



The 40-10



LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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

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*20 years
dedicated to
remembering
The
Regiment*



*Hoylake
Ledegem
Crinkhill
Prèmesques
Windsor*



2023

LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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Front and Back Cover Illustrations

Front Cover. Memorials and significant events that the Association initiated or was closely involved with during the last 20 years. We also pay tribute to David Ball who was responsible for reforming the Association and is our long serving Secretary and Vice-President.

Back Cover. Recently re-discovered memorial to 1st Battalion men who died while the battalion was stationed at Vrede in the Free State province of South Africa (formerly The Orange Free State) during the Boer War. The majority died of enteric fever and other diseases.

From the Chairman



We all know the expression 'the calm before the storm'. In the case of our Association, and following our centenary year, it could be more appropriately said 'the calm after the storm'. That is not to suggest that we are standing still, nor should we.

In this year, we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the reforming of the Association, and that was one of the themes of the commemorative lunch held at the Civil Service Club on Saturday 10 June. It was a hugely successful event organised by David Ball and presided over by our President, Sir Anthony Weldon and is reported elsewhere in this edition. In addition to our guests we welcomed Anne Farmer, granddaughter of Pte Martin Moffatt VC and Catherine Gasparini and her brother Valentine, grandchildren of Captain Valentine Farrell DSO, MC, and Bar. Also present were Denis Kirby, Ken Geary, and seven from the Irish Defence Force headed by RSM Neil Mathews, all of whom had travelled from Ireland. Sir Anthony made a comprehensive and most amusing speech. Loyal Greetings had previously been sent to His Majesty King Charles III and a Notice appeared in the Daily Telegraph Court and Social on Monday 12 June.

On the following day, and in blistering heat, the Combined Irish Regiments' Old Comrades Association (CIROCA) celebrated their 100th anniversary at their annual parade past the Cenotaph in Whitehall. It is interesting to note that the CIROCA was born out of the disbandment of the Southern Irish Regiments in 1922 and we congratulate them on their centenary. A dozen Leinsters were present including Ken Geary carrying the Old Contemptibles' Standard and Eddie Bryant carrying the Leinster Standard. I must also congratulate the Royal Irish Regiment band who played

the Leinster Regimental march 'Come Back to Erin': it was the first time I have heard our march played at this annual parade.

The next major events will be The Royal British Legion Annual Somme Ceremony of Remembrance and Wreath Laying at The Irish National War Memorial Gardens, Islandbridge, Dublin 8, on Saturday 8 July. On the following day, Ireland's National Day of Commemoration Ceremony will be held at Collins Barracks, Old Youghal Road, Montenotte, Cork. On Saturday 12 August, the Leinster Regiment Association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held at the Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, Oxmantown Hall. This will be followed by the Annual Leinster Regiment Lecture which will be given by historian and author Gerry White on 'The Leinster Regiment's Long Association with Victoria Barracks, Cork'. In the afternoon at 3pm, a Wreath Laying Ceremony was held at the Leinster Memorial, Crinkill. I do hope that as many members as possible will attend these events.

This edition of the 40-10 cannot pass without special mention of Denis Kirby who is approaching the end of his tenure as Vice Chairman on the General Committee and Chairman of the Irish Regional Committee. He has

done an outstanding job over an exceptionally busy period. Not only has he increased the number of events in which Leisters have participated, including the visiting of graves, but he has increased our presence in these events. Furthermore, he masterminded the lavish centenary commemorations at Birr and Crinkill in August last year. The Association owes Denis a huge debt of gratitude for all he has done. He will be a tough act to follow, but the signs are good that a worthy successor has been found and vacancies on the Irish Committee will be filled. Another challenge in Ireland, must be to secure the best possible site for a permanent Leinster exhibition. That is what I mean by not standing still.

Finally, I make an appeal to all members. Please do try to find others that may be interested in joining us as members. Do come forward with any suggestions as to how we can better serve your interests. On this point, I have taken on board a proposal that we hold an event where members can bring along their memorabilia to exhibit and where we can share our knowledge. Finally, just as Irish members are preparing the 'step up' at the forthcoming AGM, so it would be appreciated if we could find more volunteers for the General Committee.

Ich Dien
Mark

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).

The 1st Leinsters in South Africa

The Boer War tends to be overshadowed by the much more significant global conflict that broke out twelve years after it ended. However the lessons learned and the experience gained during the South African campaign did much to prepare the British Army for its first modern war. In this article we will look at the part that the 1st Battalion, The Leinster Regiment, played in the South African war.

The Boer or South African War is sometimes presented to the modern reader as a classic colonial land grab aimed at securing natural resources leading to the subjugation of the indigenous people. As is often the case, this is an oversimplification of the story. What we call the Boer War was in fact the second conflict to occur with the Boer republics of The Orange Free State (OFS) and the Transvaal or more correctly the South African Republic (SAR). The Boers were the descendants of Dutch settlers who had arrived on a permanent basis at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. They had found a sparsely populated land, the climate was relatively congenial and the land fertile. All these factors added together made it an attractive proposition for a community of settlers who wanted to be left alone to farm and practice their own Calvinistic version of Christianity. The British arrived at the Cape in 1807, using it as a staging post on the way to India and quickly established trading posts there and further up the east coast of South Africa in what became the province of

Natal. It was not long before the Dutch/Boer settlers came into conflict with the newcomers who wanted to establish systems of governance and generally interfere with their way of life, which it should be said, included slavery. During the 1830's the Boers moved north to escape growing interference by the British, in what is called "The Great Trek", and settled in what became the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. In doing so they came into conflict with and overcame the indigenous people, notably the Zulu. Supposedly, the traditional Boer farmer, a hardy and resourceful character, was happiest when he could not see the smoke from his nearest neighbour's chimney as it was too far away. Meanwhile, to the south and east, the British presence had been growing in a haphazard fashion, mainly along the coastal regions around the Cape and up the east coast. The settlers tended to be traders, adventurers and missionaries who eventually brought administrators and all the panoply of government in their wake. They too came into occasional conflict with the indigenous inhabitants. The slightly bucolic status-quo was upset in 1867 by the discovery of diamonds near Kimberly in the OFS. Over the next few years this led to an influx of prospectors, miners and all sorts of hangers-on who further interfered with and threatened the settlers' way of life. A further cause of resentment was the annexation of the Transvaal by the British in 1877. A Boer revolt began in December 1880 with a dispute over some unpaid taxes and the ambush of a column of troops from the Connaught Rangers. In comparison to what came later the war that followed was small scale and of short duration with a peace treaty being signed in March 1881. However, in three short months the British, commanded by Sir George Colley, suffered three humiliating defeats at the hands of loosely organised Boer farmers. The final and best remembered engagement, fought when peace talks were already underway, was at Mujaba Hill and resulted in not only another defeat but also the death of Colley.



South Africa in 1899

The settlement reached recognised the independence of the Transvaal but under the suzerainty of Britain. The simmering tensions between Boer and British were further stoked by the discovery of gold at Witwatersrand in the Transvaal in 1884. This led to a gold rush similar to those seen in America and Australia further upsetting the demographic balance between Boer and outsiders or 'uitlanders' as they were known. Worst of all, the newcomers soon began to demand civic rights such as the vote, and to further interfere with the Boer way of life. In 1895 an uitlander, Dr Jameson, with the connivance of the Cape Colony authorities and the

backing of mining interests led an abortive revolt against the Transvaal government. It was a dismal failure and attracted widespread international and domestic British condemnation. The so-called Jameson Raid remains a murky episode with questions remaining as to who knew what in government circles in London and Cape Town. Jameson was jailed for his part in the rebellion but remained a popular hero to many.

Tensions continued to mount and in 1899 following failed negotiations the Boer republics issued an ultimatum to the British government demanding the withdrawal of garrisons from the border lands. As can be imagined, this was unacceptable to HMG and the second Boer War began in December 1899. During the first of three stages of the war the Boers invaded British held territory, laying siege to key towns like Ladysmith, Mafeking and Kimberly while inflicting defeats on the Imperial forces at battles such as Colenso, Spion Kop and Stromberg. The Boers were well armed with modern rifles and some artillery supplied from German and French sources. Their forces were organised into highly mobile mounted columns employing hit and run tactics that the British found difficult to counter. The second phase of the war began with a change of British command and the arrival of additional forces in early 1900. The new commander, Lord Roberts (Bob's) relieved the besieged towns and secured the frontiers of Natal and Cape Colony before carrying the fight into Boer territory. The third phase of the war, under the direction of Lord Kitchener, and the one that The Leinsters became involved in began in mid-1900 and became the most controversial.

Three battalions of The Leinsters served in South Africa during the war, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd. In all cases they arrived after the the initial phase of operations ended and took part to varying degrees in what became the guerrilla phase of the war. At the outbreak of hostilities the 1st Battalion was on garrison duty at Halifax, Nova Scotia, then a self-governing dominion. The speed with which the Battalion was re-deployed is worth noting. The Battalion left Halifax on the 25th March 1900, arrived in England on the 5th April, left Southampton for South Africa on the 18th April and was at Port Elizabeth, Cape Colony, by the 13th May. The Battalion then travelled 400 miles north to Bloemfontein to join the 8th Division under the command of Maj-Gen Sir Leslie Rundle. Together with battalions of Grenadier and Scots Guards and a battalion of the East York's Regiment they formed the 16th Brigade. By the time the Leinsters joined the war the strategy was to confine the enemy into defined areas by establishing lines of defence later supported by a system of forts and intermediate blockhouses. Mobile



The Brandwater Basin, Orange River Colony

columns were used to seek out the Boer units and gradually force them back into ever smaller areas while depriving them of support from their communities. The British columns were constantly on the move which imposed a great strain on the logistical system and resulted in the troops often being on half rations and sleeping in the open in freezing cold conditions. Water was scarce and washing and changing clothes was often impossible for weeks on end. Major confrontations with the enemy were unusual but sporadic sniping and other low level contacts an almost daily occurrence. During this and the earlier phases of the war the need for mounted infantry became apparent. This gave the Army the mobility to counter the Boer style of warfare which was heavily dependent on mounted men, long used to life in the saddle and on the veldt. The mounted infantry units were recruited in South Africa and later from the Dominions and from the Yeomany Regiments at home.

Commencing in June 1900 a significant amount of 1st Leinsters time in South Africa was spent in operations around the Brandwater Basin in the Orange Free State. The remnants of the OFS army and government, led by Gen. Christiaan De Wet and the President of the OFS, Marthinus Steyn, had retreated into this river valley system which was bounded by high mountains and entered by a limited number of passes. The Boer forces numbered about 8,000 and were supported by a small quantity of artillery. The British strategy was to contain the Boers within this area and eventually force them to surrender. The role of the 8th Division and the



“On Stag”. Guarding a Blockhouse

Leinsters was to patrol the western edge of the area to prevent the Boers from breaking out and making for the Vaal river and the Transvaal beyond. Despite their best efforts De Wet and Steyn accompanied by 2,600 men did break out and proved to be an elusive and troublesome enemy for many months to come. In the absence of their commanders, the remaining Boers in the Brandwater Basin rather lost heart and after further sporadic fighting surrendered on the 29th July 1900. Although the captured Boers were disarmed they were allowed to keep their personal possessions including their horses, oxen and wagons and to return home.

The following months were spent chasing De Wet and his highly mobile force around the mountains and veldt of the Orange Free State and occasionally into the neighbouring provinces. In doing so significant distances were covered, the Regimental history mentions that the Battalion marched over 800 miles in a little more than four months. We should remember that at this time motorised transport of any sort was unknown and all supplies and heavy equipment was moved by animal power alone. The men moved on foot in baking heat during the day and slept, often in the open without tents, in freezing conditions at night. There was the constant possibility of being attacked by the Boers who knew the country intimately and were masters of hit and run tactics.

In October 1900 the Battalion found itself in the town of Vrede where they remained for ten months. Although welcome after a prolonged period of living in

the field, life in a town proved to be a mixed blessing with the outbreak of enteric fever. Over 400 officers and men contracted the disease of whom 40 died, a far greater number than any battle casualties incurred. However, life was not all grim as the Regimental history records that a race meeting was arranged and was livened up by the Boers sniping at the Starters. By mid-March 1901 the Battalion was on the move again and the war was entering its most contentious phase. The problem faced by the army was that the Boers were operating among their own people, able to hit the British forces and then slip back into the local supportive community. In an attempt to overcome this problem a “scorched earth policy” was adopted with homesteads, farm buildings and livestock being destroyed. The people left behind, including women and children, were rounded up and placed in camps. These were referred to as, most unfortunately for history, “Concentration Camps”. Conditions in the camps were primitive and it is estimated that around 26,000 people, mainly women and children, died of disease, hunger and general neglect. The exposure of these horrors in the British press caused revulsion at home and abroad and further hardened attitudes towards an already unpopular war.

The Battalion spent the remainder of 1901 in a series of strenuous cross-country marches, trying to corner the elusive enemy and denying him the use of the farmsteads and other facilities scattered over the veldt. The Regimental history tells us that rarely a day passed without some contact with the enemy occurring but that there were few large-scale actions. For the final ten months of their time in South Africa the Battalion manned a line of forts and blockhouses and patrolled the country between them. The Leinsters were responsible for three forts, the largest had a perimeter of 1,400 yards. The blockhouses were manned by around six men and were connected to their neighbours by barbed wire fences. In addition to preventing the enemy from slipping through between these structures they sometimes came under attack. On one occasion three blockhouses were attacked simultaneously resulting in three fatal casualties and 14 wounded.

A peace treaty was finally signed on the 31st May 1902 bringing the war to an end and paving the way for the creation of the modern South African state. The Battalion left South Africa on the 15th September 1902 and arrived in Fermoy just over a month later. During their service in South Africa the Battalion lost about 80 men of all ranks. They are remembered on a plaque in St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin and there is a monument at Vrede in the Orange Free State to those who died during the fever epidemic. (See back cover)

The Story Behind the Photo



Online auction sites are full of historical curiosities, such as photos, postcards, medals and other ephemera. Items with connections to Birr or the Leinster Regiment are of particular interest to me, even more so if there is a name attached as it can establish a tangible link to the past. One such named photo I purchased online turned into a research delight as I delved into the history behind the people picture in the photo.

When I first saw the photo for sale, it was only of moderate interest, however as the time drew nearer and nearer to the end of the auction, I was drawn to it and had to acquire it. Placing the successful bid my journey of discovery began.

The picture depicts two soldiers of the Leinster Regiment. An older, seated, Colour Sergeant, holding a pet dog, he wears the Distinguished Conduct Medal, Queen's and King's South Africa medals for the Second-Anglo Boer War and a Long Service & Good Conduct medal. To his left stands a plucky young Private. Handwritten on the reverse of the photo is the text 'Uncle Jim (O'Brien) & Cousin Jim. Uncle James

O'Brien (by marriage), married aunt Mary (Dad's sister)'. This information indicates that the younger soldier is his son.

Service records reveal that Jim O'Brien was born in Killaloe, County Clare, in 1868. He enlisted for service with the Leinster Regiment at Birr, King's County (County Offaly) on 19 January 1886. He gave his previous trade as a servant. He was previously a member of the 7th Brigade, South Irish Division, Royal Artillery. Upon enlisting Jim was recorded as being 5 foot 5 inches tall, having grey eyes and dark brown hair, and of the Roman Catholic faith.

Private O'Brien was posted the Leinster Regiment's depot at Birr. Birr was made the depot for the regiment upon its creation in 1881. Private O'Brien served with the 1st Battalion from June 1891 until June 1903. He served with the battalion during Second Anglo Boer War (1899-1902). During the campaign he was slightly wounded in his left eye and was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) for gallantry in the field. O'Brien also received the Queen's and King's

South Africa campaign medals which were presented to him at Fermoy Barracks, County Cork in 1903 upon the battalions return from South Africa. From June 1903 until January 1910 he served with the 3rd (militia) battalion. The Dublin Daily Express noted his retirement from the army took place in December 1909, where he was presented with some valuable gifts including a magnificent gold Albert (chain). Under close examination, the chain is actually visible in the photograph which dates it to December 1909, and the location it was taken as Birr.

Jim married Mary Anderson in India on 28 January 1893. Mary was a widow, her previous husband Alexander Anderson, was a Colour Sergeant in the Leinster Regiment and had died in India on 9 October 1891. Alexander and Mary had two children, Margaret (born at Fort William on 16 March 1888) Philip (born at Agra, India on 15 August 1891). Philip kept his father's surname as his middle name. Jim and Mary had one son; James William (born in India on 4 November 1893).

The 1911 English and Wales census records Jim, his wife Mary, daughter Margaret and a visitor Mary Robinson (from Birr) living at the Golf Club Pavilion, Llandrindod Wells, Wales. Jim and his wife working as stewards and Margaret as a waitress. After this the family moved to 33 Springfield Road, Bangor, County Down.

With the outbreak of the Great War, Jim reenlisted for service. He was posted to the 6th (service) Battalion, Leinster Regiment, and the later the 3rd Battalion where he gained the rank of Company Quarter Master Sergeant.

Philip had enlisted in the Leinster Regiment in 1906. He received as a commission in the 1st Battalion as a Second Lieutenant in December 1914. He was wounded on 31 January 1915 and later died on 9 March 1915 from his wounds. He is buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, France. His name is commemorated on the war memorial in St Brendan's Church of Ireland Church in Birr, which was unveiled on 24 April 1921.

James William has enlisted in the Leinster Regiment at Birr on 12 July 1909. He served with 1st Battalion during the Great War and was posted to the depot of the Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) after the disbandment of the Leinster Regiment and other historic southern Irish regiments in July 1922. He had married Mary Elizabeth Roycroft in St Nicholas, Cork on 4 October 1916. They had several children; Philip Anderson (named after his half-brother) born in Cork; Marion Charlotte and Francis Margaret, both born in Birr.

Jim was finally discharged from the army on 3 February 1920. He remained in Cork with his wife and lived in 20 Alexandra Villas and later 5 Grosvenor Place.

Jim died on 7 October 1935 at his home on Grosvenor Place, from heart failure. He was buried in St Finbar's Cemetery. Philip's name is also commemorated on the grave, along with James William who died in Middlesex on 6 July 1938, and family Mary who died in Cork on 22 January 1943.

An interesting story recounted through the chance purchase of an old photograph.

Stephen Callaghan

Future Events

It is the turn of the Ireland based section of the Association to host the AGM this year. It will take place in Birr on Saturday, 12th August and we hope that as many members as possible will attend. A number of Committee members have indicated that they wish to retire and we would very much like to welcome new faces and talent to continue the good work already carried out. The programme for the day is as follows:-

Saturday 12th August 2023.

10.30hrs Annual General Meeting of the Association, Birr Theatre & Arts Centre, Oxmantown Mall, Birr.

11.30hrs Public Lecture, "The Leinsters in Victoria Barracks, Cork". The speaker will be Gerry White,

well known as a historian and writer.

13.30hrs Wreath Laying Ceremony, The Leinster Regiment Memorial, Crinkill.

14.00hrs An informal lunch at The Thatch, Crinkill.

Thursday 9th November 2023.

Opening of the Field of Remembrance, Westminster, London.

Sunday 12th November 2023.

Remembrance Sunday. Further details of the many local events will be posted on the Association's social media pages as they become available.

The Military and the Easter Rising in Limerick

13 April 1916 to 16 May 1916



Col Sir Anthony Weldon Bt DSO

On 13 April 1916 New Barracks Limerick was home to the 4th (Extra Reserve) Battalion, The Leinster Regiment (4/LR). The primary role of 4/LR was training recruits for the front-line units of the L.R. The 4th Battalion was also a convalescence unit for personnel recovering from wounds and on leave from the front. This was in addition to its role as the garrison unit of the military barracks in the city of Limerick. On 23 April 1916 the Easter Rising took place in Ireland, this article will examine how the British Army (BA) in Limerick reacted to the Rising. What was the BA's objective in Limerick? What problems did the BA. face and how did they make use of the resources at their disposal. This article will discuss the decisions taken by the military leaders and the possible reasons for these decisions. Also the role of the New Barracks during this period and how the military were aided by the leadership of the Irish Volunteer (IV) movement. In answering these questions this article will allow us to examine the military perspective of the events during the 1916 Rising in Limerick. Previous under-utilised resources such as the Savage Armstrong papers (Captain Savage Armstrong was a captain in 4/LR and

served as Battalion Adjutant), unit histories and a report on the events of the Rising by the officer commanding the troops in Limerick will allow us to examine this unique version of events and understand why and how certain events took place.

On the 31st March 1916, at Gough Barracks, Curragh Military Camp, 4/LR received orders to report to Limerick on 13 April 1916. On 7 April 1916, an advance party under the command of Major M.C. Hamilton arrived at New Barracks Limerick, to secure and prepare accommodation for the arrival of the full battalion. On 13 April 1916, the remainder of the battalion under the command of Lt-Col Sir Anthony Arthur Weldon Bt arrived in Limerick by train. The battalion had a strength of forty-nine officers, eighty-seven NCO's and 384 privates. On arrival in Limerick, one company occupied Castle Barracks, the battalion HQ and the remainder of the battalion were located at New Barracks. The battalion had 103 personnel who were Home Service personnel, i.e. personnel not permitted to serve overseas due to medical status or age. There were also 134 recruits. The total amount of personnel available for service was put at 260. The only other troops located in Limerick at this time were members of the Army Service Corps (ASC), (New Barracks), recruiting cadre staff of the Royal Munster Fusiliers (Strand Barracks) and the Royal Field Artillery cadre staff (Ordnance Barracks).

On 14 April 1916, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 14th Brigade and officer commanding the army garrison at Queenstown, Brig-Gen Stafford C.B, arrived at New Barracks Limerick for a meeting with Weldon. Stafford briefed Weldon that they had intelligence that Sir Rodger Casement (an Irish Nationalist) with the assistance of the German navy was going to attempt to land arms and ammunition on the Irish coast. The destination for these weapons was thought to be Kerry, Limerick and Clare for distribution among the IV movement. Stafford directed Weldon to make plans should such a landing take place. It is not known at this time if this was the reason the 4th Battalion was deployed to Limerick but in the absence of any other evidence and the fact the city had no active fighting troops stationed in Limerick it can be considered as a possible contributing factor. Weldon, as a precautionary measure, immediately organised a strike force from New Barracks which consisted of six officers, 114 other ranks and a machine gun section, ready to move at a short notice. The battalion, as part

of its settling-in process in the New Barracks, issued standard operational procedures in the event of the barrack alarm being sounded. The only duties carried out in this period by the battalion were general fatigues in the cleaning of the barracks and the organisation of the barrack defences. On 21 April 1916, Sir Roger Casement was arrested by the R.I.C. at Banna Strand in Kerry as he attempted to link up with a German steamer ship SMS *Libau*, disguised as the Norwegian ship, *Aud*. The ship was carrying a cargo of arms (20,000 rifles, captured from the Russians) for the Irish Volunteers. The *Libau* was intercepted by the Royal Navy in Tralee harbour and escorted to Queenstown harbour. On entry to the harbour, the ship was scuttled by the crew and sank with the rifles and ammunition.

The Easter Rising

At 12.45 hours on 23 April 1916, on leaving church services in Limerick, Weldon, became aware of a large party of Volunteers, numbering between 180 to 200, led by their officers and marching behind a fife and drums band. The column was proceeding along George's Street, followed by two wagons full of camping gear and stores. The Volunteers were armed with rifles, shotguns and bayonets. Weldon confirmed that the volunteers were marching to Kilonan to set up camp for Easter Sunday and Monday in order to carry out manoeuvres. The R.I.C. had orders to watch over them and report any movements. On Monday evening Weldon was informed that the Volunteers had returned to the city and there was nothing unusual to report. As a precaution

he ordered a doubling of all the city barrack guards on Monday night. This doubling of the guards allows us to pose the question as to whether the military were aware that something was about to happen or whether it was simply a prudent decision by a cautious leader. Based on Weldon's report the latter appears to be the case with no other evidence available to say otherwise. However, this does show that Weldon did not see the threat posed by the I.V. as having been dismissed due to their failure to land arms in Kerry. The first news of the Easter Rising in Dublin reached Weldon in New Barracks at 16.30 hours on Tuesday 25 April 1916. The news was received by phone from the R.I.C. District Inspector, George Fitzgerald William Craig, who briefed Weldon that Queenstown authorities had wired him that rebels had seized the General Post Office building in Dublin, and the 4th Battalion L.R. was to standby for further orders. Weldon immediately paraded all available personnel on the New Barracks square. Within twenty minutes he had 49 officers, 489 other ranks armed with rifles, machine guns and 120 rounds of ammunition per man, ready to move. On the same date, Weldon met with the R.I.C. County Inspector, Henry Enfield William Yates, and the Resident Magistrate, Peter James Kelly, to assess the situation. It was shortly afterwards, at New Barracks, that he received a phone call from Colonel Buckley in Queenstown authorising him as officer commanding the troops in Limerick to safeguard the military situation and assist the civil authority in maintaining the peace.

Weldon at this time decided not to do anything as the



Thomond Bridge, Limerick (*Limerick City Library*)

situation in Limerick was peaceful and calm but the battalion remained at a state of readiness at New Barracks. This decision shows the military was prepared to monitor the situation but not willing to instigate any confrontation. News was received later in the day that the railway had been cut at Ballybrophy, Maryborough and Abbeyleix leaving no communications with Dublin. The phone line to Queenstown was however still intact. Weldon visited the G.P.O. and the principal locations of the city of Limerick. He spoke with the police and was informed of the serious situation in Galway. On receipt of a request from the postmaster and the governor of Limerick Jail, appropriate troops were sent to occupy and fortify these locations. Later that night the railway bridge at the Longpavement over the River Shannon, was manned with a picquet from the battalion. Weldon was instructed by the military at Queenstown to seize and secure all road bridges from Killaloe to Limerick. This he was unable to do with the forces at his disposal. Having informed military authorities at Queenstown, Weldon was told that he would receive re-enforcements the following morning. From 23.00 hours Weldon sent out picquets from New Barracks to patrol the city during the night. At 03.30 hours on 26 April 1916, seven officers and 150 other ranks of the 4th Battalion, Royal Irish Regiment, (4/RIR), under the command of Major Newbury arrived by train and were accommodated in New Barracks. At 13.45hrs 26 April 1916, at New Barracks, Limerick, Weldon received a phone call from Craig to the effect that the police had information about a possible attack on the Castle Barracks, the Strand Barracks and the railway station later that afternoon. The battalion deployed two officers, 50 other ranks, a section of the 4th Battalion R.I.R. to seize and secure the railway station. The barrack guards in the Castle and Strand Barracks were warned and the piquet for the patrol of the city was increased. The attack never materialised. Weldon in his report to the G.O.C. makes the point the attack didn't materialise because of the precautions he had taken. Another possible reason could have been false intelligence from the R.I.C. informants. The latter does appear to have some substance as there is no documented evidence of a planned attack by the Volunteers, who were substantially outnumbered by the military in the city. However, Weldon's deployment of his resources would certainly have had a bearing on any planned, attack and this gives his claim some creditability.

On 27 April 1916 re-enforcements arrived in the city from the 3/LR, four officers and sixty other ranks under the command of Captain Woods. Shortly after their arrival, Weldon ordered two officers and thirty other ranks from 3/LR. to proceed to O'Brien Bridge and

sent the same number of personnel to the bridge crossing over the River *Shannon*, between Killaloe and Ballina. One officer and thirty-two other ranks from 4/RIR were also ordered to seize and hold the bridges at Plassey and Athlunkard. Thomond Bridge and Sarsfield Bridge over the River *Shannon* were to be manned by 4/LR. with two officers and forty-two other ranks. All troops were to secure and control all access and egress from the city. In his later report to the G.O.C. Weldon states he ordered the seizure of Shannon Rowing Club premises in the vicinity of Shannon bridge and as a result members and employees of the rowing club were turned out of the building. Weldon goes on to say all this was done with the co-operation and extreme courtesy of the president of the club, M.S. Fitzgibbon, whose members most willingly exceeded to his demands at a meeting of the committee on 1 May 1916 Weldon needed the building to accommodate his troops, weapons and explosives as the nearest military accommodation to the bridge was located at Castle Barracks. This was a good military decision, as his troops needed somewhere to rest and feed in the vicinity of the bridge. This also provided the military with a staging point for the delivery of men and supplies by the river should the need arise. The bridges were fortified to withstand an attack and as a precaution all supplies of barbed wire in the city were confiscated (appendix 1). By nightfall all access routes had been secured preventing the movement of Volunteers, weapons and ammunition in or out of the city area.

On the 27 April 1916, the Mayor of Limerick, Stephen Quinn, met with Weldon to discuss ways of limiting any possibility of trouble. After the meeting Weldon ordered the closure of all hotels, public houses and clubs at 21.30 hours each evening and prohibited the sale of alcohol after this hour. This order was accompanied with instructions for it to be strictly applied. It was also published in the newspapers for strict compliance. The Mayor in an article published in the *Limerick Leader*, 28 April 1916 appealed to the people of the Limerick to remain calm and not to do anything to cause loss of life and damage in the city. Although these restrictions undoubtedly caused disruptions it appears that no record exists of any formal complaints being made. This meeting showed a willingness of the military commander to use other means at his disposal to maintain the peace. In doing so he limited the amount of people out after 21.30 hours, with the backing of the Mayor. On 28 April Weldon ordered all supplies of petrol to be handed into New Barracks. This prevented motorists from leaving the city without a permit. Major W.D. Hamilton, Lieutenant H.A. Bren. and the R.I.C. County Inspector, Yates, were



Wesley/Sarsfield Bridge from the Shannon Rowing Club side of the Bridge, Source, Ludlow Collection Courtesy of Sharon Slatter

appointed as the military censors for all telegraphs entering and leaving the city. These measures allowed the military to limit the movement of people and information in and out of city. Quinn requested a meeting with Weldon along with a deputation of the Corporation and a Member of Parliament to discuss military orders for the disarmament of the IV's. A meeting was arranged in the New Barracks, but by 19.00 hours the only person to attend was the Mayor himself. There are no known reasons for non-attendance at this meeting. It may be that there were fears for personal safety or about the political fallout from the local population for co-operating with the military authority. It could also be considered he did not have the full support of the political establishment in his dealings with the military as he was perceived by some to be sympathetic to Unionism and widely distrusted by many, Nationalist. In Weldon's report to the GOC, he mentions the Mayor was physically upset at the non-attendance and stated he could not get the Corporation members to agree with him.

On the same evening, a sentry on duty at the telephone exchange opened fired with three shots at what he perceived to be two men climbing over the boundary wall. All guards were turned out, but nothing further

took place. On further investigation of the incident it appeared to have been a case of nerves on behalf of the sentry. These actions show a sense of nervousness in the ranks of the military and allow us to conclude that the situation in Limerick was tense. On Saturday 29 April 1916, news was received that the rebels in Dublin under the command of Padraig Pearse had surrendered. Weldon made the news public and conveyed a message to the leaders of the Volunteer movement in Limerick through Mayor Quinn that unless the Volunteers surrendered unconditionally and handed over all their weapons, he would be forced to act against them. On examination of this decision to issue an ultimatum to the Volunteers we can conclude that Weldon felt the Volunteers were now at their most vulnerable state and with a push they would follow suit in their surrender. This was a calculated decision as he knew the leaders had been arrested in Dublin and the local volunteers were in receipt of this information.

The R.I.C. County Inspector of Limerick requested troops to re-enforce R.I.C. barracks at Doone, as he had intelligence that an attack would take place on the morning of 30 April 1916. Two officers, Lieutenants, Willington, Delap and twenty other ranks were deployed from New Barracks by motor car to Doone at 02.00 hours on 30 April 1916. The attack did

not materialise, Weldon however extended their deployment until Monday. This mobilisation shows the military were treating all these possibilities of attack with serious potential for trouble. On Monday 1 May 1916 due to the rise in demands for military support from the R.I.C., the extra patrols and the fatigue element of the men at his disposal Weldon requested more troops from Queenstown to act as reinforcements. Weldon in his report also states he had unconfirmed reports that the I.V. in Athenry and Ennis were planning to link up and march on Limerick. There does not appear to be any evidence to support these reports. It is accurate to report that the Volunteers in Athenry had mobilized but no link up occurred. On 3 May 1916 at 03.00 hours reinforcements arrived in Limerick, a full battalion of the 2/16th Battalion, Queen's Westminster Rifles, (700 personnel). The unit was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon Clarke. They were accompanied by two batteries of artillery (sixty-six personnel). These troops were accommodated in Castle, Strand and Ordnance Barracks. The Westminster's were tasked with the security of Thomond Bridge. On Thursday 4 May 1916 Weldon was informed by Mayor Quinn that the IV's were refusing to surrender. The Mayor requested an extra twenty-four hours, to which Weldon agreed. This showed a willingness on Weldon's behalf to avoid conflict if that possibility existed and showed a trust between the Mayor and himself on the matter. On 5 May 1916 after written correspondence between Weldon, the Mayor and Commandant Michael Colivet, leader of the IV'S in Limerick, Weldon was informed by the Mayor that Colivet, had agreed to an unconditional surrender. This decision was reached by a unanimous decision of the management and officers of the Volunteers. The Volunteers had learned that the military were planning to carry out searches for weapons and in an effort to avert a useless effusion of blood they made the decision to surrender. This unique perspective shows us the military were keen to avoid conflict and the efforts that Weldon made with the help of the mayor to achieve a peaceful solution.

A meeting was arranged in City Hall at 20.00 hours, 5 May 1916. In attendance was Colivet, a large party of IV's, Mayor Quinn, Lt-Col's Weldon and Clarke, Captain Parke, Lieut's Crowe, Brown and Wimberly. The Volunteers surrendered a large number of weapons, many of them made un-serviceable to Mayor Quinn, who in turn turned handed them over to the military.^{xl} Weldon by agreeing to let the Volunteers handover their weapons to Quinn first avoided confrontation and achieved his objective of an unconditional surrender. It also had the effect of gaining the respect of some Volunteer members. At the meeting Weldon addressed the Volunteers and agreed to let

them go home in return for their co-operation. Weldon made it clear that he could not grant them immunity, but he would speak favourably on their behalf. In the R.I.C County Inspectors report to the Inspector General of the R.I.C. Colonel Sir Neville F.F. Chamberland, for the month of May 1916, Yates reported that between 5 May and 6 May 1916, 253 rifles, 105 shotguns, twenty-eight revolvers, twenty-six swords, bayonets and 13,228 rounds of ammunition were handed over by the IV's.

Over the next few days, the military continued to suppress the Volunteer movement. At New Barracks Limerick on 6 May 1916, Weldon sent Lieutenant's Brophil and Delap with a detachment of men to Meelick County Clare. This deployment accompanied by the R.I.C. had orders to arrest and search the home of a local leader of the I.V's. The detachment returned at 07.30 hours with the prisoner (name unknown), a number of documents and a flag of the Sinn Féiners. On Monday 8 May 1916, a special train with the 2/16th Battalion Westminster's was despatched to operate in the Newcastle West area of Limerick in support of the R.I.C. On Tuesday 9 May 1916, twenty prisoners were escorted from Limerick Jail to Dublin by orders of the authorities in Queenstown. Later that same day, a party of four officers and forty-one other ranks were despatched from the New Barracks to Ennis with instructions to carry out searches en-route in Bunratty and Newmarket-on-Fergus for any weapons and known Irish Volunteers. A further party of troops were sent to Castlepark to operate in the Meelick area, this detachment returned with five prisoners, whom Weldon deemed to be of no real importance. On 10 May 1916 two motor lorries with two officers and twenty other ranks were sent from the New Barrack to operate in conjunction with the R.I.C. in the area of Doone County Limerick. The detachment returned with five prisoners. Weldon makes the point that this was the only district where weapons had not been satisfactorily handed in. On the same day, Weldon received word from the R.I.C. that the leaders of the I.V's were to be arrested and searches of their homes carried out. An armoured car, now located at the New Barracks, was placed at Weldon's disposal. At 03.30 hours on Friday 12 May 1916, search parties left the New Barracks to assist the R.I.C. A total of twenty-eight civilians were arrested and held in Limerick prison. These arrests and deployments of troops prevented the Volunteers an opportunity to organise any opposition to the military and in turn ensured the preservation of peace. Later the same day Weldon ordered the release of three of these prisoners who gave him assurances that no further trouble would take place.

At 10.00 hours on 12 May 1916 the 2/16th Battalion Westminster's departed Limerick for embarkation to England. With the reduction in troop numbers, Weldon decided to withdraw piquet's on the post office, train station, telephone exchange and police station. This move was forced on Weldon due to the reduction in troop numbers, but the locations he chose allowed a limited return to normality within the city. This decision allowed the military to judge the reactions of the civilian population while still controlling the main access routes of the city. On 13 May 1916 Weldon held a meeting in Ennis with the Lord Lieutenant for County Clare, Sir M.O'Loghen Bt, the R.I.C. County Inspector for Clare, John Gelston and the Bishop of Killaloe, Michael Fogarty, after which he gave orders for the dismantling of fortification on all bridges. On 15 May 1916, Weldon released twenty-seven prisoners held in Limerick Jail (from Limerick city and Castleconnell). The premises occupied at Shannon Bridge by the military were handed back to Shannon Rowing Club. Weldon visited Limerick jail on the 16 May 1916 and released all the prisoners held because of the troubles, except five prisoners from Doone whom he felt had not co-operated. This effectively was the end of the Easter Rising in Limerick.

After the Rising was over, Savage Armstrong in his papers mentions the fact that on Easter Monday of the Rising, the military password in use was "Limerick". He makes the point he had learned from a senior figure with the IV's in Limerick that the password in use with the Volunteers was also "Limerick" and had events led to all out action that the consequences could have been very serious. Weldon himself concluded that the trouble in Limerick was not as bad as it could have been. He attributes this to the fact the I.V. leaders had been without clear instructions from their national leaders. This confusion allowed Weldon time to take swift action, this together with the domination of the military he concludes were factors which allowed the military to control the situation. Weldon in his report to the GOC acknowledges the contribution by Mayor Quinn. He also commends him for his bravery and asks the G.O.C. to bring the matter to the attention of higher authority. He credits the R.I.C. in counties Clare and Limerick together with the various army commanders for the way in which they acted under orders.

During this period, the New Barracks Limerick played a crucial part in the military operations carried out in Limerick. The barracks provided an operational headquarters for large numbers of troops and a supply location for the logistical needs of the military. Had the Easter Rising in Limerick taken place before the arrival of 4/LR on 13 April 1916, there would have been very

few troops in the city to oppose the volunteers. Most of the troops present were only medical personnel and not active service troops. This would have led to limited opposition in the seizure of key installations, giving the Volunteers an advantage in their efforts to control the city. Overall, the military achieved its objective of maintaining the military situation in Limerick. This was done with decisive decisions by its leadership at the right times and a willingness to use all means at their disposal to achieve their objectives. It should not be forgotten that the Military had the added advantage of a far larger and better armed force than that of the Volunteers, whose sources put its strength at about 130 Volunteers in total. However, the military did manage to maintain the peace with no loss of live on either side due to the events of the Rising. The military were helped with their objectives by the indecisive leadership of the I.V's. at national level and the confusion this caused locally, but ultimately it was the military leadership of Weldon that deserves great credit for his tactical awareness of the situation and how he achieved his objectives.

Stephen Kelly MA

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The Missing of Prêmesques

The action at Prêmesques, a village near Lille, was one of the most costly ever fought by The Leinsters. The bald statistics tell us that between the 18th and 20th October 1914, the 2nd Battalion of The Leinsters suffered 138 fatal casualties. To these must be added the wounded amounting to, according to the Regimental History, a further 296 giving a total of 434 Officers and men. Another shocking statistic is that of those 138 fatal casualties, 122 have no known grave, and are remembered on the panels of the Berk's Corner Memorial to the Missing. It has long been a matter of speculation within the Association what the fate of the missing was and where they might be. For a number of years this quest was led by our former Chairman, Col Peter Walton, assisted by Andrew Overton, both of whom had relatives among the victims. In this article we will try to bring the story up to date, including some recent discoveries that seem to point to at least some answers to the main outstanding question; where are the missing of Prêmesques?

Although of considerable significance to The Leinsters, Prêmesques rates only a passing reference in the Official History of the War. It is an episode in the Battle of Armentières that occurred between the 13th October and the 2nd November 1914. It was one of the last efforts of the original British Expeditionary Force (BEF) to regain ground lost to the Germans during the retreat from Mons, and partially recovered after the Battle of the Marne and the subsequent so-called "Race to the Sea".

At the time, 2/Leinsters were part of 17 Brigade, 6th Division, III Corps, of the BEF. On the 18th October, their brigade was ordered forward to secure the low ridge that lies between Lille and Armentières. The Leinsters were specifically tasked with securing the village of Prêmesques and the outlying hillock of Mont de Prêmesques. They succeeded in doing so despite some well-entrenched opposition. In the words of The Official History, they "got nearer to Lille than British troops were to be for many a long day". It was B and C Companies that were most engaged on the 18th and incurred 102 casualties. The 19th October was largely spent consolidating the positions already gained and waiting nervously for a German counter attack. The attack duly arrived in the early morning of the 20th, accompanied by heavy German artillery fire. For some unexplained reason, the artillery supporting 17 Brigade had been withdrawn leaving the Leinsters, and the remainder of their brigade without artillery support and facing a numerically stronger attacking force.



Memorial at Prêmesques, erected 2014

During the day, bit by bit, the Leinsters, and their neighbouring battalions, were forced to give ground, before being ordered to retire to a new position closer to Armentières that, with little change, was to remain the front line for nearly 4 years. The Germans were left holding the battlefield while the British made a fairly orderly, but no doubt hasty, withdrawal to their new positions. These dispositions were to have a potentially important bearing on the probable fate of the casualties.

An examination of the trench maps during the rest of the war, shows that the village of Prêmesques became part of the German 2nd line trench system, with their front line being about 1,500 yards beyond the village. The British front was a further 2-300 yards away. The maps show German trenches and bunkers being built in the same locations as were used by the Leinsters during their time in the village. Despite occasional stories to the contrary, both sides, where possible, cleared the battlefields in an orderly fashion for reasons of hygiene and ordinary decency. It seems likely that mass graves would have been used to bury the dead. We know that some care was taken over the burials at Prêmesques as there is an account of post war correspondence between a German Officer present at the time and the family of Capt. Henry Maffett, one of the Officer casualties and great-uncle of Col Peter Walton.

Commonwealth War Grave Commission (CWGC) records tell us that there are 16 named Leinster graves dating from the 18th - 20th October 1914 in various cemeteries. Of these, four are Officers and the remainder are NCO's and enlisted men. After the end of the war, the massive job of clearing the battlefields started and went on for many years. Part of this process was the collection of bodies and their interment in the numerous cemeteries that we know today. In recent years new roads and houses, with all their attendant infrastructure, have been built around Pr emesques and it seems very unlikely that any human remains would have been missed. Clearing the battlefields involved the repeated digging, the careful examination, and where possible, the identification of remains that were found. Strict criteria were applied to identifying bodies and depended on personal possessions surviving or regimental numbers being found on pieces of equipment. We should remember that remains could be over four years old and that there was no common system of durable "dog tags" until 1917. If there was an identity tag, it was often made of a fibre material and was unlikely to survive long in the ground. One of the most durable items seems to have been a man's boots, each of which was stamped with his regimental number. The odds of being able to identify individual Leinster casualties from 1914 in 1919/20, or later, were stacked against the Graves Registration Units. Clues as to what may have happened during the creation of the cemeteries can be gained from looking at the arrangement of the headstones. Where we see evenly spaced markers we can be reasonably certain that these are individual graves. Where there is little or no space between the markers, it indicates a mass burial of identified or unidentified individuals.

A surprising result of tracing the graves of the named casualties, is that six are in cemeteries around Arras, about 40 miles from Pr emesques. Of these, four are in Canadian No 2 Cemetery, at Neuville-St Vaast, located within the Canadian National Vimy Memorial Park. Despite its name and location, this is by no means an exclusively Canadian Cemetery. Of the 2,966 burials, 467 are Canadian, and over 2,000 are unknown. The Leinsters buried and named in this cemetery are:

5624 Pte J Anderson
 8401 L/Cpl H McDonald
 7417 Pte H Sheehy
 6935 Pte T Weldon

According to the Burial Return Form, part of the digitised CWGC records, all the above were found at grid reference, 36 I24 d8.8, along with at least eight other unnamed bodies, identified as belonging to the Leinster Regiment and dating from the 20th October 1914. They were all originally buried in the same grave and are now in Plot 2 Row F at Neuville St-Vaast. The map reference quoted above, is located on the outskirts of the village of Pr emesques. Also buried in this cemetery is 9508 Pte J McKenna whose date of death is given as the 10th November 1914. His body was found at 36 I24 b5.2 which is a few hundred yards from the previous location, suggesting that his was an isolated and separate burial. There are no other entries on that particular Burial Return Form. The date is a puzzle, for by that time 2/Leinsters were at Croix Blanche, some distance from Pr emesques, raising the possibility that this man may have died of wounds in a German field hospital, or that somehow his date of death was recorded incorrectly.



Individual and common graves in Houplines Community Cemetery Extension. The grave on the right is that of 3828 Pte R Sullivan, KIA 20th October 1914. The "Unknown" graves on the left of Pte Sullivan may be Leinsters. The "Unknown British Officer" (See below) is in the same row but out of frame and may be that of Capt Maffett. All were found at the same map reference

There are further Leinster/Prêmesques burials in the Arras area. 8648 Pte G Raper, found at 36. I24 b05.70, is buried in Cabaret Rouge British Cemetery, Souchez, along with three others, 7162 Pte's P Fitzgerald, 10066 W Driscoll and 506 Pte R Beake. Private Beake died in October 1916 but Privates Driscoll and Fitzgerald died on the 25th October and the 6th November 1914 respectively at the Faculte de Medicine in Lillie, then in German hands. They were originally buried in the Botanical Garden of the Faculte. It looks as if these two may have died of wounds incurred at Prêmesques, and were taken to Lille for treatment and should be added to the already long list of casualties of that engagement. 9912 Pte P Mack is buried in Bailleul Road East Cemetery at St Laurent Blangy, also near Arras. This is another cemetery that was used after the war to concentrate scattered graves. It now contains over 1,000 burials of which more than half are unidentified. Private Mack is the only Leinster known to be buried in this cemetery, his body was found at 36 I24 d6.6. Are there other unnamed Leinster burials in these cemeteries?

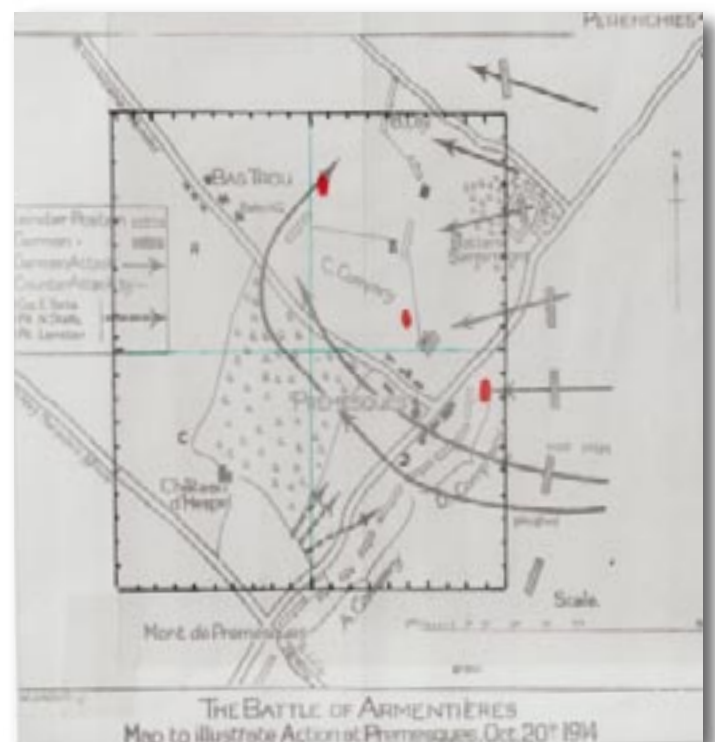
There are 22 Leinsters buried in Cite Bonjean Military cemetery at Armentières, but only three that relate to our time frame including two Officers, Capt W Montgomerie and Lt C Gaitskell. There is no information indicating previous burial sites. The third, 9309 Pte P Frawley, appears to have been originally buried with 14 Germans, but unfortunately there is no positional information included. In Chapel d'Armentieres Old Military Cemetery, we find two casualties dating from the 19th October 1914, Lt A Lecky and 9134 Pte S Stewart. This is a small cemetery, started by 6th Division in October 1914 and it remained in British hands for most of the war. It seems likely that Lecky and Stewart were buried there very soon after they died and have not been moved as they lie in adjoining graves.

The remaining burial site of known victims of Prêmesques, is Houplines Community Cemetery Extension, (Houplines CCE), the closest to the scene of the action, which contains three Leinster Other Rank burials from the 18th - 20th October 1914, 3828 Pte R Sullivan, 7630 Sgt C McPherson and 7081 Pte T O'Neill (confusingly rendered as "Tonefield" in some records). According to the CWGC "Burial Return", the bodies of these three men were recovered from the same map reference, 36 I6 a7.2. They had been identified by a crucifix, clothing and a number respectively. Two other bodies classified as "UBS" - "Unknown British Soldier" were recovered from the same location: it is possible that these are also Leinsters. There is also a "UBO", i.e. an "Unknown British Officer", recovered from this spot, who is buried in

the same row as Sullivan. Is this Capt Maffett, now remembered by a "Special Memorial" bearing the words "Believed to be buried in this cemetery"? There is a strong possibility that it is, as all other Officer casualties are accounted for. The map reference is about 3,000 yards from the scene of the action but is still within the German held area.

There remains the question of what happened to Captain Maffett, commanding B Coy, and how we should interpret the wording on his headstone "Believed to be buried in this cemetery". The Regimental History quotes the diary of a German officer who reports finding his body "600 paces north-west of Point 42 of Batterie Senarmont", a feature that can still be identified today. The diary also says that he "lies there in the midst of his men". Unfortunately we have no information as to which company McPherson, O'Neill and Sullivan served in, but two of them died on the 20th and the third on the 18th. A possible explanation of the wording on Capt Maffett's headstone, is that more than one body was found at the location where Capt Maffett was known to be buried and that all were subsequently interred in Houplines CCE.

In conclusion, it seems that the Leinster casualties of Prêmesques are now interred over a wide area, mostly in "Unknown British Soldier" graves, and in a number



The well-known sketch map of Prêmesques from the Regimental History with an overlay of Grid Square 36NW I24.

The red dots indicate the approximate locations where known remains of fatal casualties have been recovered. The location of Grid Square 36NW I6, where other remains were found, is about 3,000 yards north of the village

of different cemeteries. The bodies were recovered during the clearance of the battlefields from either mass graves or, in a few cases, individual burials and were moved to whichever cemetery was operationally practical at the time. The way forward with the investigation seems to be via the Burial Return Forms for cemeteries, where there are known relevant Leinster burials and looking for map references that match locations around Prêmesques. These are not digitised and would need to be viewed at the CWGC offices. It

seems unlikely that there are any undiscovered mass graves around Prêmesques, as a result of its subsequent use during the war and its later development as a dormitory town of Lille. In short, while we have answered some questions we have also raised many more. Our intention is to continue the investigation by searching CWGC records and visiting the Cemeteries known to contain Leinster burials from the relevant dates. We look forward to reporting our findings in a follow up article.

Understanding Trench Maps

Anybody trying to understand events in the Great War will sooner or later become involved with maps of the battlefields. This may start with sketches used to illustrate books or articles but as you start to delve deeper into the detail of a unit's or individual's actions, you will come across maps of one sort or another. The most detailed research will bring you to maps produced by the Field Survey Companies of the Royal Engineers, commonly known as "trench maps". It is useful to have some understanding of how they are structured and how they work. This short article aims to explain some basics.

The evolution of military mapping in the Great War is a complex and lengthy subject. The British Expeditionary Force (BEF) went to war in 1914 with maps that owed their origins to French and Belgian surveys and that were drawn at a scale of 1:100,000 and 1:80,000. The development of longer range artillery and the consequent need to control indirect fire (ie at an unseen target) prompted the need to have maps at larger scale showing greater detail. In the course of the war, the size and scope of the Field Survey Companies, and their attendant services, steadily increased and embraced new technologies of the time such as aerial photography, flash spotting and sound ranging. It is estimated that the British Army produced something like 34 million maps during the war. We are lucky that a large number have survived, and there are extensive collections in the Imperial War Museum and the

National Archives. We will concentrate of the two scales most frequently encountered, 1:20,000 and 1:10,000 although the basic principles apply to all British produced maps.

The initial maps were produced at a scale of 1:40,000 and subsequently re-drawn at 1:20,000, 1:10,000 and occasionally at 1:5,000. The original sheets were subdivided into 6,000 yard squares designated with a capital letter. These were then further divided into 36 numbered squares each of 1,000 yards. Each numbered square was divided into four 500 yard sub-squares, identified by the small letter, a, b, c, or d. Grid references start with the sheet number, eg 28SW, indicating that it is the 6000 yd



Part of a 1:10,000 map, 28 SW 4. It shows German trenches in detail in red and the outline of the British front in blue. Dated April 1917, just before the Battle of Messines. The red dot shows the position of Sniper's House

square in the south west corner of the main sheet 28, followed by the capital letter, e.g., U, and the number of the sub-square, e.g., 2. These sub-squares are quartered into four further sub-squares and are then marked off in notional tenths representing 50 yards on the ground. A position within a 500 yard square is expressed by giving the easting value first, e.g., 3, followed by the northing e.g., 7. This will give a position accurate to within 50 yards on the ground. Thus the grid reference (as shown above) would read 28SW4 U2 b3.7

and indicates a feature called “Sniper’s House’ in the German lines onto which you can now bring down the wrath of the Royal Artillery. By introducing a second decimal point say e.g., 35 east .75 north, a greater degree of accuracy can be achieved. Maps were regularly updated and the level of detail of “friendly” trenches and installations was often kept very sketchy for reasons of security. On British maps linear distances were expressed in imperial units, contours were given in metric – just to keep everyone on their toes!

The Central Indian Campaign and the First Leinster VC

The first Victoria Cross to be awarded to a member of one of the antecedent regiments of the Leinsters was in 1858 to Private Frederick Whirlpool of the 3rd Bombay Fusiliers, later to become part of the 109th Regiment of Foot and eventually the 2nd Battalion, The Leinster Regiment. We know relatively little about Pte. Whirlpool’s background. It seems that he was born, Fredrick Conker, in Liverpool around 1829. His father was reportedly Major Conker who became postmaster in Dundalk, Co Louth, thereby giving young Frederick some Irish and Leinster connections. In 1854, following a quarrel with his father, Frederick enlisted at Glasgow in the East India Company’s army using the name “Frederick Whirlpool”. If his birth date of 1829 is correct, he would have been 25 years of age, which seems rather old to be leaving home in a huff to join the army. Whatever his backstory might be, he arrived in Bombay (Mumbai) in 1855 and became 2200 Pte Frederick Whirlpool, 3rd Bombay Fusiliers.

The India that Frederick Whirlpool arrived in was a patchwork of semi-independent princely states owing loose allegiance to the Mughal Emperor in Delhi, increasingly to the British owned East India Company, and indirectly to the Government in London. To our eyes the East India Company was an extraordinary organisation, a joint stock company, based in the City of London, that ruled a sizeable chunk of a continent and its people via three sub-divisions or “Presidencies” as they were termed, Madras, Bombay and Bengal. The three components had grown from the original trading posts established in the 17th Century. At its peak the Company’s private army numbered around 300,000 men, larger than the British Army of the time. Over this ramshackle arrangement HMG exercised a loose control driven by the strategic imperatives to control trade, notably that of tea and spices but also opium, and to keep other European powers out of India. By the 1850’s it was becoming apparent that some fundamental reform of the system of governance was necessary.

In 1855, when Frederick Whirlpool arrived in India, a number of factors were beginning to come together. In



The Rani of Jhansi

addition to the question on governance, described above, there was growing Indian resentment at the increasing interference by the British into the Indian way of life including upsetting local religious sensibilities. In the early days of the Company all sides had lived in relative harmony with the British often embracing, both literally and metaphorically, the local way of life. With the arrival of missionaries and more European women in the early 19th century this began to change. In May 1857 simmering resentments came to a head at Meerut when an India regiment of the East India Company’s army mutinied over the type of animal fat used to grease cartridges. The newly introduced Enfield rifled musket used a cartridge that required the end to be bitten off prior to loading. It was rumoured that the cartridge was greased with a mixture of beef and pork fat, the one an anathema to Hindus, the other repugnant to Muslims. This local incident provided the proverbial spark that ignited the tinderbox. What followed was a chain reaction of mutinies and uprisings, both military and civilian, across central and northern India. Despite some prior warnings of growing unrest these disturbances caught the authorities largely by surprise and ill -prepared. There was widespread looting and

atrocities committed against Europeans, those involving women and children producing particular revulsion. These atrocities were to influence later events and have continued to resonate down the years.

Within a short time the authorities regained the initiative and organised a number of columns to relieve besieged garrisons and to seek out and destroy the rebel forces. It is worth pointing out that most of the troops used to put down the rebellion were Indian and many princely states remained loyal to the British. One of these columns was known as the Central India Field Force (CIFF), under the command of Maj-Gen Sir Hugh Rose, and included the 3rd Bombay Fusiliers. The objectives of the CIFF were to take the city fortress of Jhansi, the seat of the Rani of Jhansi but also known as “the Jezebel of India” who had a formidable reputation as a ruler and military leader of her people. After capturing Jhansi the column was to continue its march to the north east to meet a northern column around the city of Calpee on the river Jumna. The distances involved were considerable, over 600 miles from Poona, where 3/BF were based, to Calpee.

While paused at Sehore in early January 1858 the 3/BF had an unusual and gruesome task to perform; the execution by shooting of 149 rebels condemned to death by court martial. However we view this event today we should remember that, apparently, the due process of the period was carried out. As the column moved through the country it was welcomed by some local rulers and opposed by others. An example of the latter was the fortress of Rathghur, the scene of earlier atrocities against Europeans. Such was the difficulty of approaching the fortress that the elephants used to pull the artillery refused to go further and were unhitched and the task completed by manpower supplied by the 3rd Bombay Fusiliers. After an overnight bombardment the garrison made its escape under the cover of darkness leaving a near empty city to be occupied the following day. This was 3/BF's first taste of “action”. Meanwhile the enemy had regrouped and a stiff fight occurred a couple of days later in which 3/BF played a



The Fort at Jhansi

prominent part. The operations of the CIFF was characterised by the energetic leadership of its commander, Sir Hugh Rose, who always tried to seize the initiative and led from the front. By all accounts he was an inspirational leader. The success at Rathghur enabled the advance and relief of two other fortified towns, Garrakota and Saugor. It was while paused at Saugor that the Regiment was first equipped with the new ‘khaki’ uniform in place of the traditional scarlet serge tunic and blue trousers. The latter uniform was designed for a European climate and was quite unsuited for campaigning in the suffocating heat of India. It is hardly surprising that this change of uniform led to a significant reduction in cases of heat stroke and other related ailments.

Leaving Saugor the column divided into its two constituent brigades to force a passage through the hills approaching Jhansi. In doing so each brigade had to deal with a succession of rebel-held fortified towns and positions. Despite meeting well-armed and organised opposition 3/BF seem to have suffered relatively few casualties during this phase, four wounded are mentioned after an attack on a fortified position involving the use of artillery on both sides. Finally, on the 21st March 1858, the two parts of the column joined up again under the walls of Jhansi. The Regimental history describes the scene:

“The sight was a formidable one. Due north, dominating the landscape, or rising like an island from a sea of plain, was an immense granite rock crowned by the fort of Jhansi. The fort was massive, with walls of solid masonry in thickness from sixteen to twenty feet”.

The problems facing Sir Hugh Rose would have been familiar to any medieval soldier, how to prevent the re-supply of the besieged garrison and inhabitants while starving them into submission but at the same time preparing for a last resort storming of the fortress. Such operations were generally conducted according to an understood but unwritten code of conduct. If a fortress surrendered after a period of resistance the garrison and inhabitants were usually spared and in some cases the garrison would be allowed “the honours of war”, ie they were allowed to march out with their arms and colours. If, on the other hand, the attackers had to incur casualties by storming the fortress, all bets were off. The attacking force would have an unofficial licence to slaughter and plunder until such time as exhaustion took over or the authorities re-imposed order and discipline. These customs should be remembered when passing judgement on the events that occurred after many sieges that have occurred throughout history. In addition Jhansi was the scene of an earlier massacre of British men, women and children.

As the besiegers settled into their task of bombarding the fortress, seeking to open a breach in the walls, and

driving saps forwards to provide cover for the storming party disquieting news arrived of the approach of a relief force. This force numbered between 20,000 and 25,000 well-armed and led men. Potentially, Sir Hugh Rose's force was now in danger of being squeezed between the relieving force and the fortress garrison and was outnumbered by about 10:1. Rose turned his European troops to face the relieving force and aided by the timely use of cavalry and horse artillery on the flanks put the enemy to flight. 3/BF played an important part in these actions and once again seem to have suffered very few casualties with a reported two killed and three wounded compared with "a thousand" of the enemy. These relative casualty figures are difficult to reconcile with the fact that the enemy was equal in equipment and training to the CIFF, were led by experienced and able commanders, and enjoyed significant numerical superiority.

The date fixed for the storming of Jhansi was the 3rd April. The plan was that the assault would be carried out by two European regiments, 3/BF and the 86th Regiment of Foot, the latter an Imperial regiment that later became a battalion of The Royal Irish Rifles. 3/BF was to attack the walls, 25/30 feet high, using scaling ladders, the 86th was to attack a breach in the walls made by the bombardment. The plan to use scaling ladders quickly ran into trouble as they were found to be too short to reach the parapet and collapsed under the weight of the men trying to climb them. A few gallant souls did succeed in scaling the walls but were isolated and quickly cut down by the defenders. A brave attempt to blow open a gate also failed. The 86th had more success storming the breached walls and eventually secured a lodgement inside the fortress enabling some of 3/BF to mount the walls with others reinforcing the attack of the 86th. The two units joined together to fight their way through the city towards the palace, the ultimate goal. Fierce resistance was encountered along the way, particularly from Afghan and Pathan mercenaries employed by the Rani. Fighting continued throughout the day and into the following one before the city and fortress was secured. It seems that considerable looting and violence towards the local population took place with little distinction being made between soldier and civilian. One result of the looting was the Rani's dining table coming into the possession of the 3/BF's. It eventually became a treasured possession of the 2nd Battalion, The Leinster Regiment, and is now owned by The Royal Asiatic Society. Among the confusion the Rani made good her escape by being lowered down the walls by rope. Once again the casualty figures quoted in the Regimental History are difficult to reconcile with the lurid accounts of the storming of the walls and the aftermath. The attackers casualties are given as 68 dead and 252 wounded while the defender's death toll is given as "over 5000". The

86th Regiment was awarded four Victoria Crosses at Jhansi.

After the capture of Jhansi the CIFF remained in the city for about 3 weeks in order to re-supply and rest following their arduous march and action. When the force departed, it left behind a garrison including part of 3/BF. The remainder of the force continued their march towards their ultimate goal, the river Jumna and the city of Calpee while at the same time chasing down the elusive rebel columns. One of the major actions during this phase of operations was the storming of the fortress of Lohari held by a force of about 500 rebels. Maj-Gen Rose sent 3/BF, a regiment of cavalry and some artillery to fulfil this task. The cavalry screened the fort while the infantry of 3/BF attacked the walls with the aid of the artillery. Once again the successful capture of the fortress was accompanied by great slaughter of the garrison, the Regimental History says that inside the fort "there was desperate work. Every male in the fort was put to death".

It was primarily for his conduct during the storming of Lohari that Frederick Whirlpool was awarded his Victoria Cross although earlier deeds at Jhansi also contributed. Whirlpool was the first man through the breach and into the fortress. He was quickly cut down and after being rescued was found to have 19 sword cuts. He is supposed to have said to his rescuers, "Take care lads, and don't shake my head, or else it will come off". Sir Hugh Rose visited him in hospital and promised him a Victoria Cross if he survived. Whirlpool did survive his injuries and was awarded the medal. However, as a result of his wounds he was invalided out of the army. He immigrated to Australia where he had a varied career including working as a schoolmaster. He died, a recluse, in Windsor, New South Wales, in 1899. His medal is displayed in the Australian War Memorial Museum.

The 3rd Bombay Europeans continued to march with the Central India Field Force until the campaign ended with the capture of Calpee in late May 1858. The elusive Rani of Jhansi was killed during operations around the fortress city of Gwalior and the suppression of the Indian Mutiny came an end. Although control was re-established it was achieved at a huge cost in lives, money, and goodwill. Imperial government replaced the authority of the East India Company. The company's army became the Imperial Indian Army with the 3rd Bombay Europeans becoming the 109th Regiment of Foot. Not least of the legacies of the Mutiny was the fact that for the remainder of the Raj the relationship between rulers and ruled never really recovered. It is in memory of and in tribute to the part played in these operations that the 3rd Bombay Europeans were awarded the battle honour "Central India", proudly carried on the Regimental Colours of their successor regiments, the 109th Regiment of Foot and The Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment.

20th Anniversary Lunch

This year, our annual lunch had extra significance as 2023 marks the 20th anniversary of the reforming of the Association. The lunch was held on Saturday, 10th June, at The Civil Service Club, Whitehall, London. There was a record attendance and 53 members and guests enjoyed a lively occasion. It was good to see members and guests travelling from far and wide, including from Ireland in order to attend the event. Our President, Sir Anthony Weldon Bt, presided and the guests of honour were, Orla McBreen, Counsellor and Foreign Policy Director, at the Irish Embassy and Maj-Gen Colin Weir DSO, MBE, Chief of Staff, Field Army. We were also very pleased to welcome a contingent from the Irish Defence Forces, led by GSM Neil Matthews, who were in London for the Combined Irish Regiments Association parade to the Cenotaph to be held the following day. Piper Mike Shanahan entertained us with sets of traditional Irish martial tunes and it was noticeable that the “Comnaught Yell” chorus in “Killaloe” got louder with each playing.

In his address our President, Sir Anthony, formally welcomed our guests and was not in the least put off by the arrival of a party of naked cyclists in the street outside. They were demonstrating about something; no

one seemed to know quite what Sir Anthony pointed out that the day’s gathering represented the three strands of the Irish military experience: service in the British forces, service in the Irish Defence Forces and the “Wild Geese”, Irish men and women who serve in foreign forces, and were all joined by bonds of comradeship. He also thanked various members of the Association for their work in running the organisation. Special mention was made of our Secretary, David Ball, who was responsible for reforming the Association and not forgetting David’s mother, “The Duchess”. On a more sombre note, tribute was paid to Mr Frank Walshe who died recently. Frank, who lived in Ireland, was a long time, active and well known member of the Association.

In the course of the afternoon toasts were drunk, amongst others, to HM The King, The President of Ireland and to the Regiment.

The success of the day was, in no small measure, due to the hard work of Secretary David Ball who undertook most of the organisation. As usual David did the Association proud and we are all very grateful for his dedication. A special thanks is due to the staff of The Civil Service Club who looked after us so well.



Members and guests at lunch



Our President’s address



Piper Mike entertains us

THE LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Committee and Post Holders July 2023

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Vice-Presidents	Mr David Ball Commandant Michael McGoona

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* Also members of the General Committee.

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. A number of long-standing committee members have indicated that they would like to stand down from their current responsibilities. We urgently need more members to volunteer to help run your Association and continue to provide the high standards of remembrance already achieved. 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.

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



Devoted to the memory of
SOLDIERS OF THE
UNITED STATES ARMY
WHO LOST THEIR LIVES AT VARIOUS PLACES
WHILE SERVING IN THE 10th INFANTRY REGIMENT
1890 - 1900.

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M. MURPHY	J. KELLY
F. MURPHY	J. KELLY
P. MURPHY	J. KELLY
C. MURPHY	J. KELLY
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