



The 40-10



LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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“As your King I am proud to accept this trust. But I fully realise with what grief you relinquish these dearly prized emblems; and I pledge my word that within these ancient and hallowed walls your Colours will be treasured, honoured, and protected as hallowed memorials of the glorious deeds of brave and loyal regiments”.

12th June 1922

HM King George V

HM King George VI

HM King Edward VIII



HM Queen Elizabeth II

HM King Charles III

LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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From the Chairman



You will probably be reading this introduction as we enter February. It is actually being drafted on 1 January 2023. New Year is both a time of reflection and an opportunity to look forward. We are through the centenary of our Regiment’s disbandment. The year was not without its surprises, and as we progress through 2023, we are not quite done with anniversaries.

The year had been long anticipated, and it was truly commemorated in style in Ireland. Well done to the Irish Committee, and indeed to the other associations of the regiments disbanded in 1922. In the summer, I think we all revelled in the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Later, we greatly mourned the passing of Her Majesty. It was a surprise that our culminating event at Windsor was not organised by the Combined Irish Regiments’ Old Comrades Association. It was HQ London District, the Irish Guards and everyone at Windsor Castle who stepped up, and at very short notice. Huge thanks are due to all involved. There is a certain poignant symmetry that in 1922 we presented our Colours for safekeeping at Windsor Castle. One hundred years later, on 29 November 2022, the Associations of all the disbanded Southern Irish Regiments, collectively made a further presentation, again to remain “*within these ancient and historic walls*”.

Front Cover Photo

The Colours of the 1st and 2nd Leinster Battalions, as displayed on the Grand Staircase of Windsor Castle, together with the roll of Sovereigns who have maintained the safeguarding pledge made by HM King George V.

Back Cover

6807 Pte. Matthew Costello was the first recorded

Leinster casualty of the Great War. He was 28 years of age and the son of Matthew and Ann Costello of Borrisokane, Co Tipperary. He lies alongside 9914 L/Cpl Michael Gilmartin in Vailly British Cemetery. L/Cpl Gilmartin was 27 and a native of Ballymote, Co Sligo. The cemetery is close to where the Leinsters first went into action at La Cour de Soupir Farm, near the river Aisne in Picardy.

The coins of each regiment, encased in a elegant box, designed and created by Sean Collopy, made for a most fitting presentation.

Following the relaxation of Covid restrictions, we continued our social events in Ireland and the UK, on which I place so much importance. Increasingly more commemorative and remembrance events have been marked and this encouraging trend is particularly noticeable in Ireland. In the UK, more than half of the Combined Irish contingent that marched past the cenotaph on Sunday 13 November were Leinsters. In the previous week, the Fields of Remembrance were attended by a strong Association presence, including our President. On his way home, Sir Anthony was approached by a smart individual of soldierly appearance. On being asked what he had been doing, Sir Anthony replied that he had been at Westminster Abbey honouring our Regiment which had been disbanded in 1922. Clearly impressed and keen to engage, the man asked Sir Anthony if he himself had served with the Leinsters. Never one to let slip an opportunity for self-deprecating humour, he replied: "Actually, I did. It's just that I am particularly well-preserved". Only then, did the penny drop, to the amusement of both.

This brief encounter leads me onto the direction I believe we should continue: good humoured comradeship is our bond. That comradeship is best strengthened

by meeting, especially socially. But, you can only attend our events if you are a member of the Association. Our membership is currently less than a quarter of those who so actively use our excellent social media. On 20 December 2022, I posted a similar message on Facebook suggesting you might give membership of the Association as a Christmas present. In 2023, we are going to take one further step. With effect from 1 March 2023, the administrators of our Facebook and Twitter pages will only sanction posts from paid-up members (2022 AGM, Para 5.a.(1) Motion passed unanimously). Annual Membership costs considerably less than half a tank of fuel for your car, and yet you are gaining so much. So, let's get out there and enlist more members. The more members we have, the more we can do. Ultimately, the effect will be synergistic: the more put into the Association, the more we should get out of it.

That's the vision for the year. 2023 also marks the 20th anniversary of the reforming of the Association, thanks to David Ball's efforts. What an excellent reason to get together! This milestone will be the theme of the annual lunch at the Civil Service Club on Saturday 10 June 2023. Why not have a similar occasion in Ireland, at a place and time of their choosing?

Ich Dien
Mark



Photo caption: Constable and Governor of Windsor Castle, Lt Gen P D Jones CB, CBE, DL, accepts the presentation made on behalf of all the Associations of the Southern Irish Regiments disbanded in 1922. From left to right: Senator Gerry Craughwell, Sir Anthony Weldon Bt, Lt Gen Phil Jones, Col John Moody (Military Knight of Windsor), Counsellor Ms Orla McBreen (Director of the Foreign Policy Unit, Irish Embassy London, representing the Irish Ambassador).

The Other Irish Division Part II

Part 1 of this article traced the formation of the 10th (Irish) Division from its origins and composition through its training in Ireland and latterly England to embarking on troopships and its arrival in the eastern Mediterranean in late July 1915. Some battalions were landed on the Greek island of Lemnos while others were kept on board the ships. Reading the accounts of this period it is difficult to decide who had the worse deal as both were pretty uncomfortable.

Finally, on the 4th August orders were received to prepare to go into action. At this point nobody at brigade or battalion level were privy to their destination except that it would be somewhere in the eastern Mediterranean and probably the Gallipoli peninsula, rumours were rife. The situation in late July was that the earlier attacks around Cape Helles and at ANZAC cove, a little way up the west coast, had failed to take the high hills that bestrode the peninsula giving a commanding position from which to dominate the Dardanelles straits. Hamilton's August plan was to reinforce an attack from the ANZAC position with fresh troops while making a new landing at Suvla Bay, north of ANZAC with a view to pushing inland, securing the hills protecting the flank of the ANZAC attack. The 13th Division plus an Indian brigade and the 29th Brigade of 10th Division, including 6th Leinsters, was to land at ANZAC, 11th Division supported by the remaining two brigades of 10th Division were to land at Suvla to be followed by two Territorial divisions, the 53rd and 54th, who were still in transit from England. The attack was scheduled to take place on the 7th August. Details of the plan were

not revealed to brigade commanders and below until the force was at sea. So we have troops who had never been in action before, trained primarily for war on the Western Front, committed to an amphibious assault on an unknown coastline at night; what could possibly go wrong? On landing 29th Brigade made their way inland via rocky gullies in the steep hillsides to their allotted positions. Meanwhile 30th and 31st Brigades were preparing to land at Suvla Bay.

Suvla Bay was a different proposition to ANZAC. It is a gently curving bay with several beaches and a salt lake behind the shore with ground rising to some low hills. It was lightly defended by a Turkish police detachment so seemed a relatively simple proposition for a landing. The objective was to get ashore, secure the adjacent hills, and push on inland towards the Sari Bair ridge. The first complication was the discovery that the beach chosen for the landing proved to be unsuitable and as a result an alternative landing point had to be found and used. The salt lake although largely dried out was more marshy than expected slowing progress towards moving inland. Despite these problems and stiffer opposition than expected the initial objectives were secured before the operation ran out of momentum. Instead of making the most of their advantage and pushing on inland before the disorganised Turks could bring up reinforcements the tired and inexperienced troops of 10th Division dug in on their positions and awaited developments. This was the sort of warfare that they had trained for and expected on the Western Front. At battalion and company level the units lacked the leadership, experience and hence the initiative to exploit the opportunities available. There was considerable confusion in the command structure as Lt-Gen Stopford, the Corps Commander, failed to make clear the division of responsibilities between the GOC 11th Division, Maj-Gen Sir F Hammersley, and Sir Bryan Mahon. In turn the two divisional commanders blamed the lack of water and artillery support for their failure to make progress, complaints that had some validity. The Turks were not so slow and rushed up reinforcements and reorganised their defences. As a result despite several subsequent attempts to break the stalemate and the landing of two more divisions little progress was made and the Suvla landings ground to a halt remaining for the rest of the campaign in more or less the positions gained on the first day.

Meanwhile 29th Brigade, including 6/Leinsters were seeing plenty of action alongside the ANZAC's in both



Teasing Turkish snipers at Suvla Bay. Believed to show men of 5/Royal Irish Fusiliers, 31 Brigade.

offensive and defensive operations. Continuous efforts were made to enlarge the bridgehead and move inland to gain the elusive Sari Baira ridge. Every small gain made was met by furious Turkish counterattacks. You need to delve deeply into the history of the ANZAC's to find much acknowledgement of the part played by 29th Brigade and their stoicism in the face of appalling conditions.

Sir Ian Hamilton soon became impatient at the lack of progress at Suvla and from an early date he blamed Stopford and his immediate subordinates. One problem was that there was a shortage of suitable replacement officers, both in theatre and at home. Finally on the 15th August Hamilton arranged to replace Stopford with Lt-Gen Hon J Byng then serving in France. As an interim measure he asked Maj-Gen de Isle, GOC 29th Division at Cape Helles, to take temporary command of IX Corps. Sir Bryan Mahon, a senior Lt-General, refused to be subordinate to a junior officer and promptly resigned his command. He was temporarily replaced by Brig-Gen Hill of 31st Brigade but resumed command on the 23rd August, his ego presumably restored. By that time the Division's time at Gallipoli was drawing to a close, the rumour was that they were to be sent to Serbia as part of a joint Anglo-French force to assist the Serbs in their struggle against the Bulgarians and Austrians. The Division finally left the peninsula on the 2nd October 1915. They had lost over 2,000 dead plus probably three times as many wounded and sick, approaching half their original strength. It had been a brutal introduction to war for these citizen soldiers not helped by the ineptitude of some of their commanders. In late September 1915 Hamilton was asked to release one division from his command to go to Greece alongside two French divisions in order to support Serbia in its operations against Bulgaria. It may be that in his choice of the 10th Division he saw an opportunity to move on a division in which he lacked confidence and its troublesome commander.

The Allied involvement in Greece and Macedonia was triggered by the entry of Serbia into the war on the Allied side and of Bulgaria on the side of the Central Powers. At the invitation of the Greek Government the Anglo-French force was to land at Salonika and use the city as a base for operations in Serbian controlled Macedonia. The political situation quickly became complicated by the split that developed between the pro-Allies Greek Government and the pro-German King. Thus by the time 10th Division began to arrive in early October 1915 they were uncertain of the sort of welcome that they would receive. In the event the actual welcome is best described as one of sullen acceptance no doubt boosted by the welcome cash injection

to the local economy that the new arrivals brought.

As the troopships approached the port of Salonika the city would have provided an exotic sight for the men of 10th Division as it straggled up a steep hill from the waterfront to the citadel. Numerous minarets would have dotted the skyline reminding them that until the end of the first Balkan War in 1912 this was an Ottoman-Turkish city. It was a polyglot community of different races, the largest component being Jewish of Spanish descent. The more thoughtful of the new arrivals may have reflected that they were following in the footsteps of St Paul. Although the modern city bears little resemblance to that of 1915 the quay that the soldiers landed at over 100 years ago remains known as 'the English Quay'.

It took time for the Division to assemble in camps on the outskirts of the city with considerable confusion continuing to exist regarding the division's support echelons, some of which were lost when a troopship was torpedoed on its way to Salonika. One of the principal deficiencies was in artillery, particularly howitzers. There were also considerable doubts back in London about the use of British forces in the area both on military and political grounds. It is fair to say that throughout the campaign the attitude of HMG remained ambivalent and we remained there largely out of loyalty to our French allies who were more committed to the theatre for their own geo-political reasons. From the earliest days the Salonika expedition was a cinderella operation with few supporters in Whitehall.

Finally in late November the British force moved north into Serbia taking up positions on the right flank of the larger French force. The division was now operating in wild mountain country often more than 4000ft high with very primitive infrastructure and the season heading into winter. Every bullet, tin of bully beef and pint of water had to be carried up the steep hills from the single railway line that ran north from Salonika. One of the principal tasks of the troops throughout their time in Macedonia was road building and to this day many of the roads in the area owe their origins to the efforts of Tommy Atkins or perhaps his Irish cousin Paddy.

As the Allies were establishing themselves inside Serbia the Bulgarians were moving south driving the Serbian Army before them. On account of the difficulties of supplying the army and the onset of winter the decision had already been made but no action taken for the Allies to retire behind the Greek frontier. The two sides met in the mountains near the tiny village of Kosturino on the 7th December, at the time 30 and 31 Brigades were forward with 29th Brigade in support. A confused action took place in bitterly cold conditions and thick fog that favoured the attackers. The position of



The Leinsters attacked the village of Yeniköi in September.

10th Division was undermined by the French on their left flank withdrawing and further weakened by the unilateral decision by the OC 31st Brigade to pull back his men fearing that they were about to be surrounded. The result was a withdrawal to the Greek frontier in bitter winter weather. Some of the men were still kitted out for Gallipoli in August rather than a Balkan winter and there were many cases of frost bite. Kosturino was to be the most significant action that the 10th Division fought as a unit and near the village in what is now North Macedonia stands the divisional memorial, a Celtic cross of the same design as those at Guillemont and Wytchaete. Thereafter the campaign settled down in stalemate, the Allies positioned just inside the Serbian boarder with the Bulgarians in possession of the high ground overlooking them. A series of fortifications were constructed on the Greek side of the frontier to protect the main supply base at Salonika, this became known as the 'Birdcage Line'. For most of the time the most serious enemy were the malaria carrying mosquitos that thrived in the river valleys. Malaria caused the major number of casualties and lucky was the man who did not contract the illness. Many victims were to suffer the effects for the remainder of their lives. In the four months between July and October 1916 the 10th Division suffered nearly 20,000 cases of malaria with 300 deaths. At its peak the Allied Salonika Force numbered over 300,000 men drawn from many nations and colonies. From time to time the politicians at home would question what they were actually doing earning the long suffering troops the derogatory sobriquet 'the Gardeners of Salonika' as they seemed to spend more time digging than fighting.

The 10th Division spent most of its time in Greece and Macedonia garrisoning the defensive positions, building roads and taking part in local operations to improve the

overall position of the army. It was a boring and unglamorous way to spend the war but relatively safe; battle casualties were few compared to the Western Front. On the other hand there was little leave and few opportunities for any leisure activities. During the remainder of their time in Macedonia the most notable action that 10th Division took part in was an attack in late September 1916 on the village of Yeniköi. This was a classic line strengthening operation carried out by several brigades drawn from two divisions, the 10th and 27th, the latter including 1/Leinsters. On account of the depleted strength of 10th Division some reorganisation took place in November 1916 with three regular Irish battalions joining the 10th from the 27th Division with several service battalions of the 10th being amalgamated. As part of this process 1/Leinsters joined 6/Leinsters in 29th Brigade. Earlier in the year important changes in command had taken place. Sir Bryan Mahon had taken command of all British forces in Greece in December 1915 and had been succeeded as GOC 10th Division by Maj-Gen J R Longley who was to command the Division for the remainder of its existence.

On the 17th August 1917 orders were received for the 10th Division to assemble at Salonika in preparation for a move to Egypt and thence to Palestine. After their arrival in Egypt there was a period of refitting and training before setting forth to join General Allenby's forces in the desert country of Palestine. The Division remained in a precarious state of health with up to 3,000 malaria cases in hospitals at any one time.

The reason that 10th Division and another had been moved to Palestine was to support Gen Allenby's projected attack on the Gaza Line, generally known as the 3rd Battle of Gaza. The Division played its part in the logistical preparations and as the support division

for the main attack when it was launched on the 31st October 1917. One of the main objectives of the attack was to secure the wells at Beersheba as a precursor to further advances towards Jerusalem. The 10th Division took part in attacking the main Turkish positions allowing the cavalry to perform a flanking move through the desert to capture the wells intact.

After 3rd Gaza the Turkish Army who were supported by some German units started a slow retreat that with some interruptions was to last to the end of the war 12 months later. The first and most symbolic step was the capture of Jerusalem in December 1917. This helped to bring what had been a pretty dismal year for the Allies to a more hopeful conclusion. 10th Division played an active part in the operations that secured the city and subsequently held off Turkish attempts to recapture it. It was during the defence of Jerusalem that the Division operated for the last time as a complete unit under its own commander. The end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918 brought dreadful weather including heavy rain and snow that interrupted the progress of the campaign. Despite these difficulties by the middle of March 1918 the Division had reached the vicinity of Jericho when events on the Western Front caused all to change.

On the 21st March 1918 the Germans launched a major offensive against the British positions close to the old Somme battlefield. Heavy losses meant that reinforcements were urgently needed in France resulting in troops being moved from the more peripheral theatres of war to the Western Front. As part of this process the 10th (Irish) Division ceased to be 'Irish' and became in effect an Indian division, albeit retaining four Irish battalions, 1/Leinsters, 1/Royal Irish Regiment, 2/Royal Irish Fusiliers with 5/Royal Irish Regiment retained as divisional pioneers. It was the usual practice

to include one 'British' battalion in each brigade of an Indian Army division. By the war's end the order of battle of the 10th Division was as follows:

- 29th Brigade: 1st Battalion The Leinster Regiment.
1/54th Sikhs.
1/101st Grenadiers.
2/151st Infantry.
- 30th Brigade: 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment.
38th Dogras.
46th Punjabis.
1st Kashmir Rifles.
- 31st Brigade: 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers.
2/42nd Deoli.
74th Punjabis.
2/101st Grenadiers.

Thus came to an end the fairly brief but eventful story of the 10th (Irish) Division. In some ways it was a victim of being one of the first New Army divisions and was part of the steep learning curve that the expansion of the Army experienced. During its existence it was often used, for whatever reason, piecemeal rather than as a unit and was always deployed in secondary theatres of war. It also lacked the eye-catching back story of the other two Irish divisions and when the veterans returned to an already ambivalent Ireland they often did not readily identify with either of the two prevailing political camps. Unusually the 10th has no comprehensive divisional history, the nearest being Bryan Cooper's contemporary account of Gallipoli and Henry Hannah's 'Pals at Suvla Bay', both written during the war with an eye to recruitment. Until recently the only divisional memorial was on a lonely wind swept Balkan hillside. Please, as we rightly remember the exploits of the 16th and 36th Divisions, spare a thought for the often forgotten men of the 10th who endured much in far off places with little recognition.



10th (Irish) Division on the march in Palestine.

A Tale of Two Graves

Lembet Road Military Cemetery is a large cemetery not far from the city centre of Thessaloniki in Greece. It contains 1,648 Commonwealth graves and also extensive plots of French, Serbian, Italian and Russian burials, each presented in their national style. The most

prominent feature is a substantial Serbian Orthodox Church that serves the many Serbs who visit the site.

The Commonwealth plot is laid out in the familiar style of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



The graves of Katherine Harley and John Gill.

(CWGC) with neat rows of identical headstones bearing the name, rank, number and unit of the casualty. Where appropriate a religious symbol and in many cases words chosen by the surviving family have been added. As you take in the familiar scene, one grave catches the eye as being quite different to all the rest. It is taller and in a different form, automatically drawing your attention to it. It is the grave of “Madame Harly”. The grave to its right is that of 3845 Private John Gill of The Leinster Regiment so it is impossible for a follower of The Leinster Regiment to find out who Madame Harly was without also seeing what could be discovered about Private Gill. Both stories although quite different have unusual aspects, and some lessons for the amateur researcher.

“Madame Harly” is the easier to track down. Her tombstone is dedicated:

“To the victim of the Great War. The generous English lady and great benefactress of the Serbian People”

It is followed by a verse of poetry in praise of her work among the Serbs. The inscriptions are rendered in Serbian and English.

“Madame Harly”, more correctly, was Katherine Mary Harley née French the younger sister of Field Marshal Sir John French (later FM Earl French of Ypres). She was a member of an Anglo-Irish family with their roots in Co Roscommon. One of her sisters, Lottie Despard, was a pacifist, socialist and a fervent supporter of Sinn Fein. After the death of her husband in 1910, Katherine became a prominent Suffragette and campaigner for women’s rights. At the outbreak of the war, she joined the “Scottish Women’s Hospitals for Foreign Service” (SWH) movement, serving first in France where she was awarded the Croix de Guerre before moving to Greece in late 1915. She was one of the redoubtable women from these shores who went to help relieve the appalling suffering that the war imposed on the people and armies of Serbia, as they retreated across the Balkan mountains during the winter of 1915/16, fleeing the Austro-Hungarian forces. It is estimated that three-quarters of those that started the journey perished during it. The SWH was one of several similar organisations set up by volunteers at the beginning of the war to provide ambulance and refugee relief services behind the front lines. They often grew out of religious or women’s rights movements and were financed by wealthy benefactors and public subscriptions. They attracted spirited young women from diverse backgrounds who felt that they had a mission to help relieve the suffering among both the military and civilian populations. In doing so ,many



Katherine Mary Harley.

endured very great hardship and danger resulting in the death and disablement of a considerable number. Katherine Harley was among the leaders of these remarkable women. Katherine identified closely with the Serbian cause and in late 1916 she left the SWH to start her own independent ambulance unit to serve the people of Monastir (now in North Macedonia but then a strategic Serbian town). It was here that she was killed in her house by shell fire on the 7th March 1917, probably in the sort of incident that has become familiar to us, as reported from Ukraine recently. Katherine Harley continues to be remembered with respect and affection by the Serbian people to this day. A visitor to her grave cannot help but notice its neighbour, the resting place of 3845 Private John Gill of The Leinster Regiment who died on the 2nd October 1916.

It seemed the easiest and most natural thing to see what else could be discovered about John Gill. The fact that he was buried in a Greek cemetery indicated that he served in either the 1st or 6th Battalions of The Leinsters. The CWGC records told us that he was

44 years of age and from Mullingar, the son of William and Bridget Gill. His low number, 3845, indicated that he might be a “regular” suggesting that the 1st Battalion was more likely to be his unit than the 6th. Reference to the HMSO publication “Soldiers Died In The Great War” produced the first surprise, there was no John Gill recorded as having died in either the 1st or 6th Battalions but there was one with the matching number in the 2nd Battalion who never left France and Belgium. Furthermore, his Medal Index Card (MIC) told us that he arrived in France on the 18th January 1915 but with no reference to Greece or Gallipoli. The only other notes on his MIC record say that he “Died”, and that he qualified for the standard three campaign medals awarded during the war. The pension records proved to be more informative, recording that he died of malaria and that he was serving in the 6th Battalion. As he was unmarried, his mother was awarded a pension of 10/- per week, a useful sum in the 1920’s. Deaths from malaria were all too common in the British Salonika Force (BSF) . The Leinsters, part of 10th (Irish) Division, were operating in the marshy Struma Valley suffered far more casualties from malaria and other diseases than from enemy action. In the early days the British force was ill prepared to deal with the health hazards of the region, despite years of experience in warm climates. Admissions from the 10th Division to hospitals on account of malaria in the five months preceding the death of John Gill totalled about 6,500 out of a divisional strength of probably around 10/12,000. That figure represents only admissions to base hospitals and would not include those treated at field ambulances. Gradually the situation improved with compulsory doses of quinine, improved hygiene, draining the worst of the swamps, and both sides withdrawing to higher ground during the warmest months. The summer months of 1916 were to prove the worst period for malaria during the existence of the BSF, although it remained a serious problem throughout the campaign. It was towards the end of this period that John Gill succumbed to the illness. His family back in Mullingar would have been notified by telegram first that he was very ill and later that he had died. It is difficult to imagine the anguish of the family receiving these telegrams and knowing that there was nothing they could do but pray.

John Gill’s age of 44, as recorded by the CWGC seems somewhat on the old side for a frontline soldier on foreign service – old but not impossibly so. In consequence, we looked for him and his family in the 1901 and 1911 census with some instructive results. In each case, the family was living in Mullingar but the ages on the census forms were often at variance. A summary is as follows:

	Census Year	1901	1911
		Years of Age	Years of Age
William Gill	Father, Groom	50	57
Bridget Gill	Mother	42	50
Jane Gill	Daughter	18	24
Bridget Gill	Daughter	15	22
Bernard Gill	Son	20	20
John Gill	Son	10	-

If John Gill was 44 in 1916 it follows that he would have been born circa 1872 when his mother would have been about 13. To add further confusion Army Pension Records give Bridget Gill’s year of birth as 1846! There is clearly something wrong with the recorded ages of the family. Both census forms have been completed by William Gill in a clear confident hand and the rest of the family are reported as being able to read and write: so there does not seem to be any literacy problems. Other details tell a familiar story of the time: in 1911 the Gills had been married for 30 years with 11 children born but only four surviving. There is no mention of John Gill in 1911, if he was 10 in 1901 it follows that he would be 20 in 1911 and 24 or 25 in 1916 making this age more plausible than the stated 44. The fact that he was not listed with the rest of his family in the 1911 census and does not appear elsewhere in Ireland, suggests that he may have been in the army in 1911.

Further research shows that John Gill was wounded around the 24th March 1915, while still in France/Flanders. Assuming that he was serving with the 2nd Battalion at the time, it indicates that he was injured near Armentières during operations to improve the position of the front line. On recovering from his injuries, he must have been reassigned to the 6th Battalion and sent to join the BSF.

The answers to the questions raised lie in the relevant birth, marriage and death records and for our purposes are not important. However, they do remind us of the fallibility of so-called ‘official’ records. It is remarkable that there should be so many apparent inconsistencies in recording basic facts about one normal family from rural Ireland taken at random, and remind us that when doing our research to avoid accepting the apparently obvious at face value.

George Neville Patrick (Gardiner) Young (1893-1915)

'A dear, natural, cheerful boy, and the bravest of the brave'



George Neville Patrick Young.

George Neville Patrick (Gardiner) Young, the son of George Lawrence Young and Annie Harvey, was born at Randalstown, Co Antrim, on 17 March 1893, and died, aged 22, at Wimereux, France, on 25 July 1915. He was awarded the Military Cross (the first received by the Leinster Regiment's 2nd Battalion) for acts of valour in the fighting on the Aisne, in September and October 1914.

Neville, and his siblings Robin, Dorothy and Guy grew up at Millmount, Ballygrooby. Randalstown, near Shane's Castle, where their father, George Young, worked as Lord O'Neill's Land Agent.

The family spent their summer holidays at Caratra, a house by the shore at Culdaff, Co Donegal. In a possible nod towards his future life, Neville is recorded as appearing at a Fancy Dress dance at Culdaff in the uniform of 'a Victorian army officer'.

After early education at Mourne Grange School, Kilkeel, Co Down, and Castle Park School, Dalkey, Neville attended St Columba's College, Dublin, where Rex Hitchcock was a fellow pupil. Rex's brother Frank (1896-1972) later joined the Leinster Regiment and, as Captain F C Hitchcock, served with Neville ('a fine-looking fellow') in France and Belgium. Frank's Memoir, *Stand To – A Diary of the Trenches, 1915-18*, published in 1936, relates the incidents prior to Neville's death in July 1915.

Neville completed his schooling at Dover College, Kent, and entered the Royal Military College at Sandhurst (with a prize cadetship), in 1912. He became a 2nd Lieutenant in the Leinster Regiment's 2nd Battalion, stationed at Victoria Barracks, Cork, on 17 September 1913.

A fortnight later Neville acted as best man at his brother Robin's wedding in Co Antrim. One wedding photograph shows him standing, somewhat nervously, behind the happy couple at St Patrick's Church, Ballymena.



Neville behind Robin and Amy 30 September 1913.
Amy Young

From Cork to the Front (via Cambridge, Newmarket, Southampton and St Nazaire)

In his *History of the Leinster Regiment* Lieutenant-Colonel Frederick Whitton describes the dramatic escalation of military activity in the summer of 1914.¹

On 6 June 1914 Neville's Battalion marched 27 miles from Cork to Kilworth camp, for training. By late July they were under canvas at Moore Park, Fermoy, forming a unit in the 17th Brigade of the 6th Division. They were engaged on 'a scheme of night outposts', when, on the evening of 25-26 July, a motorcyclist brought orders that all troops were to return to Cork and occupy the 'vulnerable' locations to which they had been assigned - in their case, the harbour and naval dockyard at Queenstown.

German troops invaded Belgium on 3 August 2014, and war was declared between Britain and Germany at 11:00pm. Mobilisation of the Cork battalions began the following day. By 6:00pm on 9 August the 2nd Leinster Regiment, ready 'down to the last man and the last gaiter button', was reported as being 'complete and ready to take the field'.

The summer of August 1914 was, as Neville's sister Dorothy recollected, *'one of perpetual sunshine, quite the most wonderful weather ever to be remembered'*. However, life changed for everyone with the outbreak of war. Neville came home briefly to say goodbye to his family before leaving Ireland for France.

The 6th Division was, initially, selected as one of two Divisions to remain in the UK, ensuring the availability of a nucleus of trained troops in the event of a raid. Ordered to depart at 11:00pm on 16 August, the 2nd Battalion paraded silently out of the barrack gate and marched, in pitch darkness, to Albert Quay, where they boarded *SS Graphic*, a *'fine cross-channel steamer from the Belfast service'*, at 4:00am.



SS Graphic
Belfast-Liverpool ferry, 1906-1929.

From Holyhead they travelled by train to Cambridge, to join the 6th Division units. Camped on Midsummer Common, the Leinsters were attached to Clare College, using the College boat-house as a mess-house for breakfast and lunch, and dining with *'dons and other great ones'* in the evenings.

From Cambridge they marched 11 miles to Newmarket, the horse-racing town, and camped on the training downs at Warren Hill, with strict instructions not to set foot on the *'gallops'* (as Whitton comments: *'Britannia was calling wildly for half a million volunteers, but the training of racehorses was on no account to be interfered with'*). On reaching Southampton by train, they embarked on *SS Lake Michigan*, and joined the 6th Division transports at St Nazaire, France, at 6:00am on 10 September. The soldiers marched through the town to the strains of *'Tipperary'*, and continued their journey northeast by train to Coulommieres, hearing the *'dull roar of guns to the north'* as they approached the Front. Ordered to proceed to the Aisne, they had their first *'real glimpse of the war'* north of Oulchyle-Château – the sight of *'lorry loads of lightly wounded men'* who had been *'hit in the head or neck'*, heading south.

After seven days of marching the battalion reached the Aisne, and took over the defence of Soupir. They were based at *La Cour de Soupir*, a large stone-built farmhouse with outbuildings surrounded by a walled courtyard, on the edge of a plateau stretching north from the Aisne valley.ⁱⁱ



La Cour de Soupir farmyard.
'Le Chemin des Dames avant 1914' website

Battalion headquarters were in a cellar in the main building. Two of the four companies were *'in the trenches'*; the other two, providing support, were accommodated in large stone caves behind the farm.

The *'trenches'* at this stage of the war were rudimentary, *'merely a series of rifle pits, subsequently joined together, with a certain amount of head cover provided by the excavated earth'*, and none of the more elaborate features later found necessary: *'there were no revetments, no sandbags, no communication trenches, no dug-outs, no telephones, no protection from anything more serious than shrapnel, and no obstacles – not even a strand of wire in front'*.

On 22 September they were subjected to heavy firing:

'About three o'clock a steady bombardment began, the enemy pitching shrapnel, high explosive from field guns and Jack Johnsons from his 8-inch howitzers all along the position, down into the valley, and upon the farmhouse itself.'

'The Jack Johnsons were an object of interest and some awe, for the actual firing of the howitzers could be clearly heard, and then a whine growing shriller and shriller, till the projectile struck the ground with a terrifying 'woomp' and sent up with tremendous force a pillar of earth and black smoke.'

The size of the craters left by the German missiles took the soldiers by surprise:

‘When dusk fell we crept out to examine the shell holes and were surprised to see things like small circular swimming baths, so great was the size’.

After five days ‘mysterious rumblings of traffic’ were heard from behind the German lines. Wondering if the enemy were evacuating their position, the Brigade Commander ordered the Battalion to send out an officer’s patrol to draw fire.

At 10:00am on 27 September Neville accordingly led 20 men from ‘A’ Company to reconnoitre. As the Germans had, in fact, ‘no intention whatsoever’ of evacuating their line, the patrol was soon under heavy fire, and all members except Lieutenant Young and one private were hit.

Neville sent back word reporting the situation, and stated that he would remain out with the wounded soldiers until it became dark and they could be brought back. He spent the day in the field of fire, digging shelter pits and arranging cover for those unable to move. They returned to the Allied lines after dark, with Neville carrying one wounded man on his back. *The Ballymena Weekly Telegraph* later quoted a senior officer describing the incident ‘It was a bit jumpy, I can tell you’.

Private Noonan, the wounded soldier whom Neville had carried back to the trenches, had been struck in the centre of his chest by a maxim bullet which ‘came out on his right side, breaking two ribs and smashing his arm as it went through’. He was invalided home to the Infirmary at Ennis, Co Clare, from where he wrote to Neville’s parents:

*‘I am delighted to hear that Lieutenant Young is safe. He is a brave man, and only for him I would not be in Ireland. You can be proud of him. He lay for six hours with me after I got wounded, and he saved me from dying out. I will never forget it, and I hope he will come home safe’.*ⁱⁱⁱ

Prêmesques ‘An awful day for us’

A month later Neville’s Company was near the Belgian border at Prêmesques, a town about 120 miles north of Soupir,

Over 130 soldiers from the 2nd Battalion lost their lives in the fighting with ‘the Saxons’ (the 179th Infantry of the XIX Saxon Corps) that took place at Prêmesques between 18-20 October 1914.

Breakfasting at the farm at Mont de Prêmesques on 20 October Major Mather heard ‘the greatest burst of fire I have ever heard’ and sent Neville, his left platoon commander, to find out what was happening. Neville soon returned, with the information that ‘D’ Company had been driven out from Prêmesques, and that the left of ‘A’ Company was thus exposed’. As his Commanding Officer later wrote, Neville’s platoon, which briefly became ‘the mainstay of the whole defence’, made ‘two extremely spirited counter attacks, in one of which they recaptured 300 yards of trenches’.^{iv}

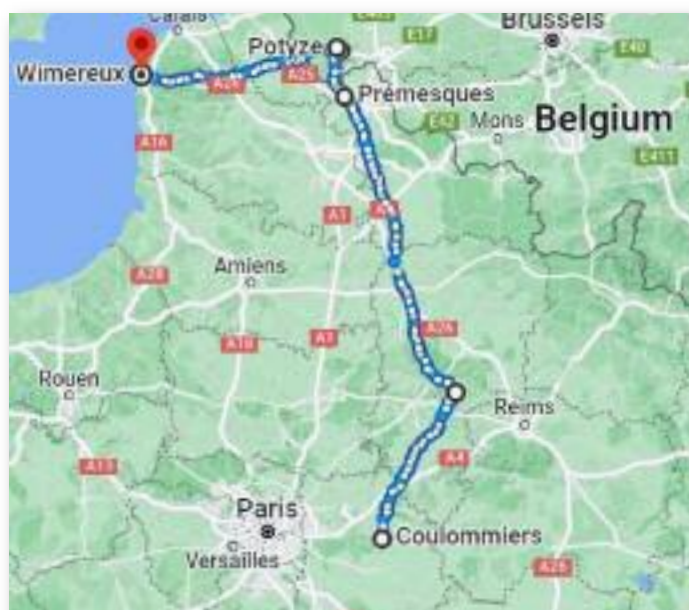
The farmhouse at Mont de Prêmesques was burnt to the ground. Neville described the attack a few days later:

‘In a very short time our farm was surrounded, but we held out there all day long, till towards evening they shelled it, and and it went on fire over our heads. We had to go then, and there was great work getting out of the house, which was being shelled and burning. We had a lot of wounded to bring out as well, and two machine guns. Among the wounded were several Germans, whom we had to rescue. We got in a trench then, and held on till dark, but it was an awful day for us’.^v

On 20 November 1914 Neville was mentioned in despatches by Field Marshal Sir John French for conspicuous bravery ‘at Soupir and elsewhere’.^{vi} He was subsequently awarded the Military Cross.^{vii}

Potijze ‘Beginning to feel the racket’

In May 1915 Neville, the Officer Commanding ‘A’ Company in the front line, was joined by Captain Frank Hitchcock, the brother of his schoolfriend Rex.



Coulommieres – Soupir – Prêmesques – Potijze – Wimereux.

By summer 1915 they were serving at Potijze, a village near Ypres, Belgium, about 20 miles north of Prêmesques. On 6 July Neville relieved Frank from his position in a dugout. The following day they were ‘very nearly knocked out by a whizz-bang’ on their way to Company Headquarters. Neville, whose coat had ‘been blown up by the Huns in October’, had borrowed a soldier’s greatcoat to keep out the cold. He admitted that he was ‘very fed up with the war’, and that his nerves were ‘beginning to feel the racket’.^{viii}

Hooge, Wimereux



Hotel Splendide (No 14 General Hospital), Wimereux.
www.scarletfinders.com

Neville was ‘wounded in the shoulder by shrapnel’ on the night of 10th/11th July 1915, during fighting near Hooge, a village about four miles south of Potijze. He was taken to No. 14 General Hospital at Wimereux, a resort on the French coast (about 70 miles to the west), where several hotels had been requisitioned for use as hospitals. No 14 was split across three neighbouring buildings: *Hotel Splendide*, *The Casino* and the *Victoria Hotel*.

Not considered serious at first, Neville’s injury became fatal when tetanus set in. However ‘*Splendide*’ the view from the verandah, he would never recover. His father George was permitted to travel to France, and was with Neville when he died, aged 22, on 25 July 1915.^{ix}

Neville was buried at Wimereux Communal Cemetery, and is commemorated by a plaque in St Buadan’s Church, Culdaff. His name is listed on the *Great War Memorial Board* in the chapel at Dover College, and on the *Memorial Wall* at Fort Dunree, Co Donegal, which lists 226 people from Inishowen parishes who gave their lives during World War I.

This portrait of Neville Young, which depicts him in his Leinster uniform, holding his helmet and his dress sword, was one of the few items saved when Culdaff



Neville Young, 1893-1915.

House was burned down by raiders on 26th May 1922. The helmet and sword survived the fire. The house was rebuilt in 1927, and Neville’s portrait was given pride of place.

Having survived the raid and the fire, the canvas was damaged in the 1950’s when Neville’s great-nephew Stanley Winton held an impromptu sword-fight with him. The helmet and sword provided hours of fun to younger generations playing in the woods at Culdaff: the helmet eventually disintegrated but the sword remains intact.

Rachel Magowan

References

- i Whitton, Lt-Col Frederick Ernest, 1924, *The History of the Prince of Wales’s Leinster Regiment* (Part I, Chap 35; Part II, Chap 1)
- ii Ibid (Part II, Chap 3)
- iii Private Noonan, 18 Nov 1914. Quoted in: *Ballymena Weekly Telegraph*, 12 Dec 1914
- iv Ibid (Part II, Chap 7)
- v Young, Neville, 24 Oct 1914 (Quoted in: *Ballymena Weekly Telegraph*, 12 Dec 1914)
- vi *De Ruvigny’s Roll of Honour*, 1914-1924
- vii *Gazette*, Issue No 29074, 16 Feb 1915, p.1697
- viii Hitchcock, Captain F C, MC, 1937, *Stand To: A Diary of the Trenches 1915-1918*, p.46
- ix Ibid p.56

A Memorable Weekend in Birr and Crinkill

The Irish Sub-Committee and a dedicated team of members pulled out all the stops to lay on a wonderful weekend of events in Birr and Crinkill on the 6th and 7th August. The dates were chosen to coincide with the annual Birr Vintage Week which was returning after its enforced Covid break. It is satisfying to think that the Association was contributing in its own unique way to the rich variety of events taking place in the town during the week. The Association took the opportunity to lay on a programme that successfully mixed essential business, the AGM of the Irish section, with the commemorative: a parade to remember the disbanded Irish regiments, the educational, a public lecture on a local hero and all interlaced with a lively social element.

Association members gathered from all over Ireland and were joined by our Chairman, and others who had travelled from the UK. It was also good to welcome UK members Andrew and Sue Overton, who timed their holiday to coincide with the weekend. Most of the visitors arrived on the Saturday and our local 'Quartermen Commandants' worked miracles finding beds where supposedly none were available. Festivities kicked off on Saturday evening with an informal gathering and dinner in what has become the Association's social HQ in Ireland - The Thatch pub and restaurant in Crinkill. As ever, the owner - Des Connole, and his staff, gave us a warm welcome and looked after us in an exemplary fashion. The evening was a great ice breaker. It is a feature of all Association occasions how quickly people, who may have never met before, begin to mix and find common ground, often but not always, rooted in their Leinster Regiment

connections. The evening in The Thatch was brought to an end by the need to move up the road to the old barrack walls to watch a sound and light show telling the story of the barracks through the ages. The show lasted about 10 minutes and consisted of images of the various stages of the barrack's history projected onto the walls and accompanied by appropriate dialogue and music. It was a warm dry evening and most of the spectators stayed for more than one performance. Truly, it was one of the highlights of the weekend.

Sunday morning dawned, possibly too bright and breezy for some. The first item on the agenda was the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Irish section. Our great team of organisers and fixers in Birr had secured the use of the impressive Oxmanstown Hall in Birr for the AGM and the lecture that followed it. The formal business of the day was promptly dealt with and will be reported separately. The subject of the talk that followed, which was open to the public, was the story of Sergeant Martin O'Meara VC, a native of nearby Lorrha, Co Tipperary, He had emigrated to Australia and returned to the Great War with the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). He won his Victoria Cross at Mouquet Farm during the Battle of the Somme and was later wounded on two occasions before becoming a long-term hospital patient back in Australia where he died in 1932. His medal has recently been lent by the Australian War Museum to the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks. Cork based member Gerry O'Meara (no relation) was to give the talk but unfortunately was unwell and Denis Kirby bravely stepped into the breach as a substitute.



One sequence from the spectacular sound and light show projected onto the walls of Crinkill Barracks.

After the talk, there was just time to dash up the road for a quick lunch in The Thatch before heading to the parade. Once again Des and his staff did us proud in the midst of what was already a very busy Sunday lunchtime service. The focus of the parade was the Leinster Regiment Memorial in the centre of the village. It was not long before we heard the sound of the Templemore Pipe Band leading the National Flag and the Standards of the disbanded regiments coming along the road. The parade was under the direction of Junior O'Callaghan who ensured a smart and dignified occasion. When all were in their place, the formal proceedings began with a welcome from Chairman Mark and a response from Tony McCormack, Las Cathaoirleach of Offaly County Council, followed by an address by Minister Sean Fleming TD on behalf of the Government. Local historians Brian Kennedy and Steven Callaghan outlined the background to the disbandment of the Irish regiments and the destruction of the barracks. Numerous wreaths were laid, including those on behalf of the Government, the County Council and the disbanded regiments. Col Sean Grant, Defence Attaché, laid a wreath on behalf of the United Kingdom. Formalities ended with the Act of

Remembrance and a joint blessing by Father Tom Hogan and the Reverend Canon Arthur Minion. At the conclusion of the event tea and light refreshments were provided in The Thatch before the our many guests went home with, hopefully, happy memories of a significant occasion.

The organisation of an event like this needs the help of many people and organisations and we thank them all. Particular thanks are due to the team in Birr including Junior O'Callaghan, Ray and Tony Hayden, Derek Coulter and Chris Brummell, our Standard Bearer Ken Geary, Bugler Michael McLoughlin, Des Connole and his team at The Thatch who kept us fed and watered, Grant Engineering on whose ground the Memorial stands and finally, the good people of Birr and Crinkill who always give us such a warm welcome. It was an honour to welcome our many distinguished official guests and we thank the clergy for their attendance and An Garda Siochana for managing the traffic arrangements. A special thanks is due to Association Vice-Chairman, Denis Kirby, who conceived the idea of the parade and provided much of the inspiration for its execution.



Some photos of a memorable occasion in Crinkill.

“He was chummy with the police”

“He was chummy with the police.” So said John Doherty of his son, James Doherty (aka James Boland), giving evidence at James’s inquest on 6 July 1922. Was that enough to have him executed as a spy by the IRA on 28 June 1921?

James Doherty, known as Boland as he had been brought up by his Boland grandparents, was born on 17 August 1898. He was a Mill Hand and his address was given as 18 Mungret Street, Limerick. James enlisted with the 4th Battalion (Extra Reserves) of the Leinster Regiment under the name James Boland on 17 April 1917, aged 18. He was home-based and did not serve overseas. He was recorded on 10 July 1917 as being a deserter or absentee from his Majesty’s Service on 13 June 1917 (apparently for just one day). He had an arm amputated while in the army – no details are available.

James’s pension file records that he was discharged as permanently totally disabled on the 4th May 1918 and received a small pension until his death on 28 June 1921; he was awarded a Silver War Badge on his discharge. These awards suggest that his injury may have been the result of an accident during his military service.

James married Elizabeth Moloney in Limerick on 29th January 1921. Almost five months later, he was shot by the IRA on 28th June 1921. Newspaper reports state he was found dead near Athlunkard Bridge. His widow was awarded £10 in 1921 from by The Not Forgotten Society, Limbless Fund.

An inquest into his death was held on 7th July 1922.

The handwritten report is available at The National Archives, Kew, London, file reference WO35/149B/2. The medical evidence by Capt. Roderick O’Connor confirmed he “... had 3 entrance bullet wounds, one on right side of forehead, one in middle of breast bone, and one on left side of body over heart. Death was due to shock and haemorrhage, arising from these wounds ...” The second witness was his father, John Doherty, who gave evidence, as follows “... My son knew he was in danger and often didn’t dare go out. In my opinion the deceased was killed because he was suspected of giving information to the police. He was chummy with the police ...” The third and final witness was Sergeant J. Chambers, R.I.C. stated “Pinned onto him was a label bearing the words ‘Tried, convicted and duly executed by I.R.A. Men and women, spies and traitors beware’”. Among the findings of the inquest were “... Cause of death was a haemorrhage due to gunshot wounds. That shots were fired by person or persons unknown, who are guilty of wilful murder ...”

The Irish Bureau of Military History records one brief mention of James in the Witness Statement of Michael Hartney, Captain, IRA, Limerick (WS ref #1415) where he states, “Engagements carried out The execution of a spy named Boland.”

There is no death certificate (which was not unusual during those times of conflict); no trace has been found of his burial place.

John’s killing in June 1921 occurred during turbulent years in Ireland. The War of Independence was already ongoing for more than 2 years. Like all guerrilla

MISSING |EX-SOLDIER SHOT
Jas. Doherty (30). alias Boland, ex-soldier,
Limerick, was yesterday found shot
dead near Athlunkard Bridge.
The body bore two bullet wounds, one
through the heart and one through the
head. On a label attached to the clothing
were the words, “Tried, convicted, and
executed. I.R.A. Spies beware.” Dublin
Castle gives the victim’s address as 50 Mun-
gret St., and states he had been missing
since Fri. night.

wars, it was bitter and provoked atrocities on both sides. Ex-Service men, and their families, living freely in the community, were especially vulnerable.

Delayed from 2021, James Boland's death was recently remembered by the Leinster Regiment Association with the dropping of a wreath into the Shannon at Athlunkard Street Bridge, Limerick, in the absence of a known burial place or headstone.

Was James Boland a spy? "He was chummy with the police" was probably more than enough to seal his fate. A warning to others "Tried, convicted and duly executed by I.R.A. Men and women, spies and traitors

beware." Unfortunately, James wasn't the first and he wouldn't be the last ...

The records that exist for James Boland are patchy but it is thanks to the following that his story can be told in 40/10 - firstly, to Tom Burke, LRA and RDFA, who brought the story of James to the attention of the LRA, and provided some initial information; then to Simon McAuliffe and Pat O'Connor who both undertook additional research which shed further light on his story; and, in particular, to the website www.bloodysunday.com.

*Mary Kennedy
31st October 2022*



The wreath recently placed in the River Shannon at Athlunkard Bridge, Limerick by Mary Kennedy.

Future Events

At the time of going to press the following dates for 2023 are reasonably certain. Any changes and additions that occur will be posted on the Association's social media accounts and will appear in the July edition of 40-10. Please do not make firm travel plans to attend any of these events without first checking the dates.

10th June. Association Lunch*. Civil Service Club, Whitehall, London.

11th June. CIROCA Centenary Parade, Whitehall, London.

8th July. RBL (RoI) Remembrance Ceremony, Islandbridge, Dublin.

9th July. National Day of Commemoration, Dublin.

12th August. Association AGM, Birr.
Public Lecture, Birr. (Subject: TBA).

9th November. Opening of the Field of Remembrance, Westminster, London.

12th November. Remembrance Sunday. Details of individual events will be circulated later.

***This year's lunch will be a special occasion to mark the 20th anniversary of the reforming of the Association.**

Centenary Commemoration at Windsor Castle – 29th November 2022

Not long before her death, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II agreed that the Centenary of the handing over of the Disbanded Irish Regiments' Colours in 1922 to the safekeeping of her grandfather King George V should be acknowledged.

But as we all know, on 8 September 2022 Operation London Bridge – the master plan for her funeral – sadly had to be activated. Inevitably, this diverted everyone's attention and delayed arranging the date and planning for any such ceremony. I naturally assumed any 2022 centenary commemoration was a lost cause, especially lacking the delivery of any plans promised earlier in the year.

Then, once everything had settled down after the Funeral, the main stakeholders – the Royal Household, Ministry of Defence, the Chief of Staff of UK Field Army (Major General Colin Weir – formerly The Royal Irish Regiment), and GOC London District (Major General Chris Ghika – formerly Irish Guards) – liaised closely to fulfil the late Queen's wishes.

Their overriding principle was for the ceremony to have the appropriate relevance and not “miss the moment”. Thus, deferring to 2023 was not an option. Whatever was to be planned had to take place in 2022.

Given this was the driver, any ceremony was inevitably going to be much lower-key than we all would have liked. But at least there would be a Commemoration. It would be in Windsor Castle, in front of the Colours and in the appropriate centennial year.

With everyone's diaries full of military commitments, Tuesday 29 November was allocated as the most suitable date. His Majesty The King then approved and gave permission that Windsor should host a Disbandment Service.

As there are now fewer Royals available for an increasingly heavy workload, sadly none could attend, however willing they might have been. (You just have to look at the Royal Family's activities, published in the Court Circulars, to realise how thinly spread they are.) That notwithstanding, it was essential that as many senior officers as possible should be present.

We were fortunate that the RHQ Irish Guards were then tasked with the organisation – along with the full support of the appropriate London District

Headquarters departments (such as Ceremonial under Major Paul Fagin and the Garrison Sergeant Major, Vernon Stokes – all of whom are already quite busy enough planning next year's Coronation).

The main responsibility fell, however, upon the shoulders of the Micks' Regimental Adjutant, Major Niall Hall LVO. Having served (albeit many years ago) in the regiment, luckily I know Niall well and so became the link to the Disbanded Associations whose presence had to be at the heart of any Ceremony.

Disappointed as we all were, everybody understood that, due to logistics, timing and security, attendance was to be very limited. But it was great, and impressive, that representatives from all the Disbanded Regiments took the time and trouble to attend, many flying over from Ireland for the day.

Realising this was a financial commitment, Lieutenant Colonel Andy Hart – Regimental Secretary of the Royal Irish Regiment, who was also involved in the planning – offered the Association's generous support from his regimental funds.

Niall Hall recce'd Windsor Castle with the appropriate Irish Guards' warrant officers, including RQMS Anthony Gailey. He also liaised with Lieutenant General Phil Jones – the newly appointed holder of the dual titles of Constable and Governor of Windsor Castle. (I had alerted his predecessor, Admiral Sir James Perowne, to this possible event, so there was already had a file on his desk waiting to be activated.)

One of the main reasons the British Army traditionally does ceremonial events so well is that no detail is left unconsidered: it's all in the planning. So, comprehensive instructions were issued by Headquarters London District to all those involved in the administration.

It was necessary to distil this detail to what was relevant to us civilian attendees, then distribute it in turn. For example, guests didn't really need to know that the order of dress for the car park fatigue (kindly provided by the Coldstream Guards) was “Guard Winter Order with Forage Caps (no sidearms)”. But they did need to be cleared for security, aware of the timings and which of Windsor Castle's many gates to enter by. Orders of dress, wearing of medals, regimental descriptions for the service sheet and whether we should parade our Association standards were further important points.

On the afternoon of 29 November, we all assembled in the Lower Ward and walked up to the State Entrance in the Quadrangle. Our Association was represented by the Chairman, Lt Colonel Mark Weldon, and the Secretary, David Ball.

After an opportunity to look at the Colours, the attendees gathered on the Main Staircase and balconies each side. These included the Governor, Major General Chris Ghika; Oria McBreen and Raymond Mullen from the Irish Embassy; representatives from each of the Disbanded Regiments; members from British Army regiments with Irish antecedents (including The Royal Irish Regiment, Royal Dragoon Guards, and Queens Royal Hussars); and two members of the Combined Irish Regiments Old Comrades Association.

Just after 3.00 pm, the Irish Guards' Padre, Father Pip Smith, commenced the service with prayers and an appropriate reading from the Book of Isaiah (61:1-4). I had been asked to make an address to put the Commemoration into context. (Father Pip said how grateful he was: it meant he was relieved of the task of giving a sermon.)

I felt it was important to set the scene leading up to the 1922 Ceremony and convey why it still has significance to so many, a hundred years later.

The Colours we were standing in front of are not inanimate historical symbols but are a testament to the fact that Ireland has the reputation for providing the world's finest soldiers. This reputation lives on through the inheritor Irish regiments in the British Army, the Irish Defence Forces, and the spirit of the "Wild Geese" - those Irishmen who have served internationally in many other nations' armies. In many ways, our Associations have taken on King George V's pledge of "*treasuring, honouring and protecting*" the colours and memories of The Royal Irish Regiment, The Connaught Rangers, The Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians), The Royal Munster Fusiliers, The Royal Dublin Fusiliers and The South Irish Horse.

Although I spoke in some detail of the events of the actual day - June 12 1922 - I won't repeat them here, as the original ceremony has already been written about in previous editions of 40-10.

After a further prayer and blessing by Father Pip, the Irish Guards Pipe Major, Robert Fleming RVM, played that most haunting of tunes, "Oft in the Silly Night". This brought the service to a close.

Due to other commitments, some had to cut away immediately - such as the Major General who was due early evening to greet the Countess of Wessex on the



Representatives of the Irish Regimental Associations gather in front of the Colours of the Disbanded Regiments on the Grand Staircase, Windsor Castle.

steps of the Guards' Chapel for a carol service. The Governor had, though, kindly offered to host a post-service tea party in his Windsor Castle apartments a short distance away. Thanks to Regimental Headquarter Irish Guards generously providing champagne, I didn't see many cups of tea consumed.

As reported elsewhere in this edition, the Disbanded Regiments wanted to show their appreciation and thanks to Lieutenant General Phil Jones for his support and hospitality. On behalf of us all, Senator Gerry Craughwell (who had served in both the British and Irish Armies) presented him with the box of limited-edition medals, designed and created by Sean Collopy, commemorating each of the disbanded regiments. Last year, and earlier this year, we all had hopes of a much larger event that would include many more members of all the Associations; unfortunately, circumstances intervened.

Nevertheless, what we had was a small but very special Commemoration. A lot of people put in a lot of effort to make it so.

My thanks must go to many and, although there's not enough space to mention everyone, in particular I'd like

to include The Governor and Constable, Lieutenant General Phil Jones; Major General Chris Ghika and his staff; Major Niall Hall and all at RHQ Irish Guards; Lt Colonel Andy Hart of Royal Irish Regiment; Major Paul Fagin of Ceremonial Department of London District Headquarters; the Commanding Officer Irish Guards for the Padre, Pip Smith, and the Pipe Major, Robert Fleming.

Looking at my computer's records that dealt with this Commemoration, I have over 280 emails on the subject! As for telephone calls ... I don't dare count! They were worth it.

Editors Note

Although Sir Anthony is generous with his thanks to those who helped organise this event, modesty prevents him from mentioning the fact that without his very considerable efforts and those of our Chairman, this occasion would not have happened. While it is unfortunate that the numbers attending had to be so restricted, the Irish Regimental Associations should be very grateful to Anthony and Mark for taking the initiative and their determination to see this project through. Gentlemen, you did our Association proud!

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 made payable to 'The Leinster Regiment Association' and sent to the address shown above. All items are subject to availability.

	£	€
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. (Poppy is approx 1.5" high)	15	18
Feather Hackle in Leinster Regiment colours. (Hackle is approx 5" high)	10	12



	£	€
New! Lapel Badge with Colours and the dates 1881-1922 .	10	12

This badge has been specially produced to commemorate the centenary of the laying up of the Colours in 1922. The size is 1.5" x 0.5" (Approx).

Remembering the Disbanded Regiments



Copyright Liaisons Gallery

The Association, in conjunction with Liaisons Gallery, is making available a commemorative picture to mark the centenary of the entrustment of Colours and disbandment of the five southern Irish infantry regiments and the South Irish Horse. This is a limited edition of 100 copies, signed by the artist of which a small number remain. The distinguished artist is Jon Starr BA who has produced military and aviation pictures as well as of other themes (music and television).

Unframed Print	55.00
Postage & Packing	7.50
Total	<u>£62.50</u>

Framed Print	55.00
Framing	85.00 (By UK Frames)
Packing & Carriage	25.00
Total	<u>£165.00</u>

Postage and packing to Ireland and other countries is subject to individual quotation.

Details: Size. 65 x 43.5cm (the image size 57.5 x 29cm) The text will be 11pt. Each print will be numbered, signed by the artist and accompanied by a Certificate of Authenticity.

All inquiries and orders should be directed to <https://frameuk.net> or www.framework.net

Please do NOT send orders or enquiries to the Leinster Regiment Association.

THE LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Committee and Post Holders January 2023

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Vice-Presidents	Mr David Ball Commandant Michael McGoona

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Annual Subscriptions

We'd like to remind all members that membership subscriptions became due on the 1st January. If you have already renewed yours, thank you for doing so. If you have not completed your renewal, please do so without delay. The subscription remains at £20 for UK residents and €25 for Irish residents. It would be much appreciated if you would pay by Standing Order as it greatly simplifies the administration for the Membership Secretary and the Treasurer. However, cheques in either currency may be sent to the Treasurer: Ian Lowe, 42 Woodridge Avenue, Marford, Wrexham, LL12 8SS. If you would like to switch your payment method to a standing order, please contact the Treasurer.

Help Required

The running of the Association falls on a very small number of people, some of whom are doing more than one job. We would be hugely grateful if more volunteers offered their services. Many hands make light work! The tasks are not onerous, yet the potential satisfaction is great. If you are interested in becoming more involved with the running of the Association, please contact Mark Weldon, Denis Kirby or David Ball.

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 the layout and style of the journal.

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



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