most historically significant warships, was the focus of a unique commemoration on May 31st, marking the contribution of 10,000 Irish sailors who participated in the First World War. The commemoration also marked the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Jutland, which HMS Caroline is a veteran.

Moored in Alexandra Dock in Belfast’s Queen’s Island the ship; which has undergone a major Heritage Lottery Fund-backed restoration programme, joined commemorative events across the UK; including Jutland Bank in the North Sea and Kirkwall in Orkney where the British Grand Fleet mobilised ahead of the Battle of Jutland on May 31st/June 1st, 1916.

Prince Michael of Kent is pictured at the ‘Commemoration of The Irish Sailor and Centenary of Battle of Jutland’ ceremonies at Alexandra Dock, along with First Minister Arlene Foster.

*(Images courtesy of the National Museum of the Royal Navy)*



## Cooles Hero Honoured

102 years after he died at the Battle of Mons, Lieutenant Maurice Dease was remembered in Coole, Co. Westmeath. A Victoria Cross Paving Stone, similar to those in Glasnevin Cemetery, and a small Victoria Cross were unveiled beside an existing cross which was erected by the Dease family after his death in 1914.

Maurice Dease was serving with the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in Belgium in 1914. On August 23rd, he was in charge of a machine gun section of the 4th Battalion Royal Fusiliers. It was the first day of the first major battle for the BEF in the war. The unit was told to hold a railway bridge over the Mons-Conde Canal at Nimy, outside the town of Mons. Dease held his position covering his units retreat despite being wounded five times. He died of his wounds. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. Private Sidney Godley who single handily manned the machine gun, was also awarded the Victoria Cross for his action.

*(Photos by Ken Mooney)*



## State Ceremony marks Centenary of the Battle of the Somme

The Battle of the Somme, fought between July 1st – November 18th, 1916, was one of the largest ever fought in military history. It was hoped that the Allied campaign would lead to victory. By the end of the fighting over a million men were casualties. The total Irish cost is unknown, as Irishmen served throughout the British and Empire units. The 36th (Ulster) and 16th (Irish) Divisions between them suffered some 10,000 casualties, with around 3,500 killed.

On July 9th, in conjunction with the Royal British Legion (Republic of Ireland), the State remembered and honoured the Irish who fought and fell in this bloody battle. President Michael D. Higgins, Taoiseach Mr. Enda Kenny TD, Northern Ireland Secretary Theresa Villiers and Stormont Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness were among those who marked the centenary at the Irish National War Memorial Gardens at Islandbridge. *(Photos by Patrick Hugh Lynch, Dept. of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht)*





# DISPATCHES

## Columbians Digitalise their Archives

St. Columba's College is a co-educational boarding and day school that was founded in 1843. Since that time its students have produced journals and magazines giving a unique insight into the past. Over the past three years, Patrick Hugh Lynch has been working on digitising the St. Columba's school magazine, *The Columban*, as well as the Old Columban Society's historical magazines. The former start in 1879 and the latter in 1930.

These magazines form a precious and fascinating historical resource, and Patrick's work has preserved them permanently in digital form (in due course, they will be available online). You can see an example (of the July 1916 edition, responding to the Easter Rising) here:

[www.sccenglish.ie/2016/05/the-columban-july-1916](http://www.sccenglish.ie/2016/05/the-columban-july-1916)

The Sub-Warden, Mr. Julian Girdham, who has worked with Patrick on the project, gave a short illustrated talk on the project, at the launch on June 16th.



From left to right: Ninian Falkiner (former Head of History), Lindsay Haslett (Warden), Patrick Lynch, Marie Haslett (Head of History), Julian Girdham (Sub-Warden). (Photo courtesy of St. Columba's)

## Launch of Air Corps Museum Collection

On August 10th, the Irish Defence Forces Military Archives launched the Air Corps Museum Collection. The launch was held in Casement Aerodrome, and was hosted by General Officer Commanding the Air Corps, Brigadier General Paul Fry.

The release of this material is the culmination of four years of hard work involving the Military Archives, a team of four archivist interns, and the curator of the Air Corps Museum Airman Michael Whelan. The launch was a proud moment for Airman Whelan, who is also a historian and published poet, who was the driving force of this project, ensuring the material was properly acquired, preserved, and made available through Military Archives.

The collection consists of 347 archival boxes spanning a date ranging from 1918-2004. Amongst its many items of interest, the collection includes the log book for the Martinsyde aircraft known as 'The Big Fella', which was secretly purchased in September 1921 and kept on standby at an airfield near London to convey the Irish delegation, including Michael Collins, to safety in France or Ireland in the event of the breakdown of the Treaty negotiations.

The collection is now available to researchers in the Military Archives reading room in Cathal Brugha Barracks, and the finding aid will shortly be available online at [www.militaryarchives.ie](http://www.militaryarchives.ie). The reading room is open to the public on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays by appointment, which can be made through the duty archivist at [militaryarchives@defenceforces.ie](mailto:militaryarchives@defenceforces.ie) or on (01) 804 6457.

(Photos by Ken Mooney)



General Officer Commanding Irish Air Corps, Brigadier General Paul Fry, with Commandant Pádraic Kennedy, Commanding Officer Military Archives.



This photo of Irish Air Corps Westland Lysanders during the Emergency period, was only recently discovered. It is an example of the hidden treasures in the Air Corps archival collection.



The start of the tour introduces you to the men and campaigns of the 36th (Ulster), 16th (Irish) and 10th (Irish) Divisions.

# Irishmen In the Trenches

## The Somme Museum

Photos by Ken Mooney

**T**he Battle of the Somme began on July 1st, 1916. There was a high expectation of a major victory and help end the war. The massive breakthrough never came, nor did the end of the war. The Battle of the Somme would turn out to be one of the largest and bloodiest of World War I and in military history. By the time the battle petered out in the rain and snow of November 1916, more than one million soldiers from both sides had died without making any appreciable alteration in the

opening position. Among the dead were over 3,500 Irish soldiers, with many more wounded.

Today it is almost inconceivable to grasp the sheer carnage, or how an army could suffer so many casualties. At the time of the Great War, entire communities were devastated. On the first day of the battle, the 36th (Ulster) Division suffered 5,500 casualties. Over 2,000 soldiers from the province of Ulster killed, never to return home. The 16th (Irish) Division suffered 4,330 casualties in September, of whom

1,200 were killed. Irish men fought in other regiments and divisions throughout the campaign, bringing the casualty figures much higher.

A piece of the Somme exists here in Ireland. Situated on the edge of the Clandeboye estate, near Bangor, Co. Down, is the Somme Museum. Clandeboye is the estate on which the 36th (Ulster) Division trained. Every day they would look up and see Helm's tower. It is this tower that the Ulster Memorial Tower in France is modelled.

## ON EXHIBIT

Formed in 1990, the Somme Association ensures that the sacrifices of all those from Ireland who served in the War - and those of their families - would continue to be honoured and remembered. The Somme Association has responsibility for the Somme Museum, formerly the Somme Heritage Centre, the Ulster Memorial Tower on the site of the Battle of the Somme near Thiepval in France, and Thiepval Wood, from where the 36th (Ulster) Division launched the attack on the German lines at 7:30 am on July 1st, 1916.

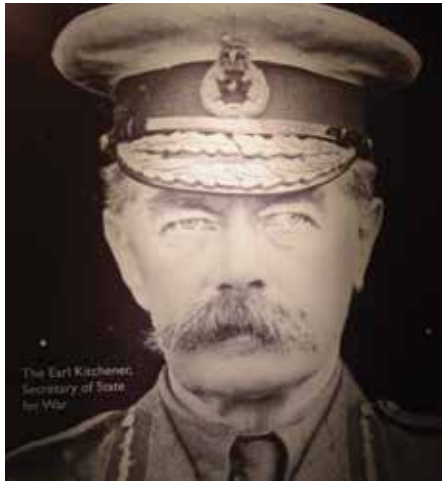
The museum traces the story of all the Irish who fought in World War I. It features not just the 16th and 36th Divisions but also the 10th (Irish) Division. As our guide Mathew Gamble told us, 'it was 100 years ago, but even in 2016, it is so important that the memory of those men who fought in the Great War is not forgotten. One of the good things about the centenary is that people are going to places like Belgium and France and visiting their ancestor's graves. In some cases, the first time a family member has done so'.

The tour guides make the experience at the Somme Museum. The knowledge they share about the Irish in the war and at the Somme is incredible. But they also have great local stories and anecdotes that visitors have passed on to them. For example, a gentleman who was in the museum a decade ago was able to point at an image of Machine Gun Corps personnel at the Somme and say- 'that's my father'.

You are told the whole story about how the Irish units were formed, how they were recruited, where they served, and what life was like on and behind the lines. The museum is home to many fascinating and rare artefacts including the original Redmond diaries. A scary caricature of Kaiser Wilhelm II gives an insight into propoganda used at the time. This bizarre looking object was handed in a few years ago. Prior to this it had been hanging in a bar in Belfast until the 1960's. An exhibit on loan from the National Library displays uniforms of the Irish Volunteers, Irish Citizen Army, Connaught Rangers, Casement's Irish Brigade and up to recently the uniform of Rose McNamara.

'There's something really important

The very real trench system is a surreal contrast to the behind the lines exhibits.



with tangible bits of history', said Mathew, uniforms that were worn at the time, palliasses that were slept in. if only these artefacts could step up and tell us what they have seen'. When we spotted ammunition labelled 'taken from the Aud', we were told that a diver had gone down and explored the wreck. They were subsequently posted to the museum after the diver's father did a tour.

An incredible story is that of Jessie Getty who served as a nurse with the Volunteer Aid Detachments. From Hollywood, Jessie lived to the age of 107. In 1918, she served on the Western Front. She never looked at the colour of the uniform. Everyone mattered. On display are a photograph of her aged 22 and then aged 100. There is also a set of Rosary Beads, which she received from a Scottish soldier. She cherished them all her life.

The two main Irish units at the Battle of the Somme were the 36th (Ulster) and 16th (Irish) Divisions. The museum traces their story through artefacts, photographs, personal accounts and through the personal knowledge of the museum's interpreters.

The 36th and 16th were formed in September 1914, as part of Kitchener's 'New Army'. The 36th was made up from units of the Ulster Volunteer Force. It was commanded initially by Major General C. H. Powell C.B., but Major General Oliver Nugent C.B. D.S.O. took over in September 1915 as the Division embarked for France. The 16th was commanded initially by Lieutenant General Sir Lawrence W. Parsons KCB, CB. Major General William B. Hickie CB, took over the Division in December 1915, as they embarked for France. It was made up of many members of the Volunteers. The 6th Battalion Royal Irish Regiment had some 300 Volunteers from Co. Derry and the Bogside, while the 6th Battalion Connaught Rangers had around 500 men from West Belfast.

The end of the tour brings you into a trench system. It is July 1st, 1916. You are met with the deafening noise of an artillery barrage as soldiers stand on the ladders ready to 'go over the top'. A narrator describes the scene: 'The men of the Ulster Division file into the trenches around Thiepval. Everyone knew that this spell would be very different then their normal



Tour guide Mathew Gamble taking us through how the men were recruited and where they were from.



In the centre of this image of Machine Gun Corps personnel is a soldier wearing a German helmet. It is this man that was identified by a member of the public as their father.



Members of the 103rd (Tyneside Irish) Brigade, 34th Division. On the first day on the Somme, the 34th Division attacked astride the Albert-Bapaume road at La Boisselle.



The unit is possibly the 1st Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, 25th Brigade, 8th Division.



Members of the 1st Battalion Irish Guards saw action at Flers-Courcelette and Morval in September.



four days on the front lines. This was it then. The Big Push that everyone had talked about. An Ulster fry before they left their billet put the men in good spirits. Now ready to fight for King and Country’.

Eleven divisions of the British Fourth Army five of the divisions of the French Sixth Army were committed to the attack. Almost in the centre were 12,000 men of the Ulster division. They were charged with attacking from Thiepval Wood and the River Ancre, up into what were arguably some of the strongest fortifications on the Somme sector.

The barrage, that had begun on the June 25th, was so loud it could be heard in England. Everyone, including the Germans, knew an attack was imminent.

Before the attack General Nugent issued the following:

*‘Much is expected of the Ulster Division. I am certain that the exhortations will be fulfilled.*

*Resolution, self-reliance and the spirit which knows no surrender and no defeat are presently in full measure in every unit of the division.*

*To every officer and man  
I wish success and honour’*

Voices from the 36th recall their experience of the battle.

*‘As we moved across no-man’s land a shell landed on our left. It killed the officer and maybe the sergeant. Once the machine guns opened up there were bullets flying everywhere and bits of shells too hitting the ground all around us’.*

*‘The first two lines were easy. It was the third line when the real fighting started. I’d never killed a man with a bayonet before’.*

*‘Someone shouted ‘go that way’, I couldn’t I’d been shot’.*

The Ulster men reached and took their objective. However, this successful penetration had to be given up before nightfall, as it was unmatched by the units on their flanks. The Ulstermen were exposed

in a narrow salient, open to attack on three sides. Running out of ammunition and supplies, and a full German counter-attack at 22:00 forced them to withdraw. There were withdrawn from the battle on July 2nd, and deployed to a quiet sector, opposite Messines Ridge in Flanders. They were joined there in September 1916 by the 16th (Irish) Division after their similar devastating losses at Ginchy and Guillemont.

At the end of August 1916, the Division moved from Loos down to the Somme sector. The Brigades were attached to other Divisions. 47th Brigade, attached to 20th Division, took part in the capture of Guillemont on September 3rd. Lieutenant J.V. Holland, commanding the bombing platoon of 7th Battalion Leinster Regiment, won a Victoria Cross.

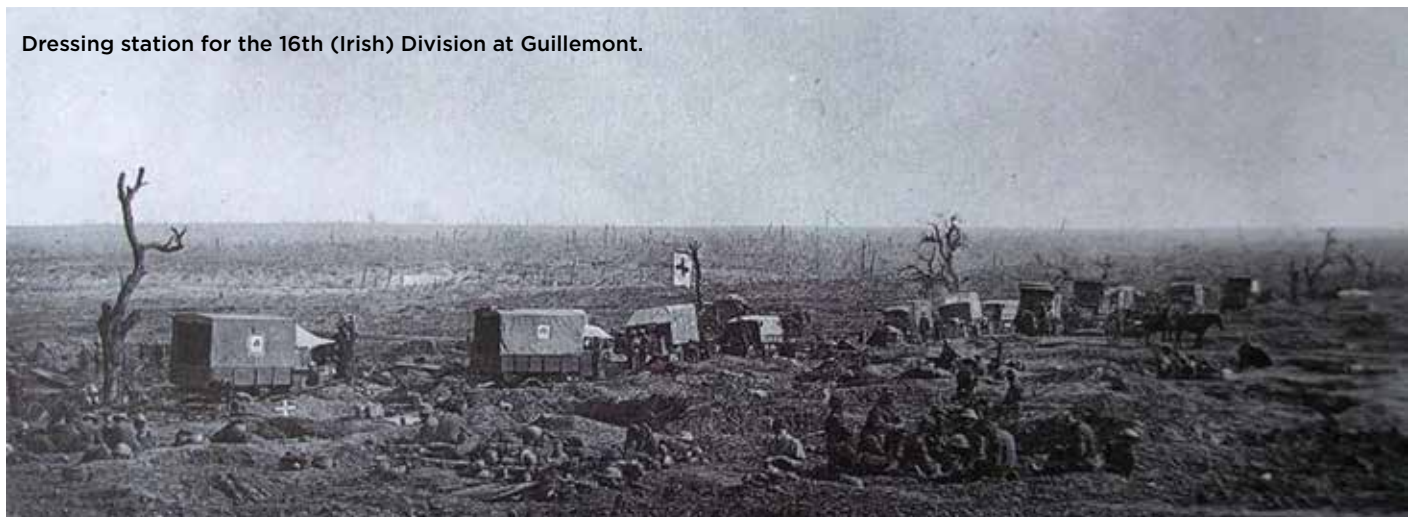
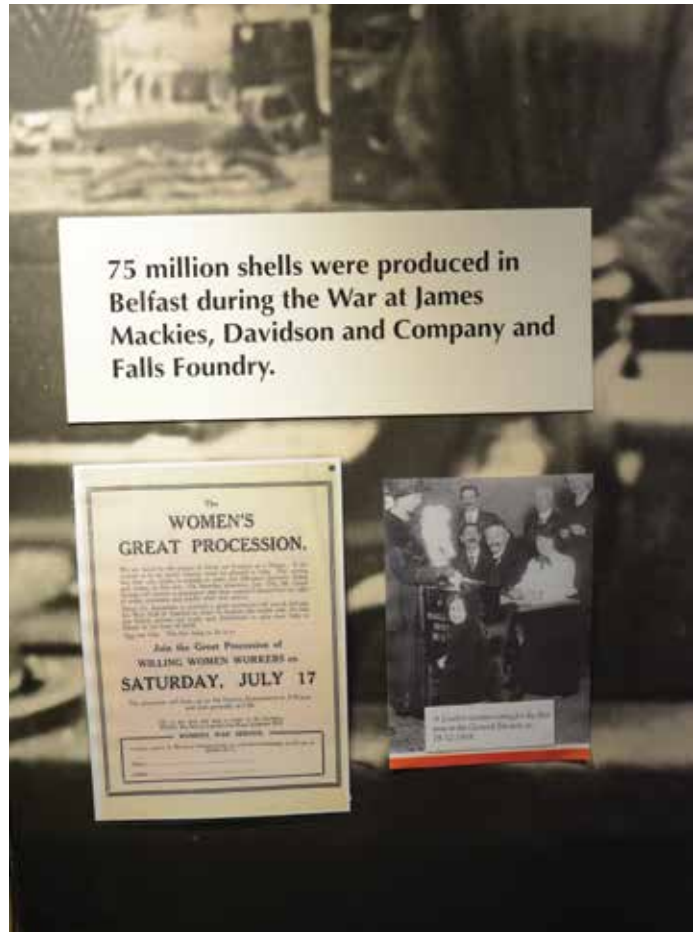
That day the men were in the trenches from 04:00. Zero hour was not until 12noon. So they had eight hours in those shallow



*Red Cross Medals for Proficiency in Nursing, First-Aid, and Anti-Gas Training  
Mrs. Getty received a number of awards for her training and work prior to and during the Second World War.*



Jessie Getty and the Rosary Beads given to her by a Scottish soldier.



Dressing station for the 16th (Irish) Division at Guillemont.

trenches waiting for the order.

On September 5th, the 16th was reconstituted under General Hickie and took part in the capture of Ginchy on September 9th. Between September 3rd-9th, the Division had 224 officers and 4,090 men killed or wounded.

The two divisions would fight side by side at Messines in June 1917. Mathew rounded off the tour, 'The 36th on the right, the 16th in the middle and the New Zealand Division on the left. From this traumatic battle friendship grew as comrades fought side by side'.

**Somme Museum**  
233 Bangor Rd.  
Newtownards  
Co. Down  
Northern Ireland  
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# SOLDIERS ON THE SOMME

**T**he Somme Offensive took place between July 1st, and November 18th, 1916. The battle was intended to hasten a victory for the Allies and was the largest battle of the First World War on the Western Front. By the end of the offensive more than one million men were wounded or killed.

The British troops on the Somme were comprised of the remains of the pre-war regular army, the Territorial Force, and

Kitchener's Army - a force of volunteer recruits including many Pals' Battalions, recruited from the same places and occupations. Irish troops served throughout the British Army, Flying Corps, and Commonwealth forces. The two main Irish units that took part in the offensive were the New Army, or Kitchener's Army, 36th (Ulster) Division and the 16th (Irish) Division. Other Irish units served throughout the offensive in brigades and

units including the Irish Guards and the 103rd (Tyneside Irish) Brigade.

By 1916, infantry troops were essentially equipped the same as when the war broke out in 1914; 1902 Service Dress, 1908 Pattern Webbing Equipment, 1914 Pattern Leather Equipment, 1903 Bandolier Equipment and the SMLE .303" rifle. The phenomenal increase in the use of artillery and the introduction of gas however, resulted in the introduction of steel helmets and gas masks.

## Lewis Gun (AKA Lewis automatic machine gun or Lewis automatic rifle)

By 1916, the machine gun had evolved to become an integral part of the infantry soldier's repertoire. The Lewis Gun is a light machine gun originally designed in the United States, that was adopted and mass-produced in the United Kingdom.

The gun was invented by U.S. Army colonel Isaac Newton Lewis in 1911. Gas operated it used a pan magazine holding 47 or 97 rounds of .303" calibre. Pan magazines hold the rounds, bullet-noses inwards toward the centre, in a radial fan. The Lewis Gun could fire 500-600 rounds/min to an effective firing range of 880 yards (800 m) and a maximum firing range of 3,500 yards (3,200 m).



## Brodie Helmet

Due to the dramatic increase in lethal head wounds, from 1916 onwards the warring nations had begun to issue steel helmets to their personnel. Prior to this; cloth, felt and leather headdress had been worn.

The British War Office analysis of the French 1915 Adrian Helmet showed that the Adrian helmet was not suitable and too complex to mass produce. The War Office adopted a design by John L. Brodie. His helmet was constructed in one piece that could be pressed from a single thick sheet of steel, which gave it added strength.

Becoming known as the Brodie helmet, it had a shallow circular crown with a wide brim around the edge, a leather liner and a leather chinstrap. The soup bowl shaped helmet was designed to protect the wearer's head and shoulders from shrapnel shell projectiles bursting from above the trenches.

Initially there was the Type A and Type B. The Type A used 1.5" - 2" mild steel, while the Type B used a harder steel with 12% manganese. The steel used in the Type B helmet became known as Hadfield steel, as it was Sir Robert Hadfield who had made the recommendation. It offered increased protection against shrapnel compared to the Type A. Brodie originally suggested a mottled light green, blue, and orange camouflage paint scheme, but the helmets were also painted in green or blue-grey.

The first helmets began arriving on the Western Front from October 1915. They were in short supply and as a result were kept for troops in the trenches. When troops rotated out of the trenches the helmets given to the unit replacing them. After the first million Brodie helmets were produced by the summer of 1916, troops began to receive a personal issue.

The 1916 Mark I model addressed several concerns. It had a separate folded rim, a two-part liner and matte khaki paint finished with sand, sawdust, or crushed cork to give a dull, non-reflective appearance.

With further modifications by the end of the war some 7.5 million Brodie helmets had been produced and used by several Allied forces, including 1.5 million M1917 helmets, for use by American forces.





**Gas Masks**

With the introduction of gas in Spring 1915, several developments had taken place since the initial issue of cotton pad mouth pieces. In June 1915, the Hypo Helmet or Smoke Hood was introduced. This was simply a khaki-coloured flannel bag soaked in hypo solution (glycerin and sodium thiosulphate); it protected the respiratory system and eyes against chlorine. This was soon followed by the P (Phenate) Helmet or Tube Helmet, the PH (Phenate Hexamine) Helmet and the PHG Helmet. Some 14 million PH Helmets were produced. These helmets had a mask connected to a tin can containing the absorbent materials by a hose and an outlet valve to reduce the carbon dioxide build up inside the mask. The PHG Helmet appeared in January 1916 and was similar to the PH Helmet but had a face piece made of rubber sponge to add protection against tear gas.

The Small Box Respirator began to be introduced in Spring 1916. It was much more sophisticated than earlier models. It consisted of a face piece and a filter box, connected by a corrugated tube. The small-box respirator was carried in a canvas haversack. To use, the soldier fastened the respirator against his face, leaving the filter box in the haversack. When the soldier inhaled, he drew air through the filter box, where it was decontaminated before passing through the corrugated tube and into the facemask.



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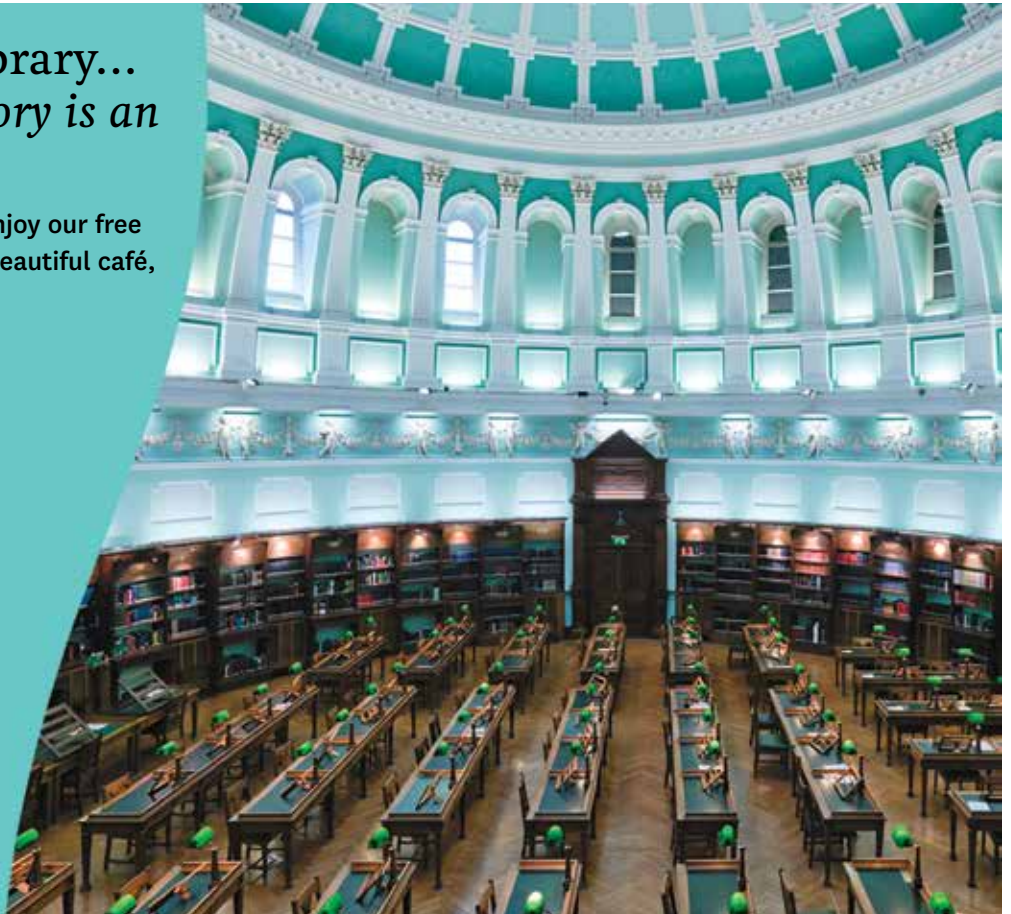
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# LEST WE FORGET

## TROOPER PAT MULLINS

35th Infantry Battalion - ONUC  
Killed in Action - Friday September 15th, 1961

By Brigadier-General Paul A. Pakenham (Retd)

Over a period of 3 years, considerable research and analysis was conducted by a Defence Forces Research Team, commissioned by the Minister of Defence, into the circumstances leading to the death of Trooper Mullins on September 15th, 1961, and the non-recovery of his remains to Ireland. Brigadier General Paul Pakenham, Colonel Peter Richardson and Commandant Victor Laing were members of the Research Team. The Research Team's Final Report was completed on August 14th, 2009, and was formally submitted on October 15th, 2009. Arising from a direction from the Minister of Defence, members of Trooper Mullins family were formally briefed on the contents of the Final Report on February 11th, 2010.

In 1960, the newly independent Republic of the Congo was threatened by mutinous armed forces, a Belgian military intervention and increasing disorder. In July 1960, the Security Council established the United Nations Operation in the Congo/Opération des Nations Unies au Congo (ONUC) in order to ensure the withdrawal of Belgium forces, to assist the Government in maintaining law and order and to provide technical assistance. The Irish Defence Forces committed peacekeepers to the mission from its inception. In July 1960, they deployed their first unit to the Congo – 32nd Infantry Battalion. During the period January 1961 through March 1962, Lieutenant-General Seán McKeown DSM was Force

Commander of the United Nations Mission. The mission was completed in June 1964.

An Advance Party of the 35th Infantry Battalion departed Dublin on May 10th, 1961, with the final departure from Ireland taking place on June 27th. The Battalion was based in the Katanga Province, with its Headquarters in Élisabethville. The Battalion's operations



**Trooper Pat Mullins.** (Image courtesy of Military Archives)

included defensive and offensive operations, patrols, internal security operations and refugee control and protection. The final elements of the Battalion arrived back in Ireland on December 25th, 1961.

Trooper Patrick Mullins was born to Edward (Ned) and Catherine Mullins. His home was in Boher, Kilbehenny, Co Limerick.

Pat was the youngest of six children, two brothers Denis and Thomas and three sisters Margaret (Dwane), Mary (Kent), and Nelly (Kelly). His father served during the Emergency period and was awarded the Emergency Service Medal for his service as a reservist.

On May 9th, 1960, Trooper Mullins enlisted in the Permanent Defence Force in Collins Barracks, Cork. He was a member of the 6th Recruit Platoon, Command Training Centre. In October 1960, following his recruit training, Trooper Mullins was posted to the 1st Motor Squadron, 1st Brigade, Southern Command in Fitzgerald Camp, Fermoy.

On June 16th, 1961, Trooper Mullins departed Ireland for the Congo as a member of the 634 strong 35th Infantry Battalion. During the month of September 1961, a high intensity operational environment prevailed throughout the 35th Infantry Battalion's Area of Operations. On September 13th, 1961, elements of the United Nations Force, situated in Élisabethville, launched Operation "MORTHOR". The 35th Infantry Battalion was ordered to seize and defend a number of objectives including the Radio College.

On September 13th, an element of the 35th Infantry Battalion, under the command of Lieutenant Tom Ryan, occupied the Radio College without the use of force, in order to use the facilities to conduct United Nations broadcasts. At 1600hrs on September 14th,

## REMEMBERING OUR PAST

this position was surrounded by Katangese Gendarmerie, who eventually took over the position.

At 2045hrs on Thursday, September 14th, Commandant Pat Cahalane, Officer Commanding the Armoured Car Group, departed Battalion Headquarters with a patrol, consisting of nineteen personnel and one interpreter, in two armoured cars, one landrover and one bus. The patrols' tasks included visiting the Irish detachment in the Radio College, locating and recovering Trooper Edward Gaffney's remains, (who was Killed in Action on September 13th), collecting Irish personnel at various locations, and delivering weapons to the Armée Nationale Congolaise detachment at the "Factory".

The patrol was ambushed at approximately 2145hrs on September 14th, at the Radio College, with the leading Armoured Car hit by anti-tank fire. Commandant Pat Cahalane and Sergeant Tim Carey, who was seriously injured, escaped from this car. The other occupants, Corporal Michael Nolan from Colbinstown Co. Wicklow and Trooper Pat Mullins, who was the gunner, remained in the car. The other personnel of the patrol dismounted their vehicles and occupied a house adjacent to the Radio College.

The lead Armoured Car was restarted in the early hours of Friday, September 15th. Leaving the ambush location at the Radio College, it proceeded northwards, leading away from the route back to the Headquarters of the 35th Infantry Battalion. The Armoured Car was driven by its own remaining crew, either Corporal Nolan or Trooper Mullins, rather than by other parties.

The Armoured Car travelled through Élisabethville, finally coming to a halt on Boulevard Reine Elizabeth. The occupant or occupants, (Corporal Nolan and Trooper Mullins), were involved in a hostile engagement, in which 9mm Gustaf submachine gun ammunition was used, against the Katangese Gendarmerie on September 15th.

On his return to the Battalion's Area of Operations from a special tasking, Captain Art Magennis, Armoured Car Group, took a Patrol to the Radio College at approximately 0600hrs on September 22nd. In the area of the Radio College, he located remnants of the Patrol dispatched on September 14th,

including one Armoured Car. Having reported his findings to his commanding officer, Captain Magennis was tasked with locating the other Armoured Car which was missing. Following an anonymous call to the Battalion's HQ, the Patrol, under Captain Magennis went to the Boulevard Reine Elizabeth, where they discovered the missing Armoured Car.

The Armoured Car was discovered in a roadside drainage trench a short distance south of the Katangese President's residence, and the Gendarmerie HQ, at Boulevard Reine Elizabeth. Unfortunately, there was no trace of either Corporal Nolan or Trooper Mullins.

Spent 9mm casings were located beside the Armoured Car, suggesting a prolonged period of combat. All equipment was taken from the Armoured Car. The Armoured Car's turret was jammed. The main armament's water jacket was perforated by small arms fire.

On the balance of probabilities Corporal Nolan and Trooper Mullins died on Friday, September 15th, 1961, following the hostile combat engagement with the Katangese Gendarmerie on Boulevard Reine Elizabeth, in the proximity of Commune Albert. This occurred sometime after the initial ambush at the Radio College on Thursday, September 14th, 1961.

In November 1961, Corporal Nolan's remains were located and identified in a local Union Miniere graveyard. Subsequently, Corporal Nolan's remains were recovered back to Ireland for burial in the Army Plot, Glasnevin. He was buried with Trooper Anthony Brown MMG with full military honours on November 16th, 1962. The attendance included An tUachtarán, Mr. Eamon deValera, Mr. Gerald Bartley TD, Minister for Defence, and Lieutenant Colonel Hugh McNamee, Officer Commanding 35th Infantry Battalion.

Trooper Mullins served in the Defence Forces and died as a result of hostile action, serving his country, under the United Nations Flag, in the cause of peace on Friday, September 15th, 1961. Despite the most exhaustive enquiries and searches undertaken by the Irish contingents in the Congo, Trooper Mullins remains were not discovered. After 55 years, it is highly unlikely that the remains of Trooper Mullins will ever be located, identified and recovered to Ireland.



**(Left to Right) Trooper Jerry Lewellyn with Corporal Michael Nolan and Trooper Pat Mullins pose with local children - Congo 1961. (Image courtesy of Military Archives)**



**This shows Lieutenant Mick Considine on the left and Captain Art Magennis, DSM (both Armoured Car Group, with the recovered Armoured Car.) (Image courtesy of Commandant Art Magennis collection)**

Trooper Mullins was posthumously awarded the Defence Forces Military Star, the Defence Forces Peacekeepers Medal, the UN Medal (Congo), and the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Medal.

On November 8th, 1998, the Minister for Defence, Michael Smith TD, presented The Military Star, awarded to Trooper Mullins, to his mother Catherine, who later died in December 1998. The medal citation includes the words:

"Trooper Patrick Mullins gave his life in the cause of world peace while serving with the United Nations on Peacekeeping duties at Elisabethville in the Republic of the Congo on the 15 September 1961. In recognition of this supreme sacrifice he is posthumously awarded An Réalt Míleata (The Military Star)

Trooper Pat Mullins extended family, supported by Pat's former comrades, have displayed remarkable commendable fortitude, courage, and patience, during their extensive, and grief laden pilgrimage, in ensuring that his extraordinary valour and bravery, is, today, after 55 years, appropriately recognised



Unveiling of  
Memorial to  
Trooper Mullins  
on September  
15th, 2011, in  
Kilbehenny.  
(Image courtesy  
of author)

by our nation and its Defence Forces.

Trooper Patrick Mullins has become a household name for selfless sacrifice and gallantry, throughout the Defence Forces and especially in the 1st Cavalry Squadron. Serving and retired personnel, of all ranks, salute Trooper Patrick Mullins for his outstanding courage and bravery, above and beyond the call of duty, demonstrated in the face of extreme danger, whilst engaged in hostile action, resulting in him being Killed in Action, fighting and serving his country and the United Nations.

On Thursday, September 15th, 2011, 50 years after his death, following a Concelebrated Mass, a Monument to Trooper Mullins, was dedicated in the presence of the Minister of Defence Mr. Alan Shatter TD, Lieutenant-General Seán McCann DSM Chief of Staff, Brigadier-General Paul Pakenham GOC 1st Southern Brigade, Trooper Mullins family, his former colleagues of the 35th Infantry Battalion, together with retired and serving personnel from Óglaigh na hÉireann and from his unit the 1st Cavalry Squadron.

In recent years, during direct contact with the brothers and sisters of Trooper Mullins, the current generation of Defence Forces senior leadership constantly reminded the family that their brother Pat will always be remembered, as a gallant and brave soldier, who fought and died in action.

Since 2006, the motto 'Lest We Forget' drove the process to where we are today.

The phrase forms the refrain of Kipling's poem 'Recessional', written in 1897.

In the 20th Century, the phrase became a plea to society not to forget past sacrifices. Accordingly, the Defence Forces were delighted when the Mullins family endorsed the inclusion of the words 'Lest We Forget' on the Monument in Kilbehenny.

This Monument, commissioned by the Defence Forces, and designed by Lieutenant Colonel John Hanlon, Corps of Engineers, is a symbol of appreciation for the honourable and faithful service that Trooper Mullins rendered this nation, the community in Kilbehenny, and the Defence Forces. The Monument, displaying those words 'Lest We

Forget', reflects the lasting legacy of Trooper Pat Mullins.

Trooper Pat Mullins, together with Private Kevin Joyce from Galway, who was kidnapped and killed in South Lebanon, while serving with the 48th Infantry Battalion, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon in 1981, are the only Irish soldiers whose remains have not been recovered to Ireland. On May 29th 2015, a monument, commissioned by the Defence Forces, dedicated to Private Kevin Joyce was unveiled by the Minister for Defence Mr Simon Coveney TD on Inis Oírr, Aran Islands.

*Ar Dhéis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha dílis.*

This article first appeared in An Cosantóir – the Defence Forces magazine November/December/October 2011, Vol 71, No 8. Brigadier-General Paul A. Pakenham (Retd) is Chairman of the Military Heritage of Ireland Trust Ltd.

# Lieutenant Tom Kettle

## Irish Volunteer, Dublin Fusilier, Patriot

By Brendan O'Shea

Lieutenant Tom Kettle, 9th Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, was killed in action on September 9th, 1916, near the village of Ginchy in Northern France at about five o'clock in the afternoon of the 71st day of the Battle of the Somme. Initially buried on the battlefield by members of the Welsh Guards, the location of his grave was subsequently lost and his remains were never found thereafter. Today his name is inscribed on the Thiepval Memorial near the town of Albert together with those of 72,000 others who lost their lives on the Somme, and equally have no known grave.

100 years later, a constant stream of people from all over the world visit Thiepval every day to pay their respects to the fallen. Some remember Tom Kettle, but most never heard of him, notwithstanding the inclusion of his name on a stone tablet in the Island of Ireland Peace Park at Messines, Belgium when it was opened in 1998. And unfortunately, this also remains true in 21st century Ireland.

The only public memorial in Ireland to Tom Kettle can be found in Dublin's St. Stephen's Green directly across from

the Shelbourne Hotel. Never unveiled properly, and following several objections by the Commissioner of Public Works to the inscription, in 1927 a bust of Kettle was eventually placed where it stands today without any reference to the facts that he was an Irish Volunteer, an officer in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers or that he died during the Battle of the Somme. It is hardly any wonder then that nobody gives this memorial a second glance as the citizens of Dublin go about their daily business but on the 100th anniversary of his death it is also nothing short of a national disgrace that nobody stops, nobody looks and nobody cares.

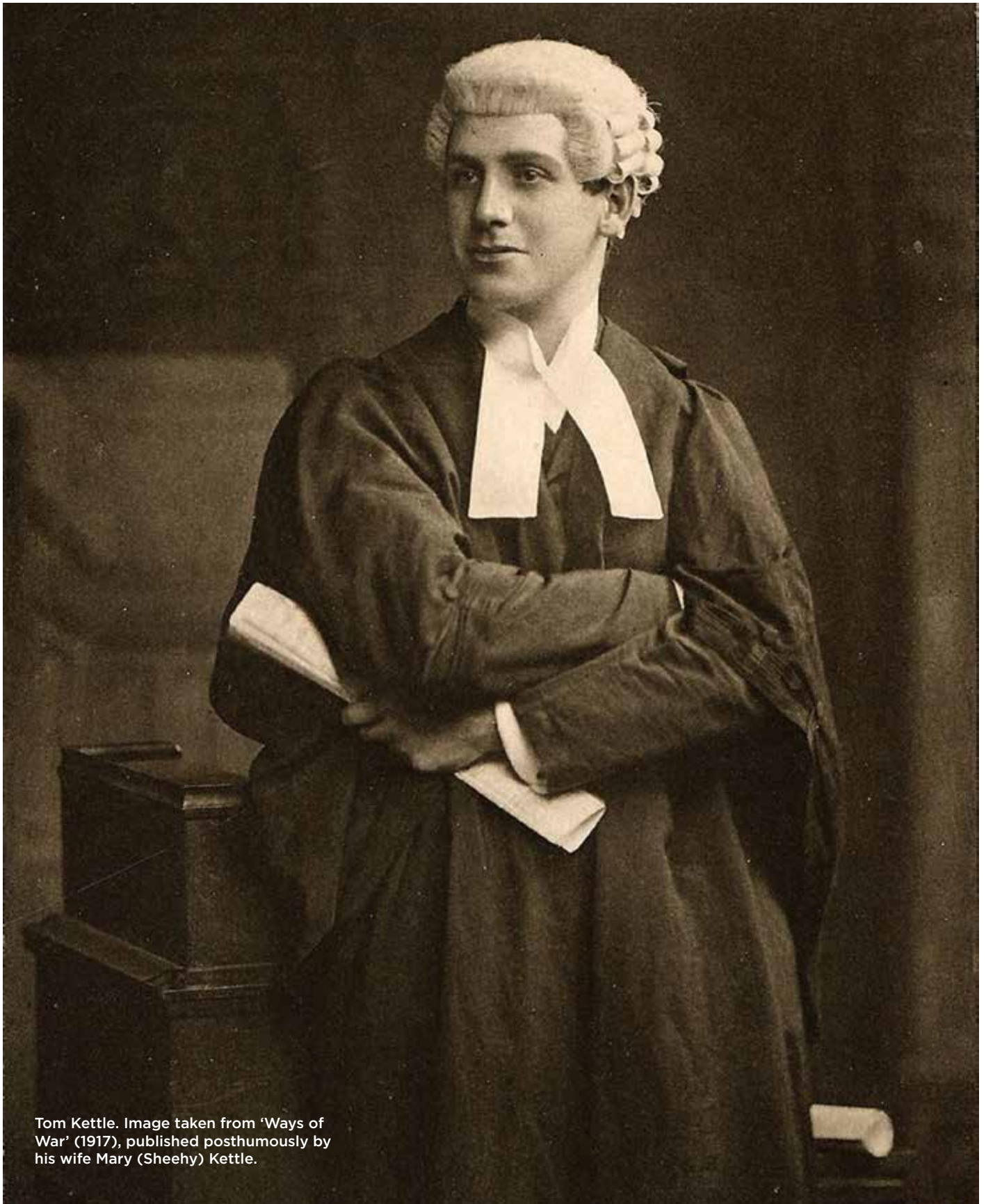
Of course there are reasons for this not least amongst which is the manner in which history has been taught to successive generations prioritising one historical narrative over another and thereby effectively reducing the contribution of Kettle and others like him to the status of an historical footnote. This is deplorable and ignores the fact that Tom Kettle was a truly great Irishman of whom we should all be immensely proud.

Thomas Michael Kettle was born in

Artane, Dublin on February 9th, 1880. The seventh of twelve children, in his formative years he was influenced significantly by the Home Rule politics of his father Andrew who was a leading Catholic Nationalist politician, and together with Michael Davitt a founding member of the Irish Land League.

Educated initially by the Christian Brothers at O'Connell School, Richmond Street, Dublin he proved to be an excellent student. In 1894 he moved on to Clongowes Wood College in Co. Kildare where it was immediately obvious that the young Kettle possessed more than just an average intellect. Three years later he enrolled at University College Dublin, where in 1898, he was elected auditor of the Literary and Historical Society and became vocal on the legitimacy of the Boer War in South Africa, before obtaining a Bachelor in Arts Degree in 1902. Thereafter he was admitted to the Irish Bar and qualified as a Barrister in 1905.

Throughout this period, he also indulged in political journalism and was a determined supporter of John Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party. He became president of the Young Ireland Branch of the United Irish



Tom Kettle. Image taken from 'Ways of War' (1917), published posthumously by his wife Mary (Sheehy) Kettle.

## REMEMBERING OUR PAST

League in 1904. In 1906, a vacancy arose in East Tyrone after the death of the sitting MP, Patrick Doogan. Not surprising Tom Kettle was offered and accepted the chance to stand for election to Parliament. In the by-election which followed he won the seat by 18 votes, thus becoming the youngest member of the Party and was immediately viewed by many colleagues as a future leader. In this regard his vision of where Ireland should stand in the world was critical and a fundamental component of his entire political philosophy. Together with Willie Redmond he passionately believed that an emerging independent Ireland must exist within a wider political context. For Redmond that context was colonial in a shared political jurisdiction with Canada, Australia and New Zealand. For Kettle it was Europe. In his article 'Ireland' he wrote: 'My only programme for Ireland consists in equal parts of Home Rule and the Ten Commandments. My only counsel to Ireland is, that to become deeply Irish, she must become European'. Tom Kettle could see the big picture and that is precisely what set him apart from the majority of his peers.

By 1908, and still only twenty-eight years of age, he had become the new Professor of National Economics at University College Dublin, while simultaneously continuing his work as an MP. However, the burden became too great given the fragile nature of his health and prior to the general election of December 1910 he stood down and did not contest the seat. Nonetheless he retained his political connections and remained an active supporter of John Redmond welcoming the 3rd Home Rule Bill in 1912, and believing that Unionist fears could be overcome in due course.

However other social and political factors were now also at play in Ireland and in 1913 Dublin became embroiled in a workers strike

and subsequent lockout by management. Unlike many in the political establishment Kettle supported the locked out workers and wrote numerous articles describing the appalling poverty in which thousands of working class people were forced to live before intervening directly himself through the establishment of a peace committee in order to find a resolution.

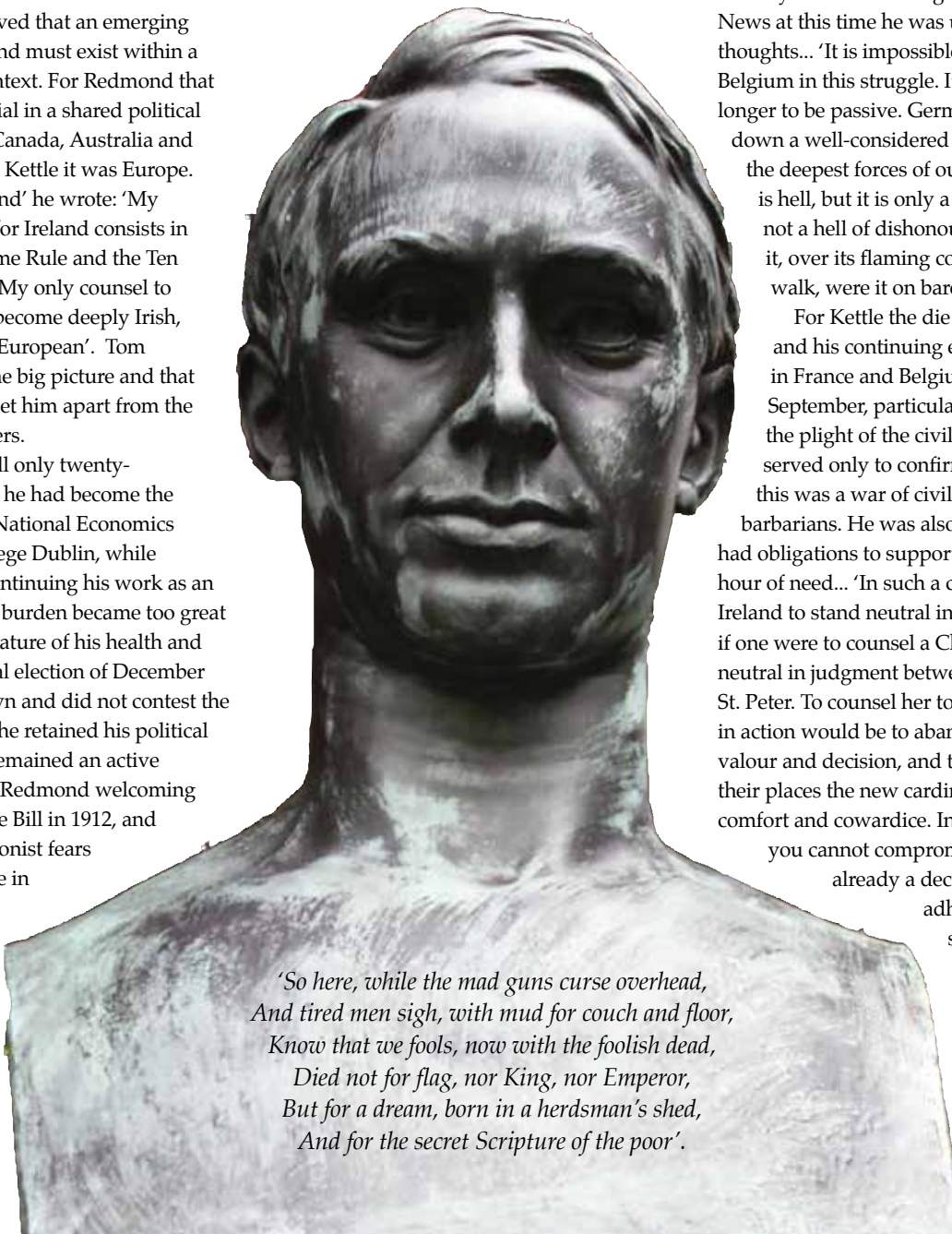
1913 also saw the formation of the Irish Volunteers in Dublin's Rotunda Rink on November 25th, and together with his

brother Laurence, he immediately enrolled subscribing to the Volunteer Manifesto, which envisaged holding Ireland for the Empire and resisting the separatist intentions of the Ulster Volunteers formed the previous year.

Thereafter he was tasked by the Volunteer leadership with obtaining arms on the open market. In August 1914 he found himself in Belgium where he personally witnessed both the ferocity of the German invasion and the corresponding inability of the Belgian military to resist. Writing for the Daily News at this time he was unequivocal in his thoughts... 'It is impossible not to be with Belgium in this struggle. It is impossible any longer to be passive. Germany has thrown down a well-considered challenge to all the deepest forces of our civilization. War is hell, but it is only a hell of suffering, not a hell of dishonour. And through it, over its flaming coals, Justice must walk, were it on bare feet'.

For Kettle the die was now cast and his continuing experiences in France and Belgium during September, particularly in relation to the plight of the civilian population, served only to confirm his view that this was a war of civilization against barbarians. He was also clear that Ireland had obligations to support Belgium in her hour of need... 'In such a conflict to counsel Ireland to stand neutral in judgment, is as if one were to counsel a Christian to stand neutral in judgment between Nero and St. Peter. To counsel her to stand neutral in action would be to abandon all her old valour and decision, and to establish in their places the new cardinal virtues of comfort and cowardice. In such matters you cannot compromise. Neutrality is already a decision, a decision of adherence to the evil side'.

Not surprisingly then when Kettle returned to Ireland he had little difficulty subscribing to John Redmond's



*'So here, while the mad guns curse overhead,  
And tired men sigh, with mud for couch and floor,  
Know that we fools, now with the foolish dead,  
Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,  
But for a dream, born in a herdsman's shed,  
And for the secret Scripture of the poor'.*

belief that Ireland should play its part in the war effort notwithstanding that Home Rule had been suspended until hostilities ceased. True to his convictions he quickly applied for a commission but was turned down because of his fragile health. However, he persisted, and eventually obtained the rank of Lieutenant, albeit that he was confined exclusively to a recruiting role. Undeterred, he continued to apply for active service and with his health improving marginally, and a chronic need for replacement officers on the Western Front, in 1916 he received an appointment in the 9th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers and deployed to France.

However, within a short time his health deteriorated again and at Easter he found himself at home in Dublin on sick leave. As his former colleagues in the Irish Volunteers launched their ill-conceived insurrection, Kettle watched in fury believing that his dream of a free Ireland in a free Europe had been terminally damaged. That said he was also distraught at the manner in which the leaders were subsequently dealt with and he could not be consoled when his colleague at UCD, Thomas MacDonagh, was executed. Nevertheless, when his time came to return to the front Kettle understood what his duty required of him and on July 14th, he set sail once again for France. He was 36 years old and had a mere 58 days left to live.

Readjusting to life in the trenches Kettle did not find life easy. 'Physically I am having a heavy time,' he wrote, 'I am doing my best but I see better men than me dropping out day by day and wonder if I shall ever come home... the heat is bad as are the insects and rats, but the moral strain is positively terrible'. Nevertheless, he carried on bravely and his leadership was very effective in the series of successful attacks on Guillemont, which began on September 3rd.

But the village of Ginchy still remained to be taken and writing to his brother the night before the main attack we get a very clear insight into his frame of mind. 'I am calm and happy but desperately anxious to live. ...the big guns are coughing and smacking their shells, which sound for all the world like overhead express trains at anything from 10 to 100 per minute on this sector; the men are grubbing and an odd one writing home. Somewhere the Choosers of the Slain are

touching, as in our Norse story they used to touch, with invisible wands those who are to die'.

Tom Kettle did not want to die. He simply wanted to do his duty, survive the war, and go home. His numerous writings which survived him make this abundantly clear and any suggestions to the contrary are completely without foundation. However, the following afternoon, at about 5 o'clock, having made his way through the stench of the dead in the forward trenches and progressed to within touching distance of his objective, which was the destroyed village of Ginchy. The Choosers of the Slain chose Tom Kettle notwithstanding that he had tried to outwit them by wearing a somewhat primitive bulletproof vest. Kettle was gone and Ireland had lost one of her most loyal and faithful servants.

In the intervening years Tom Kettle has often been criticised for supporting the war and serving in the British Army. Some commentators have even dared to suggest that if he wished to make a personal sacrifice in 1916, he should more properly have done so in the General Post Office with his former Irish Volunteer colleagues now turned insurrectionists. In fact, Kettle was acutely aware that this criticism would be made but firmly believed that: 'the faults of a period or a man should not prevail against the cause of liberty'.

Writing a sonnet to his daughter Betty (his gift from God) on September 4th, just before the attack on Guillemont, Tom Kettle railed at the madness of his predicament and spelt out in detail why he had put country before family....

*'So here, while the mad guns curse overhead,  
And tired men sigh, with mud for couch and floor,  
Know that we fools, now with the foolish dead,  
Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,  
But for a dream, born in a herdsman's shed,  
And for the secret Scripture of the poor'.*

In recent times lesser poets and lesser people have seen fit to criticize this incredible poem without having made the slightest effort to understand the physical and psychological contexts within which it was written. This is Kettle's epitaph crafted in a world of unimaginable horror with nothing

save the stench of death for company and the cold sweat of fear soaking into every fiber of his body. Kettle's dream was of a free, united and independent Ireland in a free Europe - of that there is no doubt whatsoever - and the secret scripture of the poor is what is always is - liberty, equality, and fraternity - or in modern parlance, Human Rights.

On July 1st, this year I went to Thiepval to remember all Irishmen who died there 100 years ago. I took with me the first edition (1917) of 'The Ways of War' by Lieutenant Tom Kettle, 9th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers which once upon a time was owned and treasured by Private Maurice Donovan, 1st Battalion The Durham Light Infantry. The very last words on the very last page have turned out to be quite prophetic:

'History will write of us that we began nobly, but that our purpose corrupted. The Great War for freedom will not, indeed, have been waged in vain; that is already decided: but it will have but half kept its promises. Blood and iron will have been once more established as the veritable masters of men, and nothing will open before the world save a vista of new wars'.

Lieutenant Tom Kettle, Irish Volunteer and Dublin Fusilier, died courageously leading his men on September 9th, 1916. He was, however, so much more than just another soldier who simply did his duty. He was desperately anxious to live and undoubtedly would have played a leading role in the development and evolution of our nation had he been spared. Alas, it was not to be - such are the Ways of War - and our Nation has long been the poorer as a consequence.

Brendan O'Shea is a member of the Irish Defence forces and holds a PhD in History. He is the author of numerous books. In 2010, along with Gerry White, he edited, 'A Great Sacrifice - Cork Servicemen who died in the Great War'.

.....  
Sources for this article include: Tom Burke, 'In Memory of Tom Kettle' *Journal of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association Vol. 9 Sept 2002*; Tom & Mary Kettle, 'The Ways of War', Talbot Press, 1917; Desmond and Jean Bowen, 'Heroic Option', *Pen & Sword*, 2005; Gerry White & Brendan O'Shea, 'Baptised in Blood', Mercier Press, 2005.

# Step On Board

National Museum of the Royal Navy - HMS Caroline

Photos by Ken Mooney

**F**loating in Alexandra Dock in Belfast's Titanic Quarter is HMS Caroline – the last survivor of the Battle of Jutland. Now a beautifully restored museum, this Great War veteran is open to the public.

The centenary of the Battle of the Somme made national headlines. The heroic exploits of the 36th (Ulster) Division and 16th (Irish) Division, were retold in the media. The Battle of Jutland however, did not get the same attention. On May 31st/ June 1st, 1916, 250 ships of the German High Seas Fleet and the Royal Navy Grand Fleet met off the coast of Denmark, in the biggest naval battle in history in terms of tonnage. Maritime engagements are generally far from land and as a result the scars of war are only accessible to divers and marine archaeologists. Now HMS Caroline, restored in her full splendor, gives the visitor access to World War I at sea.

Caroline is a C-class Light Cruiser. Twenty-eight were built for the Royal Navy.

They were built in a sequence of seven groups known as the Caroline class (six ships), the Calliope class (two ships), the Cambrian class (four ships), the Centaur class (two ships), the Caledon class (four ships), the Ceres class (five ships) and the Carlisle class (five ships). They were light and fast and designed to protect the fleet from torpedo attacks. At first sight she looks like she could head straight back into the fight. Her guns and torpedo tubes are today only for show. In her day she was armed with 2 × BL 6" 45 Mk XII guns (2 × 1), 8 × QF 4" /45 Mk V guns, 1 × 6 pounder, and 2 × 21" twin torpedo tubes. At a max speed of 30 knots, these light cruisers were a force to be reckoned with.

A video presentation starts you off with a historical recreation of Caroline during the Battle of Jutland. Captain Henry R. Crooke's orders are drowned out by the booming sound of gunfire. Neither side can see each other with so much smoke from the guns and burning vessels. It is hard to

image what went through the crew's minds as they watched Rear Admiral Horace Hood's 3rd Battlecruiser Squadron pass across Caroline's bow and the first German shells landed around her. Moments later they watched as Hood's flagship, HMS Invincible, exploded and broke in two, her bow and stern rising vertically from the water like a grim memorial.

On board Caroline Carpenter Frederick Fielder recorded the experience: 'A torpedo was seen making for us, but fortunately, it was near the end of its run and was travelling at only about six knots. As it neared our ship, the wash of our propellers turned it away just sufficiently to clear the stern by inches'.

Caroline along with HMS Royalist later launched a torpedo run on the German lines, Fielder continued: 'As we fired two torpedoes, the nearest ship to us opened fire with a broadside of 11 inch guns... by all the rules of gunnery the next broadside should have finished our career'.



Initially it was believed that there was only one Irish member of the crew during the Battle of Jutland. Over the past few years the Project Team, has been trawling through records and has found eight Irish members of the crew at the time of Jutland.

- Paymaster Ernest William Cox
- Acting Leading Stoker John Henry Burke
- Leading Seaman Robert Ladley
- Stoker 1st Class Thomas Moran
- Ordinary Seaman John Power
- Ordinary Seaman Frank Willaby Robinson
- Boy 1st Class John Taylor
- Petty Officer, (NS) over 3 years James Weddick

Petty Officer Weddick record reads: 'A gunner, suffered with deafness after the war due to sorting out a problem with a gun during the Battle of Jutland. Commended for good services in action in the North Sea

31 May - 1 June 1916 (N.50082/16 (vide also A.W.O. 2317/16.9.16). Joined the navy from school on 14th Oct 1899 for 12 years, as boy 2nd class, height 5ft 1 3/4 inches, dark hair, hazel eyes, fair complexion, by age 18 he was 5t 5 1/2 inches tall. by completion of his 12 years in 1911 he was 5ft 10 inches tall. He continued in the service, at RNVR Crescent & President, 1921-24, joined RFR 16.2.22 PO /6360. Ended a CPO'.

Weddick was mentioned in Despatches and the London Gazette for good service at Jutland.

The tour is self-guided. A receiver in your headphones picks up the next part of the narration from designation markers around the ship. In essence Caroline literally tells her own story. The ship has been restored as it was during the war - except for the addition of elevators making it accessible to all - so as a visitor you are seeing the ship as it was 100 years ago.

During World War 1, Caroline had a crew of 289. Officer's quarters are aft, marine's

in the centre and rating's quarters forward. You get to explore them all. The contrast between them is interesting. Officers got their own room, marines used hammocks, the crew shared rooms depending on rank. Officers even had baths. Crooke's cabin has some of its original fittings and furniture. His logbook indicates he ran a tight ship. It couldn't have been that comfortable with a full crew on board and roughing the North Sea.

Now be warned Caroline brings out your inner child. She is after all an interactive and fun museum. There are several interactive displays and simulators that you can test your naval skills on; torpedo school, signalling, and navigation and steering. These might all be meant for children but they are great fun. Learning how to use Morse code is not something you get to do every day.

On board we met Royal Navy veteran, Petty Officer John Taylor. John, now a volunteer interpreter, actually served on

## HERITAGE TRAIL



Caroline. No he was not around at Jutland, but he explained that: 'Caroline was still in operation until 2007. Since 1924, she has been permanently moored here, acting as a Headquarters and training vessel for the Royal Navy Ulster Volunteer Reserve Unit, except for during World War II and the Troubles, when she also acted as operational HQ for the Royal Navy squadrons operating out of Belfast'. Serving both the regular navy and the reserve for John, Caroline is in his blood. He had his children christened on board. 'She was a wonderful vessel to serve on. We are lucky here in Belfast that Caroline is now restored and open to the public'. To think up to a few years ago this vessel looked like a floating office block is hard to imagine.

For this editor the engine and boilers rooms made the tour. The 4 x Parsons Direct Drive Turbines, 2 x Parsons Cruising Turbines, and 8 x oil fuelled Yarrow Boilers, are a huge size. The sound of the engines is still played loudly on the speakers. When in use it must have been incredible to see in operation, but deafening all the same. While members of the crew on the upper decks can get a view of what is going on outside, Stockers and Engine Room Artificers see no daylight while on watch. For them the battle going on outside must have been drowned out by the noise of the engine and boilers.

The only warship on the island open to the public, HMS Caroline is a magnificent museum. Caroline is not just a veteran of

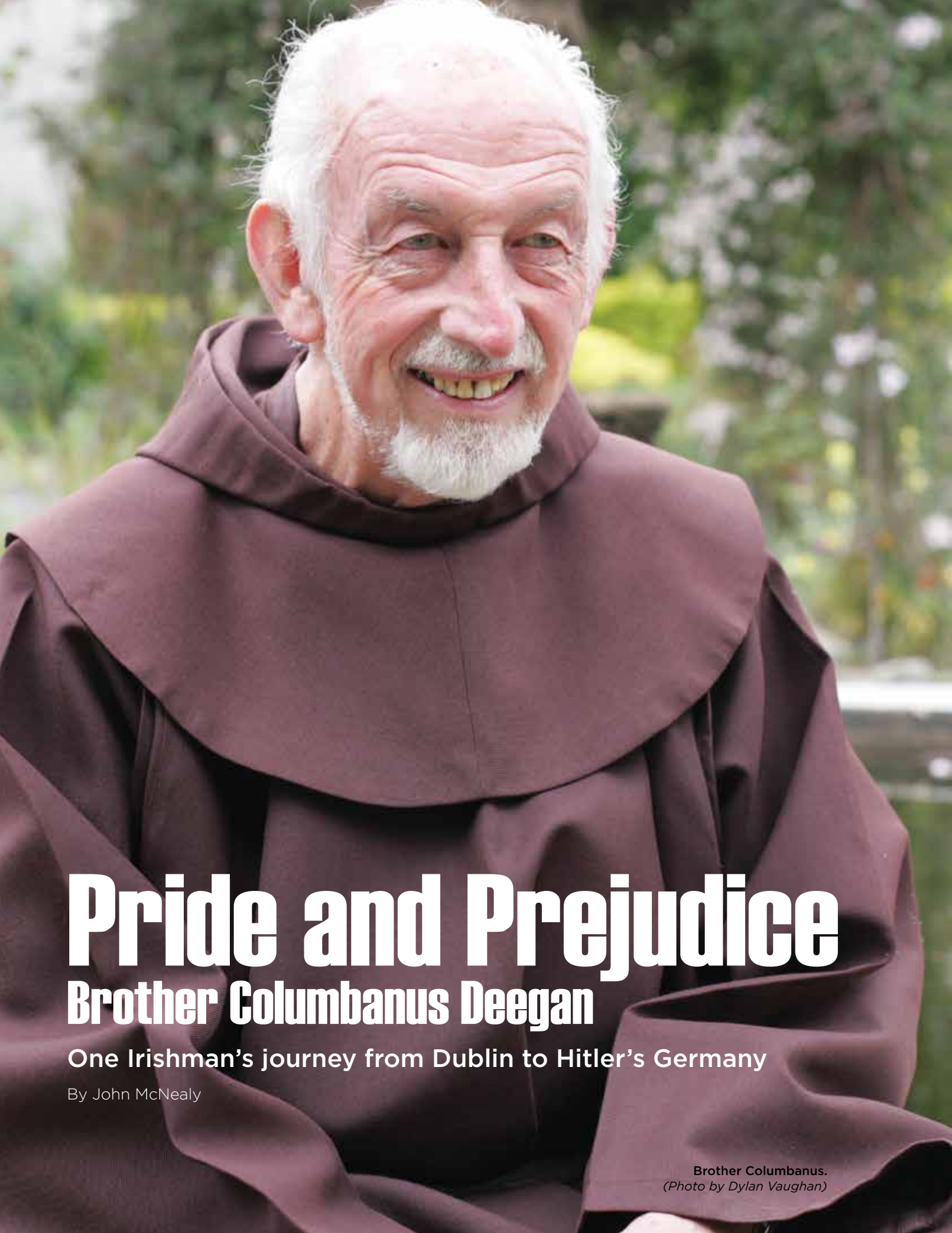
World War I and the Battle of Jutland, but an insight in to maritime history that you will not get anywhere else.

### HMS Caroline

The museum will be closed from October 23rd to early Spring for dry docking.

Alexandra Dock,  
Queens Rd,  
Belfast,  
BT3 9DT,  
Northern Ireland.

For further information and to book tickets see the National Museum of the Royal Navy website: [www.nmrn.org.uk/exhibitions-projects/](http://www.nmrn.org.uk/exhibitions-projects/)  
[www.hmscaroline.co.uk](http://www.hmscaroline.co.uk)



# Pride and Prejudice

## Brother Columbanus Deegan

One Irishman's journey from Dublin to Hitler's Germany

By John McNealy

Brother Columbanus.  
*(Photo by Dylan Vaughan)*



Brother Columbanus in his RAF uniform, 1944.



*The following is an extract taken from my recorded interview of Brother Columbanus (Seán) Deegan, OFM (Order of Friars Minor) who, as a young man, served in the Royal Air Force and took part in the liberation of Europe in 1944/45.*

It is estimated that over 50,000 Irish men and women joined the British forces during World War Two. Their contribution was described by Brother Columbanus as ‘airbrushed out of history’. Seán Deegan was born in 1924 on Ushers Island, Dublin. His father had served in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers in the First World War and one of his uncles had been killed by a sniper before he had hardly seen action. Another Uncle, John, had partaken in the Easter 1916 Rising and escaped as a stoker on a ship.

In Columbanus’s own words Dublin was a ‘drab’ place at the time. Not much to do for young energetic lads. He joined the Boy Scouts and learned many of the skills which would serve him later. He got a job in

Dublin’s General Post Office after deciding to quit school early. When war broke out, as a senior boy scout, he was asked to join the Irish Army’s reserve component - the Local Defence Force.

‘Everyone was joining the Irish Army at that time because after your service you could get your job back’. Conditions were not great. Poor food, low pay and rough working conditions were the norm. He tried to enlist in the army, telling the recruiting officer he was a young looking 18, and that he wanted to join the air force. The officer just laughed as he was not educated enough and ‘too skinny’.

By 1942, the war had been going on for three years, yet not much appeared in the radio news, cinenews or newspapers in Ireland. For a young lad dying for a change of pace, looking for adventure and a chance to get out of dreary Dublin, he wrote to the British Embassy asking could he join the Royal Airforce (RAF). They promptly wrote back. Columbanus was told to wear

old clothes, something he laughed at as he explained, ‘one only had one good set of clothes for Sunday and patched up bits and pieces for the rest of the week’. His father, who knew the horror of war and was aghast that anyone would want to get involved, tried to dissuade him. Youth never listens and sadly it was the last time he saw his father alive. He died suddenly the following year.

Columbanus took the train for Belfast, stopping off at the border post at Gowra Wood. There, along with eight others, he enlisted into the RAF. They stayed in camp at Newtownards on the outskirts of Belfast for two months. He was kitted out, given all the usual inoculations and medical tests and found the whole thing ‘terribly exciting’. It was then onto Padgate in Lancashire for basic training. At the end of basic the men knew they would be sent to different sections of the RAF. After passing out the new airmen were asked what area they would like to volunteer for. They lined up and were asked

Hawker Typhoon Mark IB, MN606, of No. 247 Squadron RAF, being overhauled by a Repair and Salvage Unit in a dispersal wrecked by the retreating Luftwaffe at B78/Eindhoven, Holland. (Image courtesy of Imperial War Museum)



to step one pace forward if they wanted to be a pilot, no one stepped forward as the educational level required was beyond their reach. Next it was asked who wanted to be an engineer, again nobody had the education. Next on the list was gunner, the majority, including Columbanus, stepped forward! Here Columbanus explained that: 'after six weeks of training you were promoted to Sergeant (all aircrew on bombers comprised both officers and NCOs) with all privileges that this rank brought with it'.

The turnover in gunners was high. Because of his map reading skills from his Boy Scout days Columbanus opted for navigation school. An air accident however, cut short his navigator training and found him in hospital at Shotley Bridge near Consett in Co. Durham, with head injuries severe enough to get him medically discharged. He amazed the doctors by making a good recovery and insisted on staying in the RAF.

After a few months of flying a desk at Weston Super Mare, an officer asked

Columbanus to take part in a Repair and Salvage Unit forming up for the invasion of Europe. The duties involved looking after downed pilots, pinpointing crashed salvageable aircraft and spotting suitable landing fields. He was told he would be given 'a Harley Davidson motorbike'. He trained for weeks on this bike with a Polish instructor, who in civilian life was a wall of death stunt rider! Training was on the beach at Blackpool and all around the Pennines. He was having a ball! In the build up for the liberation of Europe, England was full of American military units. When asked about the American 'invasion' of England at this time Columbanus replied: 'There was not so much aggro as resentment, they were well paid, had 3 changes of uniform, the glamour and got all the ladies! They completely took over wherever they went'.

After completing his training with the bike, the team was put together and sent to the south of England for further training. This took place between Bournemouth and

Eastbourne where a large area, about a mile square, had been levelled behind the cliffs of Dover. Planes that were struggling to make their way back home from raids in Europe could use this as a temporary airfield and not have to worry about air traffic control or falling short of their own base or endangering any centres of population enroute.

About two weeks before the invasion of Normandy, the men were moved to a sealed off holding camp near Salisbury. They were not allowed out. No communication whatsoever. They had no idea where they were going until their first pay day in the camp. They were paid in brand new French franc notes! As they could go nowhere gambling was rife and some people made a fortune out of it. Other guys had their heads shaved, as in the first war, to avoid lice.

The first inkling the invasion of Europe was approaching was when one evening religious ceremonies was held at 6pm. A Catholic mass was only ever a morning event

Bird's-eye view of landing craft, barrage balloons, and allied troops landing in Normandy, France on D-Day. U.S. Maritime Commission Photo. (Image courtesy of Library of Congress)



at that time. The chaplain explained that this was an emergency as they were going the following day. They were instructed to leave any personal effects in a brown envelope with their name and number on it and he (the chaplain) would see that the next of kin would get them should anything happen. Sobering thought! 'On the trip down to the south coast everyone was out waving and cheering as they knew something big was afoot. The roads were clogged with military convoys and indeed the sight of fields and fields of material was incredible'. They were ferried onto an LST (Landing Ship Tank). Operation Neptune, the invasion of Normandy was on – D-day June 6th, 1944.

H-hour for Sword Beach was 07.25 and while the first waves went in, everyone else watched in anticipation. 'The noise of the naval bombardment, from battleships like HMS Warspite and HMS Ramillies was literally deafening'. Columbanus landed at Sword beach, not far from Arromanches, on D+2 shortly before dusk. The scene as described by him was still 'messy with bodies in the water and debris everywhere'.

They drove off the LST with their 3 ton waterproofed Bedford truck which housed the bike and their equipment. One of their biggest fears on the way in was hitting a sandbank, 'because if you tried to drive off on the sandbank more often than not the truck or tank disappeared'. This he sadly saw quite a bit. Taped pathways indicated the route off the beach, as a lot of the mined areas still had to be cleared. They settled for the night in a laneway not far from the beach. Where they stopped there was an army unit shelling some German positions. The advice from them was not to stay too long as the Germans now had a fix on their position. As they had no definitive orders they decided to dig in for the night as it was a 'cosy little lane'. This they did to their cost. They took a bad shelling that night and lost a couple of men. Columbanus was sleeping up against a tree with a couple of mates, but because his beloved bike was a bit exposed and not fully camouflaged, he decided to go take care of it. While doing so, where he was resting was shelled and his mates were killed and wounded.

He became accustomed very quickly to the ways of war. He knew then that 'this was it', that there was someone out there trying to kill him. From then on it was a day to day existence. Battles were going on everywhere and the breakout was taking much longer than planned. 'You had to dig your slit trench every night and make sure it was covered with sandbags. Everyone shooting at enemy planes meant that there was stuff coming down all the time. Sleep was constantly interrupted by the pinging sound of metal or other stuff falling from the sky'. In one shared slit trench one of the guys lost a leg when shrapnel tore right through his leg leaving a gaping hole.

Columbanus' unit had access behind all the allies' beaches. As a result, he was a witness to many scenes which Dante would be proud of. One of these he found particularly gruesome. While on his bike he saw a large gathering of people. On closer inspection it was a mass burial. They were dumping bodies by the truckload in a huge pit. The stench of dead people and animals, and the fear of disease were ever present all



**Sherman tanks advancing through cheering crowds in Valkenswaard, the Netherlands, September 18th, 1944.**  
*(Image courtesy of Imperial War Museum)*

over Normandy. Columbanus was witness to most of the major battles of the Normandy campaign. With the dust and dirt his RAF blue smock turned grey, identical to the German uniform, resulting in occasional friendly fire.

After the breakout at Caen on August 6th, and the closure of the Falaise Pocket on August 21st, it was a dash across Northern France all the way into northern Belgium. With the end of the Normandy campaign, sadly he left two of his friends there, Tim O'Neill and John (Michael) O'Reilly who had come from Dublin with him. Both were killed in action.

The frantic pace of the advance was incredible and in a way gave a false belief that the war would end soon. As Paris and other towns in Northern France were liberated, the main danger for Columbanus was being knocked off his bike by well wishers!

During Operation Market Garden (September 17th - 25th, 1944) Columbanus was doing backup to a couple of squadrons of Spitfires and Typhoons. He remembers the very warm welcome from the Dutch people, especially in Eindhoven, who suffered terribly under the Nazis, more so than the Belgians. 'The initial joy and jubilation soon dissipated as the plan went to pot fairly early on'. Because Holland is for the most part flat, he was able to watch the landings through binoculars up on a control tower.



**Members of a Repair and Salvage Unit attend to North American Mustang Mark III, FZ190 'QV-A', of No. 19 Squadron RAF in the shadow of the shell-torn village church at B12/Ellon, Normandy.**  
*(Image courtesy of Imperial War Museum)*

This was the biggest airborne invasion ever attempted, nearly 35,000 men delivered over several days by parachute and glider. Soon early success turned to disaster as German resistance intensified.

With the German Ardennes offensive, they thought they would be cut off as they were north of Antwerp, a key objective for the Germans. They were billeted in tents outside of a small town and the local Mayor suggested that they stay in houses in the town with the local people. The winter of 1944/45 was one of the worst recorded and they did not need a second invitation. One family was looking for a Catholic and off went Columbanus. He was treated like a son and often brought back extra rations, clothing and blankets for the family. The Germans had cleaned out anything of use before they left, including taking many young men as slave labourers. Two of the sons had been taken from the family by the time Columbanus stayed there. This arrangement soon became like a second home. Staying with this family, who had no English at all, afforded Columbanus a chance to learn to speak Dutch and this came in handy on his return visits there.

In early spring Columbanus crossed the Rhine into Germany. This he described as a 'funny sensation'. Among his comrades they often said that the German was a tough and fine soldier. As they went through many towns, people were out offering water if they

had it and hanging out white sheets. They were ordered not to trust the Germans, not to fraternise, always go out in threes and be fully armed. Yet the civilian population seemed normal. Up to this point they regarded the Waffen SS and the Nazis as more fanatical than the normal soldier. This viewpoint would change with the discovery of the concentration and labour camps.

The first concentration camp to be liberated by the British was Bergen-Belsen, near the city of Hanover. At first Columbanus could not believe what they were hearing over the wireless, thinking it was more propaganda. As they were not far from Belsen they decided to go see for themselves. What they saw changed their opinion of the Germans in an instant. 'It was horrific'. The sense of outrage among the allies was fever pitch as more camps were liberated. The labour camps he found were just as bad.

Columbanus remembered entering the German cities. Hamburg particularly came to mind for the 'level of devastation and the smell of death'. They had to wear masks as there were so many buried under the rubble. People were living in holes in the bomb sites. As he travelled around he got to see the meaning of total war. 'Devastation everywhere one went'.

At war's end many of Columbanus's mates were being demobbed. He however decided to stay in the RAF as they still

needed experienced technical staff. The deprivation caused by the war was immense. When the British Occupation Force looked for volunteers to stay on Columbanus put his hand up. He had survived the war, was in good health and really enjoyed the duty. They took over all the German facilities. One facility he clearly remembered and enjoyed was a horse training arena. While still doing a bit of his daily work he also got to train some horses! He spent 1946 in Germany and was then posted to Holland in 1947, to assist in the start up of the airline KLM and the Dutch Air Force. As he had met a lovely Dutch girl on his first sojourn there, he was delighted to be able to see her. He frequently travelled between Germany and Holland but eventually this great adventure would have to end. By 1948, the RAF gave him the ultimatum, 'either stay in and make a career for yourself or be demobbed'. The decision was not easy. Columbanus decided to try his luck in 'civvy street' and went to London to demob.

When the boat docked at Dún Laoghaire, the Irish Army and Police were waiting

dockside. The reason for this was that many men had deserted the Irish Army and crossed the border into Northern Ireland to join the British Army. It took several more years for an amnesty to be announced before many could return to visit their families. While crossing O'Connell Bridge in Dublin he remembered looking down the river towards where he came from and thinking that he would never leave his home town again. He had survived the war unlike his two friends who came from the same neighbourhood; he would find a nice wife and settle down.

Little did he know that 'the Lord had other plans for [him]' he once said with a broad smile. He became a Franciscan Brother, adopted the name Columbanus, had a career in teaching and subsequently worked on behalf of many worthy causes based at his adopted city of Waterford. Those who survived did not return home the conquering heroes. Nobody talked about it and there was always the undercurrent that you had 'taken the Kings shilling' and foregone your own country. While he never felt ashamed



**Brother Columbanus at the annual Ceremony of Remembrance and Wreath Laying, at the National War Memorial Gardens, Islandbridge.** (Photo courtesy of Patrick Hugh Lynch)

about what he did, one simply did not speak about it. He championed the cause of getting recognition for the Irish veterans of the Second World War until his death. Sadly, my dear friend passed away on July 18th, 2007.



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The charity that supports the RAF family

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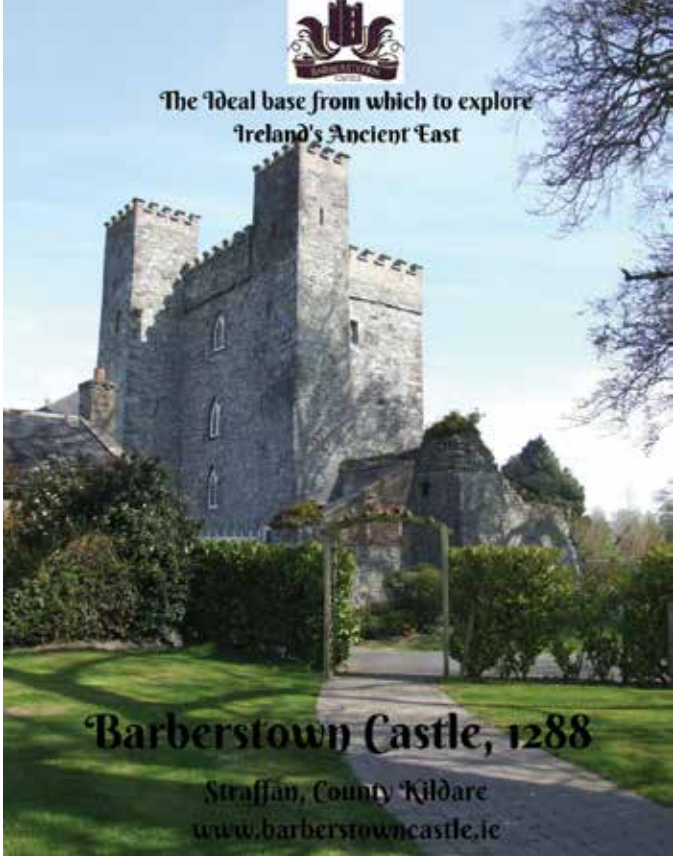
The Royal Air Forces Association is a registered charity and welfare organisation for RAF veterans. The Republic of Ireland Branch was founded in 1948 for RAF veterans and their dependents who are resident in the Republic of Ireland. We rely on donations from members and supporters; we do not receive any financial support from any government. We hold social gatherings throughout the year and we organise trips to places of interest in Ireland and abroad. If you are a former serving member of the RAF, or if you simply have an interest in the RAF or aviation, you would be welcome to join us. You do not need to have done military service in any country to join us as an Associate Member. Membership is €30 per year.

**Contact: THE ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND BRANCH, c/o 40 RIVENDELL GROVE, GREYSTONES, CO. WICKLOW A63 WT10, IRELAND**

Royal Air Forces Association, Republic of Ireland Branch,  
 Web: [www.rafai.org](http://www.rafai.org)  
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HMS Caroline, 1914. Garland Collection.



# HMS CAROLINE

## The Last Survivor of the Battle of Jutland

**H**MS Caroline was one of twenty eight C-class light-cruisers ordered by the British Admiralty. Work began on Caroline on January 28th, 1914, at Cammell Lairds shipyard, Birkenhead and the ship was launched on September 21st, that year, and commissioned on December 4th. Caroline was part of the early cruisers built without geared turbines. The Light Cruisers were designed to protect the fleet against torpedo attack. As they were fast and light they could also support British torpedo attacks.

Under the command of Captain Henry R. Crooke, the Caroline joined the Royal Navy Grand Fleet based at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands. There she initially served as leader of the 4th Destroyer Flotilla. From

February to November 1915, Caroline was then stationed with the 1st Light Cruiser Squadron. In early 1916 she joined the 4th Light Cruiser Squadron, under the command of Commodore Charles Le Mesurier.

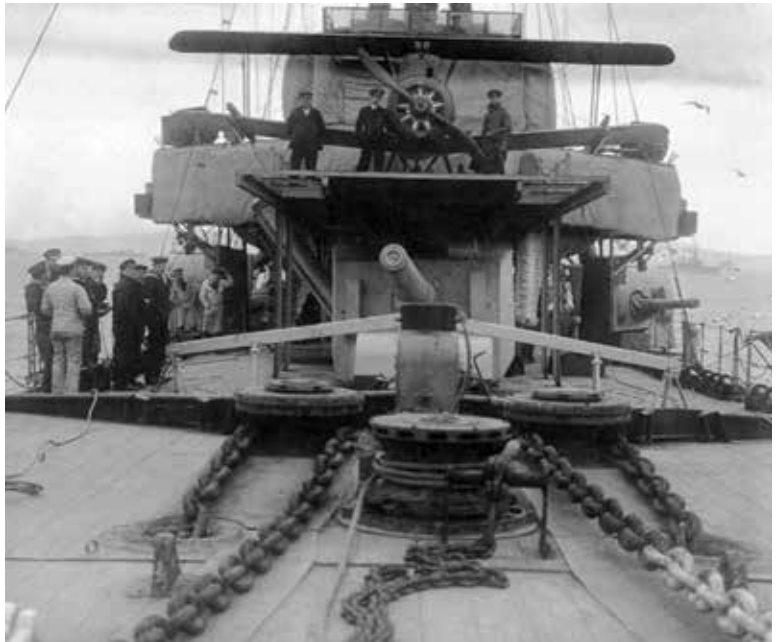
The British Royal Navy's Grand Fleet under Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, met the Imperial German Navy's High Seas Fleet under Vice-Admiral Reinhard Scheer, at the Battle of Jutland from May 31st/June 1st. Germany was under a naval blockade. If the Imperial Fleet could lure, trap and destroy even a portion of the Grand Fleet, it would allow Germany access to the Atlantic. The two fleets engaged – 250 ships between them. Fourteen British and eleven German ships were sunk, with great loss of life.

Captain Henry R. Crooke  
(National Portrait Gallery)



# HMS Caroline

Builder:	Cammell Laird
Class and type:	C-class light cruiser
Laid down:	January 28th, 1914
Launched:	September 29th, 1914
Completed:	December 1914
Commissioned:	December 4th, 1914
Decommissioned:	February 1922
Recommissioned:	February 1924
Decommissioned:	March 31st, 2011
Motto:	Tenax Propositi (Tenacious of Purpose)
Honours and awards:	Battle honour for Jutland 1916
<b>General Characteristics</b>	
Displacement	
<i>Nominal:</i>	3,750 tons
<i>Loaded:</i>	4,219 tons
<i>Deep:</i>	4,733 tons
Length:	420 ft (128.0 m) (446 ft (135.9 m) overall)
Beam:	41.6 ft (12.65 m)
Draught:	16 ft (5 m) maximum
Propulsion:	4 x Parsons Direct Drive Turbines 2 x Parsons Cruising Turbines 8 x oil-fueled Yarrow Boilers
Armour:	Belt: 3 to 1 in. Decks: 1 inch
Power:	40,000 shp
Speed:	30 knots (55.5 km/h)
Range:	carried 405 tons (772 tons maximum) of fuel oil
Complement:	325
Armament (1914):	2 x BL 6 in (152 mm) /45 Mk XII guns (2 x 1), 8 x QF 4 in (102 mm) /45 Mk V guns, 1 x 6 pounder, 4 x 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes Later: 4 x 6 in (152 mm) /45 Mk XII, 2 x 3 in (76 mm) anti-aircraft, 4 x 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes



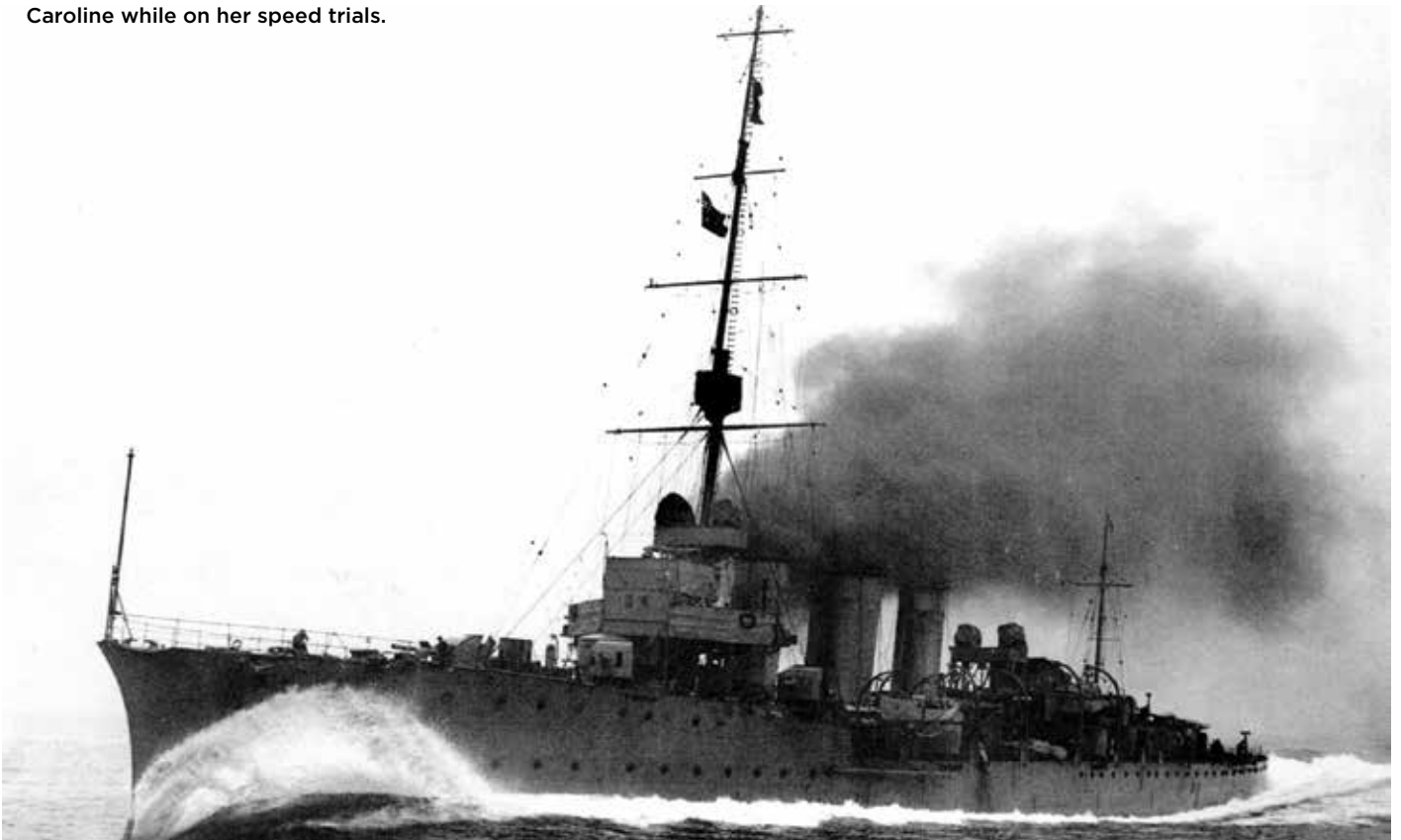
Caroline's flying off platform on her foremast, along with a Sopwith Camel.



Caroline in her later years as a Royal Navy Reserve Headquarters.



Caroline while on her speed trials.



HMS Caroline restored to her original look.





Caroline crew playing cards. (Garland Collection)

The 4th Light Cruiser Squadron, consisted of:

- HMS Calliope, Commodore 2nd class Charles E. Le Mesurier
- HMS Constance, Captain Cyril Samuel Townsend
- HMS Comus, Captain Alan Geoffrey Hotham
- HMS Caroline, Captain Henry Ralph Crooke
- HMS Royalist, Captain the Honourable Herbert Meade-Fetherstonhaugh, D.S.O.

Their orders were to defend the battleships against torpedo attacks, or to support British torpedo attacks. At 7.28pm the squadron turned to meet a German destroyer attack, and two minutes later Caroline opened fire from 9,200 yards, firing three 6" and nine 4".

Following on from Jutland, Caroline served through 1917 and 1918 (now under Captain Oliver E. Leggett), working with the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Air Force. Flying off a platform built on her forward 6" guns, a Sopwith Camel was able to see beyond the horizon and intercept German Zeppelins and aircraft coming in over the North Sea.

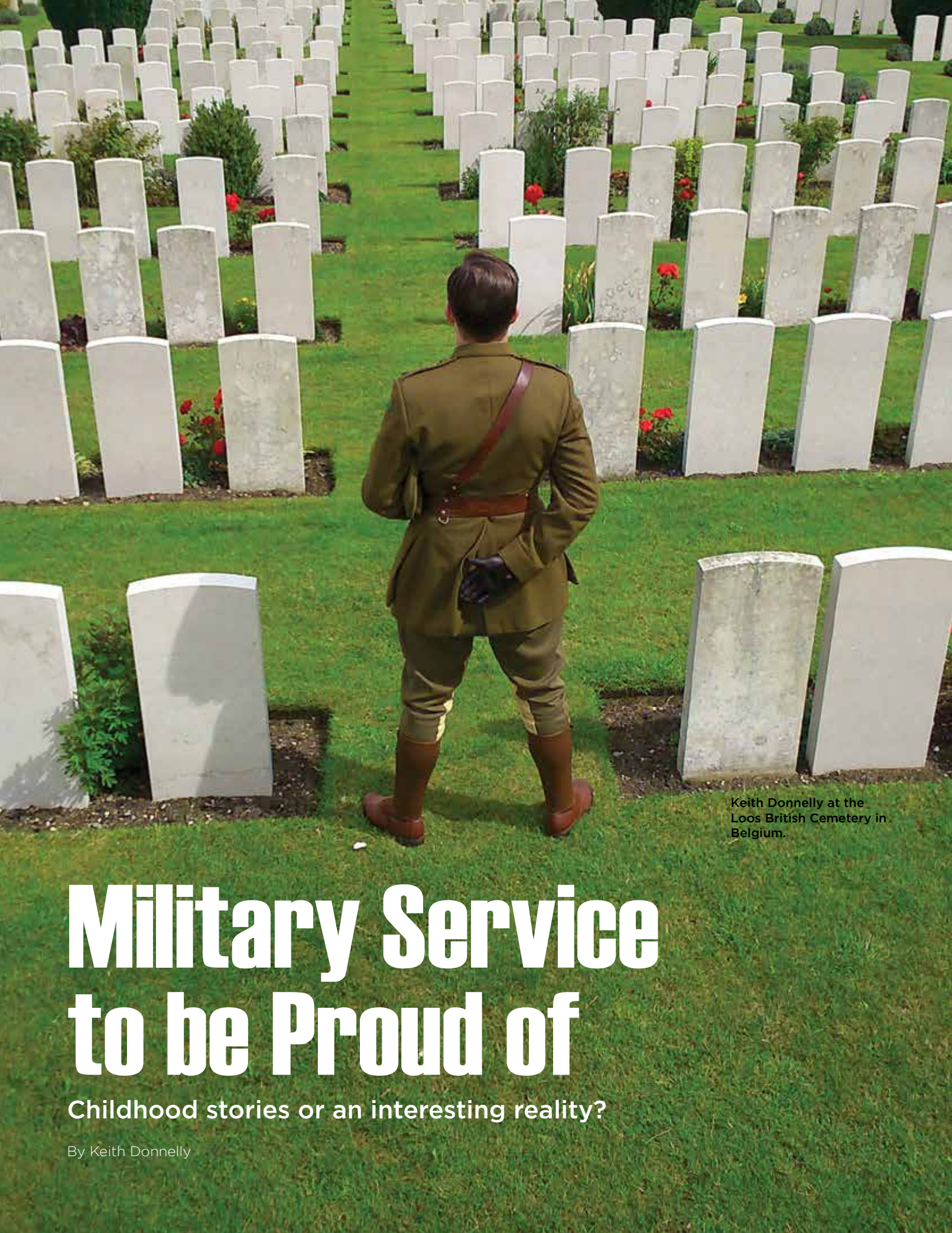
Taken by Lieutenant Commander Stack showing Caroline on passage from Colombo to Mauritius, October 1921. (Garland Collection).



Caroline remained with the 4th Light Cruiser Squadron after the war. In June 1919, she went with the squadron to serve on the East Indies Station. In February 1922, she was paid off into dockyard control and placed in reserve. In February 1924, the Caroline came out of reserve to become a headquarters and training ship for the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve's Ulster Division at Belfast. Harland and Wolff of Belfast removed her weaponry and some of her boilers.

Her guns were pooled with those of other decommissioned cruisers and used to reinforce the coastal defences of the Treaty Ports.

During World War II, Caroline became a depot ship for anti-submarine operations and an operations base for ships protecting convoys in the North Atlantic. After the war Caroline returned to her duties with the Ulster Division of the Royal Navy Reserve until 2009. She was finally decommissioned in 2011.



Keith Donnelly at the  
Loos British Cemetery in  
Belgium.

# Military Service to be Proud of

Childhood stories or an interesting reality?

By Keith Donnelly

The history that this little island has is phenomenal, which is remarkable considering the size of the population. Then add in the military history to that and the fighting breed that is the Irish. It's incredible! Once you start digging you will no doubt find an family ancestor in uniform at some time in history.

Growing up I always thought my grandfather on my father's side was the only military connection in the family, even though he never talked about the war at the time. He would still give a story here and there. I was forever digging for more stories, asking stupid questions like, 'did you kill anyone grandad?' or 'How many Germans did you kill'. Of course he would amuse me with funny stories. As I got older and wiser I started to learn the truth. My grandfather James 'Jim' Donnelly joined up on the 02/03/1940 at a recruiting office in Liverpool. He saw service with the Irish Guards in North Africa around Algiers and Tunis. After North Africa he took part in the Anzio landings in 1944. Two days after landing he was captured and served 15 months as a Prisoner of War. He left the Irish Guards in 1946. Other than my grandfather I never thought there was anyone else. Let alone relations that had served in the First World War.

Unfortunately, twenty years ago you didn't hear much about the Irish men and women and their British service, in particular during the First World War period. Well that is until the centenary commemorations began. Thankfully men are beginning to get the recognition they deserve for the courage and bravery they showed during their nations time of need. It is so easy to forget the past.

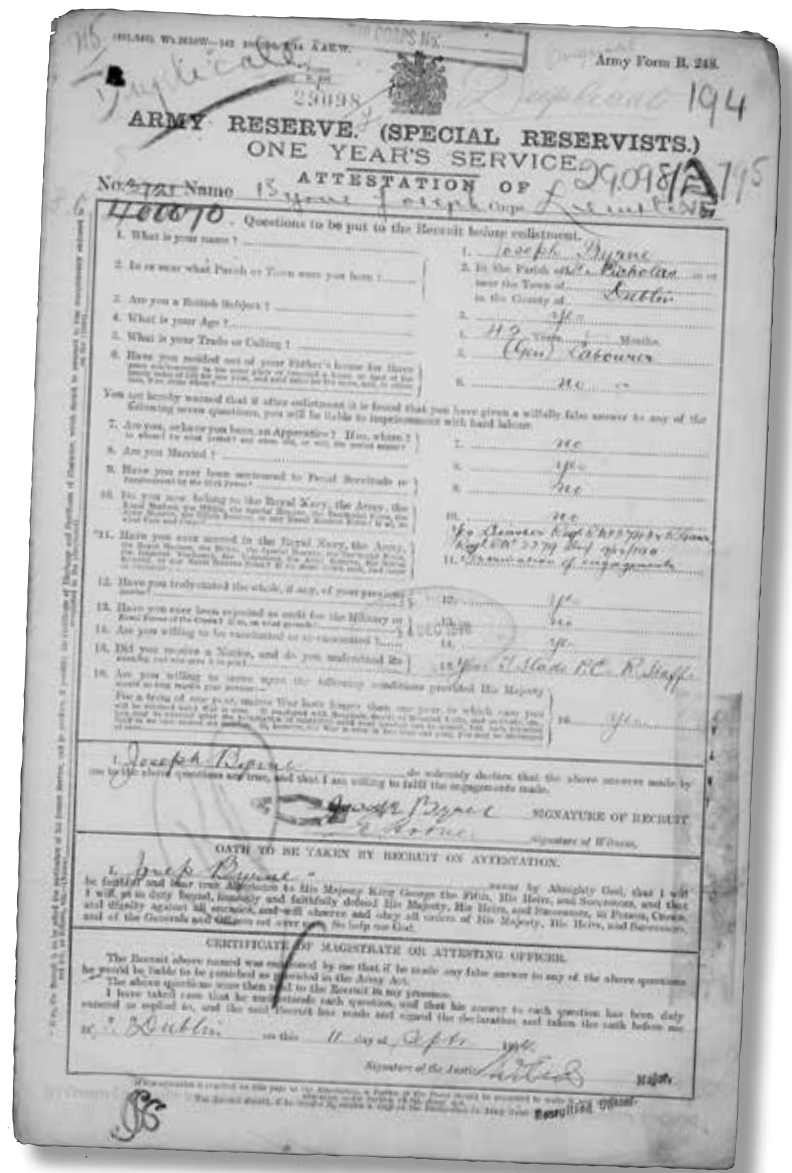
In my case up until about ten years ago I was only told a fraction of what I know today. I only got that information because I was determined to research the military roots of my family and try explain to myself why I had such a fascination. With thanks to a few close friends, mainly Les Newman and Francis O'Connor, they pushed and aided me along the way and what I found was to me amazing and it is still work in progress.

On June 12th, 2016, I awoke to a sunny Sunday morning, as usual the first thing I do is turn over and grab the phone to check

the time and see what the world was up to on Facebook. Seeing the date I couldn't help but think why it stood out in my mind? I was stumped, until it hit me. On this very date 100 years previous an Irishman lost his life to wounds he received on the battlefield of Loos - one of many Irishmen that lost their lives during that battle. The significance of this individual is that he is a great great uncle of mine - Frank Brabazon. I had first heard of Frank back around 2006. He served with the 8th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers: This man sparked my interest in the First World

War which then grew into a fascination and later led to my passion for living history. He was the only relation that I could link to the First World War, or so I thought!

As children we always remember that one family member that always told the weird and whacky stories that even a kid wouldn't believe. In my mother's case that person was her grandfather William 'Billy' Boland. She told me that any time her grandfather would start talking about the war it would ring out through-out the house because he repeated the same story over and over. The main story my mother remembers was that he fought in the First World War and while on a route march through the snow with horses they stopped to rest in a bombed out hotel. They tied the horses to a spike out of the ground, next morning they went out to find the snow was melted and the horses where



Extract of Army record of Joseph Byrne.

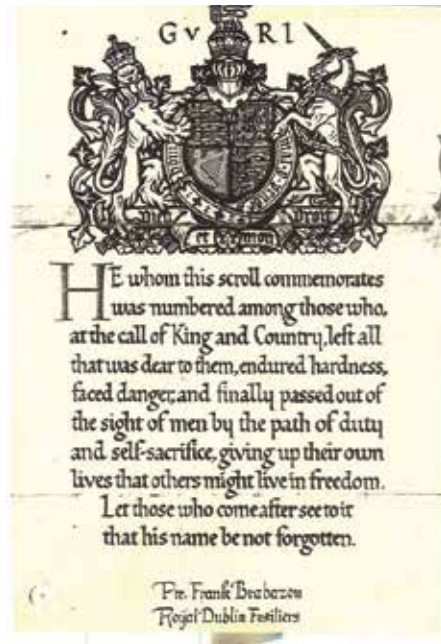
hanging from a church steeple. We know this is impossible but I always saw the possibility of maybe he did serve in the First World War so I set out to prove my mother wrong.

As it turns out I was right William Boland served with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and was wounded somewhere around Salonica. The specifics aren't clear just yet. But from what information I have I do know that he received the trio of medals and was discharged in 1919.

I found myself questioning every member of the family for information on relatives who had served in the military. One by one an aunt, uncle, or distant cousin would say 'now that I think of it, there was someone on your father's mother's side'. That type of



James Donnelly's army record.



Frank Brabazon's Death Scroll.



James Donnelly

thing. Once I got a name and idea of period I started trawling through military records online.

I came across a John 'Jack' Byrne. Through a story I was told by my nana. Jack was my nanas uncle on her mother Elizabeth side. It was she who married William Boland. Jack would be the youngest casualty of the family that I knew of for years. I was told he was fourteen and died on his first day out.

A few things didn't add up. I knew I was looking for a J. Byrne but didn't know the regiment or where he fell. On the second last day of a trip to Belgium with the Irish Great War Society we went to the Menin Gate for one last visit. I sat down in front of the gate gazing at the vast amount of names on the wall when my focus was drawn to directly in front of me. There engraved in stone where two J. Byrnes which served in the Connaught Rangers. In passing I said 'god could you imagine if one of those was the J. Byrne I've been looking for' and thought nothing of it.

I continued my research through records online with the help of Francis O'Connor of the Western Front Association and bingo I found what I was looking for. I struck gold. I found where and when 'Jack' was killed in action. So I asked Darren McMahon from the Great War Society to take a photo of J. Byrne's name on the memorial while he

was back over there. I was in work when I received the photo. Low and behold I was staring at him six months previous a shiver ran down my spine. In reality Jack was 18 and was killed in the first Battle of Ypres October/November 1914.

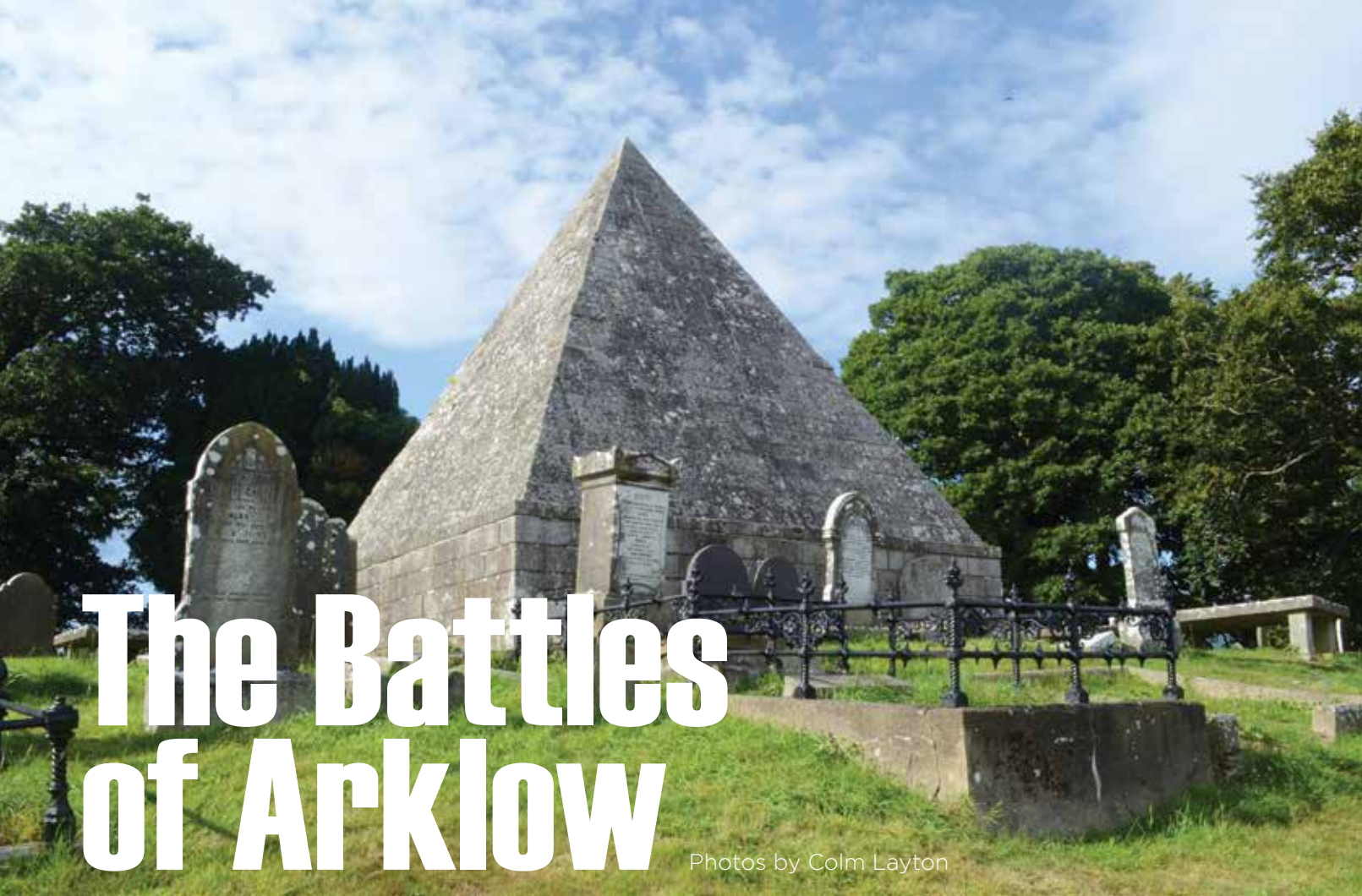
While researching Jack Byrne I came to discover that his father Joseph Byrne served in the Leinster Regiment Militia from 1890 – 1902. He transferred to the Royal Garrison Regiment and served from 1902 - 1911. As far as I can tell he was retired when the war started. Not wanting to sit this one out he joined the Labour Corps, I assume on account of his age or maybe health. He served in the Labour Corps from 1915 till 1919

I have only recently learned of Paddy Boland via my mother's cousin. He was my mother's grandfather's brother. At the moment I have very little information on his service. From what I can tell Patrick was an Inchicore man and served with the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles during the First World War. He died of wounds on the 23/07/1915. He is commemorated on the Etaples memorial on the Pas-De-Calais in France.

The story of the Brabazon brothers Frank and Joseph may sound like you stereotypical brother fighting brother during the 1916 Rising. Frank was the older of the

two and joined the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, while Joseph got involved in the Irish Volunteers. From what little information I have they were half-brothers. I spoke about Frank earlier and with the Rising centenary just over I thought it fitting to mention Joseph. He severed with C Company with the Irish Volunteers around the Four Courts area during Easter week. We know from both records and family that he was shot while on watch at the Church Street barricade by a sniper the bullet that entered the right breast pocket and lodged in his spine. The bullet was removed and Joe survived until 13 years later. He lost his life due to the wounds received on that day in 1916. That very pocket sat in my grandfather's room with the entry hole in it until I discovered it, a discovery that gave me an insight to how very different views the two brothers had.

Although it may take some time but my family's military history is going to grow. Individual records on the First World War do not always remain, but regimental and campaign histories can help fill in the blanks. For service during the Rising the record collections in Military Archives are amazing. I'm determined to continue and I urge you the reader, if you haven't already to take a look into where you come from. You'll be surprised what you will find!



# The Battles of Arklow

Photos by Colm Layton

Earlier this summer Ordnance Survey Ireland launched 'Ireland's Battle Sites & The Walks Around Them'. This is a series of walks and trails set out around battlefields that have shaped Ireland's history and landscape. The walks and trails range from easy to moderate and let the walker take in the landscape and history of the area. At present Part 1 has been released, with four walks/trails available on the Ordnance Survey Ireland website. They are the battles of Boyne, Kinsale and Sligo. In each issue we will be taking our readers on each battlefield walk/trail and setting out the sites for you to visit. Our first walk/trail takes us to Arklow.

Throughout history Arklow was a strategic location. One, because it is a seaport and two, because of its proximity to Dublin. The two historical campaigns outlined by Ordnance Survey for Arklow are the Irish Confederate War 1641 – 1653 (or the Eleven Years' War), and the 1798 Rebellion. In the centre of town there is a monument to the 1798 Rebellion. On the monument are plaques to rebel leaders Anthony Perry and Fr. Michael Murphy – daily reminders to the

events that took place in the town over 200 years ago.

The Confederate Wars in effect were the Irish theatre of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms – a series of civil wars in the kingdoms of Ireland, England and Scotland. In Ireland the native Irish Catholics initially fought against English and Scottish Protestant colonists and their allies. Later Royalists, Irish Catholics and Scottish Presbyterians fought against English Parliamentarians.

In August 1649, Oliver Cromwell landed in Ireland with his New Model Army. The Irish Confederate forces under James Butler – the Marquis of Ormond – were pushed off the eastern coast town by town. With notable defeats, including Drogheda and Rathmines, Trim and Dundalk were abandoned and Ormond retreated to Kilkenny. Keeping up the momentum, Cromwell advanced on Munster via the coast in order to cut Ormond off from the sea. At this time Arklow came under the ownership of Ormond.

Cromwell's objective was to capture Wexford. To do this he first needed to take Wicklow and Arklow. Cromwell proceeded

southwards with 7,000 foot and 2,000 horse. In 'Letters from Ireland, 1649 and 1650' Cromwell writes: 'The army marched from Dublin about the 23rd of September, into the County of Wicklow, where the enemy had a garrison about fourteen miles from Dublin, called Killincarrick, which they quitting, a company of the army was put therein. From thence the army marched through almost a desolated country, until it came to a passage over the river Doro [Avoca], about a mile above the Castle of Arklow, which . . . was upon the approach of the army quitted, wherein we left another company of foot'. From Arklow the army moved south and went on to take Wexford.

In an effort to regain the initiative Ormond planned to cut Cromwell's forces off in the south, and possibly retake Arklow. On receiving word in October that some 1,500 English forces were leaving Dublin for Wexford, Ormond dispatched the 1st Earl of Inchiquin, Murrough O'Brien and the 1st Earl of Carlingford, Theobald Taaffe, with some 3,000 cavalry and foot. Travelling through the mountains via Carlow, O'Brien's plan was to ambush the English forces under



Major Nelson south of Arklow. Nelson detected the Irish plans and manoeuvred around them. O'Brien rushed his forces south in order to cut the English off and the two forces met at Glascarrig – halfway between Arklow and Wexford. Initially all was going well for O'Brien, but his cavalry was routed when they charged into the English infantry.

The second battle outlined by Ordnance Survey is the 1798 Rebellion. By June of that year, the rebels (United Irishmen) in Wexford were on the move. A rebel victory at Tüberneering on June 4th, opened a gap in the British cordon around Wexford and secured the north of the county for the rebels. The road to Arklow was open.

Arklow, which had been void of British forces, was now garrisoned by a force of 1,700 men sent from Dublin under Francis Needham, who quickly fortified the town with barricades and had artillery positioned on all the approaches to the town. The crown forces consisted of 1,000 militia from Antrim and Cavan, 150 regular cavalry supported by 250 Yeomanry, and 315 Durham Fencibles who arrived an hour before the attack.

The rebels formed to attack Arklow on



A view of the Pyramid Mausoleum from ground level, in Kilbride cemetery.

## IRELAND'S BATTLE SITES & THE WALKS AROUND THEM



June 9th. The Wexford and Wicklow men were led by Billy Byrne, Anthony Perry, Conor McEvoy, Edward FitzGerald and Fr. Michael Murphy. 'The Scenery and Antiquities of Ireland' (c. 1841) estimates the rebels in north Wexford at this time to be 27,000 – 5,000 of whom had firearms, the rest were armed with pikes. How many of this number were combatants and how many pushed on from Gorey to Arklow is disputed. Some figures put the rebel force at Arklow at 10,000.

The rebels attacked the town on all sides, except that by the river. The approach of the column which advanced by the seashore was so rapid that the guard of yeoman-cavalry stationed in that quarter, had to escape through the flames of the thatched cabins which had been fired by the rebels on entering the town. The further progress of the assailants was prevented by a charge of the regular cavalry, supported by infantry. Attack after attack was repulsed by artillery and musket fire. In one of these assaults Fr. Murphy lost his life. As the rebels wavered the Crown cavalry tried to force a route, but were repulsed by pikemen and musketry. As nightfall came, the rebels began to withdraw.

### Glenart Wood Walk

The Coillte Glenart Wood Walk is the recommended trail by Ordnance Survey for the Battles of Arklow. Only a few kilometres from Arklow on the road to Woodenbridge, the walker gets to travel alongside the beautiful Avoca valley. Full details, along with map, are available on the Coillte website. The following is their guide for the trail.



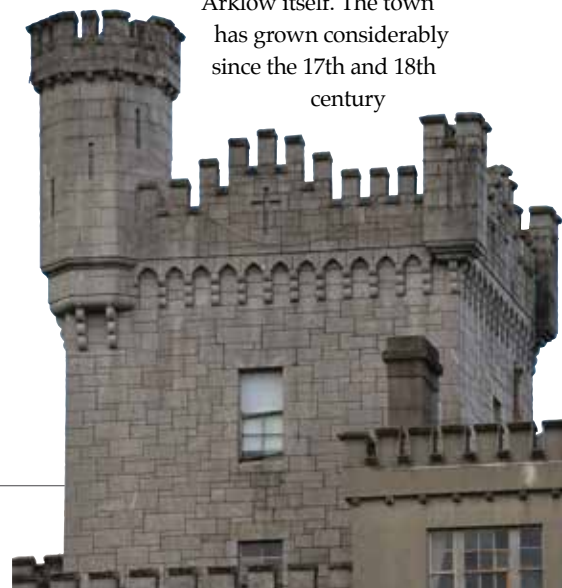
<b>Trail Name:</b>	Glenart Wood Walk
<b>Ordnance Survey Map:</b>	62
<b>Trail Start Point:</b>	Forest Barrier
<b>Length:</b>	5 km
<b>Time:</b>	2 hrs
<b>Degree of Difficulty:</b>	Moderate: View Trail Grade Definitions
<b>Metres Climb:</b>	50
<b>Attributes:</b>	Loop Trail (Returns to Starting Point)
<b>Finish Point:</b>	Forest Barrier
<b>Trail Way marking:</b>	Yellow
<b>See more at: <a href="http://www.coillteoutdoors.ie">www.coillteoutdoors.ie</a> and <a href="http://www.osi.ie">www.osi.ie</a></b>	

The walk starts at the two gate lodges at the forest barrier along the forest road past one of the small streams that bound the northern and southern sides of the wood and joins the loop walk close to the footbridge. Glimpses of Glenart Castle Hotel, which adjoins the Coillte property, are available as the road rises to the loop section. The hotel grounds are private property and you may not enter the grounds. The castle was originally built around 1750, and was formerly the Irish Residence of the Earl of Carysfort. Today's castle was built around the fabric of a hunting lodge in the mid-19th century.

Walking clockwise around the loop you quickly reach another forest road on your right. Continue straight for approximately 150m and you will reach a junction that leads to a stone bridge on the left. A slight diversion from the loop across the stone bridge affords views over Arklow and the coast. Back on the loop walk bear right at the stone bridge as you progress along the

southern side of the wood. A quarry lies on your right and 300m further on you turn right at a junction. A further 500m on, the road bends to the right as you continue along the northern side of the walk. The loop is completed at the footbridge and walkers leave the site by retreating down the forest road on the left to the forest barrier.

While in the area take the time to explore Arklow itself. The town has grown considerably since the 17th and 18th century





conflicts. The general landscape is relatively the same and you can still get a good sense of the topographical features that were there at the time. You can clearly make out the mountain passes through the hills which, more than likely were used by forces engaged at the time. The Avoca river itself acts as a natural defensive barrier. In high tide and in flood the river would no doubt be difficult to cross, if not impassable. Arklow castle is long gone however. Cromwell is said to have destroyed it, but we could not find evidence to support this. It does seem however, that the castle was destroyed during this period.

There are several features in the area that were around at the time of the 1798 Rebellion. The Nineteen Arches Bridge for example was built in 1759. Designed by Andrew Noble, it is the longest stone arched bridge in Ireland, and one of the longest in Europe.

A very interesting monument which rebels may have passed by or camped at in 1798, is the Arklow pyramid or to give it its proper name – the Howard mausoleum. Sir John Betjeman (1906 - 1984) describes it as the largest pyramid tomb 'beyond the banks of the Nile'. The pyramid is located on the highest point in the Kilbride cemetery on the north bank of Arklow. The cemetery itself is located beside a medieval monastery.

Ralph Howard (1726-86) of Shelton Abbey, decided that no longer would a departed Howard be buried in cold clay; their bodies would be housed in an edifice more befitting aristocracy. 18 Howards lay in rest there today. The pyramid mausoleum was a style at the time. Standing beside the pyramid you get a clear view of Arklow on the south bank. It is very possible that a rebel leader stood here, or even Cromwell in 1649, before they attacked the town.



Finner training Camp, Co. Donegal, during World War I.  
(Donegal County Museum collection)



# County Donegal in 1916

## Part 2: World War I

By Donegal County Museum

**W**hen war was declared on August 4th, 1914, there were already over 25,000 Irishmen serving in the regular British Army with another 30,000 Irishmen in the reserve. As most of the great European powers were drawn into the war, it spread to European colonies all over the world. Men from Donegal found themselves fighting not only in Europe, but also in Egypt and Mesopotamia, as well as in Africa and on ships in the North Sea and in the Mediterranean.

1916 was the worst year of the war, with more soldiers killed in that year than in any other year. By the end of 1916, stalemate on land had truly set in with both sides firmly entrenched on the Western Front. Gone was the belief that the war would be 'over by

Christmas', and a new understanding of the price to be paid started to emerge.

Recruitment meetings were held all over Co. Donegal. In 1916, the Department of Recruiting in Ireland wrote to Bishop O'Donnell, in Donegal, requesting, '... that recruiting meetings might with advantage be held outside the Churches ... after Mass on Sundays and Holidays'.

Men from all communities and from all corners of Donegal enlisted. For many the reasons for enlisting were a combination of unemployment, idealism and adventure. The pay was good compared to other employment and an allowance was paid to the spouse of the soldier while he was away on duty.

Irish chaplains of all denominations,

volunteered for service during the War. In January 1916, a Circular was sent to the Bishops of Ireland, requesting their assistance in soliciting Catholic priests to volunteer. Fr. Seán McGlynn, Fr. William MacNeely, Fr. Thomas Molloy, Fr. Hugh Smith, Fr. William Devine, Rev. Dr. Barry Duggan and Fr. John McGlynn were among those who volunteered from the Donegal Diocese.

Fr. Patrick Carr (also known as Canon Kerr) from Fanad, Co. Donegal, who volunteered in 1916, wrote from France, 'Only those who have been subject to the withering breath of war ... can catch a glimpse of the true extent of ruin and misery brought about by the 'Great War''.

Reverend J. Jackson Wright, a Presbyterian Minister from Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal,

Lieutenant Hugh Francis Law,  
Irish Guards. (Law Family Private  
Collection)



served with the 36th (Ulster) Division and was awarded the Military Cross after the Battle of the Somme.

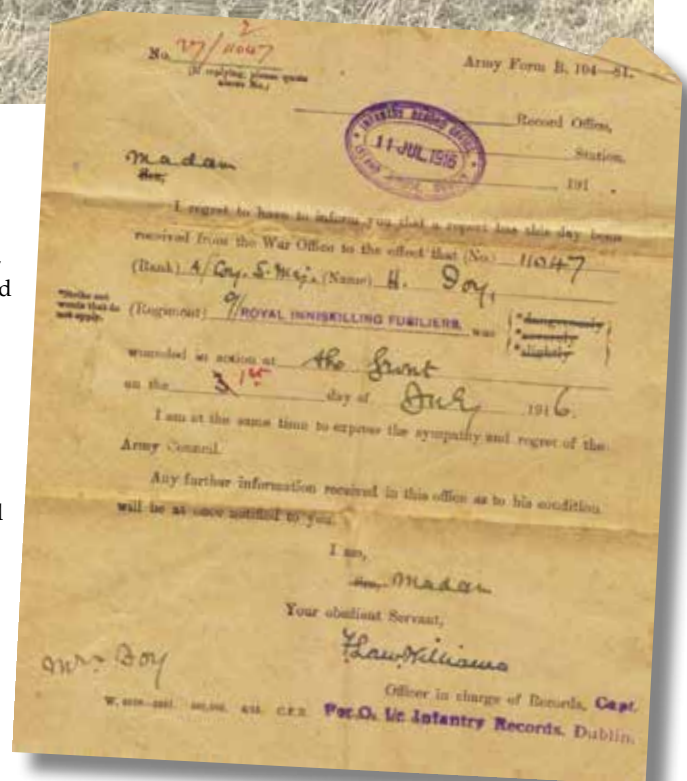
Women also played an important role in the war effort, at home and on the frontlines. They participated in recruiting and staffed volunteer hospitals, and they worked on the front as nurses. Sr. Catherine Black from Ramelton, Co Donegal, was sent to France in 1916, where she nursed shell-shocked soldiers. She wrote, '...at night, the cheerful ward became a place of torment, with the occupants of every bed tossing and turning and moaning in the hell of memories let loose'.

In rural areas, women worked to gather sphagnum moss for surgical dressings which were in huge demand. In Dungloe, women could earn up to £2 per week knitting supplies for the war. Members of the Letterkenny based St. Eunan's Cathedral Guilds working circles made garments for Irish Prisoners of War. The first instalment of

Guild work was sent off in January 1916.

Although World War I was fought mainly on land, command of the sea enabled the Allies to transport the vital resources required on the Western Front and elsewhere. On May 31st, 1916, the Battle of Jutland took place between the British Royal Navy's Grand Fleet and the Imperial German Navy's High Seas Fleet. It was the largest naval battle of the war and the only full-scale clash of battleships.

Lanty Gallagher from Carrickfinn, Co. Donegal, was a Gunner on HMS Lion during the Battle of Jutland. It is reputed that he fired the first



Injury Notice relating to Acting Company Sergeant Major Hugh Foy, July 1st, 1916. (Foy Family Collection)

## LOCAL HISTORY



**Sr. Catherine Black.** (Image from 'Kings Nurse, Beggars Nurse', 1939, by Catherine Black)



**Recruiting in Co. Donegal.** (Donegal County Museum collection)

shots which began the battle. Ninety-nine men were killed and 51 wounded on HMS Lion including Lanty, who was struck by a piece of shrapnel. He returned home after the war.

Donegal men who were killed at the Battle of Jutland included: Alexander Hamilton, Laghey, Royal Marine Light Infantry, HMS Defence; George Robinson, St. Johnson, Engine Room Artificer, HMS Indefatigable; and John Todd, Rathmullan, Stoker 1st Class, HMS Defence.

Early in the War on the Western Front both sides dug lines of trenches that stretched from the Belgian coast to the border of Switzerland. A Battalion typically served time in the front line trenches, followed by a period spent in support, and then in reserve lines. A short period of rest would follow before the cycle would start again.

Hugh Francis Law, 1st Battalion Irish Guards, from Marble Hill, Co. Donegal, described life in the trenches, '...as an endless labour of repairing collapsing ditches, filling sandbags, venturing out under darkness towards enemy lines through barbed wire. The dead were everywhere in no man's land, and casualties had to be constantly tended to'.

In May 1916, Hugh Law heard news of the Easter Rising in Dublin but reported that, 'no talk of it or its implications were apparent from his men'.

Soldiers waded through water-filled

trenches alive with frogs and covered with red slugs and horned beetles. Rats fed on the multitude of corpses, contaminating food and spreading disease. Lice thrived in



**Postcard from World War I.** (Donegal County Museum collection)

the seams of dirty uniforms and carried an infectious disease known as Trench Fever.

The smell in the trenches was a foul combination of rotting corpses, latrines, sweat, creosol and chloride of lime that

was used to lessen the risk of infection and to drive away flies. The moist cold subterranean environment gave rise to a new set of ailments including Trench Foot caused by having to stand in wet slime for days and nights.

The 16th (Irish) Division was subject to a terrible gas attack at Hulluch in Northern France, between April 27th - 29th (Easter Week), 1916, which resulted in 1,980 casualties. Among those who died were men from Donegal including Michael Doherty, Letterkenny, 26005, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers; Francis Hegarty, Frosses, 17009, Royal Dublin Fusiliers; and John Doherty, Fanad, 14507, Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

For many homes in Donegal, 1916 was remembered as the Year of the Somme. The Battle of the Somme began on July 1st, 1916, when at 7:30 a.m., the whistles blew for the soldiers to go over the top. By midnight on that first day over 60,000 British soldiers had been killed, wounded or taken prisoner. Over 80 men from Donegal died on the first day of the Somme.

In the subsequent months, the Battle waged on and more men from Donegal were wounded and killed. Many are remembered on the Thiepval Memorial in France along with 74,000 other soldiers whose bodies were never found.

Private Hugh Mulhern, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, from Baltoney, Gortahork, Co. Donegal, was wounded by a grenade during



**Private Hugh Mulhern, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.**  
(Mulhern Private Family Collection)



**Gunner Lanty Gallagher, HMS Lion, Battle of Jutland.**  
(Donegal County Museum collection)

the Somme. He was rescued from No Man's Land by his neighbour from Gortahork, who saved his life by carrying him to a Casualty Clearing Station. His right hand was amputated from above the wrist and he lost the first finger from his left hand.

The Battle of the Somme eventually petered out in November 1916. It was a tragedy on a breathtaking scale. British forces lost 420,000 soldiers. The French lost 200,000 and the Germans nearly 500,000.

Private Joseph Andrew Armstrong was born in Ballybofey, Co. Donegal. He enlisted in 1915 with the 54th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force. He was listed as 'Killed in Action' on July 20th, 1916, during the Battle of the Somme. Later, on December 7th, 1916, he was officially reported as a Prisoner of War (POW). In a statement Private Armstrong said:

*'We took part in an action against enemy position at 6 p.m. on 19th July 1916. Our*

*instructions were to take the 2nd line of trenches. We captured the 2nd line. The enemy counter-attacked early next morning and recaptured position and made prisoners of us all. We were all severely wounded and had to be carried off the battlefield on a stretcher. I (Private Armstrong) was lying severely wounded between first and second line of German trenches, when Sgt. Wilson, 53th Batt, came out under heavy fire and assisted me into the first trench. After capture we were taken to a dressing station at Lille and then transferred to Valenciennes where we were all operated upon by a German Doctor. I (Private Armstrong) had 12 pieces of shrapnel taken from different parts of my body'.*

(Witness Statement Official Circumstances of Capture, Australian Imperial Forces, December 1918). After the Armistice, Private Armstrong was repatriated to Australia.

For Donegal, and Europe, the war was

far from over. For two more years the war dragged on costing millions of more lives. Soon after the end of the war Co. Donegal, along with the rest of Ireland, was pulled into a struggle for independence.

This article is part of a History and Education Pack, 'County Donegal in 1916: From the Edge' which was produced by Cultural Services Division, Donegal County Council as part of the Ireland 2016 centenary commemorations.

#### Donegal County Museum

For further information, please contact Donegal County Museum, An Bóthar Ard, Leitir Ceanainn, Co. Dún na nGall  
Phone:(074) 912 4613  
E: [museum@donegalcoco.ie](mailto:museum@donegalcoco.ie)



# The Battle of Aughrim Remembered

By Tomás Ó Brógáin  
Photos by John Finnerty

Each year the Aughrim Remembered Committee hold a commemorative event to mark the anniversary of the largest battle in Irish history. This event began back in 2011 with a few enthusiasts made up of academics, historians and local and Clan representatives. Universities, cultural groups and commercial sponsors also support the commemorations. Each year a different theme is adopted - this year it was Cavalry.

The Cavalry was provided by Alan Larsen and his group called 'The Troop' from England. Alan and the Troop specialise in military horsemanship and are one of the few groups who do horse displays that wear the full equipment. As they are the premiere

Cavalry team in the UK and Ireland we were very happy they could come and put on the spectacular show. This was the first Cavalry display in Aughrim since 1691!

The commemoration took place in Clarke's field, which is where the Williamite Cavalry turned the Jacobite left flank. The Troop represented the 1st Troop of King James Life Guards. These elite troops, where a Jacobite Cavalry unit that instead of changing their allegiance to William III, decided to keep to their oath and serve their rightful sovereign, James II. This force was heavily engaged throughout the War in Ireland and it is this unit that Patrick Sarsfield, the Earl of Lucan, eventually commanded.

The unit is famous for its valiant charge at the Boyne, but also and more importantly they were the core of the Cavalry that attacked William III's artillery train outside Limerick at Ballyneety. This attack resulted in the Williamite siege of Limerick to be delayed. And in turn, during the 1st Siege in 1690, William attempted to rush the final phase of the attack on the walls. This impatience caused the largest loss of life on the Williamite side since the disastrous Wintering of 89/90 by Schomberg's in Newry. Approximately 4,000 - 5,000 were killed and wounded during the Siege period. This was compounded by the



Oxfords Blues turning the Jacobite left Flank, Aughrim, 1691. (Copyright S. Ó Brógáin 2007)

activities of Sarsfield and the Life Guards and the Duke of Berwick who conducted a scorched earth policy east of the Shannon.

You can find more details on the Battle of Aughrim at: [www.galway.ie/en/services/leisure/battleofaughrimcentre](http://www.galway.ie/en/services/leisure/battleofaughrimcentre)

The Aughrim Remembered Committee: Capt. Joe Kelly (rtd), Dr. Pdraig Lenihan NUIG, Tomás Ó Brógáin (Oireas), Paddy Naughton (Aughrim Development Company), Abbie McGowan GCC interpretive Centre.

The main sponsors are: The Kelly Clan, Valerie Seale (Valerie's Bar), Pdraig Clarke, Flowerhill Stables and Galway Co Council.



# Remembering the Somme at the National Library of Ireland

In summer 1914, a war began in Europe that would change the world forever. Ireland's role in this wider conflict was influenced by divisions at home, where civil war over how the country should be governed seemed possible.

In 2014, as part of its work for the Decade of Commemorations, the National Library of Ireland opened 'World War Ireland: Exploring the Irish Experience', a multi-media exhibition which examines the impact of WWI on Irish people from 1914-1918.

To mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme, the National Library of Ireland has added a 1916 focus area to the exhibition this year. The installation looks at the Battle of the Somme within the wider context of the momentous events of 1916.

It explores the complexities of the year's events and their impact on Irish society. The war provoked widely differing responses throughout Ireland and even within families. The exhibition demonstrates this through a poignant display of objects relating to nationalist, suffragist and pacifist Francis Sheehy Skeffington, and Tom Kettle, nationalist, poet and politician. While Sheehy Skeffington opposed the war, Kettle volunteered for active service with the 9th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Despite

their differing responses to the war, by the close of 1916, their wives – sisters Mary Kettle (nee Sheehy) and Hanna Sheehy Skeffington – were both left widowed. Francis Sheehy Skeffington was executed without trial during the Easter Rising; Tom Kettle was killed leading troops out at Ginchy during the Battle of the Somme.

The focus area consists of three main components: wall panels, a film and original objects. Each of these components brings visitors progressively closer to the events of the Somme. The panels provide an overview of events in 1916, while the film offers the opinions of three present-day academic experts on how the Battle of the Somme affected the Irish. An eyewitness account of the first day of the Somme can be read in the personal diary of Sergeant George McLean, a signals operator with the 36th (Ulster) Division. Not only is Sergeant McLean's day-to-day account of life at the battle front displayed in the exhibition, it can also be accessed in its entirety through the Library's online catalogue. Here the full wealth of military historic detail can be appreciated from the construction of field kitchens to bullet penetration levels.

'World War Ireland: Exploring the Irish Experience' draws on the unique collections of the NLI to explore multiple narratives that, together, help to tell the

complex and nuanced story of Ireland's experience of WWI. Thanks to letters, diaries, newspapers, photographs, leaflets and posters from the NLI's collections, visitors can explore the choices of those who lived through this momentous conflict.

The exhibition recounts the tense domestic situation in Ireland between 1914-1918, and identifies some of the reasons behind the broad array of responses to the war, both supportive and opposing. It brings visitors on a journey from the front lines to life at home, drawing on a mix of evocative original items, juxtaposed with audio, video and touchscreen installations, to create a multi-layered experience for all ages.

'World War Ireland: Exploring the Irish Experience' is running at the NLI's premises at 2/3 Kildare Street, Dublin 2, until 2018. The exhibition is open to the public every day, without charge. Free guided tours of the exhibition take place at 2pm on the second Thursday of every month (upcoming tour dates: 8th September, 13th October, 10th November and 8th December). Tailored group tours may also be booked by contacting [learning@nli.ie](mailto:learning@nli.ie).

A dedicated exhibition website, with learning resources for families and schools, is available at <http://www.nli.ie/WWI>.



Politician, barrister, journalist, poet and economist Tom Kettle (1880-1916) was a leading figure in Nationalist politics and a founding member of the Irish Volunteers. Whilst in Belgium buying arms for the Irish Volunteers, he witnessed and was deeply affected by the plight of civilians at the outbreak of WWI. Kettle subsequently joined the 16th (Irish) Division as a Lieutenant. Though initially refused active service on health grounds, repeated applications led to Kettle being posted to the Somme in 1916, where he died on 9 Sept leading his battalion, the 9th Royal Dublin Fusiliers, into battle at Ginchy.

*Sincerely yours*  
T.M. Kettle





Sgt. George McLean with a colleague outside a British Army tent. He joined the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in 1914 and was later assigned to the Royal Engineers, 36th (Ulster) Division, where he served in the Signals Company. In this photograph, McLean (standing right) outside 'La Tente Marconi', a reference to communications pioneer, Guglielmo Marconi. Radio and telephone were new cutting edge technologies at this time and became increasingly important throughout the war.



Sgt. George McLean on his motorcycle.



Portrait of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington (1878-1916).



Irish recruiting poster, 1916.



# In Their Footsteps

## The Irish Great War Society

Photos courtesy of the society

**T**o imagine what the Irish soldiers and nurses went through during the Great War is difficult. Diaries, letters, regimental records, and photographs will give you a good understanding of the sheer hell that Irish men and women went through during the period 1914 – 1918. To truly get a feel of the conditions that were endured you have to step back in time. Remembering,

researching and educating on the Irish role during World War I, is the Irish Great War Society.

Founded in 1999, the society has evolved to become one of Ireland's leading authorities on the Irish in the Great War. Portraying the men of the 10th (Irish), 16th (Irish), and 36th (Ulster) Divisions and the women of the Volunteer Aid Detachments, the group allow the public to get a full

insight into the conflict; where and how it was fought.

You may have already seen members of the society on RTÉ documentaries period dramas, or at commemorations, or living history events around the island of Ireland. They have met two presidents and their website has now been archived by the National Library of Ireland, who regard it as of 'significant national importance'.

Soldiers going over the top during filming for RTÉ's 'Nationwide: Father Brown's Forgotten War'. (Photo by Michael Lee)



## LIVING HISTORY

Chairman of the society, Darren McMahon explained: 'The main role of our group is remembrance, commemoration and education through our realistic living museum display. Our members have an extensive collection of artefacts, relics and memorabilia, which we display while dressed in the uniforms of the Irish men and women in the British Army during the war'.

When in uniform the men and women of the group are very much in character. You would swear that you were talking to an officer on his way to the Middle East, or a recruit who is learning how to put his puttees on for the first time.

Darren continued, 'We portray the everyday life of the Irish soldier during the Great War by showing members of the public the equipment the soldiers carried into war. We have recreated a field hospital display which gives the public a very important insight into the limited treatment available to the soldiers. It was a time of no antibiotics or penicillin, and the endless hard work of the doctors and nurses and the horrors they would have endured. We also show people what life behind the lines for both officers and men was like and the differences between the officers and other ranks'.

As Kevin Goods told us, 'Portraying an Irish man in the Great War is important because many joined up for many different reasons and being able to tell even a small part of the story of their lives in that terrible time is an honour.

No matter where you meet the group and you have a question on the Great War go up and ask them. They are more than happy to answer your questions. 'I get to meet relatives and descendants of other veterans and hear their stories. They are always fascinated by the uniforms and equipment. They love to hear how their relatives may have lived in the trenches. I have been to the Mansion House and met the Lord Mayor, the Phoenix Park and met the President,' continued Kevin. One member, Les Newman, acts in the role of the society researcher and helps many people who contact the group via their website with queries about their family's story.

The group have travelled many times to the old battlefields in Belgium and France. Visiting the graves and memorials of the



The black and white images that you see here and the next page were taken by Chris Copley. They are part of a project he was doing for a photography course.



Members of the Irish Great War Society in the town square Mons, Belgium, during the centenary commemorations.



The officers, men, nurses and civilians of the Irish Great War Society at a recent event in Charles' Fort, Kinsale, Co. Cork.

This image and the above, feature the living historians wearing Pith helmets and Khaki drill, while filming for in RTÉ's 'Gallipoli'. (Photo by Michel Lee)



Society member Brian Kenny constructed a trench system. During the depths of winter the mud literally sticks to your boots.





Chairman Darren McMahan crawls through the mud of no-man's land.

Irish who fought in the war. On their last trip three of the members, Keith Donnelly, Tom Halpin and Rossano Morelli, visited the graves of their relatives who had died in the war for the very first time. It was a very emotional and memorable occasion for the members involved.

'I was in Mons for the 100th anniversary in my Great War uniform. I was standing in the town square surrounded by hundreds of people from all over the world in British, German, Belgian, French World War I uniforms. Standing were men 100 years ago stood preparing for battle not knowing if they would survive. Not knowing if they would ever make it home to wives or sweet hearts. It was a very emotional and memorable occasion for me and I will remember that for the rest of my life', recalled Keith.

Members of the group, Brian and Mary Kenny, wanted to remember the men and women from their local area who were involved in the war. They authored 'News from the Front: Gorey and the Great War'. The book tells the story of the men from the Gorey area who had fought and died

in World War I. 'We started our research by spending numerous hours in Wexford library going through the old newspapers, and we were amazed at the number of articles related to Gorey and the surrounding areas during that period,' Brian Kenny told us, 'More importantly were the photographs that were included with the articles. These were the long lost and forgotten faces of men who fought and died'. The information was then cross checked on other sites such as the Imperial War Graves Commission, Ireland's Memorial records and ancestry.co.uk. Brian found that 7 men from William St. in Gorey were killed in action, including Michael and William Connors. 'This was important to me as this was where I grew up, said Brian.

As well as educating the public about the role played by the Irish during the Great War,



nearly all the members have a relative that was in the war. Kevin Goods Grandfather served with the Royal Field Artillery. 'For many it is a personal journey,' said Brian, 'following in the footsteps of our ancestors. It has so long been a taboo subject in Ireland. Now it gives us great pride to remember these men and women and their sacrifice'.

**The Irish Great War Society**

E: [igws1914\\_18@yahoo.com](mailto:igws1914_18@yahoo.com)

Web: [www.irishgreatwarsociety.com](http://www.irishgreatwarsociety.com)

# Private George McBride, Royal Irish Rifles

By Conor A. Dullaghan, Ph.D

In line with the core theme of this issue, I selected a First World War medal trio from my personal collection to share with the readership. This trio, like many others, is made up as follows; 1) 1914-15 Star, 2) British War Medal (BWM), and 3) World War I Victory Medal.

By themselves, the 14/15 Star values anywhere from €35-€75. When grouped with the BWM and a corresponding Victory Medal, the value increases to €100, upwards. It is generally accepted that groups associated with or having a connection to the more famous actions, which happens to be the case with this group, it being awarded to a prisoner of war (POW) from the Somme, are more valuable.

These trio were awarded to Private George McBride. George was born on February 10th, 1898, and grew up in Crimea Street, just off Belfast's Shankill Road. As the likelihood of Home Rule for Ireland loomed, George formed part of the opposition and elected to become a member of the Carson led Ulster Volunteer Force. After the outbreak of war, he lied about his age, claiming to be 19, when in fact he was only 17, and enlisted.

He served with the Royal Irish Rifles, 36th (Ulster) Division. His service number was 15/12019. At the Battle of the Somme, he was captured and held as a POW. Upon his release, and return to Belfast, he was transferred to Class "Z".

Class Z Reserve was authorised by an Army Order dated December 3rd, 1918. There were fears that Germany would not accept the terms of any peace treaty and therefore the British Government decided it would be wise to be able to quickly recall trained men in the eventuality of the resumption of hostilities. Soldiers who were being demobilised,



particularly those who had agreed to serve 'for the duration', were at first posted to Class Z. They returned to civilian life but with an obligation to return if called upon. The Z Reserve was abolished on March 31st, 1920.

After the war, George became involved in the Trade Union movement and active in Labour politics. In this way, he met the suffragist, trade unionist, and Irish independence activist, Winnie Carney. Although they were from diametrically opposed backgrounds, socialism and love triumphed.

George passed away in 1988 and lay in an unmarked grave until this year, when through the leadership of Professor Bill Rolston and others, with support from the Trade Union organisation, Unite, erected a headstone.

The headstone reads as follows 'McBride George. Ulster Volunteer, Soldier, Prisoner of War, Socialist, Educator and Activist.

Husband of Winifred Carney. Born 10 February 1898. Died 21 April 1988'.

George and Winnie's medals were on display in the Belfast City Council's - Reflections on 1916 exhibition. Whilst a common WWI trio on their own, as part of a larger group of medals and a husband and wife collection, they are invaluable to me.



# Braving No-Man's Land Sergeant Robert Quigg V.C

By Leonard Quigg/the Robert Quigg V.C. Commemoration Society  
(Images courtesy of the Society)



Sergeant Robert Quigg V.C.

**O**n June 28th, a bronze sculpture of Sergeant Robert Quigg V.C. was unveiled by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in the town of Bushmills, Co. Antrim. A commemorative paving stone honouring the war hero was unveiled beside the sculpture by His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip.

The ceremony was the result of four years of work by the Robert Quigg V.C. Commemoration Society. The Society raised approximately £60,000, thanks to the help and support of the people of the Causeway area and far beyond. This statue will be admired by future generations and is regarded as a worthy tribute to a local man who has become a legend.

Before the First World War, Robert Quigg worked on the Macnaghten estate close to

the Giant's Causeway, Co. Antrim. When he enlisted, he served with the 12th Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, a regiment of the 36th (Ulster) Division. Fortunately for Quigg, his platoon commander was twenty year old Second Lieutenant Sir Harry Macnaghten, the heir to the Macnaghten estate and a man he would have known well.

On July 1st, 1916, Quigg advanced with his platoon towards the German trenches through a torrent of gunfire and artillery. By nightfall, the 12th Battalion had suffered horrific casualties and Quigg learned that Sir Harry Macnaghten was among the missing.

What happened next earned Rifleman Robert Quigg the Victoria Cross, the highest military honour awarded for valour in the British Commonwealth. His medal citation reports that:

*'.....Early next morning, hearing a rumour that his platoon officer was lying out wounded, he went out seven times to look for him under heavy shell and machine-gun fire, each time bringing back a wounded man. The last man he dragged in on a waterproof sheet from within a few yards of the enemy's wire. He was seven hours engaged in this most gallant work, and finally was so exhausted that he had to give it up'.*

The last casualty that Quigg saved was Robert Matthews, from the village of Mosside, less than six miles from Bushmills.

Sadly, Quigg never found his platoon commander. Sir Harry Macnaghten has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, France; he is among 26 men from Bushmills and district who were

The unveiled statue of Sergeant Quigg, created by David Annand.



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at the unveiling in Bushmills, and His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip.



killed on the first day of the Somme.

Robert Quigg was presented with his Victoria Cross by King George V at Sandringham in January 1917. Later in the war, he served in Mesopotamia and Egypt and he continued his army career until 1934, finishing with the rank of Sergeant.

In later life, Quigg returned to the Bushmills area and became a boatman and guide at the Giant's Causeway, like his father before him. He died in 1955, at the age of seventy, and was buried with full military honours at Billy Parish Church, near Bushmills.

The Robert Quigg V.C. Commemoration Society was formed in October 2012 with the main objective of raising sufficient funds to erect a statue of Robert Quigg V.C. in his home town of Bushmills, in

time for the centenary of the first day of the Battle of the Somme. The Society organised a wide range of fund-raising events and, thanks to the generosity of the people of Bushmills and much further afield. Over £60,000 was raised.

The sculpture was created by David Annand ([www.davidannand.com](http://www.davidannand.com)). David has worked on several other high profile public sculptures of famous people, including Robert Dunlop in Ballymoney, Co. Antrim and Todger Jones V.C. in Runcorn, Cheshire.

In July 1953, during the Coronation Tour of Northern Ireland, Robert Quigg V.C. was introduced to the new Queen and her husband at their brief stop at Coleraine railway station. It was therefore most appropriate that on June 28th, 2016

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness returned to the area to put the Royal seal of approval on this tribute to Bushmills' very own Great War hero.

June 28th, was a wonderful day for the people of Bushmills and a great honour for our Society that the Queen graciously agreed to perform the official unveiling. The events of the day were made even more spectacular by the presence of some 150 members of the Irish Guards - the regimental band, the pipes and drums, the regimental mascot, wolfhound Domhnall, and a guard of honour.

I was personally greatly privileged to have the honour of welcoming the Queen to Bushmills, informing the audience about the statue, and inviting Her Majesty to perform the unveiling.

## A Doctor's Sword

How an Irish Doctor Survived War, Captivity and the Atomic Bomb

By Bob Jackson

Hardback: €22.99

'There followed a blue flash accompanied by a very bright magnesium-type flare ... Then came a frighteningly loud but rather flat explosion, which was followed by a blast of hot air ... All this was followed by eerie silence'.

So Cork doctor Aidan MacCarthy described the explosion of the atomic bomb in Nagasaki in August 1945, just over a mile from where he was trembling in a makeshift bomb shelter in the Mitsubishi POW camp. This is the compelling story of the wartime adventures of Dr Aidan MacCarthy, who survived the evacuation at Dunkirk, burning planes, sinking ships, jungle warfare and appalling privation as a Japanese prisoner of war. It is a story of survival, forgiveness and humanity at its most admirable.

Bob Jackson first heard of Dr. Aidan MacCarthy over sixteen years ago while working in a bar in Cork city. One of the regular customers, who had been in the RAF, told a story of a doctor in west Cork with a connection to the atomic bomb in Nagasaki. Intrigued, Bob travelled to MacCarthy's Bar in Castletownbere where he met Aidan's daughter Adrienne. He was stunned to learn that not only had Aidan survived the atomic bomb but Kusuno, the Japanese commander of the camp where Aidan had been held prisoner, had gifted his family's ancestral samurai sword to him – an extraordinary act of sacrifice and gratitude.

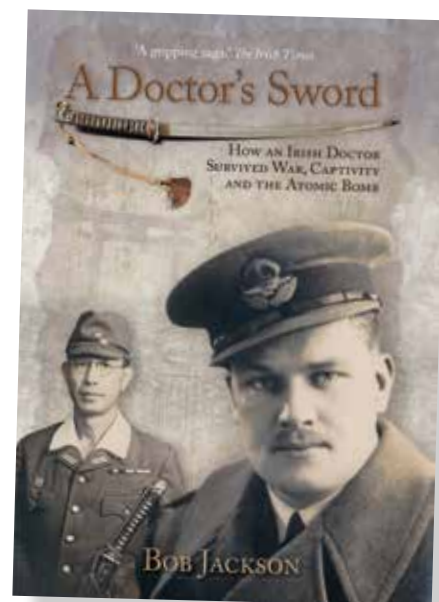
A lecturer in Creative Media at the Institute of Technology, Tralee, Bob said, 'Aidan MacCarthy was one of a handful of people who survived the two events that mark the beginning and end of the Second World War. He was evacuated from the beaches of Dunkirk after three days of relentless attacks in May 1940, and he was trembling in a makeshift bomb

shelter in the centre of Nagasaki when the atomic bomb destroyed the city in August 1945.'

In the intervening years, Dr MacCarthy survived burning planes, sinking ships, jungle warfare, starvation, disease, captivity and slave labour.

Bob continued, 'I read Aidan's memoir, which is a fascinating and engrossing account of his story but because of his genuine, self-effacing modesty, it's often short on detail. Yet his character comes through more in what he does not say. I wasn't surprised that, in the devastating aftermath of the atomic bomb, he was the first non-Japanese doctor to assist civilians. I wanted to know more about that samurai sword – especially since there was a possibility that the ashes of the officer's ancestors were embedded in the handle – and after Aidan's widow Kathleen mentioned there was a photo of the Japanese officer somewhere in their belongings, I persuaded his family to look for it.'

After years of searching, Aidan's daughter Nicola found the photograph and travelled with Bob to Japan to find the family of the Japanese commander. In a moving encounter detailed in *A Doctor's Sword* and in the critically-acclaimed documentary of the same name, they met the man's descendants at a cemetery in Kyushu Island, including his grandson who credits his existence to Aidan's act of selflessness in saving his grandfather's life.



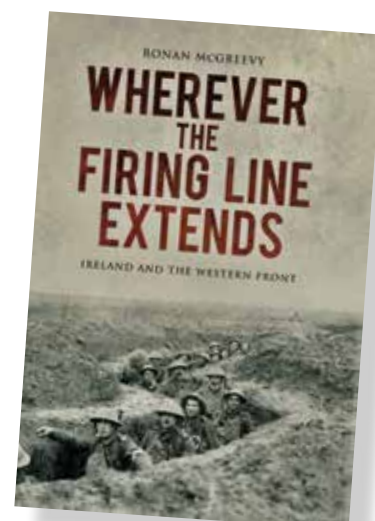
## Wherever the Firing Line Extends

Ireland and the Western Front

By Ronan McGreevy

Hardback: €20.00

The First World War was the biggest conflict in Irish history. More men served and more men died than in all the wars before or since that the Irish fought in. Often forgotten at home and written out of Irish history, the Irish soldiers and their regiments found themselves more honoured in foreign fields. From the first shot monument in Mons to the plaque to the Royal Irish Lancers who liberated the town on Armistice Day 1918, Ronan McGreevy takes a tour of the Western Front. At a time when Ireland is revisiting its history and its place in the world, McGreevy looks at those places where the Irish made their mark and are remembered in the monuments, cemeteries and landscapes of France and Flanders.



## Recovered Voices - the Stories of the Irish at War 1914 -1915

By the National Museum of Ireland  
Available in the National Museum of Ireland shop Collins Barracks.  
Paperback: €9.99



The book complements the exhibition in the National Museum of Ireland Collins Barracks of the same name. The exhibition details the stories of 21 Irishmen and women that served during the First World War. The exhibition uses original objects and interactive material to illustrate the human impact of the war on their lives.

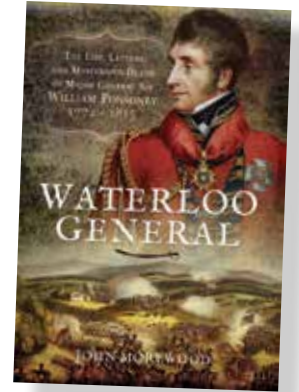
About 21,000 Irishmen were already serving in the British Army when war broke out in 1914. The National Museum of Ireland exhibition 'Recovered Voices' explores what happened to them, and the other 47,000 who joined in the first few years of the war.

From the lush green fields of France in the summer of 1914, through that first Christmas in the trenches, to the sun dried beaches of Turkey in 1915, this exciting exhibition unveils the complexity of Ireland's part in World War One.

The exhibition and book are supported by the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht and the French Embassy in Ireland.

## Waterloo General

The Life, Letters and Mysterious Death of Major General Sir William Ponsonby 1772 - 1815  
By John Morewood  
Hardback: £25.00



At the Battle of Waterloo Sir William Ponsonby, an Irish general and politician, who the Duke of Wellington stated had 'rendered very brilliant and important services and was an ornament to his profession', was killed by French lancers after leading the Union Brigade (the three Dragoon Regiments of the Royals, Iniskillings and Scots Greys) in a charge that wrecked a French advance that threatened Wellington with defeat. Sir William was a career soldier who had led his regiment in the decisive charge at the Battle of Salamanca and served with great distinction during the Peninsular War. Yet historians have blamed him because the charge at Waterloo got out of hand.

In this book John Morewood uses family sources, including Sir William's letters, as well as French and German accounts, to restore his reputation and, by shedding new light on the battle, establishes what really happen to him on that fatal afternoon. It is also a biography of a man whose bravery and professionalism distinguished him as one of the outstanding cavalry commanders of the age.

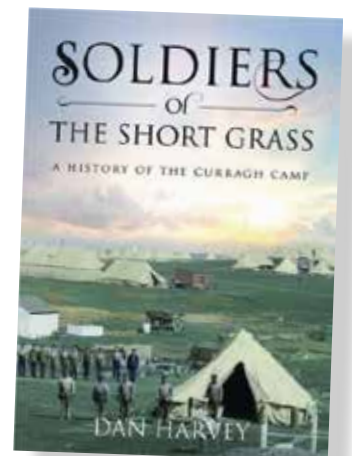
## Soldiers of the Short Grass: A History of the Curragh Camp By Dan Harvey

Paperback: €14.99  
Hardback: €49.99

This is the first complete history of the Curragh Camp, from its foundation in 1855 to the present day, under both British and Irish occupation. Dan Harvey, a military historian and an experienced senior officer, presents a compelling and fascinating narrative of the camp's many evocative eras and episodes. This unique establishment has been key in shaping Irish history while being shaped in turn by the great national and international conflicts that it was founded to respond to: the Crimean War, the Boer War, the Great War, the Easter Rising and War of Independence are all accounted for under the banner of the British Army. The first tricolour hoisted overhead of the camp signalled no change to its level of

service as the Curragh's forces were quickly embroiled in the Irish Civil War, later oversaw the years of the modern Troubles, and forged an international role with the Irish Defence Forces.

These grand narratives are interlaced with smaller yet significant tales that personalise the institution and lend vitality to the many facets that keep service, work, and a livelihood in check on world-renowned plains once covered by 'St. Brigid's cloak'. Prince Edward's royal visit and training, and the 'Wrens' less welcome visits to the soldiers after dark - everyday and extraordinary matters are described to give the most authoritative history, compelling and meticulously written, of a camp inextricable to Ireland for over one hundred and fifty years.



# The Lives of Daniel Binchy Irish Scholar, Diplomat, Public Intellectual

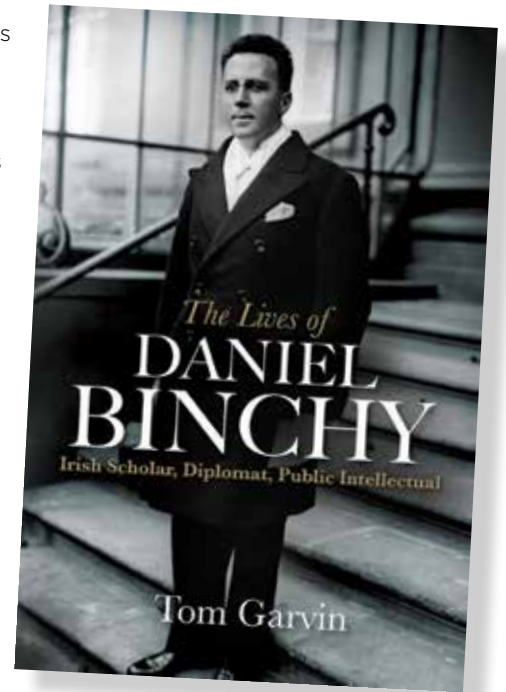
By Tom Garvin  
Hardback: €70.00  
Paperback: €45.00

'I first saw Hitler on a murky November evening in 1921. A Bavarian fellow-student in the University of Munich had induced me to accompany him to a meeting of what he described as "a new freak party" ... there could be no doubt of his ascendancy over the vast majority of the audience. As we left the meeting my friend asked me what I thought of this new party leader. With all the arrogance of twenty-one I replied: "A harmless lunatic with the gift of oratory." I can still hear his retort: "No lunatic with the gift of oratory is harmless"'

In Ireland the Binchy surname will, for this generation, call to mind the writer Maeve; but in the early years of the Irish Free State, it was Maeve's uncle Daniel who was widely regarded as one of the most brilliant minds of his time. *The Lives of Daniel Binchy: Irish Scholar, Diplomat, Public Intellectual* by best-selling author Tom Garvin is the definitive biography of one of Ireland's preeminent thinkers and diplomats, intrinsic to post-independence Irish society. In particular, the crucial interwar years of 1918-1939 are explored in light of Binchy's experiences in Europe where he witnessed at first hand the rise of Hitler - whose real menace the young diplomat was the first to fully identify and famously caution against. About the Book: Author and political science pro-

fessor Tom Garvin has written a fascinating biography of Daniel Binchy, whose personal and public lives illuminate post-independence Ireland at its inception.

Binchy came from Charleville in Cork, was educated at the Jesuit boarding school Clongowes in Kildare, and attended UCD - where he excelled. A master of several modern and ancient languages, he was the Irish Free State's ambassador to Germany from 1929 to 1932, promoting a modernising and independent new island nation while experiencing, at first hand, the disconcerting rise of Nazism and fascism; his meeting with Adolf Hitler and his landmark *Studies* article in 1933 were a brave warning against the dangers of totalitarianism. Ultimately, he would return to his love of medieval history and the Irish language, becoming perhaps the greatest Celtic Studies scholar of his day. The author and editor of seminal texts and collections of Irish language works, he held senior positions in UCD, Corpus Christi College Oxford and Harvard.

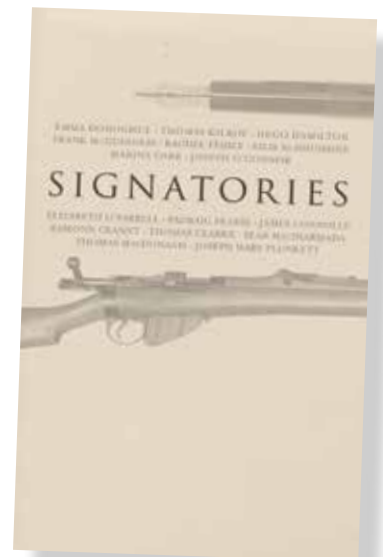


# Signatories

Lucy Collins (editor)  
Hardback: €20.00

2016 marks the centenary of the Easter Rising, known as 'the poets' rebellion', for among their leaders were university scholars of English, history and Irish. The ill-fated revolt lasted six days and ended ignominiously with the rebels rounded up and their leaders sentenced to death. The signatories of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic must have known that the Rising would be crushed, must have dreaded the carnage and death, must have foreseen that, if caught alive, they would themselves be executed. Between 3 and 12 May 1916, the seven signatories were among those executed by firing squad in Kilmainham Gaol. Now 100 years later, eight of Ireland's finest writers remember these revolutionaries in a unique theatre performance. The forgotten figure of Elizabeth O'Farrell - the nurse who delivered the rebels' surrender to the British - is also given a voice. *Signatories*

comprises the artistic responses of Emma Donoghue, Thomas Kilroy, Hugo Hamilton, Frank McGuinness, Rachel Fehily, Eilis Ni Dhuibhne, Marina Carr and Joseph O'Connor to the seven signatories and Nurse O'Farrell. They portray the emotional struggle in this groundbreaking theatrical and literary commemoration of Ireland's turbulent past. A performance introduction on the staging of the play is given by Director Patrick Mason, and an introduction by Lucy Collins, School of English, Drama and Film, UCD, sets the historical context of the play.



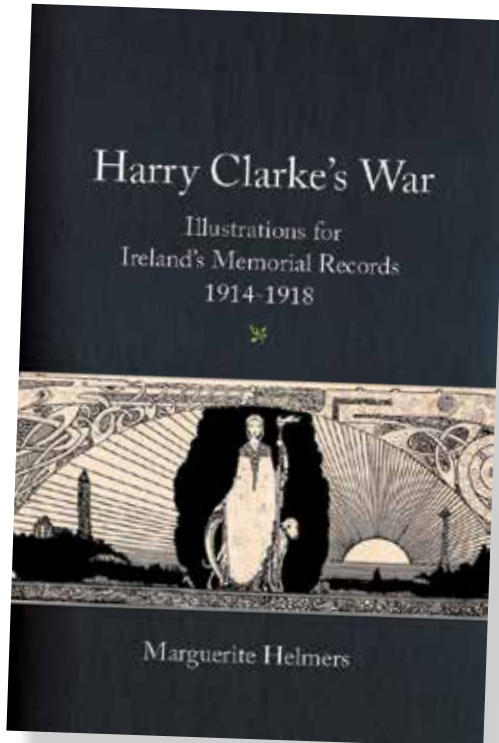
## Harry Clarke's War

Illustrations for Ireland's Memorial Records 1914-1918

By Marguerite Helmers

Paperback: €29.95

Harry Clarke is one of the few Irish artists who are household names and whose work remains popular to this day. But his fame and appreciation is centred around our perception of Clarke as an artist who worked in stained glass – often with religious or mystical themes.



Marguerite Helmers' new illustrated book reveals a fantastic body of work by Clarke that is largely unknown, underacknowledged, and particularly relevant as we commemorate the huge contribution made by Irishmen to the First World War. Ireland's Memorial Records 1914-1918 contain the names of 49,435 people of Irish affiliation who were killed in the First World War and honoured in this specially commissioned eight-volume set of books, of which 100 were produced. Even lesser known than the books themselves is the history of their elaborate page decorations – with Clarke's work forming a stunning border to the sombre listing of the fallen. Sadly only eleven sets remain today.

Harry Clarke's War is the first book to examine his intricate engravings for Ireland's Memorial Records, 1914-1918 and draws on previously unpublished material, offering a unique insight into the design and production of the elaborate illustrations that decorate each page of the eight volume series. Clarke's page borders showing ruined houses, graves, trenches, the Gallipoli Peninsula, cavalry, airplanes, tanks, and searchlights, deserve to be listed with great post-war art such as the paintings of Paul Nash and the lithographs of Otto Dix. Helmers' new book assuredly guides us from the Records' genesis through to their eventual placement in the Irish National War Memorial at Islandbridge.

## 46 Men Dead

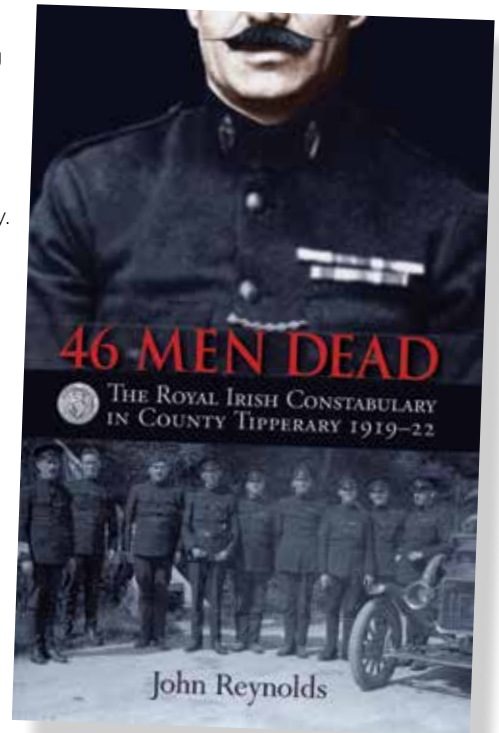
The Royal Irish Constabulary in County Tipperary 1919–22

By John Reynolds

Paperback: €17.99

On January 21st, 1919, the opening shots of the War of Independence were fired at Soloheadbeg in County Tipperary. Two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) were killed by the IRA in the ambush. Constable O'Connell, from Coachford in County Cork, was thirty years old and engaged to be married. Constable McDonnell, from Belmullet in County Mayo, was a widower with seven children. Dan Breen regretted that only two men died, later commenting, 'Six dead policemen would have impressed the country more than a mere two.' In the four bloody years that followed, nearly 500 RIC men were killed and hundreds more wounded. In Tipperary alone, 46 policemen were killed, making it one of the most violent counties in Ireland. These men have generally remained as footnotes to a bitter and divisive conflict.

This unique, potentially controversial, history addresses the dearth of material about the RIC. The popular image of the force was set in 1926 when Piaras Béaslaí contended that its members' primary purpose was to 'hold the country in subjection to England'. The truth is closer to home: they were Irishmen who joined because it was a secure job with prospects and a pension at the end of service. When confronted with a volunteer army of young and dedicated guerrilla fighters, they were unable to cope. When the conflict ended, the RIC was disbanded, not at the insistence of the Provisional Government, but of its own members. This thought-provoking book shows how the grim reality of the conflict in Tipperary was a microcosm for the wider battles of the War of Independence. It is time to give a more balanced view of this force and its men.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please contact us if you would like your event added to our calendar page: [info@irelandsmilitarystory.ie](mailto:info@irelandsmilitarystory.ie)

### Calendar of events

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
September 1st, 10:00	Outdoor exhibition in Glasnevin Cemetery Museum with a focus on the participation of the 16th Irish Division in the Battle of the Somme in September 1916.	Glasnevin Cemetery Trust, Glasnevin Museum, Finglas Rd., Dublin 11.
September 3rd, 12:00	The Somme Association annual event in Guillemont to mark the participation of the 16th Irish Division which saw action during the first weeks of September.	Guillemont, France.
September 3rd, 10:00	Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum Military Fair.	Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum, Sovereigns House The Mall, Armagh, Northern Ireland.
September 5th, 19:30	Lecture: Dr. Anthony Keating, 'An Unflinching Idealist: The life and journalism of James W. Upton'.	Waterford Museum of Treasures, The Mall, Waterford.
September 8th- 10th,	University College Dublin. King John 800 Conference.	Dublin Castle, Dame Street, Dublin 2.
September 10th	Irish Defence Forces Veteran's Day.	McKee Barracks, Blackhorse Ave. Dublin 7.
September 15th, 13:00	Lecture: Muiris de Buitléir 'The Geography of the War of Independence and Civil War in Dublin'.	Ceramics Room, National Museum of Ireland-Archaeology, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.
September 17th, 14:30	Western Front Association Lecture: Dominic Lee, 'The Life & Times of Stillorgan Born Gt. War Artist, Sir William Orpen R.A., R.H.A.'.	The National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, Benburb St. Dublin 7.
October 21st - 23rd Dublin 4.	Back to Our Past.	Serpentine Hall, RDS, Anglesea Rd, Dublin 4.
October 6th, 13:00	Lecture: Damian Shiels, 'The Archaeological Landscape of the War of Independence & The Civil War'.	Ceramics Room, National Museum of Ireland-Archaeology, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.
October 8th, 10:00	Bangor Collectors & Militaria Fair.	First Bangor Presbyterian Church Halls, Main Street, Bangor, Co Down.
October 15th, 14:30	Western Front Association/Leinster Regiment Lecture: 'John Goodman 'The 2nd Leinsters, a Battalion of 'The Old Contemptibles, who they were and what became of them'.	National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, Benburb St. Dublin 7.

November 5th 12:00	The Niemba Ambush Remembrance.	Garrison Church, Cathal Brugha Barracks, Military Rd. Rathmines, Dublin 6.
November 13th, 10:30	The annual Remembrance Sunday events will take place at the Cenotaphs in Belfast and Enniskillen, and St. Patrick's Cathedral Dublin to commemorate Armistice Day.	
November 17th, 13:00	Lecture: Dr. Barra O'Donnabhain, 'The Fortress Prison: the archaeology of Victorian Spike Island, Co. Cork'.	Ceramics Room, National Museum of Ireland-Archaeology, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.
November 19th, 10:00	International Militaria Collectors Fair.	Clontarf Castle Hotel, Castle Avenue, Dublin 3.
November 19th, 14:30	Annual Joint Meeting: Western Front Association and the Leinster Regiment Association.	National Museum of Ireland, Benburb St. Dublin 7.
December 10th, 14:30	Western Front Association Lecture: Details to be confirmed.	National Museum of Ireland, Benburb St. Dublin 7.

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