




The 40/10

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St George's Chapel
Ypres (Ieper)
Remembrance Day
11 November 2009.
The Association's
Standard on the
altar alongside the
Union Flag.

unknown photographer

PRINCE OF WALES'S
**LEINSTER
REGIMENT
ASSOCIATION**

The Journal of the Prince of Wales's
Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians)
Regimental Association

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Here we are at the end of another year when the Association has once more striven and succeeded to keep the name of the Leinster Regiment in as many events as possible. The Association is stronger now than it has ever been and we can see that in both the variety and quality of the articles in this edition. There is evidence of the growth of the Association in Ian Lowe's *News from Birr* and more evidence of recognition of the Association at the highest levels in David Ball's *Secretary's Report* on page 3 and photograph on this page. Although "*A Cautionary Tale*" (page 4) has been drafted by Ian Lowe he could not have done that without the help of Harry Hogan in providing the background for the article. This is an excellent example of how the editors can work with material provided by a member.

Drums, Standard and Bayonets narrates the background of the Association's October trip to Ledegem with a range of photographs (*all photographs, in colour, can be viewed on the Association's website*) whilst *Rags to Riches to Rags* uncovers the controversial plight of Irish Prisoners of War in WW1 and how the actions of a few introduced a misplaced distrust of Irish Regiments during 1916.

Remembered in South Africa is a truly amazing development from the legacy of the Leinsters in the Boer War of 1901/1902 and the Association is privileged to be able to make a small contribution to this annual event.

One of the biggest challenges our historians face is being sent a photograph with a plea for help. *Deciphering Army Uniforms* by Peter Walton continues our theme of providing information to our members with army ancestors.

We are trying something new in this issue with the introduction of a *Book Review* feature. So we have a challenge for all, if you have read a good book and think we should know about it why not write a review and send it to us?. From our regular postbag of "letters" (actually they arrive via email) we have selected one about *Lt. Young* of the 2nd Battalion concerning his third given name.

I hope you can agree with me that we have another fine edition of the 40/10.

Enjoy this issue, I believe it is a great read!

Don Dickson - Dec. 2009

"Opinions expressed by contributors to this Journal are not necessarily those of the Editors or the Association"

LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

News from Birr Ian Lowe

As usual there has been plenty going on in and around Crinkle and Birr since we last went to press. Early in the summer there were reported moves afoot to vary the conservation status of the remaining structures of the barrack complex in Crinkle. We became aware of what was happening quite late in the day and our difficulty in responding was compounded by the fact that various committee members were on holiday at the time. However in spite of these problems a rapid and effective lobbying campaign was mounted in very short order and if there was ever any doubt in official minds about the level of interest in or the importance of the barracks site they were surely dispelled. The committee would like to thank all those on both sides of the water who flew to the defence of our common heritage. At the time of writing reports have been received that the Department of Defence in Dublin is in the process of evaluating spare land and buildings including part of the Crinkle site with a view to raising much needed finance. It is clear that continued vigilance is necessary as to the future of the remains of the old depot although it is obviously impossible for the Association to expect that a site of that size and in such a desirable location will remain untouched in perpetuity.

Early summer also saw local elections in Ireland and in consequence we lost a good friend of the Association and its objectives in the form of the Chairman of Birr Council. Councillor Sean Doorley. Sean was quick to realise the significance of what the Association was about and participated in the events in Ledegem last year. We wish Sean well with his future endeavours and hope to see him at Association events in the future. The incoming Chairman of the Council is Mr. Tony McLoughlin, a very well known personality in the local government scene in Birr who has family connections with the Leinster

Regiment. It was a pleasure to be able to welcome him and one of his colleagues, Councillor Michael Loughnane, to the National Day of Remembrance ceremonies at Kilmainham and again during our visit to Ypres and Ledegem in October. One of the objectives of this visit was to try to advance the project of twinning the towns of Ledegem and Birr. While there is plenty of support for this idea it is fair to say that there is some reluctance to be seen getting involved in what is perceived as frivolities in the present economic climate. The possibilities of less high profile forms of cooperation including



Concept drawing of the memorial at Crinkle

contacts through schools are also being explored. While in Belgium we were able to show our visitors from Birr a number of sites around Ypres associated with the Leinster Regiment including Birr Cross Roads and the site of Leinster House. Maintaining these contacts helps to give the Association publicity through the Co. Offaly local

press and we were pleased to see good pictorial and editorial coverage of both the Kilmainham event and the visit to Belgium.

The Crinkle memorial project continues to advance slowly. We have now fairly well settled on a design and

location shown in this update. The next and

most crucial phase is to raise the necessary funding, once again at a time when funding priorities are



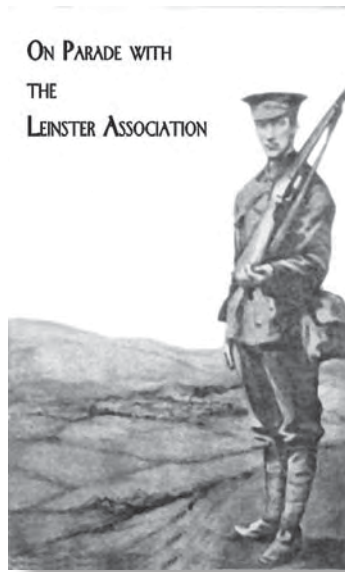
Councillor Tony McLoughlin (left) & Councillor Michael Loughnane visiting Ledegem

Continued on back page

LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Secretary's Report

The Association continues in our objective to commemorate the memory of the Regiment. The *Dublin* weekend (July) attracted the best attendance yet both at the members meeting and the subsequent events at Islandbridge and Kilmainham. We were pleased to be accompanied by some of our friends from Ledegem throughout the weekend. Our special thanks to Mr. Noel Cullen for ensuring the Leinsters were looked after, and for the invitation to the social evening at the Dublin Central Branch, RBL.



While attending the National day of Commemoration (Kilmainham), Committee members and our Belgian guests had the honour of meeting An Taoiseach, Mr. Brian Cowen. Mr. Cowen commented on the work of the Association in commemorating the soldiers of our famous regiment and the memory of the Irish soldier throughout history. It is a great tribute to the memory of the Regiment to see members from Ireland, Great Britain and Flanders supporting events far from their homes, may this show of support continue, well done!

October brought our annual trip to *Flanders* travelling by coach from London. Our arrival in Ieper on Friday evening was like an amphibious landing, with all those who gathered at the Menin Gate getting a good soaking! During the Last Post ceremony wreaths were laid on behalf of The Leinster Regiment, The CIROCA and The UN Veterans Association. A wreath was again laid by the Leinster Regiment in memory of the Royal Irish Regiment (18th Foot) who have no regimental association. The Leinster Standard was accompanied by those of the Normandy Veterans and the British Army Association (Bexleyheath Branch).

On Saturday our party attended the IMOS lunch. We received a wonderful welcome from our friends there, with much singing, dancing and lots and lots of laughter, not forgetting the now legendary longest raffle in the world. I was invited to talk, via mobile comms, to the National Secretary of IMOS Lt. Jurgen Sinnesael who was on active service in Kosovo. Lt. Sinnesael, who is no stranger to the Leinsters or the CIROCA sent his best regards to both organisations. Presentations of regimental plaques were made, on

behalf of the Leinsters, to the National President of IMOS Mr. Thierry Platin and to Annie and Roger our hosts and the organisers of the lunch. Afterwards it was all back on the coach for a free evening in Ieper.

A report will be given elsewhere in this issue of the wonderful Sunday events organised by our friends in Ledegem.

On Monday morning we made an early start to the Irish Peace Tower at Messines where wreaths were laid for the Leinsters, by Mr. James O'Brien (Cork) for CIROCA by Mr. Keith Clarke and Mr. Felix Grant and the Royal Irish Regiment (18th Foot) by Mr. William Grant.

Our next stop was Premesques, the scene of the Leinsters' baptism of fire in Europe. This visit was very poignant for a number of members who had relatives killed or wounded during this engagement. I for one was very moved because my Leinster ancestor, James Fay, was wounded here. Our thanks go to Col. Peter Walton and Mr. Ian Lowe for an outstanding job of telling the story to our group.

November is always a busy period for the Association with members attending the opening of the Westminster Field of Remembrance in the presence of HRH Prince Philip followed by the memorial service to Irish Regiments at the St. Patrick's Chapel in Westminster Cathedral. Remembrance Sunday saw many Leinster members turn out alongside the CIROCA for the Cenotaph Armistice Day parade

Each year Harry Hogan and I receive an invitation to take part in the Armistice ceremonies held in Ieper and this year Canon Ray Jones invited the Association to parade our standard alongside the Union Flag and at the service of remembrance held in St. George's Memorial Church. This was a great honour for the Association, as a regimental association standard had never been paraded in St. George's on Armistice Day before, that honour usually going to that of the RBL. This is another first for the Leinsters!

So members, we have had an eventful year, this only leaves me to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and New Year. March on the Leinsters!

Ich Dien! David

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The cautionary tale of Pte. Patrick O'Hara.

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Late last year a pamphlet entitled "The Execution of Patrick O'Hara (Private, Leinster Regiment)" appeared for sale on E-bay. A quick check of all the usual sources of information produced no mention of Pte. O'Hara or what he might have done to deserve his unfortunate end. Member Harry Hogan entered the bidding but in the end the item went to a collector in Northern Ireland. Never a man to be deflected from his purpose Harry contacted the gentleman concerned and managed, at his own expense, to get a copy of the pamphlet on behalf of the association. The eight-page pamphlet that was published in Lucknow in 1897 turns out to be a temperance tract and the death of Patrick O'Hara a cautionary tale on the evils of the demon drink.

The basic facts of the case are simple and tragic enough. Patrick O'Hara was a 24-year-old private in the 1st Leinster's, stationed at that time at Ahmedabad in India. On the 20th February 1894 Pte. O'Hara got very drunk, took his rifle and fired shots into the canteen wounding a Corporal Doyle. He then went to a window and fired two more shots at some NCO's playing cards killing Corporal Micheal Dooley [sic] and Lance Corporal J Roach. Within a matter of weeks O'Hara was tried by General-Court Martial, found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging in accordance with the legal code of the time. Nowhere does the pamphlet tell us anything personal about Patrick O'Hara beyond the fact that his brother was also serving in India with the Cheshire Regiment. Nor does it tell us anything of his victims or any of the circumstances surrounding the incident. The main theme of the pamphlet is the resolute manner in which the condemned man accepted his guilt and his fate, prepared himself spiritually for his death while wanting his situation to act as a warning to other soldiers. The latter takes the form of a remarkable open letter to "Non-

Commissioned Officers and men of the British Army" and goes on "It is with a contrite heart that I willingly meet my fate upon the scaffold for a crime which I have no recollection of committing. I have not even the remotest idea of how it happened". He goes on to describe the victims as "my most intimate friends" with whom "I have not had a wrong word with while I had known them". He then says that Corporal Doyle had forgiven him and that he hopes to obtain that of Dooley and Roach in Heaven. In the central and most powerful passage of the letter he says "N C Officers and men of the Army at large, take warning by my disgraceful fate and keep from drink, which is the cause of most of the crime in the British Army irrespective of rank. Take timely warning before you are placed in the same position as I am placed in and keep from drink". He concludes by thanking the men of "C" Coy. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment who provided his guard in Ahmedbad and to his gaolers in Poona for treating him, under the circumstances, with kindness. Finally, he fulsomely acknowledges the religious and spiritual guidance and comfort he has obtained from the priests at both the gaols.

The pamphlet continues with a graphic description of sequence of events surrounding the execution including



Drink has been the scourge of the Army (Punch)

the length of the drop and the period of time the body had to stay suspended as "required by law". The reader is told that the condemned man "ascended the scaffold with a firm step exhibiting no signs of emotion. He took his stand on the drop as he was directed to do." After the black cap had been placed on his head he asked to say a few words to his comrades, promising to say nothing amiss. Surprisingly this request was granted, the cap removed, and he made a "short but impressive speech, speaking in a loud and distinct voice without quivering." What followed was a further denunciation of the evils of drink and he

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urged the spectators to learn the lesson of his fate and henceforth give up alcohol. We are told that the entire 1st Leinsters were paraded together with sections of other Imperial and Indian Army units to witness the event. The pamphlet concluded by recording that cavalry were used to disperse the crowd of curious onlookers that gathered and that “there were no natives present at the execution.” Evidently the sepoy of the Indian Army did not count as “natives” for this purpose.

Although modern eyes and ears might recoil at some of the mawkish and morbid detail in the document, it was

designed to shock and get the attention of an audience in the same way that recent public campaigns against drinking and driving, speeding and AIDS have done. Furthermore our Victorian forbearers admitted to an appetite for salacious detail that we like to pretend we no longer have. A curious detail of the pamphlet is that although it tells you who printed it nowhere does it say who published it; most likely it was the work of The Army Temperance League. Both O’Hara’s letter and his address from



*Army Temperance Association
Medal presented for 1 year's
abstinence whilst serving in India*

the scaffold seem, under the circumstances, very literate and carefully composed leaving the reader to wonder how much of it was his own work and how much was “artistic licence” by those who published the pamphlet. Three years had passed between the events described and publication by which time the Leinsters had left India so there was little chance of contradiction even if it was justified. There is no mention of the events in the regimental history and it would be interesting to know how his comrades in the regiment reacted to the spectacle.

Drink has always been the scourge of an army and the British Army is no exception. As is usually the case the army mirrored the society from which it was drawn and despite what politicians and the health police might like us to think hard drinking was endemic in all levels of society throughout history. In part this was to overcome the lack of clean drinking water but also helped people deal with



Reverse of the ATA 1 year medal

the tough living and working conditions that most endured. Life in the Victorian army was hard and was more so for units serving in India or similar stations where postings lasted for years at a time in remote cantonments involving monotonous duties and a hostile climate. For example the 1st Leinsters served continuously in India from 1877 to 1894; not an exceptional length of time for the period. The only form of relaxation for most men was the canteen and the drink that could be obtained there. It was generally believed that a couple of good doses of alcohol per day actually helped prevent disease and so there was an official ration of spirits issued daily to each man. The spirit was either “arrack”, an Indian spirit distilled from palm sap or rice and molasses or rum. This was diluted with water to produce “grog”. The ration was usually issued after morning parade but before breakfast so the men were expected to down two measures of spirit on an empty stomach. A tally was kept of the issue involving a board with two holes for each man, a peg was inserted in a hole as each tot was issued giving rise to expressions such as “burra peg” (a large measure), “chota peg” (a small measure) and to be “taken down a peg” i.e. be denied a measure. The soldiers had a trifling one anna a day deducted from their pay for this dubious concoction. The whole system was open to all sorts of abuse with men hording and selling on their ration at a healthy profit to their comrades. When off duty the main place of recreation was the canteen that was unlikely to sell anything but cheap grog. There was no Indian brewing industry until the 1860’s so

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The Army Temperance Association: India 4 year medal The ribbon was blue with a red central stripe

their traditional fondness of drinking. In parallel with health problems went problems of discipline ranging from the relatively trivial right through to murder of the sort committed by Patrick O'Hara, sadly he was by no means the first or the last to find himself in that predicament. There are statistics that suggest that two thirds of the crime committed by soldiers may have been drink related. Small wonder that a temperance societies began to be formed in individual regiments from the late 1830's onwards. In 1861 "Outram Institutes" were established, named after their founder General Sir James Outram. These aimed to provide canteens with "shade and coolness in the day time ... abundant illumination in the evening, light unadulterated beer to any extent they choose to pay for", together, "with strong, delicious coffee, genuine and well made tea and good and cheap ginger beer, lemonade and soda water". The Soldiers' Total Temperance Association was formed in 1862 and by 1896 having being renamed The Army Temperance Association and part funded by the government had 22,800 members in India alone. Although the problem

even if imported beer was obtainable it was much more expensive than the local firewater. Alcohol was a major contributor to both health and crime problems among soldiers serving in India and similar stations. Many more soldiers died from illness than in action and a major contributory factor was the amount of alcohol consumed. In 1836 one third of the deaths in the 26th Foot serving in India were ascribed directly to drink. Contemporary commentary on the problem often notes the number of Irishmen in the regiments and

of excessive drinking was not solved it was at least reduced through a combination of the temperance movement, improvements in service conditions and increased leisure opportunities, alas, too late to save Private Patrick O'Hara. Drink was not just an "Other Ranks" problem. Officers often drank huge quantities though better quality and more variety than the men. The Duke of Wellington reckoned to be an abstemious man regularly drank "four or five glasses with people at dinner and about a pint of claret after"

As usual Kipling had something to say on the subject, this time about the orderly officer who had spent too long in the mess before doing his rounds:-

Our Orderly Orf'cer's hoki-mut

You help him all you can.

For the wine was old and the night is cold,

An' the best we may go wrong;

So 'fore 'e gits to the sentry-box,

You pass the word along.¹

Sources & Acknowledgements.

Our thanks to Harry Hogan for obtaining the pamphlet on which this article is based and making it available to us.

Information on the drinking habits in the Victorian army is taken from "Sahib. The British Soldier in India" by Richard Holmes.

The verse (1) above is from Kipling's "Verse".

Queens South Africa Medal

The Queen's South Africa Medal & the Kings South Africa Medal were awarded to soldiers who served in the Boer War between 1901 - 1902 and the record of men who received them is kept on microfilm at the National Archives in Kew, London. The Association chairman is planning to use the QSA & KSA medal roll of the Leinster Regiment to build a nominal roll of the battalions who served in Africa. This involves viewing digital photographs of the medal rolls, that contain 20 names per page, and typing the names one at a time, into a form on the Internet. The eventual list will then be published on the Association's web site. If you have the time, have a computer and broadband internet connection and would like to help with this project please would you email me at donald.dickson@btconnect.com for more details.

Thank you.

Don

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Bring your drums, your standard and bayonets!

Sunday 11th October saw members and families of the Association once again in Ledegem as guests of the Ledegem Historical Society though such a statement belies the planning that clearly had taken place between our friends in Ledegem and the Leinster trip organisers. It all started with a phone call from our resident member in Ledegem. Nick Soen. "The mayor invites the Leinsters to exercise their right and march into Ledegem with drums beating, standard flying and bayonets fixed, is that OK with you?!"

To say that the invitation was unexpected is an understatement, especially after the 2008 event when the Association received the Freedom of Ledegem. That occasion had been magnificent and our concern was one of attempting to repeat what had taken place then. A discussion amongst our committee agreed that we should not attempt to replicate that event but to plan something different. The team in Ledegem agreed and the strategy involved both a formal and informal element as before – but different!

The formal side would be shorter though again we turned to our friend Leo Regmortels for help with the "bayonets fixed" element. Soon we had our guard of honour and Chris Harman would parade as our drummer bugler.

The role of the Association was to fall in at the church in Ledegem, present ourselves to the Mayor for inspection and request permission to enter the town and march



Smartly on parade at Ledegem Church

to the 40/10 memorial that was unveiled last year. At the memorial we would have a short service for all the casualties who fell achieving the liberation of Ledegem in 1918.

This all went according to plan and once again Ledegem's streets experienced the squirl of pipes, the beat of the marching drum and the splendour of the Leinster Regiment Association members marching in perfect



Lunch in Ledegem

step. Of course events such as these always have their speeches and this year the emphasis was on looking forward, building upon the special relationships developing between Ledegem and our Association and between Ledegem and Birr. Equally important both Ledegem's mayor and the Association chairman emphasised the importance of involving the youth of today in such events for it will be our children and grandchildren who will keep alive the memories in the years to come.

With the formal part of the day completed the team from Ledegem Historical Society moved into gear. The main venue was the De Cycloon restaurant and conference centre where we assembled for lunch and to hear a surprise who had driven all the way over from London that very morning. During a visit to London to attend



the May meeting of the Association Nick Soen had seen "Gracie Lyne" (aka Annie Love) and invited her to Ledegem. Annie's talent was much appreciated by all singing 'Hits from the Blitz' and songs of the

'Nifty Fifties'. Annie's songs rang around the De Cycloon enchanting both locals and visitors alike with many joining in during the choruses.

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Rags to riches to rags

POWS & THE IRISH BRIGADE DON DICKSON

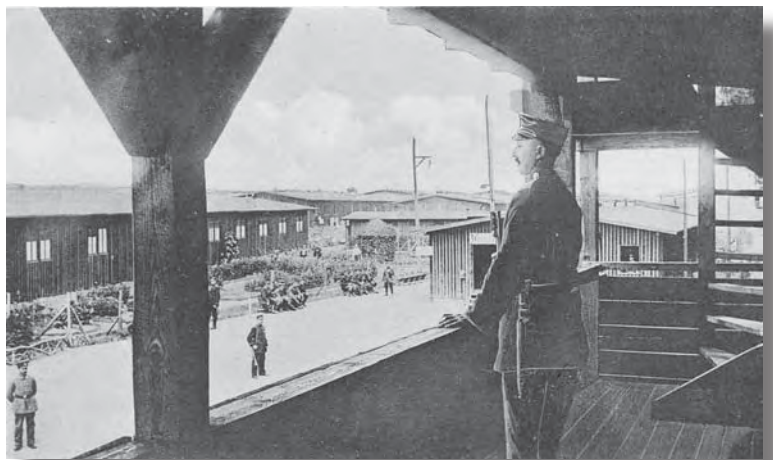
The Association battlefield trip to Premeques in October 2009 was to a location that was the first significant hostile engagement of the 2/Leinsters with the German army when Leinsters were captured.. Whilst it is more usual to write about the deeds of the Regiment and men in conflict, on this occasion I will explore the events that followed their capture. The early release of Prisoner of War (POW) statements archived at the TNA in Kew has provided material for this article as have the release of the personal papers of Roger Casement following their discovery in 2004. I have also drawn upon the collection of Casement papers in Reinhard Doerries publication "Prelude to the Easter Rising". Some of the photographs used within this article were provided by Ms Noreen O'Meara whose great uncle Private James Leavey (aka Leavy) was captured during the Premeques action.

Evidence based research¹ indicates that generally British POWs were all initially classed as English (Englanders) by the Germans and frequently singled out for rough treatment compared to the Belgian and French POWs. Pte SCANLAN² who was wounded and also captured at Premeques had his straw bedding removed and given to French and Belgian soldiers whilst on route to a hospital near Hanover. Scanlan also tells his interviewer that he



Postcard photo taken at Gundhelm POW camp in 1916 depicting prisoners from different countries. Pte James Leavey of the (2/Leinsters) is front row, third from left (private collection)

and two other 2/Leinsters, Privates Gerraghty and Doyle were put on display in a pen with pigs until released by a German officer. Pte MULHOLLAND³ captured on the same day confirmed in his interview that the English POWs were treated much worse than other nationalities and in his case at his first POW camp in Hameln (Hamlin) his bed was merely a pile of shavings on the floor. Even as late as 1917 Arthur STANSFIELD⁴ using hearsay evidence reported that 120 English POWs had been forced to dig trenches for the Germans whilst under attack by French forces; of the 120 only 80 survived the shelling. Back to the early stages of the war L/Cpl FLANAGAN⁵ captured at St Eloi (South of Ypres) on the 14 February 1915 reported that medical treatment was very poor for the "Englanders". In the same testimony there is a narrative of Private



Propaganda postcard of Giessen POW camp circa 1916 (private collection)

Conner, 1/Leinsters, having soup thrown in his face by a German Red Cross female nurse. William McCoy⁶ 2/Leinsters captured just after the Christmas truce of 1914 reported that disobedience by POWs toward German NCOs and Officers, could result in having dogs set upon them and in extreme cases result in being lashed to a post and flogged.

The statements also contain evidence of great kindness shown toward the POWs by some German doctors and all French and Belgian medical and nursing staff in hospitals, though invariably contain reports of maltreatment by German medical orderlies.

Against this background there then transpires for the Irish soldiers captured at Premeques a change in their treatment as they become amongst the first to find them selves embroiled

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in a major political strategy involving the Nationalist dissidents campaigning for Home Rule in Ireland and the Imperial German Government. The dissidents strategy culminated in the Easter uprising in Ireland, and the distrust, by the British Government, of Irish Regiments that followed in the aftermath.

The unfolding of this strategy commenced as far back as 1907 when, in their struggle for allies to oppose Britain, the German Foreign Office sought cooperation from leading Irish-Americans⁷. By July 1914 a well known Irish nationalist, Sir Roger CASEMENT, was asked by the Irish Volunteers in Dublin, to take on the role of special representative to the USA to seek out Irish-Americans for the purpose of raising funds for the supply of arms to be used against the British.

By August 1914 Casement was in contact with the German Military Attaché with a proposition that Germany releases a statement of support for an Independent Ireland. During October 1914 Casement travelled to Berlin and in November produced his first advisory that Irish POWs from any British Regiment should be separated from other British prisoners. He went onto stress that care should be taken to note who were Catholics and who the Protestants were, because *“Irish Protestants would be Protestants first and Irishmen last”*⁸ the inference being that Germany could rely upon Irish Catholic POWs to support the Nationalist movement.

The importance given by the German Government to this advice resulted in instructions being issued on November 7th from the German Chief of Staff of the Army that all Catholic Irish prisoners were to be united in one camp and that suitable Irish priests together with Roger Casement were to be given access in order that an Irish legion could be formed to fight against the British. Matters then moved quickly and by November 20th Germany’s Minister at the Vatican in a secret telegram to the German Foreign Office confirmed the Vatican had given permission for Father O’GORMAN and Father CROTTY to travel to Germany to support the Irish soldiers POW camp.

Orders were updated on the 21 November 1914 that all Irish Catholic prisoners were to be treated especially well. In his interview Pte Scanlan substantiates this by reporting that in the POW hospital at Verdun with 300 prisoners, he and three other Irish soldiers were relocated into better accommodation with better food; *“we being Irish were [now] treated better than the Belgians and French”*. The German CGS also indicated that facilities should be provided for Casement and the priests who were to encourage the prisoners to join an Irish brigade (under the command of English speaking German Officers) to fight against the British in Egypt. As additional inducement volunteers were to

be offered free passage to the USA upon completion of their service. Thus was the LIMBURG POW camp established and by 7 December 1914 Casement, Father O’Gorman and Father Crotty commenced their plan to meet with the Irish soldiers.

However the two sides of the same coin were not appreciated by all concerned for in a letter dated 23 December 1914 from Casement to the German Foreign Office, he writes that Irish prisoners are now being treated *“with as much kindness as is possible”* and then goes on to propose several changes to the previous instructions from the German Chief of Staff, principally that the Irish brigade should wear a special Irish uniform, fight under an Irish flag and only be commanded by Irish or Irish-American officers. Furthermore, and here we see an extension of military purpose, the brigade should be equipped in order that the Irish brigade can return to Ireland in support of the Irish Volunteers to *“recover Irish national freedom by force of arms”*.

Then a wheel seems to fall off the wagon for on the 9th January 1915 Casement sends a letter from Limburg to Berlin indicating that the Irish soldiers are far from cooperating and that the plan for an Irish brigade must be abandoned! New POWs were arriving and informing their countrymen that conditions and the treatment of POWs at Limburg were worse than



Limburg 1916 the photograph shows Father O’Gorman left and Father Crotty is to the right of centre. The stern faces perhaps reflect the purpose of the photograph (private collection)

those experienced at other camps. Casement again visits Limburg 4 days later and discovers that there are now 2,200 prisoners many of whom are *“poorly clad”* and being sent out to work in the rain such that they are *“wet through”*. The food given to the prisoners has deteriorated and the quantity of the meat ration had

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fallen. The priest Father O’Gorman was leaving and Church services had become an issue due to overcrowding. In a nutshell the prisoners were not receiving the promised “better treatment” making it difficult to approach them with the suggestion that they change sides. It appears too that the camp commandant was far from sympathetic suggesting that morale could be restored if each man was provided with a small Irish flag!

Matters continue to deteriorate and by March the camp is clearly no longer “Catholic Irish only” with Russian, French & British prisoners housed in barracks and the original separation plan is no longer in place. Personal mail sent to the prisoners from Ireland is indicating support for the British campaign against Germany. Leinster POW, 6902 James Scanlan confirmed in his interview that “At Limburg the food was bad. At 5.30 am we had coffee, so called; at 11am we had 12 ozs (360 grammes) of black bread which had to last ‘till the next day. At 12 noon soup, sometimes just thin soup and other days prunes were in it. One day a week at noon we were given rice and prunes. At 7pm we had soup again. I never had meat or vegetables, though in winter we would have mangelwurzel boiled in the soup”⁹. Food, or the lack of it, was being used as an inducement to join the Irish brigade whose members supposedly were to receive better rations. Again we turn to Scanlan for more information. “I know for certain that Private Berry of the 2/Leinsters joined the Irish Brigade by the end of March and I believe they were driven to do so by hunger. Berry was hardly more than a boy and I had seen him crying from hunger”.

The majority of Irish soldiers however stood firm and demonstrated hostility toward Casement when he visited POW camps. As a result German guards at the camps start mistreating the Irish prisoners and Casement’s “brigade sergeants” in Limburg, Quinslisk¹⁰ & Kehoe¹¹ [Keogh] are unable to get messages to him. By now there was in place an anti Irish brigade movement with over sixty men actively engaged in persuading Catholic Irish prisoners to ignore overtures from the Irish brigade “recruiting sergeants”. This counter movement resulted in a request from Casement for sixty-six identified Irish POWS to be removed from Limburg as a matter of urgency.

Many of the Irish brigade volunteers were

transferred to Zossen and there the recruiting effort continued albeit not very successfully; although Casement did receive a letter from a sympathetic German soldier who wanted to join the brigade, the letter being “endorsed “ by Irish brigade NCOs Corporal O’Toole and a Sergeant Beverley.

Back at Limburg recruitment continued to deteriorate as did the amenities for the remaining Irish brigade NCOs; Kehoe was openly complaining about the lack of the uniform that had been promised and the lack of promised pay. Casement does his

Dear Captain (Boehm),
I send you herewith
a copy of the (essential) conditions
stated by the three Corporals now in
Berlin. These requests of theirs should
be complied with.
You will start for Limburg, I hope,
very soon and take Ketch with you
to help in stricting the Co. Undoubtedly
there is I know a 67th Co. -
a sergeant named MacIntyre
Ketch knows him.

Section of a letter sent by Casement to Boehm on the 15 April 1915 in which he requests action against 67 POWs who are actively opposing the recruitment for the Irish brigade. Original manuscript copyright Ireland National Library

best to reassure those who had joined the Irish brigade but the Germans realise that the brigade is small and that the majority of Irish POWS will have nothing to do with it, referring to those who joined as “traitors”. The German authorities despatched an officer, Captain BOEHM to investigate events at Limburg and in his report to the General Staff, Boehm alludes to poor discipline amongst the Irish prisoners who refuse to acknowledge the authority of the Irish brigade NCOs, again SCANLAN tells us that one of the Irish brigade NCOS, “unter-offizier Bailey¹² formerly of the Royal Irish Regiment, was surrounded by Irish prisoners who knocked him to the ground and kicked him. The Germans came to his rescue and we were punished” BOEHM dismissed the assertions of poor conditions insisting that the Irish brigade were housed in “good, well furnished barrack that is physically fenced off from the remainder of the camp”.

In Zossen, the facilities for the small contingent of volunteers for the Irish brigade also deteriorated. By August 1915 a feeling of resentment toward Casement was evident with the men of the Irish brigade stating to Casement that he and the

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Germans had betrayed them. This appears to have been the straw that breaks the camel's back because Casement then informs the German Foreign Office that he wishes to leave Germany and travel to the USA. About this time the Camp commanding officers seek clarification of the actual status of the Irish prisoners and to what extent they can be punished for disobedience.

Despite all this the Irish-American hope of an Irish brigade does not diminish and in September 1915 a former Boer War veteran and officer of the Irish Volunteers, Robert MONTEITH was proposed to lead the Irish brigade and was appointed "Commanding Officer of the Irish Corps".

There is also evidence that NCOs of the Irish brigade in Limburg were involved in bullying and theft. Over an affair of stolen money from an Algerian POW, four men, Kehoe (now calling himself a Colour Sergeant), Dowling¹³, Quinlisk and another Irish brigade volunteer Collins¹⁴ were charged and found guilty by a court in Berlin and in October 1915 sentenced to two weeks imprisonment. Interestingly Casement complains to officials in Berlin that the men were tried as POWs and not Irish soldiers of the Irish brigade of Imperial Germany. Initially he refused to intervene on behalf of the four soldiers believing it to be not worth the effort, but later changed his mind and they were not imprisoned.

With Monteith in place in Limburg a clearer picture emerges when he discovers that Kehoe (now a Sergeant Major!) is a bit of a villain, though he more prudently describes Kehoe as having "attractions other than recruiting in Limburg". Never the less Monteith reports that Kehoe's position [rank] and protection should continue. The Irish brigade in Zossen now numbers some seventy of which probably ten are unsuitable but soon Monteith has revised his figure down to forty reliable members of the Irish brigade with thirty still to be confirmed.

Surprisingly at this juncture Casement revises his plans and begins to pursue the idea that the Irish brigade, again a sixty man strong company, should be attached to the Ottoman army as a volunteer Irish brigade to fight the British in Egypt. The plan is forwarded to the Military Attaché in Constantinople and in January 1916 the Turks suggest that the Irish brigade be deployed as a machine gun detachment in Syria. Monteith informs his "company" now all at Zossen, and discovers that his sixty volunteers reduced itself to thirty-eight. The German authorities duly procured the machine guns that arrived in Zossen in March 1916 but then because no written authority for issuing the MGs had been received they were not released.

We now know that the worm had turned! Military intelligence between the Irish Volunteers, the Irish-



NCOs of the Irish brigade at Zossen POW camp 1916. From left: Cpl P Golden, Sgt Maj Kehoe, Cpl O'Mahony, Sgt Beverley, Interpreter Zerhussen, Cpl Kavanagh, Cpl O'Callaghan & QMS Quinlisk. "Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland" (MS18,081(10))

Americans in the USA and the German Government had confirmed the date of the Easter uprising. Representations had been made to Germany for the provision of arms to support the uprising and in the course of disagreements between Casement and the German authorities over the use of the Irish brigade, Casement falls from favour and the Irish brigade was dissolved, its recruits being reclassified as prisoners of war. On the 11th April 1916 Casement wrote to the Chancellor of Germany expressing his disappointment and requesting that the men of the Irish brigade be treated as guests of Germany and not as prisoners. The same day, 11 April 1916 Casement, Monteith and Beverley embarked upon a German submarine from Wilhelmshaven for Ireland their objective being to take part in the 1916 Easter Rising organised by the dissident Nationalists in Ireland.

So what was the outcome for our Irish POWs? At the start of the war, Irish POWs were treated in the same way as most British POWs, and the evidence is that this could be quite brutal. Then as Casement promises the German government that he can deliver a brigade of Irish Volunteers to fight against the British there is a moderate improvement in their conditions. Casement though clearly got it wrong because the vast majority of Irish POWs remained loyal and Casement's promises are rejected. In the end the German Authorities realise that Casement cannot

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12

deliver his Irish brigade and privileges for the brigade volunteers are withdrawn. In POW terms their treatments went from rags to riches and back to rags again. After 1916 Irish POWs were treated just as appallingly as any other British POW and conditions did not improve until toward the end of the war when the German military authorities acted to minimise any post war recriminations by the allies.

And what can be discovered about the volunteers who had joined the brigade? Many were quietly discharged upon their return home. Casement as we know was executed for treason and few of his cohorts were dealt with severely. Information about the brigade and its rejection by the majority of Irish POWs did not get back to the British authorities until late 1916 but by then damage has been done. The British government, following the Easter Rising, treated all home based battalions of Irish Regiments still in Ireland with suspicion and moved them out of Ireland into mainland UK. It could also be argued by some that the whole episode was one of the nails that led to the ultimate demise of the Southern Irish Regiments in 1922.

References & Acknowledgements

1 TNA WO 161/68 Committee on the Treatment of British Prisoners of War: Interviews and Reports October 1915 – August 1916

2 Prisoner interview 376, 6607 Mulholland Richard, 2/Leinsters, POW Camp Hameln

3 Prisoner interview 520, 6905 Scanlan, 2/Leinsters, POW Camp Soltau, Limburg

4 Prisoner interview 1087, Arthur Stansfield was 6/Cheshires

5 Prisoner Interview 1088, L/Cpl Flannigan 1/Leinsters was captured on 14/02/1915 POW Camp multiple.

6 Prisoner Interview 237, 6926 Wm McCoy 2/Leinsters POW Camp Wittenburg

7 In 1907 representatives of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the German-American National Alliance established an agreement for political cooperation – See *Imperial Challenge* pp 72-3 published 1989 by Chapel Hill:UNCP

8 A handwritten note by Casement written on 2 Nov 1914 - See *Prelude to the Easter Rising* pp.52-53 published 2000 by Frank Cass Publishers

9 POW interview No. 520 TNA WO161/98/652

10 10435 Cpl Timothy Quinlisk Irish Guards aka Quinless turned informer and was subsequently killed.

11 Kehoe cannot be identified with certainty. Casement refers to him as both Kehoe GMP and Kehoe

J. Scanlan refers to him as Private Keogh of the Irish Guards. Investigations by the author using the TNA MRCI failed to identify either Kehoe or Keogh of the Irish Guards but did identify James Kehoe, Irish Guards (enlistment date 14/7/15) and Garret Kehoe, Irish Guards Sgt Kehoe P J (RDF) who had been a POW; James Kehoe of the Royal Irish Regiment and Kehoe J, of the Leinsters. I am unable to confirm if any of these persons is the Kehoe that



Irish Prisoners of War camp at Giessen Germany 1916. Many of the “uniforms” were locally made as were the musical instruments. Pte. Leavey is seated front left on the ground. Private collection

Casement refers to

12 Bailey Daniel Julian, Royal Irish Rifles, is identified by Casement in his list of men who joined the brigade as Sgt D J Beverley. Bailey was, following his recapture by the British in 1916, “re-instated for good behaviour” and subsequently transferred twice to other regiments before ending up in as RE.

13 Dowling, Joseph, Pte, was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1918 by General Courts Martial.

14 Collins was subsequently moved to the Zossen POW camp as part of the Irish brigade but no other identification for this person has been unearthed other than his civil occupation was as a labourer.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to the National Library of Ireland Manuscripts Department for permission to use the image from their collection of the Irish brigade NCOs (MS18,081(10))

Recommended Further Reading

The 1916 Easter Rising Chapter 5, an online exhibition of the National Library of Ireland.



photo private collection

Private Leavey as a POW in Giessen. His Jacket carries the POW identification and his POW number is on the jacket left sleeve. He is wearing Leinster shoulder tags on his epaulets. His trousers are locally made with turn-ups and his shoes are “clog style” His cap badge appears to be “made up”

continued from page 7

It must have been quite a challenge for Annie, especially after such a long journey from London and David Ball summed it up nicely with a congratulatory *"What a girl!"*

But, the afternoon was not yet over as we discovered the opportunity to visit the parts and places in Ledegem



A passing truck stumbles into a WW1 re-enactment at Pereboomhuis used as an officers hospital by the Germans 1914 - 1918

that have historic significance prior to and during WW1. A "hop on – hop off" bus service was provided permitting individuals to tour the town and discover its past. Members of the Ledegem Historical Society dressed in period costume were at many of the venues to demonstrate and explain in English the significance of the places being visited. One way or another the tour took



Inside Ledegem's oldest house where the interior is maintained as it was over 70 years ago

some two hours and was nothing short of fascinating. Eventually the day had to draw to a close and our members returned to Ypres for dinner and probably a well earned rest after much walking around Ledegem.

Did we achieve our objective of making the visit different to 2008? I believe we did and our thanks and appreciation go to Bart Dochy, Nick Soen and the folk of Ledegem for making us feel most welcome again.

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Leo Regemortels, of the Salient Remembrance Detachment, in the uniform of a mounted infantry sergeant brought his horse "Pandur" and braved the afternoon (light) rain to demonstrate the type of equipment & riding-tac used by the mounted infantry during WW1



The 40/10 Monument in Ledegem photo Jack Dickson



The future belongs to the children for they will be the ones who will carry forward the commemoration

more Ledegem photos on page 15

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Leinsters remembered in South Africa



Site of the highest Blockhouse on Voetpad Mountain

Earlier this year we were surprised to receive an e-mail from Leon Bezuidenhout in South Africa telling us about a cross country race that he helps to organise near Pretoria each September that combines a serious athletics event with local history themed to the Anglo Boer War (ABW) including the part the Leinster regiment played in that conflict. We discovered that the 10 mile race was run over a course traced by bush tracks connecting a number of blockhouses garrisoned by 2/Leinsters during 1902 on the Daspoort Ridge overlooking Pretoria. In the course of recent excavations at one of the blockhouses a number of imperial uniform items had been found including a brass “Leinster” shoulder title.

In October 1901 the Leinster’s 2nd Battalion, then serving in the West Indies, received orders to go to South Africa arriving in Cape Town in January 1902. By this time the ABW had petered out into its protracted and bitter final phase when the Imperial forces tried to mop up the remaining elusive Boer commandos over huge tracts of veldt country. The Boers had the advantage of being highly mobile, familiar with the country and being able to rely on the indigenous population for support. The strategy evolved to counter these advantages involved the building of lines of blockhouses joined by barbed wire and garrisoned by small detachments of infantry. Other troops were turned into Mounted

Infantry and used to sweep through the country in theory driving the elusive Boers into the lines of waiting blockhouses. At the same time the isolated farmsteads and small communities were destroyed and the inhabitants, mainly women and children, were rounded up and put into “concentration” camps where the primitive conditions led to many deaths ensuring a bitter legacy that continues to echo over a hundred years later, not to mention the subsequent use of the term “concentration camp” to describe places of far more sinister intent. It was as part of these operations that 2/Leinsters found themselves deployed in the Orange Free State during the early months of 1902. In the middle of March 1902 the battalion was moved back to the Pretoria area as part of the garrison of the spiritual home of the South African republics where it was to remain until 1905.

The “Ou Voetpad Mountain 10 miler” was conceived 5 years ago by members of the Voortrekker Monument Athletics Club as an event to combine remembrance of the shared experience of the Anglo Boer War with a serious athletic challenge. Reenactors dressed in period uniforms man the checkpoints and provide the historical atmosphere to the event. Given the historical context it is a remarkable exercise in reconciliation; a parallel would be if people in Ledegem dressed up as German soldiers and paraded with the Leinsters through the town! Part of the course takes in the site of Quagga Camp where some of the Leinsters trained as Mounted



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More Ledegem Photos



*The Leinster
Commemoration medallion
Awarded in the
"Ou Voetpad Mountain 10 miler"*

Infantry.

The course of the event also recalls the exploits of Capt. Koos Naude of the Transvaal Secret Service who successfully slipped through the British lines into Pretoria on seven occasions during which he had some hair-raising escapes. On one occasion a German companion was caught and executed as a spy.

Pretoria is about 1,350 meters above sea level (as high as Ben Nevis) and the race takes place over terrain climbing to nearly 1,440 meters in temperatures reaching into the early 30's. Leon tells us that this year 756 competitors took part in the race that was started by the firing of 18th century British naval gun. As the competitors reached the blockhouse line they were greeted by the pipes of the South African Irish Regiment and two "Tommies" manning the control point, one badged as a Leinster. Over the ridge a Boer horseman waited to guide the leaders to the finishing point. In addition the South African Army Field Gun Racing team gave a demonstration similar to the Royal Navy's version, itself based on events during the ABW.

The Association was pleased to provide some modest sponsorship to this event which was used to present each finisher with a medal depicting the Leinster badge and it is good to reflect that over 100 years on the Leinsters are remembered so far from home for their part in what was at the time a very controversial war.

Leon would be delighted if we would put together a team for the next year's event which takes place on the 11th September. Squad training will commence immediately after the Association's AGM in April!



Mrs. June Ball at De Cycloon



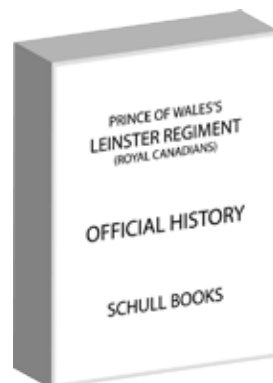
Is Col Nick Weekes supervising a photo session?



Chris Harman plays the Last Post



Pipes, drums, bayonets fixed and standard flying the Leinster Regiment Association in Ledegem 2009



Purchase your own copy of the Regimental History and have a valuable resource. Three volume editions of the history may be purchased from Schull Books in Ireland.

Telephone
00 353 28 37317

Email
schullbooks@eircome.net and mention that you are an Association member

LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Deciphering army uniforms. Peter Walton takes a look at the challenges involved.

16 If ever a word was misused it is uniform – certainly so far as the British Army is concerned. While in some branches of it before 1914 certain colours were commonly used, for example scarlet coats and blue trousers, by most (but NOT all) infantry regiments, the fact is that the colour of clothing and the nature of badges and embellishments were anything but uniform. For all that it is often possible to distinguish members of one Regiment from those of another. But when khaki was introduced in the years before 1914 and in one shade or another has been worn now for 100 years and more, there was much more uniformity. But equally it became much more difficult, sometimes impossible, to tell the Regiment to which any particular soldier belonged. Naturally, if you could inspect him face to face you could tell from certain badges (even by asking him!). But when you have nothing but a photograph, perhaps not in the best of condition, it is all a bit harder – even impossible.

This article assumes no knowledge of this arcane subject and attempts to offer a guide to the recognition of the wearer's Regiment or Corps from the uniform shown in a monochrome portrait. We are fortunate to be able to use as examples photographs of relatives of Member Liz Sainsbury, who consulted us on this very subject back in August.

Infantry Soldiers c 1903-1918

Before the Great War, soldiers wore their best dress (known as full dress) for parade and also for "walking out". In the Infantry, most members of

Foot Guards and Line Regiments wore a scarlet tunic and blue trousers, the latter with a narrow scarlet stripe down the outside seam. (Beware of the exceptions which are beyond us in this short article.) From around 1903 to 1913 scarlet tunics of this type were ornamented with cuffs and collar of a different colour for different Regiments – known as the facing colour. For Royal Regiments such as the Leinsters this was dark blue. In 1913 the pattern was slightly modified and the shoulder straps became made of the facing colour. Throughout the period the tunic had a line of white cloth edging the front, the collar, the (pointed) cuffs and the shoulder straps. But there was nothing to distinguish members of one Regiment from those of another Royal Regiment, except the collar badges and the shoulder titles. In the picture entitled "William Barrett group" which has been dated to about 1905, all these features can be seen. The collar badges are clear enough to be recognised as those of the Royal West Kent Regiment but the shoulder titles (embroidered in



William Barrett group

white thread on the scarlet material) simply cannot be made out. In this case the matter is academic, but in another it might be important. The buttons are no help even if they could be seen clearly as at this time virtually the whole Army wore the same pattern – showing the Royal Arms.

In the "William Barrett group" there are three odd men out. At this stage I draw attention to one only – in the rear rank standing, third from the viewer's left. This is a Lance Corporal Drummer wearing a single medal, probably the Queen's South Africa Medal for service in the 2nd Anglo-Boer War during the period 1899-1901. His tunic is the same as the others except for the very obvious and defining additions of "crown and inch" braid (that is, white braid $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide with scarlet

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James Barrett group



crowns embroidered on it at 1 inch intervals) on the seams of the arms and back of the tunic, also around the top of the collar, and around and across the top of the “wing” at the end of each shoulder strap; there was also an edging of special narrow scarlet and white

braid around the top of the pointed cuffs, along the base of the collar, and round the shoulder straps. Drummers, it should be noted, were not bandsmen but rather the signallers of the day: until telephones and radios were invented and in common use, they were the means of passing orders on the battlefield by drum beat or bugle call. The uniform of Regimental bandsmen was much the same as that of drummers except that all the additional braid was plain white.

Turning from scarlet and blue to khaki clothing, there were two distinct patterns of serge jacket. In the “William Barrett group”, the two men at either end of the back row are wearing the earlier version. This dates them to 1906 or earlier. The distinctive features of this period were coloured Regimental titles sewn at the top of each sleeve, slightly below the armhole seam, and shoulder straps which were not in fact cloth

but plaited khaki/white cord or thick braid – and these can be seen. These two features can also be seen on the uniform of Richard Barrett (the left hand figure in the picture called “Richard and James Barrett”). He is in fact wearing the uniform of the Royal Welch Fusiliers and this is identified from the badge in his forage cap; had we been able

to see his coloured Regimental titles they would show it too. (So it is just as well he wore his cap for the snap!)

From around 1907 to late in the Great War (1914–18) the khaki jackets of infantry soldiers were unchanged except that they now had khaki cloth shoulder straps with metal shoulder titles plugged into them at the end nearest the armhole seam. These features can be seen on the uniform of all soldiers in the “James Barrett group”, and also on the uniform of “James Barrett”. There is however, one other feature which changed during the course of the Great War. Troops went to France in 1914 wearing the stiffened service peaked cap which is so clear



from the “James Barrett group” picture. It had, however, some disadvantages: it could not be shaped to the head, was uncomfortable especially when new, and tended to fall off especially when the wearer was running; also, it was very obvious from the air and tended to give away British positions, even in undergrowth, to the aerial observer. It was therefore quite soon replaced by a more floppy version and this can be seen on “James Barrett” although, it has to be said that he has tried to stiffen it – probably for the photograph. Both pictures however show plainly the distinctive capbadge of The Leinsters!

I hope that these few clues will help you to recognise your family members or to identify their Regiment. If not, or if you would like to ask about anyone who was clearly not Infantry, I shall be very happy to advise – if I can. All I need is a clear picture either by email to peter@scarletgunner.com or a copy of your photograph (a laser copy is ideal) by post to 1



James Barrett Walkhurst Cottages, Benenden, Kent TN17 4DS. See also my website www.scarletgunner.com. There is no charge for recognition or advice unless I need to research beyond my own resources in which case I will ask you before beginning.

Lastly, thanks to Liz Sainsbury for allowing us to use her family photographs for this article.

Peter Walton



LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Your letters



Dear Sir

I am Vice Chairman and Secretary of the Friends of the Somme Association, South Antrim Branch and I was wondering if you could help me with some research that I'm doing into Lieut. G P N Young MC of 2nd Battalion, The Leinster Regiment who died on the 25th July 1915.

About a year ago a friend lent me an old school jotter that contained newspaper cuttings from the Ballymena Observer newspaper dated 1914 and 1915 including references to Lieut. G P N Young. I have started to research this man with a view to producing a booklet about him in time for the anniversary of his death. There are two specific things that are puzzling me. Lieut. Young's initials are variously shown as G.P.G and G.P.N.. do you know which one is correct? The second is why his award of the Military Cross is not shown on his Medal Index Card. I would also very much like to locate a photograph of Lieut. Young.

Can you help me answer these questions and provide me with information concerning the activities of 2/ Leinsters during 1915?

Thank you for your time.

Allistair Kitson.

Our Historian replies:-

Dear Allistair,

Fortunately in this case we can give you a reasonable amount of information from published sources and point you in the direction of other material including photographs.

Lieut. Young is mentioned twice in the regimental history; on page 34 he is described as showing great gallantry in attending and rescuing the wounded of his platoon on the 23rd September 1914 during the Battle of the Aisne. This is the action for which he was awarded the MC.

On page 66 we are told that his Company Commander Major Mather instructed him to find out what was going on when the Germans attacked the Leinster's positions at Premesques on the 20th October 1914 while he finished his breakfast.

Both of these references appear in "The History of the Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment. Vol. II in the chapters devoted to the 2nd Battalion.

There are further references to him in "Stand To", subtitled "A Diary of the Trenches 1915 - 1918" by Capt. F C Hitchcock MC. Hitchcock was a regular officer in the 2/Leinsters and has left us one of the best diary accounts of life in the trenches. At the start of his diary Young is his company CO and the two seem to have been fairly close, at one point Young confides to Hitchcock that his nerves are in a bad way. In later references Hitchcock records Young being wounded in the shoulder by shrapnel on the 10/11th July 1915. Finally on the 30th July he records the surprise and regret at the news of Neville Young's death in hospital at Boulogne as a result of gangrene in those days before penicillin.

Lieut. Young also appears in "Our Heroes: Mons to the Somme, August 1914 - July 1916". This book is a compendium of a supplement published by "Irish Life" magazine during the Great War and gives brief biographical details and photographs of "Officers of Irish Regiments and Irish Officers of British Regiments" who had been killed or distinguished themselves. It also includes a limited number of entries relating to other ranks.

For the 14th May 1915 there is an entry relating to Lt. George Neville Patrick Young. This gives brief biographical details, it tells us who his father was, his date of birth, home address, where he went to school and that he had been awarded the MC. Copies of the original publication are available in the National Library of Ireland in Dublin, and may be available in Belfast. There is also a photograph available at ww1photos.com, it may be the same one as referred to above and it is reproduced here.

On the question of his names I can only say that the regimental history calls him "N G", Hitchcock uses G N G but "Our Heroes" refers to G N P. The De Ruvigny Roll of Honour (page 389) refers to him as Young, George Neville Patrick, and the entry can be viewed on Ancestry.

com that also mentions his brother Guy, a Lt with the Royal Irish Rifles. As neither were "at home" for the 1911 census of Ireland the only way to resolve the matter would be to look at his birth certificate or his file in The National Archives which will probably be in Class No. WO 339 or possibly WO374.

It would be quite usual for the MC not to be shown on the Medal Index Card. These Cards are only supposed to be a record of campaign medals, gallantry medals are not usually shown.



Book Review “Somme Mud”

reviewed by Ian Lowe

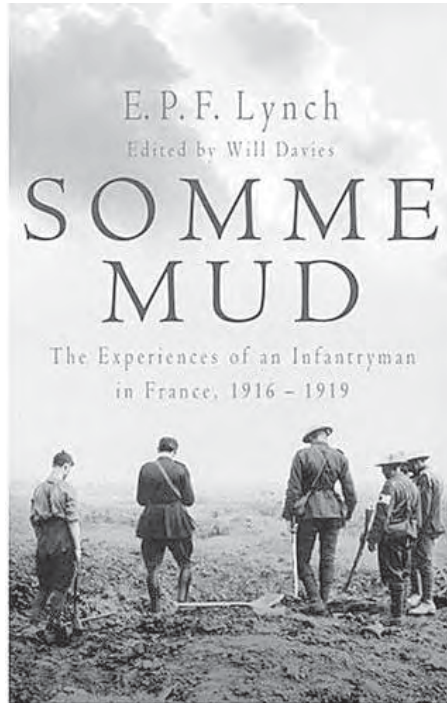
There is a seemingly inexhaustible supply of trench diaries, collected letters and reminiscences written by veterans of the Great War that turn up in attics and old family trunks and are subsequently published.

The results are of very variable quality and rarely add much to our knowledge of events but provide background information and human interest. So it was with no great expectation that I recently picked up a book lent to me by a friend entitled “Somme Mud” written by E P F Lynch and edited by Will Davies.

Edward Lynch was an 18-year-old Australian who volunteered for the AIF and served, often as a runner or signaller, in France and Belgium with the 45th Bn AIF from late 1916 to 1919. During that time he saw action in the latter stages of the Somme battles of 1916, took part in the Battle of Messines in June 1917 where he was wounded, 3rd Ypres where he was more seriously wounded taking him out of the line for 6 months. He returned in time for the closing stages of the German offensive of March 1918 and took part in the actions that stopped the German advance before Amiens. Finally he took part in the last Allied offensives and the ensuing pursuit of the retreating Germans. After returning home he recorded his memories in a series of exercise books perhaps as a form of therapy, perhaps with a view to publishing them. Whatever the motives he has left us with one of the most detailed descriptions of front line action that I have read.

The author has a talent for vivid description and capturing dialogue. Bearing in mind that he started writing his account in 1921 you have, at times, to question how his memory of events could remain so clear 5 years on. However the main details of his story can be cross-checked right down to the locations of individual trenches. His description of his unit's part in the Battle of Messines is particularly welcome as the involvement by II ANZAC Corps anchoring the right flank of Second Army during that battle is often overlooked. 2/Leinsters were later to fight over the same ground in early September 1918. His narrative is refreshingly free of the type of Aussie bombast that is often found in his countrymen's accounts of the Great War. While he is clearly proud of the AIF and it's achievements he pays due respect to the dogged bravery of British units and even has nice things to say about the General Staff and officers in general. The Australian

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tradition of “sticking by your mates” comes over loud and clear. In addition to the accounts of life in the front line and “going over the top” or a “hop over” as he refers to it there are good descriptions of life out of the line including interaction with civilians and the experience of being passed through the casualty evacuation system. The descriptions of hand-to-hand fighting are vivid, direct and frequent and while it is possible that some colour has been added to the facts to provide what the author perceives as a more exciting

read the ferocity of some of the encounters can be checked against other sources e.g. the Official History's description of the capture of Windmill Hill near Zonnebeke in October 1917.

The role of the editor of a work like this is difficult, probably made more so in this case by the fact that Will Davies is a friend of the grandson of the author. A more rigorous editing of descriptions of recurring events would have produced a tighter and pacier read, without detracting from the impact of the book. For me, a particularly irritating feature is the excessive use of Superman style sound effects, Crump, Zing, Zong, Bang and many others to describe shell and other gunfire, always delivered in italics.

“Somme Mud” is a good read for the specialist as well as the general reader and is well worth the £7.99 that Bantam Books are asking for the paper back edition. ISBN No. 978-0-553-81913-7, 432 pages.

Editor: There is a companion book “Following in the Footsteps of Private Lynch” that provides an extended guide to the historical background of Somme Mud that supports and expands on the original text.

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To Contact the Association

Write to:

The Secretary
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7 Nethercombe House
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London
SE3 7SL

The Quartermasters Store

Item	Price
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 **The 40/10**

Journal of the Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians) Regimental Association

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likely to be directed elsewhere. It is hoped that we will have some indication of the degree of local support available before the end of this year.

On the 21st November over 40 members and friends braved dreadful weather conditions to attend an Association meeting in the Resource Centre, Birr. The day, presided over by our President Major-General The O'Morchoe, was in two parts with a members only meeting, held in the morning, to discuss how to organise the Association in Ireland in order to ensure its future growth. As a result sufficient volunteers came forward to form a small Irish sub-committee, under the chairmanship of Maj-Gen The O'Morchoe, who will be responsible for promoting the Association in Ireland. After lunch there was a public meeting at which Mr. Brian Kennedy, a local schoolteacher, gave a talk on the history of the Leinster Regiment. Brian traced the story of the Regiment from its origins in Canada and India through the Boer War to the part it played in the Great War. He related how four members of the Regiment won the Victoria Cross and described in some detail the action during which 2nd Leinsters captured the town of Ledegem in 1918. Among the appreciative audience it was good to see the Chairman of Birr Town Council, Mr. Tony McLoughlin. Our thanks are due to the Brian Kennedy and to Sean and Concepta Cooke and their family who organised the day and most importantly made the tea and sandwiches!

In conclusion the Committee would like to thank all our friends in and around Birr and Ireland generally for their continued support of all our activities, it is much appreciated.

Subscriptions are due on January 1st

Unless you pay by Standing Order please would all members send their 2010 subscriptions to the Membership Secretary, Mrs. Sheila Dickson
Fir Trees, 12 Fryer Close, Chesham, Bucks,
HP5 1RD with your membership card and SAE
Thank you!

SEND CORRESPONDENCE AND ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION IN 40/10 TO

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