



# *The 40-10*



## LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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

Summer 2020

ISSN 1753-8246



# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

## E D I T O R I A L

As I write this the Covid-19 pandemic crisis is still with us and none of us can predict what the world will look like in a few months time or much less in a few years. However I have no reason to doubt the wisdom of HM The Queen's words when she addressed us on the 5th April.

*"We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return: we will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again".*

Quite when those days will be or what the world will look like when they arrive is very uncertain at the moment and we should recognise that organisations such as ours will not be immune to unknown changes that may be coming. It was always my intention to address the question of change and the future in this edition and recent events have provided an added impetus.

Between 2014 and 2018 we passed through the period of centenaries associated with the Great War; these provided us with many poignant and memorable moments. In Ireland we continue to pass through what is termed the "Decade of Centenaries" spanning the period of political, social and industrial unrest starting in 1912 and encompassing the Great War, the Easter Rising and War of Independence, ending with the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1922. These centenaries and the associated publicity coupled with the upsurge in interest in family history have acted as a powerful recruiting sergeant for organisations such as ours. However we should recognise that those factors will run their course and that people's interests and focus will shift elsewhere leaving a diminishing band of enthusiasts to follow for their own reasons the memory of a long disbanded Irish regiment. A few years ago I visited some of the battlefields of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 and saw how that conflict was remembered 150 years on, the major memorials were generally in fair condition while some of the smaller ones had been

vandalised or damaged through neglect and carelessness, two subsequent wars rolling through the region have not helped. Is this how we want the Western Front to look in 50 years time? Do we want to go back, not much more than 20 years ago, to the time when there might be half a dozen people attending the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate?

The solution to this looming problem is both simple and difficult; we need to attract and involve the next generation and enthuse them with an interest in their heritage and its place in the wider history of their respective nations. The difficult part is how to achieve this in the face of much competition and the immutable fact that each generation (my own included) is not particularly interested in what has gone before until it is too late. My challenge to you all is to try to sow the seeds of interest in their family background and heritage in the next generation. Some of these will have been on school trips to the Western Front or like my family have spent part of family holidays visiting obscure battlefields so hopefully some seeds will have been planted. Let's try to think of ways to nurture those.

I wish you and your families well in these difficult times and remember that times will get better and we will meet again.

*Ian Lowe*

### **Front cover**

Officer's Helmet Plate, King's Crown.

### **Back cover**

South African War Memorial, Crinkill Military Cemetery. The memorial has recently been cleaned by member Stephen Callaghan who also provided the photo.

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## Chairman's Address



Welcome to the Summer 2020 edition of 40-10. In my last introduction I said that we were facing a particularly busy time. Life rarely turns out as you expect and none of us expected Covid-19, nor the impact it would have on all our lives and the way we live.

Covid-19 has stopped the Association's activities in its tracks, but we are not alone. The effects have ranged from the personal tragedy of bereavement to an unprecedented period of isolation, the effects of which we have yet to learn. Our unifying purpose is comradeship and in the absence of meeting, I have been heartened by the increased use of Facebook. It is really

important that people share their stories, as in doing so they are strengthening the fellowship of the Association.

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. In this edition you will find the minutes of our 2020 Annual General Meeting which was to be held in Dublin on Saturday 11 July. These minutes have been completed by submission.

Time marches on and the 12 June marked the 98th anniversary of the laying up of our colours in St George's Hall Windsor where they were taken into safe care by King George V and his descendants. We are now less than two years from the 100th anniversary of that sad day and thus the countdown has truly begun.

After such a long period of 'social distancing', I hope this edition will remind you of the continuing strength of the Association and its resolve to perpetuate the memory of The Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians). Furthermore, when it is safe to meet, that you will make a special effort to attend events and renew acquaintances. In the meantime, do keep safe and stay well.

Ich Dien

Mark Weldon

## New Memorial to Irish Troops in Belgium 7th Leinsters and the 3rd Battle of Ypres



The recently erected memorial to the 16th (Irish) Division and the 36th (Ulster) Division near Frezenberg.

In 2017 the Association was asked if it would contribute towards the cost of erecting a new memorial to the two Irish divisions that fought side by side during the opening phase of the Battle of Langemarck on the 16th August 1917. The initiative for the memorial originated from the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association and was supported by the other Irish regimental associations as well as the Belgian and Irish authorities. Subsequent to the original unveiling an additional plaque has been added to commemorate the famous Roman Catholic Chaplain of 8/Royal Dublin Fusiliers, Fr. Willie Doyle SJ MC who was killed during the action.

From an Irish perspective the importance of the occasion is that it was the second and last time that the two Irish divisions on the Western Front, the 16th (Irish) and the 36th (Ulster) representing the different strands of Irish aspirations went into action side by side. The first occasion had been the successful attack they made during the opening phase of the Battle of Messines on the 7th June 1917. The symbolism of the two divisions supporting each other against a common enemy was widely recognised at the time and has continued to echo down the years. The site of the new memorial was chosen because it is on the common boundary of the two divisional areas.

The Battle of Langemarck was the second sub-battle of the eight that the Battles Nomenclature Committee divided the 3rd Battle of Ypres often popularly referred to as "Passchendaele". The Battle of Langemarck is deemed to have taken place between the 16th and the 18th August 1917 and the conditions under which it was

fought and the eventual outcome have come to define the common perception of the Great War on the Western Front; mud, rain, death and destruction for very little gain. Indeed some of the most commonly used images of the war are from this area and period. Today it is easy to appreciate the tactical problem of attacking over this ground by standing on one of the most important features of this part of the battlefield, Hill 37, i.e. it is only 37 meters above sea level. The surrounding countryside is a checkerboard of small brick built farms often constructed over cellars and their associated out-buildings, these the Germans had turned into strongpoints each one giving covering fire to its neighbours. The Tommies, as is their custom, had given these places homely names, some of which are still used, Hindu Cot, Pond Farm, etc. The intervening fields were crisscrossed by small streams constructed over countless generations by the inhabitants to drain the land. These ditches had been destroyed by three years of warfare resulting in flooding turning the ground into a quagmire. These problems were compounded by heavier rain than was usual for the time of year. The two Irish divisions had spent the previous two weeks in what was supposed to be reserve. In reality although they were out of the line they were involved in the endless task of moving supplies forward and creating the infrastructure to support the coming attack. The Official History records that the 16th(Irish) Div suffered 4,285 casualties between the 1st and the 20th August, the 36th(Ulster) Div's casualties for the 1st August to 18th August were 3,585. On the 16th August 16th(Irish) Div. attacked with two brigades, 48 and 49, up and with 47 Brigade of which 7/Leinsters were part in reserve. While they did not take part in the initial assault the Brigade moved forward later in the day to try to consolidate the ground gained and suffered considerable casualties from the German counterattacks.

So what was the role of 7/Leinsters in 3rd Ypres? In summary it was not very glamorous but still a necessary and even vital one. After the conclusion of the Battle of Messines the battalion and its parent brigade and division were taken out of the line for rest and refitting. The Battalion had acquitted itself well during the action and despite having its HQ hit by shellfire resulting in the loss of the CO Lt-Col Stannus and other HQ personnel.

On the 31st July 1917, the first day of what was to become known as 3rd Ypres the battalion was tasked with digging a communications trench and bury a cable as the attack moved forward from Potijze Chateau. The working parties immediately came under shellfire



Detail of the plaque on the Frezenberg memorial.

resulting in a steady trickle of casualties. In addition the weather turned for the worse and it began to rain. The weather and in particular the rain was to become a dominant feature throughout the remainder of the campaign and 100 years later it remains a potent folk memory. That first night the battalion bivouacked in the open near Goldfish Chateau having been warned that it might be required to move up to the frontline at short notice. Sure enough the following morning the Battalion was ordered to relieve the remnants of a Scottish battalion on the Frezenberg Ridge. It is an indication of the conditions that even during this superficially simple manoeuvre the Battalion suffered 6 men killed and 39 wounded. By the 3rd August the Regimental history records that all the companies were under the command of "very junior officers", a lieutenant and three second-lieutenants. One particularly notable event during this period was the rescue under fire of a wounded man by the Battalion MO Capt. G D Watkins who was subsequently awarded the DSO for his actions. The Leinsters endured several days in the frontline under incessant shellfire and rain making the preparation of hot food impossible and the forward movement of any supplies extremely difficult. Under these conditions proper rest or sleep for the men was also impossible. The Battalion was relieved by 2/Royal Dublin Fusiliers on the 6th August and once again moved into a rest area on the far side of Ypres. During the march back the Regimental history records that they were shelled on the road back to Ypres and subjected to gas shelling while passing through the town.

The Battalion was in the rest area between the 6th and the 11th August but even during this period it was not safe from the attentions of the enemy, while in camp they were subjected to bombing raids by enemy aircraft.

It is an indication of the growing importance of the air component of warfare that the history also highlights the fact that the Battalion was subjected to bombing and strafing attacks when they were in the front line and comments on the apparent air superiority of the Germans at this point of the war.

On the 15th August the Battalion and the rest of 47 Brigade moved forward to support 48 and 49 Brigades in their attack scheduled for the following day. When the attack went in it was an initial success with gains of up to 1000 yards being made. However a combination of German counter attacks and the weakened state of the attacking units coupled with the appalling weather meant that the early gains could not be held. 7/Leinsters relieved 8/Royal Dublin Fusiliers who had suffered heavy casualties during the initial assault and found themselves in much the same positions as they had held at the beginning of the month. The following night troops of 15th(Scottish) Div took over the line including that held by the Leinsters. Thus ended the part 7/Leinsters played in 3rd Ypres. In summary it was not a particularly high profile part but a very necessary supporting role. Reading the accounts of these days in the War Diary and the Regimental history you get a sense of weariness coupled with a determination to carry on and see the job through.

The Battalion and the rest of the division now left the Ypres sector and moved south to Bullencourt near Arras where in the coming months further trials and tribulations awaited them. Early in their march back from Ypres the War Diary records that the Battalion came under fire from a "14.2" gun firing at a reported range of 41Kms or about 25 miles, an indication of how difficult it was to escape the dangers of war even when apparently at a safe distance.

## The Leinsters in the Balkans



Visiting and paying respects at the 10th (Irish) Division memorial at Robrovo, North Macedonia. This is the only memorial to the 10th Division and includes its service at Gallipoli and Palestine. The local custom on these occasions is to drink a toast to the memory of the fallen.

The campaign that took place in the southern Balkans between 1915 and 1918 is often overlooked through our preoccupation with the events on the Western Front. Yet at its height this campaign had about 300,000 allied soldiers and vast resources committed to it. The main forces were French and British with at various times Serbian, Greek and Russian forces contributing. The main enemy were Bulgarian assisted by their Austro-Hungarian, Turkish and German allies. In Britain the campaign is usually referred to as the Salonika or Macedonian Campaign and the forces deployed to it referred to as the “British Salonika Force” shortened to “BSF”. In truth the use of the name “Salonika” is misleading as Salonika or Thessalonika as it is now known was the port and rear base for the allied armies with the action taking place 70kms or so away in the mountains of Serbia.

Although today we think of Thessalonika as being a Greek city, the second largest after Athens, it was quite a different place at the time of the Great War. For a start it had only been Greek since the end of the Balkan Wars in 1913. Prior to that it had been an Ottoman city with an exotic mixture of races and creeds including large Jewish and Christian communities. It had been an important trading port going back to the time that

St Paul walked its streets and its history was reflected in the mixture of architecture to be seen. Some of its principal buildings had started as Roman temples, became Christian churches had been turned into mosques and were now back to being churches.

The decision to send an Allied force to the region was in response to the desire to help prop up Serbia in its struggle against the Austro-Hungarian empire, the dispute that had triggered the start of the war. In the early part of 1915 British and French attention was concentrated on the Western Front and on the Gallipoli campaign. However as it became apparent that the latter was going nowhere and as the plight of the Serbians became more desperate it was decided to send a force to help them. The only practical port and base to do so from was Salonika. The position of Greece at this time and indeed throughout most of the war was to say the least equivocal. Technically Greece was neutral however the Greek king was married to the Kaiser’s sister while the Prime Minister Venizelos was pro Allies. It has to be said that not too many diplomatic niceties were observed when the first Allied troops arrived, a Royal Navy battleship covered the initial landings and a few brisk skirmishes with Greek forces soon settled matters in favour of the Allies. Throughout the war these early

tensions remained waxing and waning with whichever party had the upper hand in Athens. However the pragmatic inhabitants of Salonika long accustomed to making the best of whatever situation they found themselves in set about reliving the new arrivals of as many pounds and francs and anything else that they could lay hands on. Salonika was a place where east met west and it must have seemed utterly exotic to the average Tommy or Poilu. The more thoughtful and educated would have appreciated the historical significance of their surroundings while contemplating the distant view of Mount Olympus far to the south.

It was into this heady atmosphere that the 10th (Irish) Division and 6/Leinsters arrived in early October 1915 fresh from Gallipoli and its baptism of fire at Suvla Bay and in the case of 6/Leinsters at Anzac Cove. The division had suffered considerable casualties at Gallipoli and despite a brief stopover on the island of Lemnos was not in good shape either materially or in terms of general health and morale. It is worth remembering that the 10th Division was the first Irish division of Kitchener's "New Armies" and was comprised largely of men who had been civilians barely a year before. During that year they had undergone basic training in Ireland, final training in England before being shipped off to undertake an unrehearsed night landing at Suvla Bay and Anzac. General Sir Ian Hamilton GOC the Gallipoli campaign had little confidence in the "New Armies" and was inclined to see them as reinforcements and in consequence detached 29 Brigade including 6/Leinsters to Anzac thus denying the division the

opportunity to go into action as a complete unit. The division was commanded by Lt-Gen Sir Bryan Mahon, a cavalryman from Co Galway who had distinguished himself during the South African War. He had retired just before the start of the latest war and after rejoining had been largely responsible for raising and training the 10th (Irish) Div. He had not enhanced his reputation during the Gallipoli campaign by resigning his command in protest over a perceived slight concerning seniority and having had his ruffled feathers smoothed he was given overall command of the British Salonika Force. Accompanying the British force was a reinforced French division under the command of General Sarrail who was to have overall command of the theatre

6/Leinsters arrived at Salonika on the 5th October 1915 and were among the first Allied troops to do so. The remaining units arrived during the following week and the Division was concentrated at a camp on the outskirts of the city. On the 13th October the Battalion entrained and headed towards the Serbian front near Lake Doiran, a distance of about 40 miles. It is worth remembering that the roads and general infrastructure that we take for granted were almost non-existent in the region at this time. Indeed even today once you leave the urban areas roads are few and generally fairly rough and some owe their origin to the blood sweat and tears of Tommies and locally recruited labour that built them. Lake Doiran is roughly square and straddles the boarder of Greece and what was then Serbia and is now North Macedonia. Finding your way around the geography and politics of the area is complicated by the



The Doiran Memorial to the British Salonika Force close to the Greek/North Macedonia boarder. The memorial commemorates the BSF, including a list of all the units that served in the theatre and also the names of the 2172 missing of the campaign. The memorial was largely paid for by the veterans of the BSF and was designed by Sir Robert Lorimer, the two lion sculptures, (only one visible in the photo.) are by Walter Gilbert, one shows a benign face looking towards Greece, the other, snarling, faces towards Bulgaria.



Stavros on the Gulf of Rendina where 6/Leinster were posted in December 1915, there were worse places to spend the war!

fact that locations often have three or four quite different names reflecting changes in ownership, Ottoman, Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek and Macedonian. For the purposes of this narrative we will try to use the names that Tommy used. For much of the 20th century the area we will be dealing with was a province of Yugoslavia. When Yugoslavia was broken up the small state of Macedonia emerged as one of its successors. Its existence and very name is challenged by many Greeks who regard Macedonia as part of the Greek province of the same name. Both sides try to tap into the heritage of Alexander the Great and the whole matter remains a diplomatic and political problem helping to stoke the simmering ethnic tensions of the region.

On the 17th November the Battalion and the remainder of 29 Brigade moved north of the lake to take up positions on the hill top line while the other two brigades of the division occupied a more forward position. 6/Leinsters were on the extreme right of the line with their flank resting near the north shore of the lake. The Regimental history tells us that on the 26th November it started to snow; at this point we should remind ourselves that the Battalion and indeed the rest of the Division was still largely equipped for campaigning at the Dardanelles in August, quite a different climate to what they were now to experience. During the first week of December the Bulgarians started an attack on the positions held by the French and the remaining two brigades of the 10th Division. In the face of superior numbers and logistical difficulties these troops were forced to withdraw leaving 29 Brigade and its French allies holding their positions. On the 11th December 6/Leinsters were ordered to withdraw to Doiran Station (In Greece and not to be confused with Doiran village

just over the boarder in Serbia) This move was followed by further orders to move *forward* to take up positions on the Greek/Serbian boarder. Finally on the 14th December came the instruction to start the march back to Salonika, 40 miles or so through the mountains and in appalling winter weather. The following day the Battalion was able to join a train bound for Salonika. The rest of December was spent in camp outside the city no doubt wondering what was going to happen next. The Bulgarians stopped their advance at the Greek/Serbian boarder and did not, as was expected, press their advance into Greek territory. After the privations of the Macedonian mountains in winter the next move of the Battalion must have seemed like heaven.

In the last days of December the Battalion was loaded onto a steamer and sent to a place called Stavros on Rendina Bay east of Salonika. This was and remains an idyllic spot of gentle beaches and deep blue mediterranean waters lying at the mouth of the River Struma and giving access to the Rubel Pass and the strategic frontier town of Serres. At the time it formed the eastern most bastion of the defensive line that the Allies had formed to protect Salonika. As winter gave way to spring and eventually high summer an enemy more intractable than the Bulgarians became apparent; malaria. The low lying river valley and the attendant marshes were an ideal breeding ground for disease carrying mosquitos and malaria soon became a major drain on the resources of the BSF. Overall in the course of the campaign this disease caused more casualties than the actual fighting and acted as a constant drain on the strength of the BSF. The Official History of the campaign gives a total of 23,762 battle casualties for the BSF compared with 481,262 “non battle casualties”, the



majority of the latter would be from malaria. It was not just the immediate generally temporary loss of unit strength through illness but the longterm effect that the condition had on the general health of the men, in many cases lasting for the remainder of their lives. Finally good sense prevailed and both sides withdrew to higher ground leaving the valley to the mosquitos and occasional patrols to see what if anything the other side was up to.

As far as 6/Leinsters and their parent brigade much of 1916 was spent in a series of moves around the defensive perimeter that protected Salonika against the possible threat from the Bulgarians, a threat that never materialised. Back home politicians, the press and the public began to question what the allied force at Salonika, which now numbered over 250,000 men, were doing and gave rise to the mocking nickname “the gardeners of Salonika” as all they seemed to do was dig trenches and build roads.

In late September 1916 the battalion took part in the engagement at Yenikoi, the object being to seize the village of the same name which lay just across the river and was potentially a useful starting point for future offensive operations and also to pin down Bulgarian forces who might be used against the French who were planning an offensive further west. 6/Leinsters provided cover on the flank of the main attack and played a full part in what was a sharp but ultimately successful engagement including a strong counter attack that the Bulgarians launched during the afternoon. By this time Tommy Atkins had developed a healthy respect for his Bulgarian equivalent. The rank and file of the Bulgarian army were hardy peasant soldiers who had experience of the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913. Any deficiencies in their officer Corps was made up for by a stiffening of German and Turkish officers and equipment. It was the misfortune of the BSF to find itself pitted against some of the best Bulgarian units including the 9th (Pleven) Division throughout the campaign. It remains an article of national pride in Bulgaria that their army “defeated” the British army in Macedonia although this claim conveniently overlooks the fact that the collapse of the Bulgarian Army in September 1918 precipitated the collapse of the other Central Powers.

Early in December 1916 the Regiment’s 1st Battalion joined the 6th in the 29th Brigade in place of the 10th Hampshires thus making the Brigade a half Leinster and wholly Irish formation. Thus ended a relatively uneventful year, there had been a lot of moving about, hard work, hardships caused by the climate and disease with little opportunity for R & R but also little actual contact with the enemy and in consequence few battle casualties.

The dawn of 1917 found the Battalion still in the area of Yenikoi where it took its turn manning the front line positions. There was fairly constant low level activity from both sides of the line. Both armies sent out raiding and reconnaissance parties in addition to the occasional local operation launched to improve the disposition of the line. The overall objective was to try to gain and keep the initiative and to prevent the enemy from doing so. There was also the belief that activities such as patrolling helped to prevent boredom setting in and encouraged an offensive spirit. Finally in early September word came that the 10th (Irish) Division was leaving Greece and Macedonia and moving to Egypt prior to a further move to Palestine where it remained until May 1918.

The time spent by 6/Leinsters serving with the BSF was relatively uneventful and certainly the experience was nothing like that of many battalions serving on the Western Front. Theirs was a corner of the war that is now often overlooked but as has been previously discussed included much continuing hardship to be endured far from home and at the bottom of the list of priorities when it came supplies and equipment. Not for nothing was the emblem of a mosquito chosen for the Salonika Old Comrades Association badge and the title of their journal “The Mosquito”.



An early Leinster grave in Lembet Road Cemetery, Thessalonika. Pte. Cregan is recorded as having died at sea either of wounds or illness contracted at Gallipoli. He was a native of Drogheda, Co Louth.

## Irish Military Heroes and Rogues

Although there are no obvious military links between the Leinster Regiment and the five regiments of Foot Guards, there is no doubt that they have much in common – especially with my old regiment the Irish Guards (perhaps better known as The Micks). Both would have drawn from the same Irish recruiting pool as well as being exemplars of the bravery of the Irish soldier.

While co-authoring “*The Drum Horse in the Fountain & Other Stories of Heroes and Rogues in the Guards*” it was conspicuous that many of the heroes were Irishmen... but then so were several rogues.

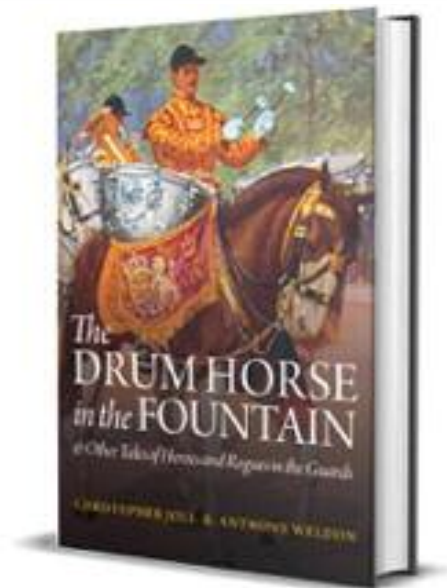
Notable amongst the heroes is the “bravest man at Waterloo”, Coldstream Guards Corporal James Graham from Clones, Co. Monaghan – nominated by the Duke of Wellington no less. Not only did Graham rescue his wounded brother under fire, he then saved an officer from being shot by a sniper, but also, and most critically, closed the courtyard gate at Hougomont Farm and in so doing denied the French possession of this strategically key position.

Other heroic Irish names which march across the pages of the book are... Field Marshals Roberts, Wolseley, Gort and Alexander; VCs Moyney, O’Leary and Boyd-Rochfort; boxing champion, singing sensation and film star Guardsman Jack Doyle (the gorgeous Gael); writers Ensign Lord Dunsany and Guardsman Liam O’Flaherty; and the extraordinarily brave priests – Father Francis Browne with an MC and bar, and Father Dolly Brookes with just the one MC.

However, to keep a verbal Leinster link and thus justify this article in 40-10, two very different brothers are worthy of mentions – one as a hero and the other a rogue but who eventually carried the Leinster name when he inherited the eponymous Dukedom.

Lord Desmond Fitzgerald, the second son of the 5th Duke of Leinster, was a first-rate professional soldier joining the Irish Guards around 1908. He won an MC during the attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt in 1915. But a year later this much loved and imperturbable Adjutant was accidentally killed on the sands of Calais when teaching the Irish Guards Padre – Father Fox-Pitt – to throw (or, in this case, not throw) the new Mills bomb. His death was to have a dramatic impact upon the Fitzgerald ducal inheritance.

Lord Edward Fitzgerald was the Duke’s third son and he joined the Irish Guards a couple of years after his brother Desmond. However, Edward’s intention was to spend as little time as possible at his military



duties – preferring to drive fast cars (very dangerously), collect exotic pets (fifteen monkeys, a score of snakes and a lemur), gamble to excess (with money he did not have) and keep company with an endless procession of chorus girls.

One night – while meant to be on duty as the Officer of the Guard in the Tower of London – he sneaked out for an unofficial night on the town. When he tried to get back into the Tower to resume his duties, he had forgotten the password and thus was denied entry.

Undeterred, Lord Edward decided to climb over the wall near Traitor’s Gate – rather unsuccessfully. He slipped and fell into the River Thames and was rescued by a barge. He persuaded the captain to moor up, waited until the tide rose high enough to allow him to climb to the top of the mast and over the Tower’s rampart.

Despite being in much need of funds, he married the beautiful but minor variety star May Etheridge – better known as “the Pink Pyjama Girl”. Although the press described this as “the most romantic wedding of 1913”, there was no reception after the Wandsworth Registry Office ceremony and the groom departed to a nightclub while the bride went home to her parents. Despite all this, the new Lady Edward Fitzgerald produced a son and heir twelve months later, but she was soon pensioned off on a meagre allowance. The Irish Guards were not amused by his behaviour and Lord Edward was asked to resign his commission.

In 1914, despite being recently declared bankrupt, Lord Edward applied to re-join his old regiment. The Micks, perhaps not surprisingly, declined his offer. Instead, he joined the 8th Battalion West Riding

Regiment, fought with distinction at Gallipoli, was wounded in the arm and given an honourable discharge.

In 1922, on the the death of his unmarried eldest brother, Lord Edward became the 7th Duke of Leinster. The new Duke should have inherited vast wealth, but he had already mortgaged his inheritance. He married three more times, but sadly died in penury in 1976.

Surely the origins of the name Kenneally are as Irish as they come. But where heroes and rogues are concerned not everything is as it seems.

Leslie Jackson was the illegitimate son of a rich Jewish textile merchant and former officer in the Blues. In 1939 Jackson enlisted in the Honourable Artillery Company but went absent and when caught was locked up in Wellington Barracks by the Irish Guards. So impressed was Jackson by his jailers that he applied to change regiments, but the Micks turned him down. So, Jackson went absent again, and while on the run “borrowed” a fellow road worker’s Irish identity and re-joined the Colours - this time successfully in the Irish Guards.

Thus, it was under his new name of John Kenneally, Jackson found himself in North Africa as a Lance-Corporal, when the 2nd Battalion Irish Guards was ordered to attack - across open ground and in broad daylight - a strategically vital hill known as the Bou. Unsurprisingly, the Micks suffered appalling casualties.

Only one hundred and seventy-three made it to the hill-top which was then held against overwhelming odds and constant enemy counter-attacks - several times the Germans were repulsed individually by a wounded Kenneally charging downhill firing his Bren gun. Just eighty men remained when they were relieved three days later and Kenneally was awarded the VC.

Ironically Churchill quoted him in a speech when talking about brave Irishmen“ ... I do not forget Lieutenant-Commander Esmonde VC DSO, Lance-Corporal Kenneally VC, Captain Fegen VC, and other Irish heroes that I could easily recite...”.

Thus, rogues, even though technically English, can be Irish heroes too.

Finally, why did we call the book *The Drum Horse in the Fountain* - well, if you’re lucky the Editor might allow me to pen another article to tell the story... or perhaps you could even buy the book.

Anthony Weldon

*\* If you would like to learn more about some of the amazing characters, heroes and rogues, to be found in the Guards regiments you can buy a copy of “The Drum Horse in the Fountain” signed by the author at the specially discounted price of £15 incl. of P&P from: www.nineelmsbooks.co.uk quoting discount code: 40-10Summer.*

## Quartermaster’s Stores

The following are available to purchase by mail order. Please email or post your order to Ian Lowe at: marfordms@icloud.com or at 42 Woodridge Avenue, Marford, Wrexham, LL12 8SS. Prices include 2nd class postage to UK & Irish addresses. Payment can be made by cheque drawn on a UK or Irish bank and sent to the address shown above. All items are subject to availability.

	£	€
Blazer Badge.	15	18
Cap Badge. (Reproduction)	5	6
Lapel Pin Badge. (Suitable as a tie pin or Ladies brooch)	10	12
Ladies Scarf in Regimental colours. (Square 30” x 30”, Polyester)	12	15

Regimental Tie. (Silk)	15	18
Poppy Lapel Badge with Regimental Crest. (New)	15	18

These are a special one off purchase and cannot be repeated so there is a strictly limited number available.



(Not actual size)

# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Held at The Civil Service Club, Whitehall

12 noon Saturday 8th June 2019

### 01. Members attending.

D Ball, Assoc. Secretary, R Hayden, Secretary (Eire), D Kirby, Vice-Chairman (Eire).  
I Lowe, Treasurer, R Templeman, Mem. Secretary, A Weldon, Vice-Chairman (UK).  
J. Ball (Mrs), E Bryant, P Chambers, Mr & Mrs B Hall, J-P Harding,  
D McGaughran,  
S McGaughran, A Overton, Col. P Walton, Lt Col. N Weekes, Lt Col & Mrs M Weldon.

### 02. Apologies.

R Ball, A Farmer (Mrs), R McGowan (Ms), I Lyon,

### 03. Welcome.

Mr Denis Kirby opened the meeting welcoming all those present and thanked those who had travelled long distances.

### 04. Obituaries.

The secretary reported that thankfully he had not received notifications of any members answering the sunset call.

### 05. Minutes Silence.

The secretary spoke the Exhortation whilst members stood in a minutes silence to remember the regiment's fallen and its past members.

### 06. Minutes of the last AGM.

The Minutes of the last AGM held in Dublin, 8th July 2018 had been circulated and read by members attending.

### Matters Arising:

It was mentioned that the association must look at further ways to expand recruitment with a brief discussion to look at ways to bring new members or "new blood" into the association perhaps using the journal, promoting dates of meetings and association events.

### 07. Finance.

The Treasurer, Mr Ian Lowe, firstly explained to those present about the element of conversion with regards Euro to sterling which was taken at the rate as of 31st of December 2018. He explained that a small surplus had been unintentionally made from association events, eg last year's dinner and the Ledegem trip. He said that we had covered costs throughout the year comfortably and that we had excellent income from our membership fees. Mr Lowe mentioned the costs of producing the 40-10 stating although it was an expensive item to produce, as it was in colour but was a necessity to the association, he also mentioned the Maffett Fund, which was donated to help in funding the 'Premesque Missing Project' and that it was available when, and if the project moved forward. He concluded his report saying for a small association; financially it was in pretty good health. Col. Mark Weldon remarked that he found the hospitality and kind generosity of our friends in Ledegem extraordinary and those that had also attended the Ledegem visit agreed with him.

Accounts and report were proposed to be passed by Sir Anthony Weldon, seconded by Col. Mark Weldon and passed unanimously.

### 08. Membership.

Membership Secretary, Mr Bob Templeman started his report by say that the association had 66 members based in the UK, 64 in the Republic of Ireland with 8 in the rest of the world. He told members that he had recently sent out reminders to renew membership which also gave details of the AGM and the annual meal, breaking it down to sending 53 emails, of which 16 replied, and 47 letters being posted. He said that he hoped to build a membership database and asked if anyone could help with this he added that a good source of communication was through Facebook which was notifying members of upcoming dates and events.

### 09. Secretary's Report.

David Ball thanked those who had supported him through his period of ill health and said that thankfully he was now well and truly on the road to recovery and now back from the period of "Gardening Leave", he thanked his colleagues on the committee for their understanding and for the messages of support and best wishes from everyone. He gave a brief report on the association's lunch (to be held after the AGM), which had had a fantastic response and was to date to be the best attended.

### 10. Chairman's Report.

Vice Chairman, Denis Kirby acting chairman, thanked Col. Peter Walton who was chairman of the association since 2012 and had recently stepped down. Mr Kirby said that Col. Peter's service and input would be a very hard act to follow but was please to say Col. Peter would continue as editor for the regimental journal, 40-10. Mr Kirby then informed members present of the 13 wreath laying ceremonies which were held in the Republic of Ireland where the association was represented. He mentioned the Portlaoise War memorial which was in fact a memorial to the regiment's 4th Battalion. He also mentioned that six talks would be held in the Republic of Ireland 3 in Cork with two in Birr and one in Dublin. He reminded everyone of the Islandbridge Ceremony in Dublin 13th July which is hosted by The Royal British Legion (RoI District) where the association would attend as always. The association was continuing to place remembrance crosses on the CWGC graves of all those who served with the regiment and died in service commemorating their 100th anniversaries.

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Chairman put forward a motion ascertaining to finding a successor to the position of chairman that the current committee, if holders of the positions agreed, that the committee would stay unchanged. This was agreed unanimously.

### 11. QM's Report.

As acting Quartermaster, David Ball answered an earlier question with regard to the wearing of headdress at association parades. Association headdress is a green caubeen of the type issued to the British Army with the regimental capbadge and a hackle of the regimental colours, green and royal blue, with the green to the top. Navy blue caubeens may be worn but are no longer issued or supplied to the British Army. Headdress of parent regiments and service are encouraged with all those parading wearing an association tie. Mr Ball added that due to supply and manufacturer items such as blazer badges, hackles and keyfobs were for the foreseeable future unavailable.

### 12. Website and Social Media.

Sir Anthony Weldon said that he intended to take control of the association website and the situation was very much work in progress and added we were to "Watch this space!"

It was mentioned that the association's Twitter account has been very informative and has been used by certain media channels for information. Facebook was also successful in promoting the association, it was mentioned that David Ball's effort's to list a name every day from the regiments casualty list was very much appreciated. In all it was agreed by those present that these media channels were very helpful in promoting the association's existence and would also help promote recruitment. David Ball mentioned that he had been asked on a couple of occasions, why the Twitter account was "For Irish members". Ray Hayden said he understood and would change the home page as soon as he could. There was also mention of a WhatsApp group being setup and this would be a possible follow up for the future.

### 13. The 40-10 Journal.

Col. Peter Walton said that although he intended to step down as chairman he would continue as editor for the journal and he apologised for no recent issue, which was due to health reasons. He asked that all information should be channelled to him for the next issue which he was working on.

### 14. Any Other Business.

It was brought up that the Birr Exhibition had had a great response and that the exhibition would soon need more display cases as there was a good possibility that the display would grow, especially after contact was made by The Ellison family from Belfast, who were hoping to make a donation of family artefacts to the exhibition at Birr Library. Denis Kirby stated that contact had been with Canada and discussions were ongoing to look at a possibility of an item or items from the Royal Military College at Kingston, Canada being loaned to the exhibition. A visit was also being planned to look at items to the regiment being held by The National Army Museum, London. Col. Mark Weldon said that he would take the lead as he was hoping to make a visit in the not too distant future.

New member Sean McGaughran, thanked David Ball for his help and assistance allowing him and his family to attend the meeting, lunch and the parade, and to the committee to the welcome shown to him and his family.

# THE PRINCE OF WALES'S LEINSTER REGIMENT (ROYAL CANADIANS) ASSOCIATION



## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2020

### AGENDA

#### 1. Introduction and Chairman's Report.

The restrictions imposed by Covid-19 have not only forced us to cancel all our planned events so far this year, but also to complete the 2020 Annual General Meeting (AGM) with submitted reports. In the interests of brevity, I have asked those submitting reports to minimise their reference to Covid-19, otherwise it would become repetitive. It will be assumed that the reports and proposals are accepted unless comments to the contrary are received. Nevertheless, there will be an opportunity at the next AGM under Matters Arising to discuss any outstanding matters. I would like to thank all members of the Committee both in the UK and Ireland for their hard work and continued support during the year and also you the members who help make the Association the vibrant organisation that it is.

#### 2. Last Post (Secretary).

John Seabrook (former Member)  
Sheila Dickson (former Membership Secretary)

#### Exhortation.

#### 3. Minutes of the Last AGM (Secretary). See Enclosure 1.

**Proposed:** Ian Lowe      **Seconded:** Bob Templeman.

#### 4. Matters Arising. None.

#### 5. Finance Report (12 months ending 31 December 2019):

Ian Lowe, Treasurer, submitted the following report. I am pleased to present this report that shows the Association's financial affairs in a good position. Total balances amount to £13,527 as at the 31st December 2019 compared to £12,744 the previous year. I should explain the basis on which this statement is prepared. The Association maintains separate bank accounts in the UK and Ireland with the latter being denominated in Euros. It is therefore necessary to convert Euro transactions and balances into Sterling. The rate we use is the mid-market £/€ rate on the 31st December. This year the rate stood at £1 = €1.1762. While this introduces an element of estimation into the preparation of year end balances, it is unlikely to produce a significant distortion.

The Association's only source of income is the subscriptions paid by members and I'm pleased to say that this has remained steady from one year to the next. I'm sure that Bob Templeman, our Membership Secretary, joins me in thanking the majority of our members for paying promptly. We are grateful that many of you pay by direct debit which helps to reduce administration and I would urge any of you who don't to consider doing so.

The major source of expenditure is usually the production and printing of our 40-10 Journal. Due to the retirement of Col. Peter Walton as Editor, it was not possible to produce an edition during 2019 resulting in no costs being incurred. However, we have published a journal in early 2020 and the intention is to follow that with a further edition in mid-summer 2020. Between production, printing and distribution, it costs about £700 per edition to produce the 40-10 resulting in a likely charge of around £1,400 for the year 2020.

Our aim is always to run Association events so that they cover their costs or ideally show a modest profit. We did not organise a battlefield visit during 2019 and have no plans to do so in 2020 even if it were possible to do so. The future of such trips will depend on demand from the membership and being able to attract enough participants to make them viable. The annual lunch held at the

Civil Service Club, Whitehall, produced a loss of £247, caused mainly by a late increase in the rates charged by the club.

One significant cost arising during 2020 will be the revamping of the Association's website at a net cost of about £1,000. The total cost is considerably more than this figure and the Association is very grateful to one member for making a significant contribution towards the total cost. Your Committee are confident that this is a worthwhile investment in the future of the Association.

The Statement of Accounts for Year Ending 31 December 2019 is at Enclosure 2.

Comment: The cancellation of our June lunch, the gathering at the AGM in July and other events in the remainder of the year means that we'll miss the opportunity of collecting some outstanding subscriptions from people who only remember to pay when they see us. Also, there are those who give the occasional extra donation, all of which adds up. Another source of revenue that we will miss is the ever-dependable raffle. There is not much we can do about this, except implore members to pay their subscriptions by Standing Order.

#### 6. Membership Report:

Bob Templeman (Membership Secretary) submitted the following report. Subject to examining bank statements we have approximately 138 paid members, inclusive of a handful of members who have either not renewed or updated their Standing Orders. They can be subdivided as follows: 68 UK, 64 ROI and 8 ROW.

I surmise that Covid-19 has prevented some members in either paying their subscriptions and/or adjusting their standing orders and myself receiving copies of bank statements inclusive of Dec 2019 receipts. Thanks are due to Ian Lowe and Denis Kirby for sending me details of cash/cheques they have received. Once I receive the outstanding copies of bank statements, I will be able to confirm the actual figures. I will then be able to send out appropriate letters/emails.

On the subject of data protection, no issues have been reported or identified.

#### 7. Secretary's Report.

David Ball (Association Secretary) submitted the following report. The year started very positively with a strong membership and a growing diary of events to be held throughout the year. I had made plans for the annual lunch early, due to the fantastic response and success of the previous year's event. This event is growing stronger every year. As usual, I had been working with our friends of the Combined Irish Regiments and Irish Defence Forces for the events that were to be held this year both in the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Sadly, with the terrible onslaught of Covid-19, all these events have been cancelled. It is still possible that events in the UK and the Republic for Armistice in November may go ahead: let's hope they do. The website is to be relaunched soon and I have reactivated a dormant Facebook page which has been linked to the existing Group page as I hope to create a Private Members page: this will need further thought and perhaps discussion at Committee level.

I would further add that The Combined Irish Regiments Association (CIRA) has a new Chairman, Col. Hubert McAllister Royal Irish Regiment, who took charge in January and I have sent him the Association's best wishes in his new position. He has replaced Col. David Maitland-Titterton, late North Irish Horse and 9th/12th Lancers who decided to step down towards the end of last year. Again, I have sent the Association's best regards to Col. David who supported the Association in exemplary style throughout his Chairmanship. Ich Dien.

## 8. Regional Committee (Ireland) Report.

Denis Kirby (Chairman – Regional Committee Ireland) submitted the following report.

**Ordinary General Meeting.** Due to difficulties with the Dublin venue, the OGM of the Ireland members was moved to Birr and held on 10th August, in conjunction with the Annual Leinster Regiment lecture, the Wreath Laying at the Crinkill Memorial and a visit to the Crinkill Military Cemetery. The change of venue resulted in the election of three Birr based members to the Ireland Committee; Chris Brummell, Derek Coulter and Junior O'Callaghan.

**Birr Activities.** A small but steady stream of items continue to be added to the Leinster Regiment permanent exhibition in Birr County Library, though further items are still being sought. Junior O'Callaghan was instrumental in acquiring a map of the former Crinkill Barracks and having it framed for display as part of the exhibition.

The Annual Lecture was given by local historian and LRA Member Brian Kennedy on the topic of The Leinster Regiment 1881 to 1922, concentrating on its impact on Birr and the surrounding areas.

Following the lecture and again at the ceremony in Crinkill, we were joined by Pipe Major Joe Barry and some of his colleagues from Castlecomer Pipe Band. Joe was playing a set of pipes formerly owned by the 6th Leinsters and played at the Battle of the Somme.

Association member and authority on Crinkill Barracks, Stephen Callaghan, was instrumental in having a 6.6 metre oak cross on farmland outside Birr restored and re-erected. The cross commemorates Capt. Lancelot Joseph Moore Studholme of the Leinster Regiment who died on 9th September 1916 during the Battle of Ginchy.

The Boer War Memorial in the Military Cemetery was in a sad state until Stephen Callaghan took it upon himself in March, before the lockdown, to clean up the memorial with help from his father. He is now in discussions with Offaly County Council to see if it can be registered as a protected structure.

**Leinster Regiment Schools Project.** It had been suggested that we should set up Leinster Regiment themed project for the transition year students of secondary schools in the Greater Birr area. If we were to proceed, we would have looked for support from the local council, media outlets, as well as local businesses. However, it was first necessary to measure the level of interest amongst School Principals and Transition Year Coordinators. We wrote to twelve people in all and didn't receive a single reply! So, that project is being shelved.

**Visits to "Leinster" graves.** In the second half of 2019, visits were made by LRA members to the graves of those buried in Ireland in 1919. A planned trip to Belfast to visit the graves there did not take place but Committee Member Ray Hayden carried out those visits on our behalf. There were only eight Leinsters buried in Ireland during 1920. While some of those have been visited, the remainder have had to be postponed until Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

**Annual Joint LRA/Dublin WFA Lecture.** This lecture took place in November 2019 and was addressed by Sir Anthony Weldon Bt who regaled us with stories, with an Irish flavour, from his book; "The Drum-horse in the Fountain". Arrangements for the 2020 lecture have yet to be finalised.

**Other Commemorative Events.** The Association was represented at the following events in 2019:

RBL Commemorations at National Garden of Remembrance, Islandbridge, Dublin.  
IUNVA Commemorations at the Leinster Regiment Memorial in Portlaoise.  
RBL Commemorations in Limerick.  
RBL Commemorations in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.  
RBL Commemorations in South Mall, Cork.  
WFA Commemorations in South Mall, Cork.  
Service of Remembrance in St. Finn Barre's Cathedral, Cork.  
Commemorations at War Memorial, Ennis.

**9. Election to the Regional Committee Ireland.** It was proposed by Gerry White and seconded by Simon McAuliffe that the following be re-elected:

Chairman:	Denis Kirby
Sec/Treasurer & Member of the General Committee:	Ray Hayden
Member of the General Committee:	Ken Geary
Member:	Tony Hayden
Member:	Larry Yourell
Member:	Chris Brummell
Member:	Derek Coulter
Member:	Junior O'Callaghan

**10. Election to General Committee (Chairman).** It was proposed by Simon McAuliffe and seconded by John Walsh that the following be re-elected to the General Committee:

Chairman	Mark Weldon
Vice-Chairman	Sir Anthony Weldon Bt
Vice-Chairman	Denis Kirby
Treasurer	Ian Lowe
Membership	Bob Templeman
Secretary	David Ball
Irish Representative	Ken Geary
Irish Representative	Ray Hayden

**11. Ratification of President (Chairman).** In April, after the Memorial Service for Major-General The O'Morchoe should have been held, I initiated the process of finding our new President. Paragraph 9a of the Rules of our Association (adopted 26 November 2015) states:

President of the Association.

- (1) The General Committee may invite a person of appropriate status to become the President of the Association, subject to endorsement at a general meeting of the Association.
- (2) If appointed, a President does not become a member of the General Committee. He/She is encouraged to attend meetings of the General Committee and general meetings of the Association but is not entitled to cast a vote at such meetings by virtue of being President.
- (3) The initial tenure of office of a President shall be for five years with the possibility of subsequent extensions for periods of five years or less.

I stated that the President is our figurehead - our 'influencer', on both sides of the water and as such it is a crucially important appointment. Members of the General Committee were asked to forward their nomination with reasons. No other guidance was offered. I did not submit my own choice in order not to influence the debate. As it turned out, there was an overwhelming majority for Sir Anthony Weldon Bt.

It was particularly gratifying that nominations for Sir Anthony were immediately forthcoming from both sides of the water. There is no conflict with Sir Anthony being both President, in which capacity he does not have a vote on the General Committee, and Vice-Chairman (GB) where he does have a vote. That precedent has already been set by David Ball who is both Vice-President and Secretary, but he still has only one vote.

It was therefore proposed to invite Sir Anthony to be our next President.

**Proposed:** Denis Kirby

**Seconded:** David Ball

**12. Website and Social Media.** Sir Anthony Weldon Bt submitted the following report.

A lot of progress has been made on the new site during lock-down. However, because of my other commitments this has taken a little longer than expected. We have a new look and some new sections – all of which will be much easier to access and to travel around. Hopefully, it will also deliver useful Leinster information and encourage new members.

I shall be doing quite a bit more work to upload new information. I shall shortly give a preview to the key members of the Committee for their appraisal. Once all their feedback has been taken in to account we can then go public.

I'd like to thank Nick Weekes, Ian Lowe, Denis Kirby and David Ball for their help – all have responded with alacrity for additional material or the checking of information.

**13. Any Other Business.**

**13.1. Date and Venue of Annual General Meeting 2021.** To be held at Birr, during Vintage Week, at 10.00 on Saturday 7 August 2021. This change of both date and venue offers an ideal venue and more time in which to hold the meeting. I am personally delighted that it is to be held in Ireland as we have missed out this year. Furthermore, it is right that it should be held in Birr, the 'home of the Leinsters'.

Enclosures:

1. Minutes of the Leinster Regiment Association Annual General Meeting held at the Civil Service Club on Saturday 8 June 2019.

2. The Statement of Accounts for Year Ending 31 December 2019 is at Enclosure 2.

# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

## Income & Expenditure Association

1st January - 31st December 2018			2018		
	£	£	£	£	£
Opening balances as at 01/01/19			12,744		11799
<b>Income</b>					
Subs & Donations		2007		2067	
Dinner Income	910			500	
Expenditure	<u>1,157</u>			<u>470</u>	
Loss/Surplus		-247			30
Ledegem Visit Income	0			2870	
Expenditure	<u>0</u>			<u>2500</u>	
Surplus		0			370
Other Income			0		24
<b>Total Income</b>			<u>1,760</u>		<u>2,491</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Purchase of Merchandise	66			0	
Production of 40/10	0			755	
Printing, Postage & Secretarial Expenses	482			736	
Donations	398			25	
Bank Charges	<u>31</u>			<u>30</u>	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>			977		1546
<b>Surplus of Income over Expenditure</b>			<u>783</u>		<u>945</u>
<b>Closing balances as at 31/12/19</b>			<u>£13,527</u>		<u>£12,744</u>

# The Evolution of the Leinster Regiment



An Officer and a Private of the 100th Regiment of Foot.  
Circa 1814.

It is well known that the Leinster Regiment in its final form was established in 1881 by the amalgamation of two earlier regiments, the 100th and 109th Regiments of Foot becoming the 1st and 2nd Battalions respectively. This amalgamation was part of what is known as the “Childers Reforms” to the organisation of the army that saw the introduction of a system of county and regionally based regiments familiar to us today. As often happens with changes this process was bitterly opposed at the time although with the benefit of hindsight the regional/county system is now regarded as one of the strengths of the British Army. In this article we will take a look at the earliest origins of the two regiments that later formed the Leinsters from their inception to roughly the end of the middle of the 19th Century. The early history of most regiments tends to be tangled and not well documented. Regiments were raised in order to meet specific threats, often by private individuals for whom it was a business venture and were then disbanded as the original threat passed with the numeric designation being reused when the need next arose. There was a long standing distrust in British society for having a large standing army for economic, political and social reasons. The economic argument is easy to understand, armies are expensive to maintain, political objections were based on the fear that the Army might become an alternative power base to Parliament while socially there was a concern about the disruptive

effect that large numbers of often ill-disciplined men could have on their host communities. As is often the case Kipling’s words sum up society’s attitude to Tommy Atkins and the Army:-

*“O it’s Tommy this, an’ Tommy that, an’ “Tommy,  
go away”;  
But it’s “Thank you, Mister Atkins,” when the band  
begins to play - “*

So it was with the 100th Regiment of Foot. The first “100th” to appear in the record was raised in Argyllshire in 1760 as the 100th Highlanders. It was posted variously to Jersey and to the West Indies where it saw action against the French in Martinique and Guadeloupe and the Spanish in Cuba. While in Martinique one of the company commanders embezzled his company’s funds and was killed by the commanding officer, who was acquitted of his murder on a technicality. During the Regiment’s time in Jersey the pay office was set on fire and robbed of £1,100, not surprisingly there were reports of men of the 100th begging in the streets of St Helier. This short but eventful existence ended in 1763 when the Regiment was disbanded at Stirling.

The second incarnation of the 100th Regiment begins in 1780 when Lt-Col Francis Humberstone was authorised to raise a regiment in England for service in India. In practice most of the recruitment seems to have taken place in Scotland and in its earliest days it was stationed at Inverness before being dispatched via Gravesend and Portsmouth prior to embarking for the Cape of Good Hope and India. The French also had an eye on the Cape and unsuccessfully attacked the British convoy while it was at anchor in the Cape Verde Islands, an action in which the 100th suffered its first casualties. The French ultimately won the race to the Cape so the decision was taken to proceed directly to India but not before taking the opportunity to capture a convoy of Dutch East Indiamen from which the men of the 100th shared the prize money, which must have cheered them up considerably. Finally in early 1782 the convoy arrived in Bombay after a voyage lasting about 12 months. While in India the Regiment took part with distinction in the campaigns in Mysore against Tippoo Sultan and his French allies. After the conclusion of these wars in 1784 the Regiment was ordered home and disbanded the following year. During its service in India the Regiment lost through action and disease 39 officers and 1,200 men.



We now jump forward nearly 10 years to when the next 100th Regiment was formed in Aberdeen and subsequently served in Gibraltar and Corsica before doing a stint in Ireland during the period of the threatened French invasion of 1798 although it does not seem to have been involved in the suppression of the United Irishmen's rebellion of that year. In October 1798 and as part of a reorganisation of other regiments the 100th was re-designated the 92nd Highlanders and under this title it continued to find fame and fortune subsequently becoming 2nd Battalion, The Gordon Highlanders in 1881.

The fourth incarnation of the 100th Regiment begins life in April 1804 and with it the origins of the Leinster Regiment and its clear association with Ireland and with North America. The new regiment recruited in Ireland and embarked for Canada in August 1805. In a vivid example of the perils of sea travel at this time some of the ships carrying the Regiment were wrecked on the coast of Nova Scotia and some 192 officers and men lost their lives. A further two companies of the Regiment were wrecked on Cape Breton where they remained marooned until June 1806. The following 6 years were spent performing garrison duties at various stations around Canada. It is worth remembering that at this time it was not unusual for army units to spend many years in far flung corners of the empire. Communications to home were uncertain and at best slow, there was no prospect of home leave and the only way of returning home was at the expiry of ones period of service assuming that you had not succumbed to some deadly illness or, much less likely, enemy action in the mean time.

It is not the purpose of this article to give a detailed account of the involvement of the newly titled 100th Prince Regent's County of Dublin Regiment in the war of 1812. This war between Britain and America had its origins in the claim by the Royal Navy of the right to stop all ships at sea and to search them for contraband destined for America's ally and Britain's enemy France. A further point of friction was the Royal Navy's habit during these stop and search operations of kidnapping and pressing American seamen into the Navy. It was during this conflict, lasting two years, that the 100th was to see its first significant action and to win distinction. The Regiment took part in operations strung out along the long Canadian/American border, many of them involving the rivers of the region, the only practical means of communication, including those at Sackett's Harbour, Chippawa and the best remembered, Fort Niagara, for which the Regiment received the battle honour later carried on the colours of the Leinster Regiment. The 100th did not take part in the two

actions for which this war is probably best remembered today, the burning of Washington and the White House (1814) and the Battle of New Orleans (1815). The war was finally concluded by the Treaty of Ghent signed on the 24th December 1814, however the news did not reach North America in time to avoid the final battle taking place at New Orleans on the 8th January 1815.

At the conclusion of hostilities the 100th remained in Canada fulfilling garrison duties until it was disbanded at Quebec in July 1818 as part of the post war economy drive. The authorities, no doubt with an eye to economy as well as the desire to populate the wide open spaces of Canada offered grants of land to the demobilised veterans as an alternative to returning home. It is recorded that some 300 men of the 100th took up this offer and were settled in Upper Ottawa. When 40 years later a 100th or Royal Canadian Regiment was raised recruits were obtained from the descendants of these settlers thus providing the thread of continuity, slender though it is, between the old 100th and the new. How this came about and what happened next is a story for another day.

The earliest record of a 109th Regiment dates from 1761 and the Seven Years War. It was raised by a Captain John Nairne the scion of a Scottish Jacobite family. Because of the ban on recruiting in the Highlands at the time (this was only 16 years after the '45) the Regiment was raised in Hertfordshire and Middlesex and served exclusively at home. The war concluded with the Treaty of Paris in 1763 and in due course the 109th Regiment was disbanded in Bristol in April 1763.

For the next appearance of a 109th Regiment we must jump forward a further 31 years to 1794 when Colonel Alexander Hay was authorised to raise the 109th Aberdeenshire Regiment to join in the war against revolutionary France. By all accounts recruiting proceeded briskly and the Regiment mustered 1,000 men when it left Aberdeen in September 1794. After a brief period on Jersey the Regiment found itself back in Southampton as part of a force being assembled for service in the West Indies. Then out of the blue came the order for the Regiment to be disbanded and the men absorbed into the 53rd Regiment of Foot (which later morphed into The King's Shropshire Light Infantry). This order was bitterly but vainly contested and so passed into history another 109th Regiment.

To continue to explore the antecedents of "our" 109th Regiment we must now turn to India and the army of the Honourable East India Company. At this



Other Ranks Helmet Plate. 109th Regiment of Foot. Mid Victorian Era.

time India was not a unified country but rather a collection of semi-independent principalities some of which owed allegiance to the East India Company, a joint stock company based in the City of London and incorporated by Royal Charter. Initially the government in Westminster exercised a loose oversight of the Company's activities but provided it operated within the bounds of its charter it was left to its own devices. As part of this arrangement the Company was able to raise its own army, recruited both locally and from the British Isles to protect and expand the Company's interests. Threats were external, the French were particularly keen to acquire some of the spoils of India, and internal when some of the local rulers sought to expand their influence, often with French assistance and to oppose increasing "foreign" influence and interference to the indigenous way of life. When King Charles II married the infanta of Portugal, Catherine of Braganza, in 1662 she brought with her as part of her dowry the settlement of Bombay (now Mumbai) and it was to help protect this new possession that in the same year the Bombay Regiment of Europeans was raised and became part of the army of the East India Company. During the following almost 200 years the power and influence of

the East India Company continued to develop and with it the need for an effective army to protect its interests. As the company's power expanded so did the involvement of the government back in London with the need to control the semi-independent behemoth that was developing in India, still largely run by a trading company in the City of London. In 1853 it was decided that there should be a reorganisation of the company's armies and the two regiments, 1st Bombay Europeans (Fusiliers) and 2nd Bombay Europeans (Light Infantry) that had grown out of the original regiment should be amalgamated into a new entity, the 3rd Bombay European Regiment. It is not part of the remit of this article to follow the origins of the Indian Mutiny of 1857 or the events that followed it except to say that at the conclusion the East India Company's army was disbanded and absorbed into a government controlled Indian Army with the "European" units becoming part of the Imperial Army. As part of these changes the 3rd Bombay Europeans became the 109th Regiment of Foot, later to be 2nd Battalion, The Leinster Regiment and carrying with it the battle honour "Central India" marking its predecessors' service during the campaigns of the Indian Mutiny.

# The Forgotten Victors

## The 2nd Battalion of the Leinsters at the Battle of Vimy Ridge

The (Second) Battle of Arras was a British Offensive from 9th April to 16th May 1917. It had been almost 12 months in the planning. By the end of the Battle the British forces to the south of the battle lines had limited success. The French forces operating even further south failed badly.

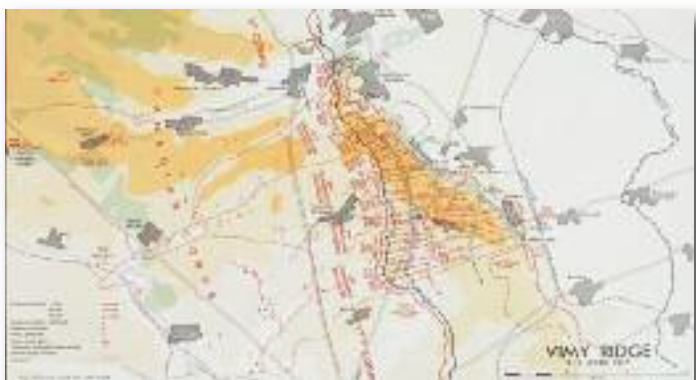
In these islands the Battle of Arras is well known and remembered, but there was one highly successful element of the battle, some miles further north that is often overlooked, but not by the Canadians: The Battle of Vimy Ridge.



The Vimy - Arras Operation 1917.

The Battle of Vimy Ridge itself gets little attention in these islands but is widely celebrated in Canada and with major justification.

It was the first time that all 4 Divisions of the Canadian Forces were to fight together. The target was to try to capture the seven kilometre ridge some distance north of Arras, the Vimy Ridge. The defenders had a considerable advantage over the attacking forces due to their higher positions. The Canadians put months of very considerable detailed planning into their attack on the ridge which commenced with a massive artillery barrage which started on 20th March and which was stepped up from 2nd April.



Vimy Ridge was key to the German defences, rising 61 metres above the Douai Plain and protecting vital French mines and factories to the East. Any attacking force from the west would be attacking up-hill over open ground. Facing the Canadians at Vimy were considerable German forces estimated at 10,000. For three years they had fortified the ridge with an array of defensive works.



The Canadian offensive started at 5.30am on 9th April, Easter Monday, when they stormed the ridge overrunning German troops all along the front. 20,000 Canadians were in the first wave across very difficult terrain and in driving sleet and snow. The main objective was to capture Hill 145, the highest point on the ridge.



The Canadians advance up Vimy Ridge.

The total Canadian forces at the time amounted to 100,000 troops but the victory at Vimy cost them almost 10,000 killed or wounded. Four Canadians earned VCs mainly through their bravery in attacking enemy machine gun positions:

- Pte. William Milne, KIA
- Lance-Sgt. Ellis Sifton, KIA
- Capt. Thain MacDowell
- Pte. John Pattison, KIA two months later

Most of the ridge was captured on 9th with the remaining portions captured by 12th. They captured more ground, more prisoners and more guns than any British offensive up to that point in the war.



General view of Vimy Ridge Battlefield today.

### So what about the 2nd Leinsters?

In early 1917 the 2nd Leinsters were in the 73rd Infantry Brigade and part of the 24th Division. At the end of January 1917 and into February the Leinsters were moving around a number of locations in the vicinity of Maroc, (Grenay today) about 15km north of Arras and Fouquereuil, some further 20kms West. Behind the lines, they were doing general duties, providing working parties etc.

The 24th Division was now holding the front immediately north of Vimy Ridge and on 5th March the 2nd Leinsters moved to Souchez where they took over a front line sector from the Canadians. Souchez was partly out of sight of the enemy on the ridge to the East. North West of it is the famous Notre Dame de Lorette. After a relatively quiet week on the front, the Leinsters came off the line and moved to Sains-en-Gohelle some distance to the north-west. The Battalion War Diary reports: "16th March, Lt. M.A. Higgins & 18 other ranks joined the regiment."

The Battalion returned to the front at Souchez on 21st March. While there was occasional shelling near their position, the rest of the month was again relatively quiet. However, movement around their positions had to be done carefully as the elevated position of the enemy exposed their positions to sniper fire. The War

Diary records: "Souchez; 31st March, 10.30pm; Heavy barrage behind our front line in vicinity of Coy H.Q. and Coy Trench. Lt. M.A. Higgins killed." He was killed by sniper fire during the barrage. (*Lt. Higgins was the author's uncle*).

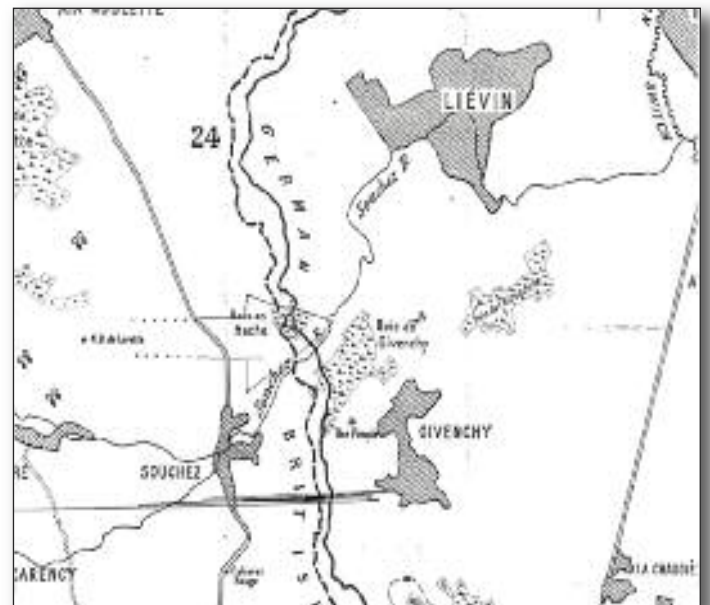


Souchez Cemetery towards Notre Dame de Lorette, where there is a basilica and the largest French Military Cemetery in the world.

On 5th April the Battalion was again relieved and moved to billets only to return to Souchez on 11th where detailed preparations for the coming assault were under way.

The War Diary records:

"12th April, 5.00am: (Zero hour) In conjunction with operations on Vimy Ridge the Battalion attacked the Bois-en-Hache spur in co-operation with the 9th Royal Sussex Regiment." Just as the assault started, so did the



Note the position of the Bois en Hache, the Souchez River and the Bois de Givenchy, with The Pimple further South.

snow, sleet and rain making conditions very difficult for the advancing soldiers.

The following extracts from the War Diary record:

- 10am: "First objective captured. Moving on to 2nd objective. Enemy MG and rifle fire very heavy".
- 13th April, 4.00pm Givenchy occupied.
- 14th April, 7.00am Battalion relieved."

The combined offensive by the Canadians, the Leinsters and the Royal Sussex was regarded as a striking success and one of the finest achievements of the war. However victory was at a price for the Leinsters;

- Killed:- 4 Officers & 48 Other Ranks
- Wounded:- 4 Officers & 155 Other Ranks
- Missing:- 3 Other Ranks

### John Cunningham VC



John Cunningham was 26 years old, and a corporal in the 2nd Battalion, when he performed a deed on 12 April 1917 at Bois-en-Hache, which earned him the Victoria Cross. Unfortunately he later died as a result of his injuries.

Following the awarding of his Victoria Cross *The London Gazette* reported on 6th June 1917:

"For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty when in command of a Lewis Gun section on the most exposed flank of the attack. His section came under heavy enfilade fire and suffered severely. Although wounded he succeeded almost alone in reaching his objective with his gun, which he got into action in spite

of much opposition. When counter-attacked by a party of twenty of the enemy he exhausted his ammunition against them, then, standing in full view, he commenced throwing bombs.

He was wounded again, and fell, but picked himself up and continued to fight single-handed with the enemy until his bombs were exhausted. He then made his way back to our lines with a fractured arm and other wounds. There is little doubt that the superb courage of this N.C.O. cleared up a most critical situation on the left flank of the attack. Corporal Cunningham died in hospital from the effects of his wounds.

"Special Order of the Day by Major General Sir J E Capper, Commanding 24th Division April 19th 1917.

From the First Army Commander to the GOC 1st Corps: "The 24th Division deserves great credit not only for the skilful capture of Bois-en-Hache, but also for the promptitude and determination with which they followed up the retirement of the enemy through an area presenting so many difficulties. This is more noteworthy when it is remembered that this division has spent the whole winter and spring in a trying section of the trenches."

The Imperial War museum records the following:

"On the 12th April 1917 the Prince of Wales' Leinster Regiment were to make an assault, their objective being the Bois-en-Hache to the north-east of Souchez and the strongpoint known as Pimple, on the northern edge of Vimy Ridge. At 5.00 a.m. the attack began and three companies moved off in two waves accompanied by a British barrage. Landmarks were quickly concealed by the snow and the ground, comprising mainly of shell holes and craters, quickly became slushy.

The Leinsters continued their advance in these very poor conditions and the enemy opened a heavy rifle and machine-gun fire on them. After beating the Germans back from their first line, the leading men moved downhill towards the wooded slope and the German second line. Meanwhile, hostile enfilade fire from across the Souchez Valley continued and took its toll."

The following is an extract from a New Zealand Paper; *The Poverty Bay Herald* on 26th May 1917:

**BRITISH CAPTURED BOIS-EN-HACHE IN BLIZZARD. OUTFOUGHT DEFENDERS WHILE STORM RAGED.** (By Philip Gibbs.) War Correspondents' Headquarters, April 13.

The enemy's headquarters' staff clearly troubled by

the enormous successes gained by our troops during these first days of the battle of Arras and all attempts to repair the damage to his defensive positions, upon which his future safety depends, have been feeble and irresolute. It is certain that he desired to make a heavy counter-attack upon the northern edge of Vimy Ridge.

Prisoners taken yesterday all believed that this would be done without delay. The Fifth Grenadiers of the Prussian Guards Reserve were hurriedly brought up to relieve or support the Bavarian troops who had suffered frightfully, and were massed in a wood called Bois d'Hirondelle (Swallows Wood) in order to move through another little wood called Bois-en-Hache to a hill known by us as "The Pimple," and so on to recapture Hill 145, taken by the Canadians on Monday night.

Yesterday morning the Canadian troops made a sudden assault upon "The Pimple," which is a knoll slightly lower than Hill 145 to its right, and gained it in spite of fierce machine-gun fire from the garrison, who defended themselves stubbornly until they were killed or captured. At the same time, the Bois-en-Hache, which stands on rising ground across the little valley of the River Souchez was attacked with great courage and the enemy driven out. It was an hour or two later before German officers, directing operations at a distance and preparing a counter-attack on Vimy Ridge, heard that "The Pimple" and the Bois-en-Hache had both gone - the only places which gave them Observation on the south side of Vimy and made effective any attack. Their curses must have been deep and full when that message came over the telephone wires."

### No mention of Leinsters in that report!

However the following message from the General Staff puts a better perspective on the events.

"With reference to the successful operation which took place on this front on the morning of April 12th, resulting in the capture of "The Pimple" by the 4th Canadian Division and The Bois en Hache by the

9th Bn. Royal Sussex Regt. and the 2nd Bn. Leinster Regt. 73rd Infantry Bde., 24th Division, the following message has been received from the Commander in Chief via the I Corps."

"Please convey to the 24th Division and the 4th Canadian division congratulations on the success of their operations this morning and my appreciation of the gallantry and skill shown by troops engaged."



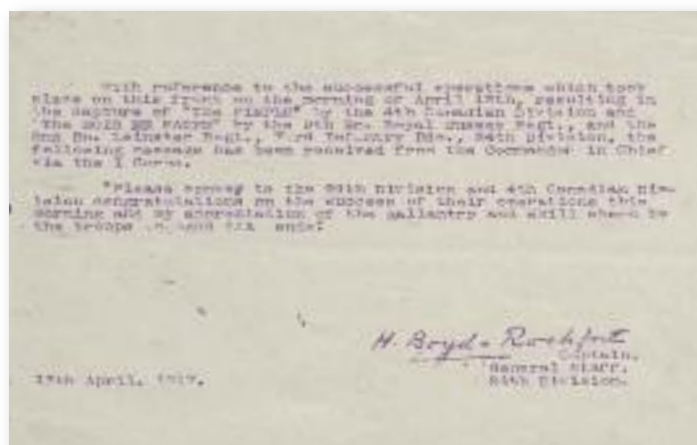
A view of Souchez after the war.

Also, the message from 1 Corps HQ; Bd. General G V Hordern; dated 12.4.17 goes as follows:

"The Corps Commander wishes his thanks conveyed to the Officers and men of the 9th Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment and the 2nd Battalion the Leinster Regiment on the success of their attack on the Bois-en-Hache. The Corps Commander fully appreciates the difficulties of weather and ground under which the attack was carried out, but the determination of all ranks to get in with the bayonet overcame these difficulties and has again proven that British infantry are irresistible at close quarters."

The battle of Vimy Ridge was a great success and deserves to be celebrated, particularly in Canada. Indeed it was reported that "The Canadian Corps' success at Vimy allowed their troops to finally emerge from Britain's shadow."

In all that, we must also recognise the major part played in that success by the 2nd Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment(Royal Canadians), something that all associated with the Leinster Regiment Association today can also be justly proud of.



Denis Kirby

# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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\* Also members of the General Committee.

### Appeal to Members

May we remind you that all annual subscriptions become due on the 1st January, this currently stands at £20 for UK residents and €25 for Irish residents. If you have already paid your subscription, thank you, if you have not may we respectfully remind you that it is now due. Cheques in either currency may be sent to the Treasurer, Ian Lowe, 42 Woodridge Avenue, Marford, Wrexham, LL12 8SS.

Many of you pay by standing order and direct debit which is greatly appreciated and simplifies the job of the Treasurer and Membership Secretary. If you would like to switch to this sort of arrangement please contact us as above.

You will have noticed that the running of the Association falls on a very small number of people some of who are fulfilling more than one role. This is an appeal to members to come forward as volunteers to help run your association and secure the future of what we aspire to do. The tasks are not onerous and the satisfaction of doing something worthwhile is considerable! If you are interested in becoming more involved with the running of the Association please contact Mark Weldon or David Ball in the first instance.

*Opinions expressed by contributors to this journal are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Association*

### Mrs Sheila Dickson.

We are very sorry to inform you that we recently heard of the death of Sheila Dickson on the 5th June 2020 after a long period of ill health. Sheila will be remembered as an active, enthusiastic and popular member of the Association who fulfilled the role of Membership Secretary for a number of years. Sheila also ably supported and assisted her husband Don while he was Chairman particularly during a number of high profile events. The Association extends our most sincere sympathies to Don and his family at this sad time.

### Thanks

The editorial team would like to thank all those who have contributed towards producing this journal, without your assistance it would not happen. A special thanks to Laetitia Barnes of Afterhours Artwork for turning a collection of articles and other material into a coherent publication.

We urgently need more material for future editions of 40-10 so can we please ask you to get writing and tell us the story of why you are a member of the Association. Every one of our members has a story to tell!

Design & artwork by Laetitia Barnes 01580 714015 art@afterhours.myzen.co.uk

