



# The 40/10

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*Burgemeester of Ledegem Mart Dochy (right) presents the Leinster Regiment Association Chairman with a commemorative plate in recognition of the special bond between the Belgian Community and the Regiment.*



Photo by Nick Soen August 2007

Just as we were about to go to print came the news of the passing of Jim MacLeod, someone who was very special to many of us. His Obituary is on page 14. There is also a tribute to Jim published on the Association's website.

It has been an amazingly busy period since the last edition, especially so since there were so many special events hosted in Belgium to commemorate the Battle of Passchendaele. Like many people I was able to spend time this year in Flanders and had the opportunity to make many new friends. I even managed to "bump into" Ian Lowe, our historian, whilst we were both exploring parts of the Somme in France!

Thank you to those folks who have sent in congratulatory messages following the last edition. Secretary Dave Ball tells me he is being asked when Part 2 of the Gozo story is to be published? Well unfortunately not in this edition because we have managed to fill 40/10 with other superb content. It is however earmarked for the next edition!

This edition contains a rich variety of material to support the regular features. I am particularly pleased to be able to include an article from Nick Soen, Chairman of the History Society in the Flanders village of Ledegem. Nick writes with infectious enthusiasm in his description of why the community of Ledegem likes the Leinsters.

Association historian and co-editor Ian Lowe provides another fine article about the 7/Leinsters at Messines on page 4 whilst our President writes a personal letter to all

## 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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members on page 15.

In time for Christmas & New Year on page 7 you will find details of the Association's "wares" so maybe now is the time to purchase that new Tie or Key fob - check out the amazingly competitive prices!

Lastly a reminder that for members with Internet access you can download a free copy of the Leinster Association Christmas Card. Save it to a CD ROM and take it to your local printer. Do it now, it will soon be time for the last Christmas mailing.

Enjoy the edition!

Don Dickson, November 2007  
Editor

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

# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

## News from Birr

**T**he year in Birr started on a sad note with the news of the death of **Marjorie Joyce-Kelly** at the advanced age of 92. Marjorie, the daughter of Sergeant-Major Robert Nixon of the Leinsters, was born in Crinkle Barracks in April 1915. The early years of her childhood were spent living in the barracks and she is thought to have been the last surviving former resident. Marjorie lived all her long life in the village and was a rich source of local stories and knowledge with particular reference to the barracks. Some years ago, on the occasion of the re-dedication of the military cemetery in Crinkle, the Association presented her with a Leinster cap badge as a memento and as a mark of our respect. Clearly a lady of many talents, she published two books of reminiscences; "Crinkle all my days" and "Echoes of Birr". Marjorie leaves three daughters, her youngest sister and their respective families to whom we extend our sympathy. The Association arranged for a poppy wreath to be provided for her funeral.

### Library and Memorial projects.

Progress continues to be made on both these projects albeit at a slower pace than we would like. Dublin based member Noel Cullen kindly went to Birr earlier in the year and together with Sean Cooke met the owner of the gate, which we hoped to use as the basis of the memorial. Following discussions with the owner and subsequent contacts with Offaly County Council it became apparent that the memorial as originally conceived would be beyond the scope of an organisation of our size and resources. Early in July Maj-Gen The O'Morchoe, Sean Cooke and your correspondent met with the Heritage Officer for Offaly County Council and an alternative scheme was devised. This proposal takes the form of a free standing pillar, to be located on the grass verge to the left of the gate, with an inscription dedicating it to the memory of all those who served in the regiment throughout its history. This would compliment the information board recently

erected on the right of the gate by the local Tidy Villages Committee which gives a brief history of the barracks. The owner of the verge appears willing to provide the ground and at the time of writing we are awaiting quotes.

### Resource Centre

The Leinster Regiment resource centre in the library is now open with each book in the collection labelled "Leinster Regiment Collection". Framed portraits of the Regiments V.C. Winners, presented to the Association by member Mr Jack Keeley, are also now lodged with the collection. A special catalogue in the form of a booklet has been produced. The formal launch of the collection took place on the 14th September when Maj-Gen The O'Morchoe represented the Association and Sean Cooke gave a talk on the history of the Regiment. The proposal for a schools essay competition to be sponsored by the Association has been warmly received because it fits with the inclusion of the Great War in the revised Leaving Certificate syllabus. It is hoped to launch this competition during the 2008/9 school year.

There is now a real sense of progress in Birr even if it does not always happen as quickly as we would like. Our thanks and appreciation goes to our members in Ireland and the UK who have been driving this project forward, all made possible by the enthusiastic support of the staff of Offaly County Council. Watch this space for further developments! **IL**

## Events Calendar

### 2007

Nov 11 Remembrance Day Parade Horse Guards \*

Dec 8 Christmas lunch, Civil Service Club

### 2008

Mar 16-18 St. Patrick's Parade Ieper, Belgium

Apr 19 AGM and London Meeting

Jun 14 & 15 CIR Association Lunch & Parade \*\*

July 12 Dublin Meeting

Sep 27 London Meeting

Oct 10-12 IMOS Sphinx Ieper, Belgium \*\*

Oct 12-13 Operation Ledegem, Belgium

Nov 9th Remembrance Day Parade \*

Dec TBA Christmas Lunch

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

\*\* Meeting organised by Combined Irish Regiments Association

## Secretary's Report

Welcome again to the Regimental Journal, hasn't time flown.

I hope you all enjoyed the first edition, a little piece of history in the making I think, and I hope you will agree. I was proud to be a member of our association, what with all the messages of congratulations and best wishes that were sent by not only yourselves, the members, but also from the many associations and organisations that had received copies. This I feel sent out a message that the Leinsters were indeed back and that the regiment was no longer stuck in the pages of history.

It has been an eventful year so far, sadly Vincent McGough our Chairman had decided to step down after moving to Spain with his wife Anne and his two boisterous, but lovable cats (God help Spain). As I said in the last issue Vincent was a pillar of support to me and indeed the association by pushing to get us up and on to our own two ammo boots. I'm sure you will all wish him all the very best in his new life in Spain, though he has promised to keep in touch, I have recently spoken to him and he sends you all his best regards.

The big vacuum that was left after Vincent's departure was I'm pleased to say, filled by Mr Don Dickson, Don has been very much involved with the Leinster Regiment through his family history website and became the Association's webmaster in 2006. On behalf of the members I'd like to welcome Don to the position of Chairman and I'm sure that we will all give him 100% support.

In Belgium, links have been established with the village of Ledegem; the 2nd Leinsters and other elements of the 29th Division liberated the village in October 1918. It was in the village and the immediate area that Sgt John O'Neill and Pte Martin Moffat won their Victoria Crosses. On a recent visit to the village the Chairman presented the "Regimental History" and a copy of "Stand To" on behalf of the association to the village. Discussions between the community of Ledegem and the Association are under way to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the liberation of the village..

In Birr, plans for the arch have changed due to circumstances beyond the association's control, but the Committee have a plan B and it is working on the project as we go to press, so all is not lost, there will be a permanent memorial to the regiment in Birr / Crinkle

ON PARADE WITH  
THE  
LEINSTER ASSOCIATION



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and details will be given soon. On the Library front, well, what can I say; our team in Ireland have shown true Leinster gusto and helped provide the newly refurbished Library at Birr with The Leinster Regiment Collection. This collection is unique in the fact that it houses copies of the complete files of the Leinster Regiment that are held at the National Archive at Kew along with publications related to the regiment. This I believe is the first for any disbanded southern Irish regiment. The Birr Library Collection was launched Friday 14 September, and included a lecture given by Mr Sean Cooke, Depot representative of the association, with a display of artefacts owned by Comdt Mick McGoona. General David The O'Morchoe also attended, along with members of the association. I would like to thank Ian Lowe, General David and all the Committee members in Ireland, for their efforts and assistance given to Birr Library.

I was once told that the Leinster Regiment Association was pushing at an open door in Ireland, well, I think we have not only pushed at the door, but we have pushed that door well and truly wide open, I'm sure that with your continued support we will now march on.

Quis Separabit  
David Ball

### Your letters



Dear Editor,

Are you aware that there is a photo of Crinkle Barracks in the National Library, Dublin.? The title is "The Barracks, Birr, Kings Co. 3234 WL" The reference number is R3234.

Dennis Bill

Tel: 00 353 2837317

**SCHULL  
BOOKS**

County Cork, Ireland



# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

## 7th Leinsters at Messines IAN LOWE

*Two battalions of the Leinsters saw action during the Flanders campaigns of 1917, the 2nd and the 7th. Of the two the 7th Battalion as part of the 47th Infantry Brigade of 16th (Irish) Division had the most prominent role. This account will concentrate on the 7th Battalion which took part in the successful assault of Wyschaete on the 7th June, part of the Battle of Messines*

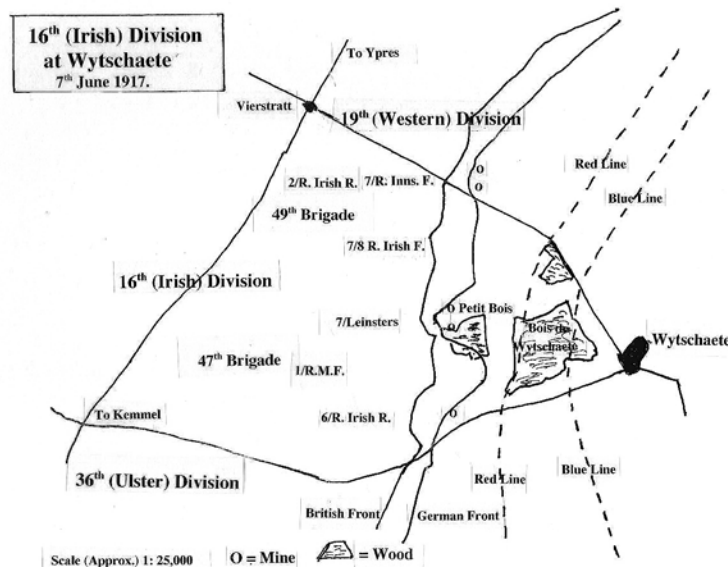
*Messines is an excellent example of a carefully thought out and planned battle and was typical of the methodical approach of General Plumer. Pictures show Herbert Plumer as a plump jolly looking man with a walrus moustache. He was one of the most respected generals of the time being trusted both by his men as well as his military and political superiors. Lloyd George touted him as a successor to Haig and he is one of the few generals that the vitriolic Welshman had anything kind to say about. It is interesting to remember that the young Bernard Montgomery served as a staff captain at one of Plumer's Corp's HQ's during the planning of the battle.*

### Background.

The 7/Leinsters had moved from the Somme to the Flanders front with the rest of 16th (Irish) Division the previous September as part of General Plumer's Second Army in IX Corps. The months preceding the action had been spent in the routine of trench warfare, periods spent in the frontline alternating with being in reserve, training or so called rest – in reality carrying supplies forward, digging trenches or similar labouring tasks. The Leinsters were then assigned to a sector near Vierstatt roughly half way between Ypres and Kemmel and facing the village of Wyschaete.

The tactical objective of the attack was to gain the high ground of the Wytschaete/Messines ridge, part of the shallow semi-circle of low hills around Ypres. This was to be the first phase in a series of attacks to be launched against the system of ridges occupied by the Germans since 1914 that had provided them with excellent observation on most allied activity around the Ypres salient.

One of the most notable features of the Messines plan was the placing of 23 large mines under the German lines; these were designed to be exploded at zero hour and to obliterate various German strong points. It was a prodigious feat of engineering employing similar techniques to those used to build the London underground railways. The two mines in front of the 7th Leinsters were under the German front line on the edge of a wood known as Petit Bois. Work had started in late 1915 with the entrance at Vandamme farm (near the battalion HQ of the Leinsters); there was a single gallery 1600ft long which branched into a shallow Y leading to the two chambers with each packed with about 30,000lbs of explosive. In June 1916 the Germans, suspecting that something was up, exploded a camouflet mine causing extensive damage to the gallery and entombing 12 miners. After 6 days of frantic rescue efforts one man, Sapper Bedson was rescued alive. An experienced miner he had lain still and waited to be rescued while his comrades had succumbed one by one expending their vital energy and oxygen in a futile attempt to dig through 250ft of collapsed tunnel. A further feature of this tunnel was the unsuccessful attempt to use a tunnelling machine, after a huge effort this experiment failed and the machine was abandoned underground where it still lies<sup>(1)</sup>. The mines when detonated each produced a "diameter of complete obliteration" of around 400 ft. The craters were about 200ft in diameter and 50 feet deep<sup>(2)</sup>. They appear as two ponds on modern OS maps.



On the evening of the 4th June a dinner was held at Locre Hospice. This is sometimes referred to as a 16th Division dinner<sup>(3)</sup>. However the Leinsters war diary clearly states that it was a

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battalion event during which the Commanding Officer proposed, "the health of the 16th Irish Division coupled with the name of Major W. Redmond,"<sup>(4)</sup> who replied in an "eloquent and touching speech". A typed list of the guests is included in the diary headed by Lieut Col G A M Buckley DSO, OC 7th Leinsters and the 45 other officers and guests who included in addition to Maj. W. Redmond MP, Maj. F. H. Jourdain of the Connaughts and a number of mysterious characters such as, "Spud Always 7th Leinster Regiment", "J M Roche Vagrant, a CO to-morrow probably or 2/Lieut" and not forgetting "Mack of the 'orses, 7th Leinsters"<sup>(4)</sup>. These entries appear near the bottom of the list and give you the impression of a convivial evening. The diary goes on to say that the speech delivered by Major Redmond was probably his last as he was killed at Wytschaete on the 7th June.

In fact he was wounded and died at Loivre Hospice where he had dined a few evenings before. The fact that William Redmond's death is mentioned in a diary entry three days in advance of the actual event shows that these entries are not always contemporaneous accounts and may have been written up some time after the events being described.

During the battle the accompanying artillery bombardment was carefully planned and drew on the experience gained particularly at the Somme and Arras. There were two main elements to it, a creeping barrage, mainly provided by the 18 lb field artillery batteries falling just in front of the advancing infantry, while the heavier guns concentrated on interdicting the German artillery positions and command, control and communication infrastructure in the rear areas. It was decided to delay the bombardment until the mines were detonated to maximise their destructive and shock effect by denying the Germans the opportunity to withdraw troops from the front line in order to use them in later counter attacks. Two dress rehearsals of the bombardment had been carried out on the 3rd and 5th of June, a total of 3 1/2 million artillery shells were fired between 26th May and 6th June on the Second Army front.<sup>(2)</sup>

The 7th Leinsters took their place in the forward trenches on the 5th June facing Petis Bois and the village of Wytschaete. 16th (Irish) Div was in the centre of the IX Corps attack with 19th Div to the left and 36th (Ulster) on the right. The emotional significance of the two

Irish Divisions drawn from opposing traditions attacking the common enemy side by side cannot be overlooked, many on both sides hoped that the links forged in the heat of battle would help form a consensus upon which it would be possible to build a new Ireland after the war. 47 Brigade took the right of the 16th Div line with the Leinsters being flanked by the 7/8th Royal Irish Fusiliers and 6th Royal Irish Regiment. The Leinsters attack was led by A and B Coy's with C and D following in



*The middle tree line locates the craters that exploded in front to the Leinsters*

the second wave. The various objectives for the attack were colour coded Red, Blue, Green and Black, with the final target of capturing the German positions known as the "Oosttaverne Line". The second phase depended on momentum being maintained to capture the German artillery positions behind the Messines/Wytschaete ridge.

Zero hour was set for 3.10am on the 7th June. Reading accounts of the mayhem that erupted at this time you sense the various writers' difficulty in finding words to describe what happened. The war diary merely says: "At zero 3.10 am the mines went up causing [illegible] confusion, owing to the dense fog and fumes which drifted towards our lines and consequently made it impossible to see more than a few yards".<sup>(4)</sup> The usually sober Regimental history speaks of the nightingales singing in Rossignol Wood as dawn broke and then "hell was let loose, and the greatest earthquake ever felt in Northern Europe, accompanied by the mightiest crash of sound ever heard by mortal man, broke on the still summer morn"<sup>(5)</sup> A German observer, quoted in the Official History, speaks of "nineteen gigantic roses with carmine petals or as enormous mushrooms which rose up slowly and majestically out of the ground". Whatever the hyperbole used the effect was spectacular, immediate and devastating to the Germans. It also caused confusion amongst the attacking troops who were blinded by smoke and falling debris, disorientated by the explosions and in some cases sickened by the fumes. To add to the din the massed British artillery had opened fire

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and their German counterparts had begun to reply. However, somehow order emerged out of chaos, the result of careful planning and training, every man regardless of rank knew his task. In some places direction could only be kept by reference to compass bearings until visibility improved. As they advanced the Leinsters came under machine gun fire from the ruins of Wytschaete. Remarkably, given what had happened, the leading companies reached their objective Red line, about 700 yards from their starting positions on time at Zero + 20 minutes where they paused to reorganise and C and D companies passed through to secure the next objective, the Blue line, a further 400 yards on near the outskirts of Wytschaete village on time at Zero + 100 minutes despite stiffening opposition. This was to be the limit of the Leinsters advance that day. At this point 1/Royal Munster Fusiliers passed through the Leinsters to a "rousing cheer" and according to the war diary "*their formation was splendidly kept*" to carry the attack on through the village and in turn reaching their objective on time, 3 hours 40 minutes after zero.

## Counting the cost

In addition to securing their objectives the Battalion took 60 prisoners, killed 80 to 100 of the enemy and captured 4 machine guns, 2 trench mortars, 1 dynamo and an assortment of ordnance and other equipment.<sup>(5)</sup> However tragedy had struck at Battalion H.Q. when shortly after Zero hour a German shell landed at the entrance to the H.Q. where the CO, adjutant and seven others who were watching the explosion of the mines were either killed outright or severely wounded. The commanding officer, Lt-Col. T. R. A. Stannus DSO, later died of his wounds; he was the father of the famous ballerina, Dame Ninette de Valois. Another victim was Captain J. P. Roche MC, the battalion trench mortar officer, a native of Cahirciveen, light-heartedly described on the guest list for the dinner a few days before as a "vagrant".

In the context of the Great War the casualties suffered during the Battle of Messines were remarkably light.

The Leinsters casualties, including those at Battalion HQ, are given as 115, of whom about

20 died. Between the 7th and 12th June all allied casualties amounted to 24,500 killed, wounded or missing of whom half were from the ANZAC Corps<sup>(2)</sup>.

The following day the Battalion was withdrawn to divisional reserve and on the 9th June moved to Tralee Lines to reorganise and refit. Towards the end of June a number of divisions including 16th (Irish) were moved from II Army to V Army commanded by Gen Sir Hubert Gough as part of the preparations for the renewed offensive. On the 18th July Maj-Gen Hickie, OC 16th (Irish) Div, visited the Battalion and presented awards relating to the Battle of Messines. On this occasion one DCM and 12 MM's were presented together with 33 "Parchments", a certificate issued by 16th (Irish) Div and signed by the OC to commend valuable service.<sup>(4)</sup>

The Battle of Messines tends to be overlooked due to its proximity to the larger and grimmer struggle that was 3rd Ypres. The success of the battle was the result of meticulous planning and preparation coupled with the quality of the soldiers and their leaders and their ability to rise above the nerve shattering experiences of the initial attack. The role played by 7th Leinsters is best summed up by the Regimental history, "*Of these the 7th Leinsters were among the first and nobly did they perform their allotted task*". ■

## Sources.

- (1) Tunnellers. The story of the Tunnelling Companies, Royal Engineers, during the Great War. Grant-Grieve & Newman.
- (2) Official History of the War. Military Operations France & Belgium 1917 Vol.2.
- (3) Ireland's Unknown Soldiers. Denham.
- (4) War Diary 7th Battalion, The Leinster Regiment. TNA WO95/1970.
- (5) History of the Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians) Vol.2

## Notice

A founder member of the reformed Association Sheila Dorothy Malkin, born 6 June 1934 died unexpectedly on the 26 October 2007. A former member of the London Metropolitan Police and retired Social Worker, Sheila was a staunch supporter of the Association. She will be sadly missed.



## National Day of Commemoration, Dublin

The association was once again pleased to be invited to send representatives to the ceremonies marking the National Day of Commemoration, which was held on Sunday 8th July at the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham. The commemoration is held, *"In honour of all those Irishmen and Irishwomen who died in past wars or on service with the United Nations"*.

The significance of the date is that it is the nearest Sunday to the anniversary of the signing of the Anglo-Irish treaty in 1921. It is a formal sate occasion that the



*Some of the association's members who attended the ceremonies at Kilmainham.*

*L to R. David Ball, Noel Cullen (Dublin) John Hollingsworth (Dublin) Sean & Concepta Cooke (Birr) John Goodman (Dublin)*

President and the Taoiseach attend with members of the government, the diplomatic cops and other dignitaries. After multi-denominational prayers the President lays a wreath on behalf of the people of Ireland followed by the observance of a minute's silence together with the sounding of the Last Post and Reveille.

The Leinsters were well represented by members from both Ireland and the UK who joined other associations concerned with remembering the disbanded Irish Regiments together with British and Irish ex-service organizations including the Royal British Legion for the ceremony. As the event is held out of doors there is always some uncertainty concerning the weather which this year was cool and breezy, unlike a previous year when members of the presidential guard of honour fainted in the heat. Afterwards, there was a very enjoyable reception, which gave the opportunity to renew old acquaintances and

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to make some new ones. The Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, dating from 1680, was formerly the equivalent of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea and is now used as an art gallery, museum and as a venue for government functions. The displays include a permanent exhibition relating to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

### The Quartermasters Store

Item	Price
Blazer badge	£10
Caubeen (Cap) Badge	£ 5
Association Tie	£8
Key Fob	£5

To purchase any of these items send your order together with a sterling cheque for the correct amount made out to the Leinster Regiment Association, to  
Eddie Bryant (Leinster QM)  
24 Maxwell Road  
Fulham  
London SW6 2HR



Enjoying "The Black Stuff" at the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham.  
L to R. Barney Rooney, John Hollingsworth, David Ball and John Goodman.

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## The liberation of Ledegem *NICK SOEN\**

### Background

On 27 September 1918 an offensive by the British 2nd Army and the Belgians under the command of King Albert started from Ieper. The 2nd Leinsters as part of the 29th Division advanced eastward along the Menin Road. In the confusion of battle and appalling weather the allied troops succeeded to break through the Salient and rapidly advance in the direction of Kortrijk and Roeselare/Tielt. Such was the speed of advance within the following three days that maintaining the supply line to the front became a problem. By the 30th September the village of Gheluvelt had fallen to the 4th Worcesters' but the forward momentum slowed on 1st October on the Menen-Roeselare line as the advancing troops were exhausted and the German army was by then putting up a stiff resistance. The fast moving offensive had produced a very satisfactory outcome with an advance in excess of sixteen kilometres. Such was the shock to the German Army that Hindenberg was recognising the need to pursue peace negotiations. However the allied command was in a buoyant mood following their successful advance and was not receptive to the approach made to the U.S. President. The decision was taken to resume the attack in the morning of 14 October. The spearhead of the final advance was to be my hometown of Ledegem! (Editor Note; throughout the war the allied forces knew the village as Ledeghem]

### Monday 30 September 1918

Picture the scene, the rain continues to fall and a cold wind blows. There is little shelter and the soldiers shiver and look pale. Little progress is now being achieved. From Hill 41 at "Kezelberg" the Germans conceal themselves along the area between the Heulebeek and the Leie. With their automatic weapons they harass the allied troops that march toward Dadizele. The inhabitants of two nearby villages, Gullegem and Wevelgem, get

the command to leave their municipalities.

### Tuesday 1 October 1918

At 06.15 the 9th Division resumes the attack. The 27th Lowland Brigade moves forward toward Ledegem; whilst the Black Watch of 26th Brigade moves on Rollegem-Kapelle. The 15th Prussian Infantry Regiment carries out a counter-attack and repels with hand grenades the troops of the 27th Brigade from Ledegem. On the Menen-Roeselare road the 11th Royal Scots attack and succeed in capturing and holding the rail station on the



In addition to capturing the Station, the Royal Scots also capture a bunker built alongside a farmhouse to hide it from allied artillery

outskirts of Ledegem. The citizens of Ledegem leave their homes, the empty village remains in German hands.

The attack halts and along the whole front it becomes quiet. This signals the end of the first phase of offensive. After a progress of 16 kilometres from Ieper the front on the line Roeselare, Handzame, Ledegem, Geluwe, Wervik is quiet but the liberation of Ledegem has taken its first victims. Now eight soldiers of the Royal Scots lie in the Ledegem New Military Cemetery. The offensive now remains quiet up to 14 October. There are small clashes between the different troops and the occasional exchange of fire between artillery. Mainly the time is used to provision ammunition and to relieve the weary allies and replace with rested troops. On the 13th October the 2nd Battalion of the Leinster Regiment, as part of the British IIInd Corps moved into the assembly positions for the assault on Ledegem.

### Monday 14 October

The 2/Leinsters are to lead the assault with the 4th Worcesters' in support and the 2nd Hampshires' in reserve. The night is restless. At 04.30 the soldiers are in the highest state of anticipation and ready to go. The landscape lies under a fog with a light south west breeze. At 5.32 the ground erupts with



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artillery fire that together with the fog reduces visibility to a few meters. The rolling fire moves forward at a rate of 50 meters per minute for the 500 meters for one hour fifty-five minutes followed by a pause for seventeen minutes whilst the village is to be captured. With the dense fog and the smoke grenades it becomes dark and the visibility is reduced to less than 3 meters. The allied officers must orient themselves by compass bearing, the visual signalling demanded by the Operational Orders issued on 13th October is difficult to achieve. In some sections the soldiers keep in touch with each other but



The same bunker today (2007) still hidden alongside the farmhouse

others become lost. For the Germans the situation is just as terrible. The first defence bunkers and reinforced farms have no visibility of the attack and the machine guns shoot aimlessly. Suddenly 2/Leinster soldiers appear as if from the ground and fall upon the defenders with bayonet despatching all in their path. At other places machine gun emplacements remain unnoticed and harass the allies afterwards in the back. The allied plan of attack has no intention of halting for whatever reason and slow but sure the Leinster and Worcestershire regiments advance. The first line defence bunkers are shortly eliminated, and the dense barbed wires formed a further light obstacle. From the vicinity of the previously captured railway station 400 mortar grenades are fired into the village in support of the assault. One house in German hands continued to deliver deadly fire into the advancing troops and was charged by Private Martin Moffat of the 2/Leinsters. Using bombs and bayonet Private Moffat despatched two of the enemy and captured thirty prisoners, an act of valour for which he received the Victoria Cross. The 2/Leinsters advanced further into the village capturing the principle buildings and defences but a large number of German soldiers took shelter in the cellars of houses and

refused to give themselves up. Altogether the total number of Germans captured by the 2/Leinsters was 263.

By 07.00 Ledegem had been liberated and at 11.00 hrs the 2nd Hampshires' passed through the village with the 4th Worcesters' in support. As the Leinster Regiment were withdrawn to Overheule the Lancashire Fusiliers of the 86th Brigade now moved into our village capturing a further 150 prisoners and many machine guns whilst clearing out the cellars.

With the allies now firmly in control of the village and no further risk to the houses from artillery fire the citizens of Ledegem start slowly to return; after four years of occupation our municipality had been liberated!

Eleven of the 4th Worcestershire soldiers were killed during the liberation of Ledegem and have been buried on our Ledeghem Military Cemetery on the Kempkens. Those from the Leinster Regiment that were killed in action or subsequently died from wounds were not buried in Ledegem but in several cemeteries in the surrounding area.

Although not directly involved in the assault on Ledegem, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers were engaged



*Kruisstraat (Ledegem) in 1918. These houses are now rebuilt and are family homes once more*

to the east of the village. Fifteen of their men were killed in the surroundings of our municipality and are buried in our Ledeghem Military Cemetery.

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The Lancashire Fusiliers continued to clear out Ledegem of the German occupiers after the first attack by the Leinsters. House to house fighting in small pockets continued and four Lancashire Fusiliers soldiers are buried in Ledegem.

The tale of Sergeant Patrick Hackett and Ledegem

Sergeant Patrick Hackett, 2 Bn Leinster Regiment, who took part in the 4th battle for Ieper was born in 1890 in Dublin and married in Dublin to Margaret McCabe on 5th January 1913. With his comrades he approached Dadizele on the 11 October 1918. There they joined the other troops which since 1 October were already preparing for the assault on Ledegem.

On 13 October Patrick Hackett along with the rest of his company, took part in the first attack and as far as can be ascertained his role was to be in charge of the transport for C company. He and his men supplied the Regiment with ammunition, water, food and other supplies. Very probably on route in convoy between Saint Pieter and Moorslede they were found by German artillery or bombed from a plane. Badly wounded he was taken to Duhallow Dressing station, an advanced first aid post between Ieper and Boezinge. Sergeant Hackett received medical aid and care but on 18

October he died from his injuries. He was 28 years of age. In April 2007, his granddaughter Margaret McGuire together with her two sisters made a personal tribute visit to see the area where her grandfather became a victim of the Great War and it was our privilege to introduce them to Ledegem and escort them as they made their tribute visit.

## Victoria Cross Awards

Awarded for the highest courage and valour in direct action with the enemy the Victoria Cross is only rarely given to a member of the British and Commonwealth Forces. During the liberation of Ledegem no less than three soldiers won the Victoria Cross; Private Thomas Ricketts, (from the Royal Newfoundland Regiment), Sergeant John O'Neill MM and Private Martin Moffat of the 2 Bn Leinster

Regiment, This immediately underlines the strategic importance of our municipality. The attack on Ledegem was the spearhead of the 2nd phase of the end offensive that started in the early morning of 14 October 1918. The Leinster regiment played a central role. After WW1 and over the following 90 years this action was unfortunately forgotten from the collective memory of our municipality but thanks to the work of the Ledegem History Society the gallant actions of the Leinster Regiment are now remembered within the community. 2008 will be the 90th anniversary of the suffering and liberation... possibly a unique occasion for our community to commemorate.

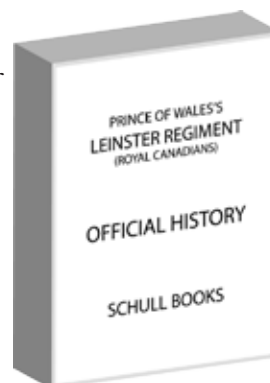
★ Nick Soen is Chairman of the Ledegem History Society.



*The granddaughters of Sgt Hackett on their tribute visit. From the left Anne Jarvis, Mary Sanders and Pauline Dettmer*

*The Association has presented a copy of the Official History of the Regiment to the community of Ledegem in Belgium.*

Three volume editions of the history may be purchased from Schull Books in Ireland.  
Telephone 00 353 28 37317  
email  
schullbooks@eircome.net





# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

## St. Patrick's Day Annual visit to Ieper (Ypres) 2008

Members of the Association will depart by coach from London on SUNDAY 16 March and return to London by coach on TUESDAY the 18 March 2008.

Accommodation for two nights with Buffet Breakfast will be in a three star hotel in Ieper.

This is a great opportunity to combine taking part in a prestigious ceremony that has been in existence since 1928 with socialising with other Leinster members. The bond between British and Irish forces with Ypres and Flanders is special. There is no other like it in the world. It is probably fair to say that practically every soldier who served on the western front will have spent some time in Ypres, so just being there is treading the steps of our forefathers.

### Itinerary.

On arrival in Ieper on the afternoon of SUNDAY 16 March, members will have free time to explore their surroundings although it will be possible to visit the Sunday evening Last Post Ceremony followed by an informal dinner in a local restaurant.



Grot Markt in Ieper

MONDAY 17 March there will be a coach trip in the morning to visit the WW1 German bunkers and trenches at Bayernwald and the 16th Irish Division Memorial and CWGC at Wytschaete, followed by Lunch at the Het Labyrint in Kemmel. After lunch the coach will return to Ieper allowing members free time to visit the historical attractions in Ieper. Members can be provided with a list of alternative attractions to see. At 7.30 pm those members wishing to take part in the Leinster Regimental Association parade are to assemble in Grot Markt outside the Flanders Fields Museum for the march to Menin Gate. Those members who prefer to make their own way to the Menin Gate may join the parade at the Menin Gate for the Last Post Ceremony. Members who wish to lay a tribute wreath during the ceremony should advise the



Het Labyrint in Kemmel

Association when making their booking. After the ceremony the Association members will return to Grot Markt and then make their way to the hotel for the Ieper Annual Leinster Regiment Association dinner.

TUESDAY 18 March the coach will depart for London after breakfast first stopping at Hooze Chateau to visit Hooze craters. There will be an opportunity to visit Hooze museum and/or the coffee shop.

Places on this trip are snapped up very quickly so you are advised to book your place as soon as possible. A reservation form was included with your copy of 40/10 You can download additional copies from the website or you can contact the Secretary on 07926 784397

## Ieper (Ypres) 2007

Memories of the March 2007 visit and parade are available on DVD.

If you went with the Leinsters on this trip and would like a copy of the DVD, please contact the Secretary for further information on how to go about getting a copy



# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

## More than "Trench Art".

Don Dickson

Trench art has been around for some time and from its earliest beginning copper shell cases have been transformed into decorated vases made from the scrap of war. Thousands of objects were manufactured after the war on a commercial basis and sold to tourists who came to visit the battlefields. Shell cases decorated with flowers can be found in the homes of many people who have visited Western Flanders. Now only a few specialists are engaged in the artisanal techniques of shaping, sculpture and the engraving of the copper shells. Belgian Rik Ryon is one of them and on the 24th September this year, during a reception hosted by the Belgian Ambassador in London to commemorate the events of Passchendaele in 1917, I got a chance to meet him.

Celebrated sculptor Rik Ryon uses, as his raw material, the scrap weaponry of war recovered from the battlefields of Flanders. Rik is an active member of the Association for Battlefield Archeology in Flanders that carries out the delicate work of excavations and inventories the findings that are still made on the WW1 battlefields in Flanders.

Over a conversation of some thirty minutes Rik explained to me how he uses the copper of different artillery shells to create his sculpture. Working with material recovered from the trenches Rik explained that the objects frequently unearthed, combined with the probable war situation that existed there gives him the inspiration of creating copper sculptures. By integrating the scrap of war into his creations Rik masterly rebuilds life sculptures of the war victims and their daily existence. Rik showed me how; by using the copper from shells that had not been fired with copper from shells that had been fired he was able to create different sculpted effects. Showing me the difference in the form of the copper in several

pieces Rik told me *"I am very conscious in my mind that a specific piece of material that I am working with may have killed or maimed many soldiers, whilst copper from other shells that I use did not explode and did not cause death. It is these feelings that I try to capture and use in my sculptures."*

There is no doubt that the pieces of art on display captured scenes filled with a succession of



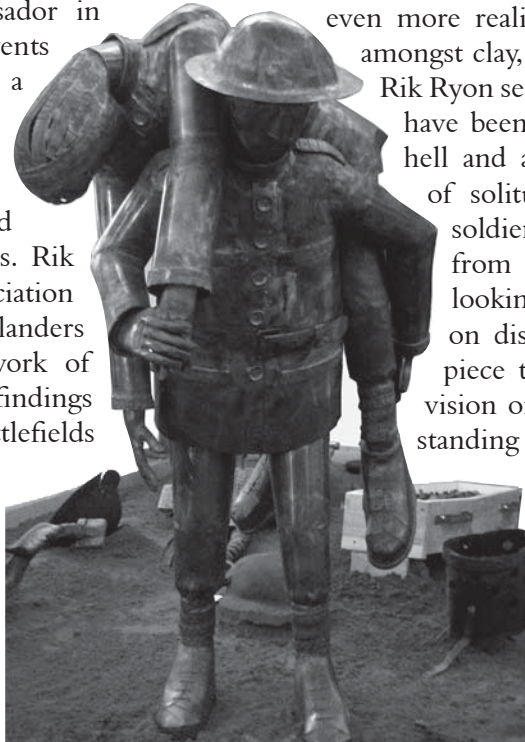
The late Major J M Macleod (left) in discussion with Rik Ryon

misfortunes and terrible human hardship but they also exhibit a touching simplicity in construction. Red copper shell cases seem to make the sculptures even more realistic, especially when set amongst clay, sand and wood. For me, Rik Ryon seems to capture what must have been sometimes the personal hell and at other times the peace of solitude experienced by the soldier at war, a soldier far away from home. Whilst we were looking at one of his sculptures on display at the exhibition, a piece that seemed to capture a vision of war and its horror, Rik standing alongside me said *"Don't look at the war scene, see the man; it's only a man"*.

I am glad that I had the opportunity to meet and talk with Rik Ryon and I now see more than the work of a skilful artisan. Rik's use of scrap WW1 artillery

shells is far more than the craft industry many of us know and

show in our homes. If you wish to see examples of Rik's work then it is often shown in Poperinge, a small town just west of Ieper. A sculpture by Rik Ryon was also purchased by Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum at the time of their exhibition "Art from War".



A sculpture made from copper shell cases

## A memorable weekend in Dublin

The annual meeting of the Association held in Dublin took place during the weekend of the 7/8th July and was part of what turned out to be a busy weekend. The meeting was held on Saturday morning at the Irish UN Veterans Association HQ at Arbour Hill where we were given a warm welcome. The formalities were kept to a minimum so that the maximum time was available to meet and talk to members who included a number of new recruits. In the absence of the Chairman who was unfortunately taken ill the day before, our President Maj-Gen The O'Morchoe presided. David Ball briefed the meeting on the current state of membership and the finances. As the Association now has two standards and given the increasing difficulty and cost of carrying such items to and fro, a discussion took place as to the practicalities of keeping one in Ireland for use on appropriate occasions. The meeting was also briefed on the progress being made in Birr relating to the library and memorial projects. After a buffet lunch we travelled the short distance to the Islandbridge War Memorial Gardens for the annual commemoration of the Irish dead of the Great War.

This event is organised by the Republic of Ireland section of the Royal British Legion and led by the Association's President Maj-Gen The O'Morchoe, and is a parade of standards, inter faith prayers, followed by the commemoration and a wreath laying. The Irish Defence Forces provided music, refreshment and other support services.

A large number of ex-service personnel and their families, the government and diplomatic corps and other facets of public life were well represented. It was particularly good to see ex-service organisations from Northern Ireland taking part at what is a memorial designed to represent the whole island of Ireland. Our Secretary David Ball laid a wreath on behalf of the Association. During the service two items stood out. The first was the laying of wreaths by the mothers of two servicemen killed in Iraq providing a reminder of the continuing sacrifices being made; this also focused our thoughts on Association member Corporal Ed Rooney (Irish Guards) currently serving in Basra. The second event was the address given by Father Columbanus, a Franciscan monk and veteran of D-Day. He spoke with the simple sincerity recounting the circumstances of the creation of the memorial gardens and the struggle for recognition that Irish ex-servicemen experienced after independence.

Our thanks is also due to Noel Cullen and the other members of Dublin Central branch RBL for organising the social evening, that followed. **IL**

## LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

### The Last Leinster

An article first published in Soldier Magazine in 1950 and reproduced with permission.

"How is the Leinster Regiment getting on these days?"

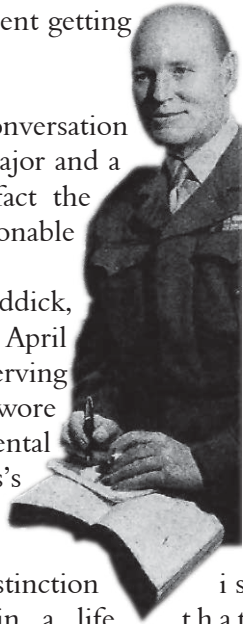
"I'm very well, thank you."

It sounded a silly sort of conversation to be going on between a major and a lieutenant-colonel, but in fact the answer was a perfectly reasonable one.

Lieut-Colonel Victor Haddick, MBE, who retired in April [1950] was the only man serving in the British Army who wore the badge and regimental title of the Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians), disbanded in 1922. How he came by that distinction is only one unusual story in a life that Colonel Haddick describes as "one mass of unusualities".

He joined the Leinsters in 1908. After being a lance-corporal for three years he was commissioned in the same regiment in 1914. He was wounded in France, and the authorities decided that he was due for a spell of light duty – so they sent him to land with the Australians at Gallipoli. Here he was wounded again and a really "cushy" station was found for him – the North West Frontier of India! While here he turned his energies into invention. In those days troop trains had to halt at meal-times and the meal was cooked at the side of the track. This had caused disaster during a heat-wave in the Sinai Peninsula when a number of freshly arrived troops died of heat stroke. Colonel Haddick invented a cooker which could turn out hot meals while the train was in motion. The Haddick cooker is still in use in the East.

In 1922 when the Colonel took a staff appointment in Ireland his regiment was disbanded. The officers and men were transferred to other regiments but not Colonel Haddick. It was not until 1923 that the War Office caught up with him. Then instead of being transferred he went into retirement, still in the Leinster Regiment.



# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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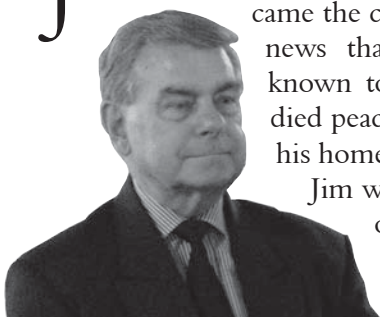
In 1924 he was a member of the expedition which made an ill-fated attempt to climb Mount Everest. In a final attack on the summit two of its members vanished upwards into the clouds which obscured the last thousand feet and were never seen again. On his way back to Britain Colonel Haddick toured the Indian States lecturing at the courts of the princes. By the time World War Two broke out, the Colonel's reputation as an explorer, lecturer and author was well established and he was asked to return to the Army as a speaker. Then the problem of his regiment arose again. Efforts were made to fit him into various regiments, but the Leinster Regiment was the only one he had ever been in and the War Office finally agreed that the Leinster Regiment it had to be. His regimental flashes were specially woven and his cap badge was treasured as though it were made of gold.

So for the last ten-years Colonel Haddick has helped to keep alive the memory of the regiment which ceased to exist 28 years ago. But the regiment does not die until the last man dies.

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## Obituary

Just as this issue of 40/10 was being "put to bed" came the completely unexpected news that **Major MacLeod**, known to us all as "Jim" had died peacefully, whilst asleep at his home, on the 21st October.



*Major J M MacLeod MBE  
3 Sept 1935 - 21 Oct 2007*

Jim was born in Stornoway, on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland, the second of his parent's sons.

A keen member of the Island's Army Cadet force Jim became their

cadet Sergeant Major before responding to the call of National Service in the Seaforth Highlanders. Whilst in Egypt and the canal zone the War Office Press Liaison of the day used a photograph of Jim in a local recruiting drive, a photograph that still hangs resplendent in the Regimental Headquarters

in Inverness. After his time in the army Jim became a member of the Glamorgan Constabulary with a lodging in Neath, and it was here that he met his future wife Betty, the daughter of his landlady. Betty worked in London so Jim transferred to the London Metropolitan Police, pursued his courtship and succeeded in his quest of marrying Betty.

Jim could not however keep away from the Army and his next move was to join the Territorials and found himself commissioned into the London Irish Rifles, certainly a challenge for a Scotsman. However he rose to the challenge, had his "fitting for the caubeen" and moved into the campus of the Duke of York's Barracks in Chelsea, where amongst his many responsibilities he renewed his roots as Captain MacLeod, OC of the cadet force. Nothing less than full involvement with his Territorial career eventually led to Jim becoming the President of the Pipes & Drums of the London Irish Rifles, a position that he held up to his untimely death. By then a "retired army officer" with a passion for the Irish Regiments Jim was immensely popular not only with the members of the band, but fellow members of the Combined Irish Regiments (OC) Association who voted him chairman of that Association some seven years ago. Now Jim found himself with the responsibility of coordinating the Annual June Parade of the Irish Regiments in Whitehall and the continued rise in the popularity of the event within fellow Irish Regiment Associations is a testament to his success as Chairman.

Jim MacLeod's membership number within the Leinster Association had but a single digit, number one; signifying his support and commitment to our own Association. His unhesitating support to David Ball and Vincent McGough during the reformation of the Leinster Association was a significant factor in persuading others to follow suit. It should come as no surprise therefore that upon my own nomination as Chairman, Jim MacLeod threw his weight behind the proposal. Unlike many members I did not know Jim MacLeod for many years, though in the few years I did know him I discovered a caring and supportive person with a passion to uphold the memory of the disbanded Irish Regiments. I suppose that is above all the reason why I warmed to him. There is no doubt that Jim's passing leaves a gap in our community of Irish Regimental Associations and I have no doubt that when we next march down Whitehall, the challenge of "Clear the Way!" will have a poignant meaning for us; there will be a spirit that marches with us, out there in front as always.

Jim is survived by his wife Betty, his son Gary and daughter Cath; his brothers James, Donnie and Hadie. Our wishes for fond memories go with them. **DD**



# Bringing back the memory.

A letter from the President of the Association

As President of the Association, I bring all our readers my warmest greetings. I wish you all well, in the hope that you get real satisfaction from being a member and will do all you can to further its aims.

Most of us who belong probably do so because we had relatives in the Regiment or are closely associated with it in some other way. I am no exception as my father and his two elder brothers joined the Leinsters from Trinity College Dublin Officers Training Corps during World War 1. The two elder brothers served in France and Belgium and my father in the middle east. Mercifully all survived the war.

I was immensely proud, therefore, to have been invited to become President of the newly formed Association and am committed to doing all I can to raise the profile of our now disbanded regiment so that those who live to day and had relatives in it, can learn about the fine regiment and those who made its reputation. This is what I call "bringing back the memory" of those we have heard little or nothing of since the formation of the Irish State.

All of us, including the President of Ireland and the Irish Government, are relieved and delighted that the political situation in Ireland today has been transformed to the extent that, amongst the many other benefits, we can talk openly about those Irish, and others, who served in the Leinsters.

We have made great strides since the Association was reformed and I want to pay tribute to all who have contributed to this progress. To our membership for joining and supporting the work that has been going on: to our office holders for their imagination and hard work which has enabled us to make the progress we have made: and to all others who have willingly given their time and effort to further the development of the Association.

Readers will know that those who live in Britain made the start, and we are privileged to have a significant membership there, including our first two Chairmen, Vincent McGough and Don Dickson, as well as our indefatigable Secretary, David Ball and our historian Ian Lowe, from that side of the Irish Sea. But it was obvious from the beginning that if the venture was going to be successful it should also have a caucus in Ireland.

Sean Cook, who lives coincidentally beside Crinkill Barracks in Birr, Co Offaly, the Depot of the Regiment, has been our catalyst there and steadily but surely he

## LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

has encouraged local interest from the Chairmen of the County and Town Councils down, that a Leinster Regiment presence in Birr would be of very significant local interest in the town and surround.

Two ideas developed. One was the restoration of a remaining entrance arch to the barracks as a memorial arch to all who served. And the other a corner of the newly converted library in Birr town dedicated to those who served in the Regiment. Unfortunately the memorial arch, for a number of understandable reasons, was found to be too ambitious and this idea has been shelved in favour of a memorial pillar, which it is intended should stand on a strip of grass, which has been gifted by its owner, adjacent to the barracks entrance. This will be a focus of remembrance of all who served in the Regiment. The detailed plan is being developed and necessary permission currently sought.

However the really great achievement has been obtaining the agreement and support of the Offaly County Librarian to the dedication of a corner of the new library as an information centre and database of the Leinster Regiment. With Ian Lowe's help the library has purchased from its own funding, microfiches of all the war diaries of the battalions



The new information board at Crinkle Barracks

Pictured from the left Maj-Gen The O'Morchoe, Sean Cooke, Martina Needham (Birr Library) & Anne Coughlan (County Librarian)

# LEINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

## Bringing back the memory

*continued from prior page*

of the Regiment from the UK Record Office. These can now be seen and researched by visitors. There is also a significant collection of history books, many written recently, about the contribution of the Irish and Irish Regiments in World War 1.



THE LEINSTER REGIMENT WINDOW

Commandant Mick McGoona, who has an invaluable collection of Leinster Regiment artefacts and lives nearby in Navan, has generously loaned some of these.

The highlight as far as the Association is concerned was the official opening of the collection in the library on Friday 14th September. The Chairmen of the County

### OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

President: Major.General The O'Morchoe CB CBE

Chairman: Don Dickson, MBA, FIHEEM, MCIM

Vice Chairman: Comdt Mick McGoona

Secretary: David Ball Esq.

Treasurer: Harry Hogan Esq.

Quartermaster: Eddie Bryant Esq.

and Town Councils, other dignitaries and interested individuals as well as myself attended this. It was opened by the County Librarian, Anne Coughlan. During the opening ceremony a visit was made to the adjacent church where there is a memorial stained glass window to the men of the Regiment at which prayers were said and the traditional exhortation given. On return to the library Sean Cook gave a lecture on the history of the Regiment. I want to close with a repeated thanks to all who have been involved in the very successful launch of the Association. We have progressed from ideas and aspirations to the state of other interested bodies displaying our history and encouraging the community to learn, absorb as well as pay respect to our former comrades. We have, I hope, "brought back their memory".

O'M

## Remembering the Leinsters.

The window shown in the photograph is located in the parish church in Birr, Co. Offaly. We are told that it was installed in the 1960's by the then rapidly dwindling band of veterans of the regiment, a number of whom lived in the area, and was unveiled by Field Marshal Earl Alexander of Tunis.

In addition to the biblical scenes depicted in the main panels the design includes the regimental badge at the top. The script at the bottom of the two main panels reads as follows: -

Left. "In memory of all ranks of the Prince of Wales Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians) whose depot was at Crinkle, Birr, 1881 - 1921."

Right. "Battle Honours on Colours. Niagara, Central India, South Africa, Aisne 1914, Ypres 1915-17-18, Somme 1916-18, Guillemont, Gallipoli 1915, Jerusalem"

## Where to find out more?

Visit the Associations website at  
[www.leinster-regiment-association.org.uk](http://www.leinster-regiment-association.org.uk)

### SEND CORRESPONDENCE AND ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION TO

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