



Piper William Aspinal playing Killaloe at the April Meeting of the Association held in the Leinster Arms, Bayswater, London.



PRINCE OF WALES'S LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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

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am considering a future edition dedicated to such tributes. Michael Feeney brings us up to date on the new Mayo Peace Park and we have our regular items on News from Birr and the action of the Leinsters in WW1 from Association historian Ian Lowe. Once again we have a rich variety of content for the 40/10, thank you for all your submissions, keep them coming!

Now all that remains for me to say is -
Enjoy the edition!

Don Dickson, June 2008
Editor

The Leinster Regiment Association identifies as its primary objective the perpetuation of the memory of the Regiment and where possible the officers and soldiers who served as members.

Every task the Association embarks upon or event that we become involved with is built upon that foundation, so it is great to be able include in this edition the brilliant news within the Secretary's report and the article on Page twelve. Thunder I shall not steal, so read the articles! Along with this edition you will also have received a reservation form for what has become the annual lunch with IMOS in Belgium. Many of us associate this event with the late Major Jim MacLeod who, for many years, organised the IMOS trip through the meetings of Combined Irish Regiments Old Comrades Association. The organisers of the IMOS lunch approached Leinster Association Secretary, David Ball, to step in and for this year the IMOS trip and Ledegem commemoration have been combined into a single event.

This edition also honours Private Patrick Kane, a once forgotten Leinster, in an article written by Chris Thornton. I would like to see more tribute articles submitted and

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

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News from Birr

In the last edition of 40/10 we were able to report that our President had officially launched the book and archive collection in the local library with the able assistance of Sean Cooke. On the same occasion a rededication ceremony took place for the memorial window in St Brendan's Church (see 40/10 November 2007) thus marking the revival of interest in the Leinsters in their old depot town. A full page spread in the local paper reporting the events including colour photographs followed providing welcome additional publicity. During a brief pre Christmas visit to Birr, Sean and I visited the library to see how things were going and were pleased to find that the material was being used and the staff were satisfied with what had been achieved and were interested in what else could be done in the way of lectures to help maintain interest in the future. Further discussions took place about how to interest schools and the younger age group in the project.

Progress continues slowly towards the erection of a permanent memorial to the Regiment to be sited by the old barracks gate in Crinkle. We have made initial contact with a young Irish mason who specialises in high quality memorial stone carving and who has recently finished a commission for the Queens Royal Hussars OCA in Dublin. We are grateful to Noel Cullen's son in law for producing a number of concept designs, some of which can be seen on the Association's web site. Following a committee meeting a basic choice of design has been made which will now go forward for some amendment before being submitted for the necessary formal approvals from the local authorities who are already aware of the scheme. As the resources of the association are very much committed to the commemoration event in Ledegem in October this year the committee consider it wise to restrict progress on the Birr Memorial to the design, authorisation and funding issues

until the Ledegem project is complete at which time we can give it our full attention.

The Committee are very appreciative of the continued support and wise counsel that we receive from Sean Cooke in Birr, our President Maj-Gen. The O'Morchoe, Noel Cullen and other Irish based members.

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A Calendar for 2009

The Association is planning to release a calendar for 2009 so we are sending out a call to all our members who take photographs of events throughout the year. We need thirteen photographs, one front cover and one photograph for each month. You can



Cenotaph parade 11 November 2007

send either a digital or printed photograph, in colour or black & white. Full details of how to submit a photo are on the Association website. If you do not have Internet access just contact us at the address on the back page and we will send you printed instructions of what to do. You can submit any photograph as long as it has an Association, Leinster Regiment or Irish Regiments connection. It is important that you have the copyright for the photograph or can secure permission for its use by the Association.

Events Calendar

2008

July 12 Dublin Meeting

Sep 27 London Meeting

Oct 10-12 IMOS Sphinx Ieper, Belgium

Oct 12-13 Remembrance Ledegem, Belgium

Nov 9th RBL Remembrance Day Parade *

Dec TBA Christmas Lunch

* Public event organised by others. See website for details.

Secretary's Report

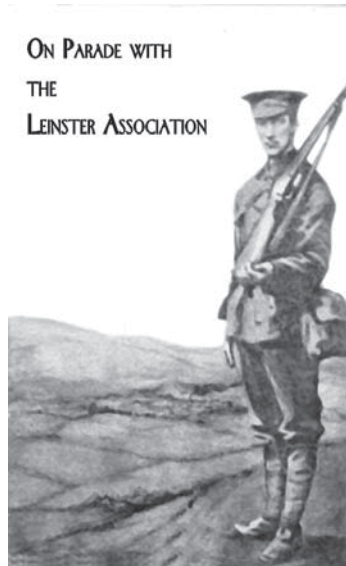
Welcome to the latest edition of the regimental journal.

I will begin my report with news of the great honour bestowed on the association by the town council of Ledegem who have awarded us the Freedom of the City. This award is in recognition of the regiment's involvement in the liberation of the town ninety years ago next October. The association is planning to parade the regimental standard into the town with pipes and drums to mark acceptance of the award. Further details of the trip are included in this issue. I ask members to please consider attending, as this is not only a great honour for an organisation such as ours, but it is also a great honour to the memory of the men who took part in this action, some of whom were forbearers of our members. Our President, General David, will be travelling from Ireland to formally accept the honour.

I paid a visit to Birr during the Christmas and New Year period and received a fantastic welcome from the Cooke and Harte families, who looked after me as though I was one of their own. I was introduced to the team at Birr Library, who are doing a marvellous job with the regimental collection. I also met many people in the area with Leinster regiment connections, who also made me very welcome; it is great to know that there is still a lot of interest in the regiment in its spiritual home of Crinkle, so many years after the disbandment. I am looking forward to a return visit later this year. My thanks once again to the Cooke and Harte families, and indeed to all the people who made me welcome.

This time of year is busy for us as an association, the annual lunch and parade of the Combined Irish Regiments Association will take place on the 14th and 15th June and we look forward to a good turnout for these events. As a member of Combined Irish committee I know what it takes to plan these events including not forgetting the remembrance period ceremonies, so I must thank them on behalf of our association for the hard work that I sometimes feel is taken for granted by ALL the Irish regimental associations who support these functions. Association members have many ceremonies and functions open to them and I must not forget to highlight the annual meeting in Dublin, which is

ON PARADE WITH
THE
LEINSTER ASSOCIATION



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scheduled for Saturday 12 July 2008. Planned for the same weekend is the RBL (Rep of Ireland) wreath laying ceremony at Islandbridge, the RBL Dublin Central Branch social and The National Day of Commemoration at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Sunday 13 July. All members who are based in Ireland will be sent details of the Dublin meeting soon.

Members who attended the AGM will know that Harry Hogan has decided to step down from the position of treasurer, a position that he held from our reformation. Harry, being a modest chap asked me not to make a 'fuss', but as he is a personal friend I cannot let him step down with at least saying a big "thank you" for the work and effort he has put into this task and for his personal support shown to me, Harry is of course staying on as a member, and we look forward to seeing him at future meetings. Thanks Harry and as you're a, not so old, Skin, "*Nec Aspera Torrent*".

Finally to all Members, enjoy this edition.

David Ball, Ich Dien.

IMOS



Inter-Allied Military
Organisation:
Call Sign Sphinx.

The annual invitation to Irish Regiment Associations to attend the IMOS lunch is being coordinated by the Association this year. The lunch will be on Saturday October 11th and coach travel and accommodation is offered by the Association. This year the long-weekend also includes participation in Remembrance Ledegem (see p 12). A reservation and booking form is enclosed with this edition of 40/10 and extra copies are available upon request or by download from the Association website.

This promises to be a magnificent weekend for all who attend. Don't miss out, make sure of your place by returning the booking form immediately!

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6th Leinsters at Gallipoli

IAN LOWE

The Leinster Regiment raised only two service battalions during the Great War, the 6th and the 7th; because the 7th served in France and Flanders and played an important part in some significant successful operations it tends to be better remembered. The 6th battalion formed part of the 29th Brigade of 10th (Irish) Division and served in Gallipoli, Salonika and Palestine before arriving in France in June 1918. This article will look at the early history of the battalion and its baptism of fire at Gallipoli.

Unlike the other two Irish divisions, whose roots lay in the Nationalist and Unionist Volunteer movements of the day, the 10th Division was raised in direct response to Kitcheners call for a new army of 100,000 volunteers. It comprised men of the 29th, 30th and 31st Brigades, which were made up of battalions drawn from all the Irish line regiments although a battalion of the Hampshire Regiment was added later.

The early story of 6/Leinsters is similar to that of most other new army battalions, a typically British mixture of improvisation, occasional farce, comic elements and enthusiasm that somehow comes right in the end. The battalion came into existence on the 14th August 1914 when Major J Caske DSO, at the time commanding the Birr depot, was ordered to Dublin to take charge of the embryonic unit. Early members of the battalion were a mixture of new volunteers and those who had served in the regiment previously and now wanted to rejoin. The officers were drawn from men on home service, the militia battalions, the retired, university OTC's and in some cases Indian Army officers on leave. In early September the battalion moved to Fermoy where it was strengthened by 600 men from Bristol, who were probably looking forward to service in one of the county regiments local to that city. This was swiftly followed by moves to the Curragh and in late October 1914 to Birr. Early 1915 saw the battalion back at the Curragh for brigade training before it made its final move in

late April to Hackwood Park near Basingstoke where the 10th Division assembled as a unit for the first time.

Up to this point the assumption was that the 10th Division was training to go to Europe to fight the Germans, however events in the eastern Mediterranean where the earlier attempt to storm the Gallipoli peninsula, in order to open the way for the capture of Constantinople and to take Turkey out of the war, had stalled. In an effort to break the deadlock it was resolved to carry out a further landing on the Gallipoli coast at Suvla Bay about 12 miles north of the original landing site and a couple of miles further on than the landing made by the Anzacs at Sari Bair, now better known to history as Anzac Cove. The objective of the new landing was to get behind the Turkish defences and capture the Sari Bair ridge overlooking the Dardanelles. Three of the new Kitchener divisions were initially to be used for this operation, 10th (Irish), 11th (Northern) and 13th (Western) as the IX Corps under the command of Lieut-Gen The Hon Sir F W Stopford. The appointment of Stopford to this position is a good example of the problems faced by Britain in the early years of the Great War. He was a retired officer in questionable health who had, in his day, been a well-respected trainer of troops and peacetime general but who lacked field command experience. He was appointed simply because there was no alternative. Much of the ultimate failure of the Suvla bay landings can be traced to his lack of grip on events at critical moments.

6/Leinsters, now kitted out for the Mediterranean but not knowing in detail where they were bound, left Liverpool on the 9th July 1915 on board the Cunarder, *SS Mauretania*. For many of the young volunteers on board it must have seemed a fabulous adventure. They arrived in the anchorage of Murdos on the island of Lemnos on the 16th July and went into bivouacs on the island. However uncomfortable this may sound it was probably preferable to remaining on the ship for over two weeks, as happened to other units of the division who then had high levels of illness bedeviling the division for months.

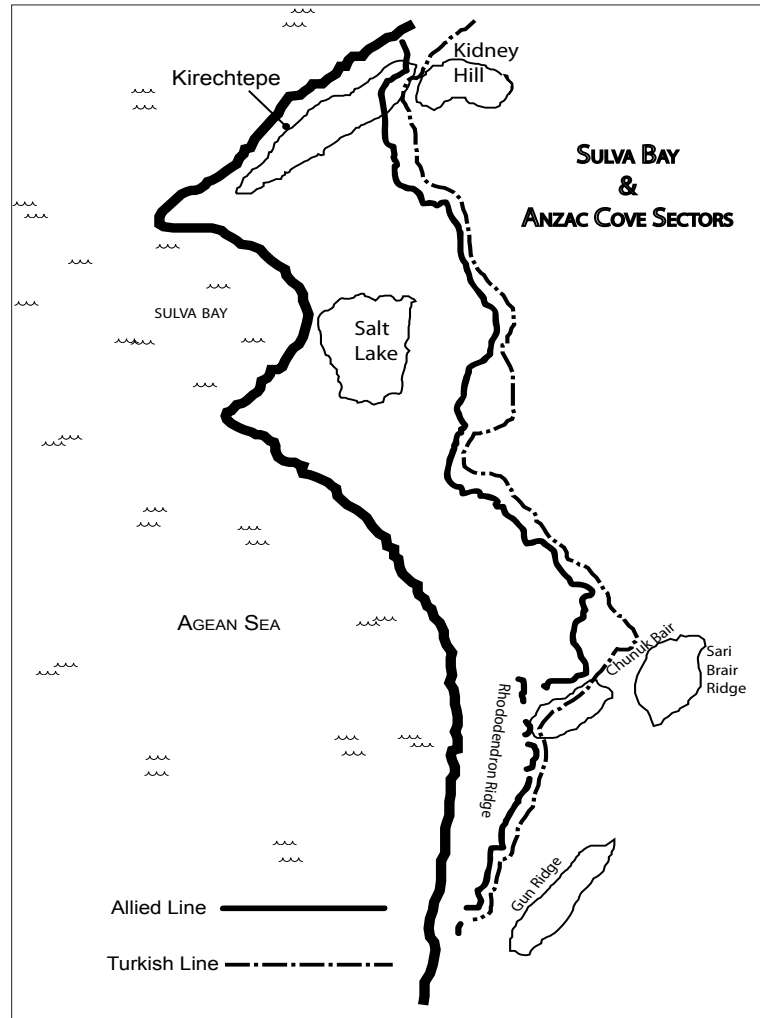
The plan for the landings called for 29 Brigade, including 6/Leinsters, to be sent to Anzac to reinforce the troops already there, so that fresh attempts could be made to break out of the narrow beach head. The remainder of the division was to land at Suvla in support of 11th Division and to drive inland seizing the high ground that dominated the peninsula. On the afternoon of the 5th August 1915 the 6/Leinsters and the other battalions of 29 Brigade, 5/Connaught Rangers, 6/Royal Irish Rifles and 10/Hampshires set sail from Lemnos; such were the concerns about security that the battalion and brigade commanders did not know precisely where they

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were bound. Troops with less than a years training and no combat experience were committed to a landing at night on an unknown shore with minimal control being exercised by senior commanders.

The battalion strength was 25 officers and 745 men. They disembarked at around 04.00 on the 6th August and went into crude dugouts burrowed into the side of gullies leading off the beach. The war diary records that two men of D Coy were wounded while still on board ship and that during the day they experienced "desultory shell fire and *unaimed* rifle fire" resulting in a further 7 wounded. The following day 6/ Leinsters were detached from their parent brigade and sent to support the Australian Light Horse at Quinn's and Courtney's Posts for what was their first experience of front line conditions. The following day they returned briefly to their dugouts before being ordered, on the 9th August, to Rhododendron Ridge in support of the New Zealand Infantry Brigade coming under shrapnel fire and sustaining significant casualties for the first time with 12 killed and 35 wounded.

At 06.00 the following day the Turks attacked in divisional strength overwhelming a battalion of the Loyal North Lancs' regiment and annihilated three companies of the Wiltshire in neighbouring positions to the Leinsters. A and D Coy's of 6/ Leinster stood their ground despite being in great peril. At the crucial moment a bayonet charge by the remaining companies of the battalion steadied the line and restored the situation driving the Turks back down the hill after a desperate hand to hand struggle. Casualties were heavy, exceeding 100, including the CO, Lt-Col Caske and Capt J C Parke, who were wounded. As the Turks streamed over the crest of the hill, formerly held by the North Lanc's and the Wilts, they were temporally stopped and beaten back by the machine guns of the New Zealand brigade and the fire of the Royal Navy ships offshore. A comparative lull ensued during which the Leinsters tried to dig further trenches to better defend their precarious position. Immediately working parties showed themselves they attracted shrapnel fire forcing the work to be abandoned until nightfall. Turkish snipers had also infiltrated the thick bush that covered the hill causing work to be repeatedly interrupted. The Leinsters were now desperately tired having had no opportunity to sleep properly for two days and having fought a fierce action earlier in the day. An attempt to send out a platoon to drive off the snipers led to further casualties



and proved that the Turks were closer to hand and in greater strength than had been thought. As the night wore on the Turkish attacks continued making further digging impossible; it was now a question of hanging on and survival. A and D Coy's, which had been in support, were brought into the line. Repeated charges out of the darkness by the enemy were stopped by the steady rifle fire of the Leinsters and their bravery in meeting the enemy hand to hand. As dawn began to break the Turks threw themselves at the Leinsters in one last desperate attempt to overrun these stubborn Irishmen, behind whom there was hardly another formed unit before the beach. The Leinsters, invoking the old principle of attack being the best method of defence, responded with a bayonet charge of their own; delivered with such spirit that it not only stopped the Turks but also drove them

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back. Such was the impetus of the Leinster charge that it almost ran out of control resulting in some of D Coy., including Capt. D'Arcy-Irvine and 2/Lt Wellington, being cut off and never heard of again. In all the battalion suffered about 180 casualties defending Rhododendron Ridge. *It is interesting to reflect that within the enduring mystique of the Anzacs at Gallipoli you have to dig deep to find mention of the part played by the Leinsters at Rhododendron Ridge or the Connaught Rangers and the other Irish battalions of 29 Brigade at Sari Bair on the same day.*

At 20.00hrs the battalion was relieved by the New Zealand Infantry Brigade and went into bivouacs further down the gully; however the following day they were back on fatigues digging trenches. On the 12th August three officers and 175 men, drawn from a cadre left at Murdos, joined the battalion to replace the casualties. A terse entry in the war diary also on the 12th August sums up the battalions situation; "Water very scarce, less than 1 pint per man, men exhausted".

The remainder of August was spent alternating between the front line and fatigues in what passed as the rear areas; in fact no part of Anzac was out of range of Turkish fire and, wherever they were, the men constantly lived with the risk of shell or snipers bullet. The War Diary records a daily steady stream of casualties, what would euphemistically be referred to as "trench wastage". In addition to the battle casualties there were increasing problems with health with frequent references to the number of men suffering from dysentery. The final entry in the diary for the 31st August simply says "Cresol has no affect on flies"[sic]. There is also some indications of morale beginning to suffer as evidenced by an entry on 18th August which records that three men from the reinforcements, that landed on the 12th, had been found on the beach and brought back to the lines. The diary goes on to say that 3078 Pte Quinn faced a Field General Court Martial. There is no record of the verdict, punishment or if any action was taken against the other two men. On the 25th August there is reference to an investigation into an "accident" in which 1220 Pte Catley shot himself in the left hand while cleaning his rifle, although the inquiry

concluded that it was an accident. The fact that it was recorded in some detail indicates that there must have been some sensitivity about such matters at the time. There is also an interesting insight into the difficulties of communication and organisation that occurred. On the 27th August a signal was received by the battalion from 29 Brigade HQ instructing the CO of 6/Leinsters, Lt-Col Craske, to take up command of 31 Brigade at Suvla Bay despite the fact that he had been wounded and evacuated to hospital 17 days previously!

Throughout September the battalion alternated between being in reserve and the front line. By now both sides had settled down to a sort of stalemate, neither being strong enough to overcome the other. Living conditions remained primitive in the extreme; food consisted mainly of bully beef which turned liquid in the heat, biscuits and jam, water was always in short supply with most of it having to be shipped in from Egypt and carried to the front line in petrol tins. Mail from home, particularly food parcels was eagerly awaited; the most welcome contents were tinned fruit together with sauces and curry powder to vary the taste of the bully. Disease, particularly dysentery and enteric fever, spread by the swarms of flies that flitted from the detritus of war to the food about to be eaten, flourished and took a steady toll on the strength both constitutional and numeric of all units. As if all these privations were not enough there was the ever-present danger of the snipers bullet or random shell. By the end of September the 10th (Irish) Division, which had sailed from home so full of pride and enthusiasm less than three months before was a shadow of its former self, many units had lost more than half their original complement of men and a greater proportion of officers. Perhaps one of the most galling aspects of the whole Gallipoli episode was that the Division never fought as a unit but was used piecemeal as reinforcements.

Finally on the 30th September 6/Leinsters and the rest of 10th (Irish) were withdrawn from the peninsula and returned to Murdos to recuperate and refit. This interlude was not to last long for by the middle of October they were on the move again, this time to Salonika and a new chapter of trials and triumphs.

Much of the background information for this article is taken from "The Tenth (Irish) Division in Gallipoli" by Bryan Cooper, Irish Academic Press. This source forms the basis of and is so acknowledged of the account of these events in the regimental history.

Day of Commemoration in Mayo

Michael Feeney

Chairman, Mayo Peace Park Committee

When Col Tim Collins O.B.E., led the Royal Irish Regiment into Al-Amarah, Iraq, they were brought to a commonwealth war cemetery that he later described as “entering a secret garden”. Stunned at what they found in pristine condition, a very well cared place thanks to the great care and unpaid work of a local man named Mosun Ali, who with his sons, had dedicated their lives to this work despite the danger of the Saddam years.

Col. Collins expressed surprise at the huge number of graves of soldiers from county Mayo, a rural county in the West of Ireland. Those men are just a small part of our forgotten war dead, a whole generation of men who sacrificed their lives for world peace in their time. My own grandfather was killed in France in 1915, he was but one of many men from our area who died, lost fathers, sons, and uncles rarely mentioned in Irish history. Now, years later in these more enlightened times, we in Ireland can equally recognise and commemorate all our war dead. For over twenty years I have been working to promote a better awareness and understanding of those brave men and their sacrifice for mankind. In 1999 we organised the first ever Remembrance Day Service in our county that was very well supported; people came out with medals and photo's of their loved ones, and this lit a torch that has burned brightly ever since.

On the 22nd of August 2002, I called a public meeting to organise a committee to develop a War Memorial, and now six years later this work is nearing completion, because on Tuesday the 7th of October 2008, the President of Ireland Mrs Mary McAleese will officially open our Mayo Peace Park Garden of Remembrance, this is situated in the centre of Castlebar the County Town of Mayo. The main memorial will have the names of over 1,048 Mayo men who died in W.W.1 inscribed upon it. The park will have memorials for W.W.2, The British Commonwealth, The U.S.A covering both World Wars, Korea and Vietnam, we will have memorials for Australia, Canada, the Connaught Rangers Regiment, the Irish Guards Regiment, Women in the War, and we especially remember the Mayo men who died with the Irish Army on United Nations

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Operations in the Lebanon, The Belgian Embassy in Ireland has also donated a special memorial in respect of all those from this area who fought and died in defence of their country. I have recorded the names of 17 brave Mayo born soldiers of the Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment who died in World War One; they will be inscribed on the memorial wall, with the rest of their comrades. I want to openly invite their regimental comrades, and surviving relatives to come and share this historic occasion with us.

We are extremely proud that the President of our country has honoured us, by agreeing to open our Memorial Garden, there is now a huge interest generated in our unique project and a large number of ambassadors, politicians, and top ranking military personnel will attend, we also have visitors travelling from many parts of the world to pay homage to their previously ignored loved ones. We would welcome anyone with an interest in honouring our long forgotten war dead to come and join us for what should be a memorable occasion.



The wording on my grandfather's grave reads, "Gone but not forgotten", sadly they were forgotten in our area, but after Tuesday the 7th of October 2008, this will no longer be the case.

If anyone wants to know more or to view our plans and project, they can do so by logging into our web-site

www.mayomemorialpeacepark.org

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A most distinguished Leinster by Ian Lowe

8 Ask most people to name a famous British soldier of the Second World War and the chances are that they would say "Montgomery," a few of the more knowledgeable might offer Alanbrooke or possibly Slim. It is very doubtful if any would mention Field Marshal Sir John Dill who did his regimental soldiering with the Leinsters. There are libraries full of autobiographies and biographies of the war time commanders from all sides but you will not find one devoted to Dill. Yet you will find him buried in that Valhalla of the American military, Arlington National Cemetery in Washington and commemorated there, uniquely for a non-US citizen, by a life-size bronze equestrian statue. Sir John Dill was Churchill's man in Washington from late 1941 until his premature death in 1944. During that time he and General Marshall shaped and made work the wartime alliance between the United Kingdom and the United States. Between the two men and their respective staffs they reconciled the often disparate objectives of the politicians and established the military dimension to the "special relationship" that endures to this day.

So who was John Greer Dill? He was born on Christmas Day 1881 in Lurgan, Co Antrim. His father was the local bank manager, and perhaps significantly for his later career, his mother was an American. When he was 12 his father died followed shortly after by his mother leaving John and his sister to be brought up by an uncle, the Rev. Joseph Burton. Educated at The Methodist College, Belfast and at Cheltenham College he entered Sandhurst where he was described as an "exemplary" cadet. He was commissioned into 1st Battalion of the Leinsters in 1901, just in time to see some action in the closing stages of the South African war.

John Dill rates no more than two brief mentions in the regimental history; on page 149 he is included in a list of new officers who joined the battalion at "Brindisi"; which is a township on the Caledon River in The Orange Free State. The war had entered its final and most controversial stage when the countryside was divided by lines of fortified blockhouses, held by troops who conducted periodic sweeps in pursuit of the highly mobile Boer commandos. To deny support and shelter to the Boers the women, children and the elderly of the scattered farmsteads were removed to camps. 1st Leinsters



Sir John Dill

were engaged in these operations between August 1901 and April 1902 before returning home to Fermoy Barracks. The second reference to Dill occurs on page 155 where we are told that in 1908 "Lieutenant J R Dill was appointed adjutant vice Captain R A H Orpen-Parmer"(1) at the relatively young age (by the standards of

the time) of 27. During this time the battalion was based at Blackdown, near Aldershot. The previous year Dill had married Ada Le Mottee the daughter of an officer in The Royal Irish Regiment.

The next significant event in Dill's career occurs in 1913 when he left his regiment to attend the Staff College at Camberley. Successfully passing through Staff College was an essential step in the career of an able and ambitious officer and opened the way to the senior ranks of the army. The Great War started shortly after Dill graduated and as there was a dire shortage of trained staff officers he never returned to the Leinsters or served in any other regiment. At the outbreak of war he was a staff captain at Eastern Command. John Dill was awarded the DSO for gallantry in 1915, was wounded and mentioned in dispatches no less than 8 times earning himself the sobriquet "Devil Dill"(2) His service record through the Great War is one of rapid promotion starting as Brigade Major, usually a captain's appointment, 25 Brigade, 8th Division in 1914 and ascending through divisional and corps staffs to end the war as a Brigadier General on the Operations Staff at GHQ. Sir Douglas Haig had noticed

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him as he writes in his diary on the 19th August 1918 about "Colonel Dill of GHQ" and sending him to General Byng with fresh instructions regarding the disposition of cavalry in the aftermath of the Battle of Amiens ⁽³⁾. John Dill was awarded CMG in 1918 thereby rounding off what in career terms had been a good war.

Dill's post war career was one of steady progression through the upper reaches of the army. Unlike many of his contemporaries he retained his final wartime rank through the inevitable manpower cuts that came with peace although he did not become a Major General until 1930. His post war career started as an instructor at the Staff College followed by operational commands, a period as an instructor at the Imperial Defence College, a senior staff appointment in India, Commandant of the Staff College, Director of Military Operations and Intelligence at the War Office amongst others. In 1936 he was appointed GOC Palestine and Transjordan. In 1937 he was appointed GOC Aldershot Command and it was during this period that we see the first apparent check occur in his career. He was interviewed for the position of Chief of the Imperial General Staff by Leslie Hore-Belisha (Secretary of State for War) but was passed over in favour of Lord Gort VC. Dill's consolation prize was the Aldershot command and with it the understanding that he would command the BEF in the event of war. Once again he was to be disappointed, Gort was appointed to lead the BEF being replaced as CIGS by Sir Edmond Ironside while Dill was given command of 1 Corps of the BEF. He was recalled to London in April 1940 to be Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Very soon after his arrival at the War Office Churchill became Prime Minister and Dill came into regular contact with this mercurial character that would shape the remainder of his life.

Hore-Belisha had resigned the previous January and Churchill replaced Ironside by Dill. Now, as the BEF was retreating towards Dunkirk, and on the cusp of one of the greatest crises that the nation had ever faced, Sir John Dill had arrived at the apogee of the career of a British soldier. Dill was involved with the last frantic efforts to keep the French in the war and impressed all with his grasp of the strategic situation. However, close and regular contact with Churchill produced strains in

the relationship. Dill was not inclined to push his views and when coupled with his gentlemanly nature this was interpreted as indecisiveness by the PM who nicknamed him "Dilly-Dally". In truth Dill, a man of regular habit and routine, was finding the PM hard going. He was unable to adapt to the rough and tumble ways of the

political world and like many others found Churchill's eccentric working methods difficult to come to terms with. Had he been better able to stand his ground and argue his corner as forcibly as Churchill did he might have stood more of a chance. By the autumn of 1941 Churchill had resolved to replace Dill with his friend and fellow Ulsterman Alanbrooke. Dill resigned as CIGS on the 18th November 1941, to take effect on the 25th December, his 60th birthday. Dill was promoted Field Marshal and appointed to the largely ceremonial role of Governor of Bombay. However before all these moves could be implemented fate took a hand in the form of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on the 7th

December 1941.

With America's entry into the war an early priority was a face-to-face meeting between Churchill and Roosevelt. At Alanbrooke's behest Churchill took Dill along as one of his advisors. Dill had previously met General Marshall the American Chief of Staff and the two men had formed a good working and personal relationship. Dill had also impressed other senior American officers with his straight forward, no nonsense manner and his ability to get things done. Churchill recognised the potential of all this and putting aside his reservations about Dill appointed him head of the British Joint Staff Mission in Washington, by the end of 1942 the British military mission in Washington numbered nearly 10,000 people. Dill acquired immense influence in Washington having direct access to both Churchill and Roosevelt as well



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as developing close relationships with key officials such as Harry Hopkins. John Dill was even able to help smooth the difficult passages in the relationship between General Marshall and President Roosevelt. There was some fear in official circles in Washington that there was a hidden agenda in Britain's war aims; these Dill was able to allay and it is interesting to speculate whether he could have influenced American attitudes towards the end of the war when they tended to side with the Russian view of the shape of the post war world.

Dill died in November 1944. Up to the beginning of 1944 he had enjoyed reasonable health, allowing for the strains of office to which he was subjected and confirmed by a detailed medical examination he received in May 1941. A view of Dill is that he was tired and past his best when he was appointed CIGS and this was caused by the early onset of his fatal illness. This does not square with the medical evidence as presented by Dr A Danchev of Keele University in his article "The strange case of Field Marshal Sir John Dill"⁽⁴⁾ In his article Dr Danchev points out that at this time the illness that Dill had tended to progress rapidly leading to death within six months or so of diagnoses. A more likely explanation for his apparent 'tiredness' seems to be a combination of his age, 59 when he became CIGS, the cumulative effects of a number of serious riding accidents plus the strain of his wife's chronic ill health leading to her death in 1940. He remarried in 1941 to Nancy Furlong, the widow of Brig. D W Furlong and a daughter of the Charrington brewing family. Lady Dill subsequently lived at Doneraile, Co Cork.

In death Sir John Dill was eulogised by official America. His funeral was held in Washington Cathedral and thousands of troops lined the route to Arlington National Cemetery with the US Joint Chiefs of Staff acting as honorary pallbearers. He was posthumously awarded the US Distinguished Service Medal and the message of condolence sent by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to their British counterparts included the following:

"We mourn with you the passing of a great and wise soldier and a great gentleman. His task in this war has been well done."⁽⁵⁾

John Greer Dill, the bank manager's son from Lurgan and late of the Leinster Regiment had done well for his country and for himself.

Sources.

Background information drawn from the essay on FM Sir J Dill by Richard Doherty in his book "Irish Generals" based on the BBC radio series "Generals"

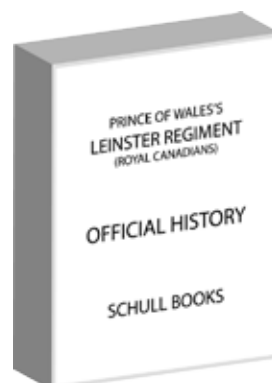
1. *The History of the Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians) Vol. 1.*
2. *Irish Generals, Richard Doherty.*
3. *Douglas Haig War Diaries & Letters 1914-18, Ed's. Sheffield & Bourne.*
4. *The Strange Case of Field Marshal Sir John Dill. Dr A Danchev. Journal of Medical History, The Wellcome Trust, July 1991.*
5. *Quoted by Richard Doherty in Irish Generals.*

Update

Members planning to visit Ypres this summer should note that the popular venue "TER POSTERIE" on Rijselestraat has closed. It is now a jewellers shop

Another popular "watering hole" and ramparts museum KLEIN RISJEL at Lille Gate on Rijselestraat has changed its opening times. Our man in Ypres, Bart D'Hulster informs us that it is now closed on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Three volume editions of the history may be purchased from Schull Books in Ireland.
Telephone
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schullbooks@eircome.net



Insignia, medals and badges: Guidance for formal meetings & occasions

Several of our members have requested clarification on wearing commemorative medals on formal occasions. This guidance is provided to members of the Leinster Regiment Association and applies to British servicemen and veterans of Her Majesty's Forces. Members who served or are serving in other countries may have rules that contradict this guidance, in which case the Association recognises there may be an alternative preference.



Members may be entitled to wear three classes of decoration when on parade with the Association.

- Decorations made by the Crown to a member whilst the member was serving on active duty.
- Commemorative medals sponsored by veteran groups or charities, where the member is entitled or qualifies to wear such a medal.
- Decorations originally made to a serviceman (now deceased) and worn as a tribute by the "next of kin" or descendent. These are referred to as Tribute Medals.

When wearing medals, the priority is given to those awarded to the member by the Crown. Such medals are worn by the bearer on the LEFT chest. When a UK serving member is wearing their official uniform the Ministry of Defence directive is that only these medals may be worn.

Veteran members, who by definition are no longer serving in H.M. Forces and therefore not in uniform, may also wear on the LEFT chest commemorative medals, when they qualify to do so. These commemorative medals must be worn on the line below any medals awarded by the Crown.

Any member of the Association, not in uniform, may also wear "tribute medals" awarded to a deceased family member. These are typically (but not exclusively), WW1 or WW2 medals. Tribute medals should be worn by Association members on the RIGHT breast.

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The Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment Association is providing this information as guidance. The Association supports the view that there should always be an element allowed for personal preference when wearing insignia and representing the Association. When 'on parade' Association members, being descendents or extended family of Leinster Regiment soldiers, are encouraged to wear the insignia of the Leinster Regiment by way of a Blazer Badge on either a green or black blazer, together with the Association tie. The Association also encourages members to wear a Green Caubeen with the

Leinster Regiment headdress badge and a green hackle fixed behind the badge. The position of the headdress badge and the manner of the wearing of the caubeen is again a matter of personal preference. By way of guidance, many veterans will prefer to wear the caubeen such that the headdress badge is positioned over the left eye, as it is with the standard issue "beret" headdress. Historical photographs of Leinster soldiers also showed that the Leinster Caubeen was worn with the headdress badge midway between the left eye and left ear.



Many members wear lapel badges of their parent regiment, the official Veterans Badge or other service associations. The wearing of other regimental badges and insignia is a matter of personal preference and is encouraged by the Leinster Association.

We are grateful to AWARD, Medallists to the Royal British Legion for the advice concerning the wearing of medals.

LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Drums Beating and Colours Flying!

Don Dickson

The "Freedom of the City" is the greatest tribute of respect that is in the power of any municipality to offer any person or organisation and proposals are underway to confer this honour, by the Burgemeester and Eldermen of Ledegem (West Flanders, Belgium) upon the Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians). It was on the 14th October 1918 during the initial phase of the Battle of Courtrai, the 2nd battalion Leinster Regiment, as part of 29th Division (II Corps), liberated Ledegem a town then heavily defended by the German Forces.

One would perhaps have expected to read such an announcement in The Times following the end of the Great War when the officers and men of the 2nd battalion of the Regiment would have been pleased to see their contribution toward the liberation of Ledegem on the 14th October 1918 recognised in such away. Sadly the opportunity for such an honour was never to be because the Regiment was disbanded on the 12th June 1922 as part of the Reduction in Establishment recommended by the Geddes Committee.

After the Great War whilst Belgium, and Ledegem in particular, was in the process of reconstruction, the Leinster Regiment, along with all the other Southern Irish regiments, was disbanded and the connection between Ledegem and the Leinster Regiment was, in both the UK and Ireland, consigned to a brief mention in history. Not so however for the community of Ledegem that never forgot its gratitude to the Regiment from Ireland. In recent years descendants of the original inhabitants have re-established links with the descendants of those Leinster soldiers through the Regiment's Association.

Now 90 years later, on October 12th 2008 the people of Ledegem will ask the Regimental Association to accept, on behalf of the Regiment, the Freedom of the City and to march into

Ledegem "with drums beating, colours flying and bayonets fixed" in a commemoration ceremony that will coincide with the ninetieth anniversary of the liberation of the town during 1918.

The Burgemeester of Ledegem, Bart Dochy, in a letter to the Association wrote *"We would like to thank and honour all those young men who lost their lives in Ledegem ... we want to give this award as a sign of deep respect and in gratitude to the courage and strong engagement from the Leinsters"*.

The municipality of Ledegem (9,379 inhabitants, January 2007) in West Flanders, is located east of Ypres, west of Kortrijk, south of Roeselare and just 5 km north of Menin & the border with France. Today Ledegem also includes the nearby communities of Rollegem-Kapelle and Sint-Eloois-Winkel. From 1914 the town was occupied by the German Army for four years during in which time they established Ledegem as a major supply depot and hospital town. Whilst under occupation 14 citizens of Ledegem are reported to have been executed by the occupying forces for aiding the allies, their sacrifices are recorded on the church wall memorial.

In the closing stages of the war Ledegem lay directly in the path of the advancing II Corps making its capture and liberation critical to the continued advance of the British II Army. This was no 'cake walk' and the fighting that ensued was tough. Three Victoria Cross medals were awarded for action in the liberation of Ledegem, two being won by soldiers of the 2nd Leinsters, Sergeant John O'Neil (*born at Airdrie in Scotland to parents who came from Northern Ireland*) and Private Martin Moffatt (*born in Sligo on the west coast of Ireland*). A third soldier, Private Thomas Ricketts (*born in White Bay, Newfoundland*) of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment was only 17 years of age when he was awarded the Victoria Cross

during the same action. Of the 1,126 allied soldiers that were killed in action in the fighting that raged around Ledegem, over 300 were from

Irish Regiments. These soldiers now lay in the three Commonwealth War Grave Cemeteries in the area,



The President of the Leinster Regiment Association, Major General, The O'Morchoe, will accept the award on behalf of the Regiment in a special day of commemoration "*Remembrance Ledegem*" that will take place on Sunday 12 October 2008. All members of the Leinster Regiment Association are encouraged to attend the commemoration and the Association have

incorporated the coach and hotel accommodation within the annual IMOS event (see IMOS article on page 3)



A team of Ledegem & Leinster Regiment Association members have been working since early this year building the day's programme of formal parade and informal celebration events that will last until early evening. A distinctive *Remembrance Ledegem* insignia depicting the coat of arms of Ledegem with the maple leaf of the Leinsters, was developed by the Association for use on all material in connection with the day's events. Invitations to the award ceremony have been sent to the various Belgian governmental departments and the respective ambassadors for Britain and Ireland.

Taking part during the day's activities are a band from the Belgian Army, Ledegem's Band "Koninklijke harmonie Sint Cecilia" and the Trommelkorps [Drums Corps], The Emerald Society Pipes & Drums, courtesy of Pipe Major Dominic Murphy, will accompany the parade of Leinster Association members, the Belgian Defence Force unit "kwartier Lemahieu uit, Ypres", the Koninklijke muziekkapel Belgisch leger, [cadet forces], Belgian veterans and representatives of the local Fire Brigade will take part in the parade. In addition to the award to the Leinsters, the ceremony will include the unveiling of a new monument commemorating all who took part in the action of 14 October 1918. Details of how to book a place that includes all travel and tickets or how to go about arranging independent travel have been included with this edition of 40/10. More information, including the full programme and detail of how to book admission to the separate lunch and afternoon concert is available on the Associations website www.leinster-regiment-association.org.uk.

LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Your letters



Whilst the Association is not normally in the business of active research for non members, occasionally we are able to assist in a worthy cause that involves a Leinster soldier. [Ed.]

Dear Sir,

I am Vice Chairman and Secretary of the Friends of the Somme Association, South Antrim Branch and I was wondering if you could help me with some research that I'm doing into Lt. G P N Young MC of 2nd Battalion, The Leinster Regiment who died on the 25th July 1915. About a year ago a friend lent me an old school jotter that contained newspaper cuttings from the Ballymena Observer newspaper dated 1914 and 1915 including references to Lieut G P N Young. I have started to research this man with a view to producing a booklet about him in time for the anniversary of his death. There are two specific things that are puzzling me. Lieut Young's initials are variously shown as G.P.G and G.P.N., do you know which one is correct? The second is why his award of the Military Cross is not shown on his Medal Index Card. I would also very much like to locate a photograph of Lieut Young. Can you help me answer these questions and provide me with information concerning the activities of 2/Leinsters during 1915? Thank you for your time. *Allistair Kitson.*

Dear Allistair, fortunately in this case we can give you a reasonable amount of information from published sources and point you in the direction of other material including photographs. Lieut Young is mentioned twice in the regimental history; on page 34 he is described as showing great gallantry in attending and rescuing the wounded of his platoon on the 23rd September 1914 during the Battle of the Aisne. This is the action for which he was awarded the MC.

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

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

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

On the 14th May 1915 there is an entry relating to Lt. George Neville Patrick Young. This gives brief biographical details, it tells us who his father was, his date of birth, home address, where he went to school and that he had been awarded the MC. A small photograph accompanies it. Unfortunately the facsimile copy that I have would not reproduce well. Copies of the original publication are available in the National Library of Ireland in Dublin, and may be available in Belfast. There is also a photograph available on a pay to download basis at www.ww1photos.com, it may be the same one as referred to above.

On the question of his names we can only say that the regimental history calls him "N G", Hitchcock uses G N G and "Our Heroes" refers to G N P. The only way to resolve the matter would be to look at his birth certificate or his file in The National Archives which will probably be in Class No. WO 339 or possibly WO374.

It would be quite usual for the MC not to be shown on the Medal Index Card. These Cards are only supposed to be a record of campaign medals, gallantry medals are not usually shown. There should be a separate citation for the MC in the relevant register which is in Class No. WO 389.

Copies of the war diaries of all battalions of the Leinsters together with copies of related books are now available to researchers at the library in Birr, Co Offaly. We hope the above is of assistance to you and we wish you well with your project. **I.L.**



Proudly wearing his Leinster caubeen and army uniform, eight year old Jack Dickson, 3 times grandson of Captain John Dickson of 2/Leinsters & Green Howards, places a poppy cross at the National Memorial Arboretum.

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Patrick Kane was one of the forgotten

An example of one way the Association works to fulfil our objectives.

LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Last November the Association was approached by Belfast Telegraph journalist CHRIS THORNTON to assist in the research of an article to commemorate the anniversary of the death of a Leinster Soldier in the closing stages of WW1 in 1918. It became apparent in our research that Private Kane's death was what we now call a "blue on blue" tragedy and we had some concern about conveying this information to his great nephew. In the event Chris reported back to us with the following update. *"The family were very grateful to learn about the circumstances of Private Kane's death. They did not know that it was a 'friendly fire' incident, and had been under the impression that he had suffered for several days before his death. They were gratified, if that's the right word, to learn that his death had been relatively quick".* The story was published on November 16 2007 and is reprinted here with the permission of the editor of the Belfast Telegraph.

The reconciliation within the Island of Ireland now permits a new examinations of forgotten events and, with the help of the Leinster Regiment Association, Chris Thornton is able to examine the story of one Catholic soldier who fought in World War I.

A Co Down man who enlisted in the British Army at the outbreak of World War I, he survived some of the worst battles of modern warfare, only to die at the hands of comrades two days before the war ended.

Then, apart from the lasting grief of his mother and immediate family, the tides of history closed over him and only now are they beginning to part. After decades in which the sacrifices of Catholic soldiers were ignored across Ireland, some families are beginning to recover their history - discovering items like Patrick Kane's notebook, which bears the lyrics to his favourite songs and a hole where a bullet finally pierced his heart.

The story of the Ulster Division, which fought with distinction at the Somme, has long been celebrated by Protestants. But the end of the "Troubles" is allowing greater examination of forgotten Irish units, like the 6th battalion of the Connaught Rangers, made up of hundreds of Catholic men from Northern Ireland.

Private Patrick Kane was among them. Enlisting shortly after the war broke out, he was shipped to France in December 1915 - an apparently confident 22-year-old, carrying a silver-tipped swagger stick with the crest of the Rangers - the harp and crown - and his initials carved into it.

Just over a month after arriving in France, he was in the trenches. Before 1916 closed, he had survived the carnage

of the Somme, only to fight in other hellholes like Passchendaele, where soldiers drowned in mud and mustard gas was unleashed for the first time.

He also came through the battle that virtually wiped out the 6th Connaughts, when they suffered more than 50% casualties during the final German offensive at the Somme in March 1918.

The unit's survivors, including Private Kane, were transferred into the Leinster Regiment. The 6th Connaught was never reformed.

Eight months later, pursuing the retreating Germans through northern France, 25-year-old Private Kane was returning from a night patrol near Le Quesnoy.

A sentry, Private Penrose, had not been told of the patrol and fired a machine gun burst at them when they returned. Patrick Kane and another soldier, Private Bousfield, were killed. Two other men were wounded. The war ended two days later.

The Leinsters' commanding officer, Colonel Frederick Ernest Whitton, said later that the two privates were the battalion's "last and saddest casualties of the war".

Nearly 90 years on, Private Kane's family are now rebuilding a picture of the life lost to them. His great nephew, Simon Artherton, said their interest was awakened with the rediscovery of a letter sent to the family in 1970, informing them that Patrick Kane's grave had been moved from a small churchyard because of development in the area. *[Private Kane was reinterred at Cement House Cemetery, Langemark, Flanders. Ed.]*

"We knew we had a great uncle killed in the war, but it wasn't talked about that much," he said. "It was only relatively recently that we talked about it and my uncle got out the letter about his grave. The letter was the start of it all."

Family effects were scoured and photographs of Patrick were turned up, along with the swagger stick he carried and - perhaps most movingly - the notebook and prayer book he carried, apparently ripped by one of the bullets that killed him.

The notebook includes French phrases, details of his pay from the end of 1917 until shortly before he was killed, and the lyrics of some songs.

One of the songs is an Irving Berlin number, called *When I Leave The World Behind*. Patrick Kane

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Private Kane was one of the forgotten
continued from prior page

copied it out, including the chorus:

*I'll leave the night time to the dreamers,
I'll leave the songbirds to the blind,
I'll leave the moon above to those in love,
When I leave the world behind.*

In his prayer book, called A Simple Prayer Book for Soldiers, he wrote inside the cover: "Let me not forget Thursday 15th Aug 1918

at the little chapel in Calias (sic) feast of B.V.M."

"You're just left wondering what happened to him there on August 15," said Simon. "I guess we'll never know."

The discoveries continue - only this week the family learned that Patrick had been killed by friendly fire.

Simon said that learning more about Patrick has had a "big time" impact on the family. "I named my wee boy after him," he said.

Several relatives also went to visit the grave.

"We couldn't believe when we found it," he said. "It was quite emotional, considering we were the first to go to it.

"It was a wild sad place just to look at - everything was flattened by all the bombing that went on. Even after this time you can see that."

Story by Chris Thornton

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The Quartermasters Store

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Advertisement

Visiting Ypres this summer?

No visit to Belgium is complete without experiencing the sensation of Belgian chocolate and no visit to Ypres is complete without stopping off and saying hello to Carl Vandaele, master chocolate maker whose family have run their shop since 1891 and were one of the first to rebuild in 1921. You can find Carl and his delicious assortment of chocolates in his shop in the Market Square. Just look for the old TEA ROOM sign that dates back to his family's original 1921 shop.



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Leinster Regiment Association
members are especially welcome!

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Where to find out more?

Visit the Associations website at
www.leinster-regiment-association.org.uk



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