



THE NEW RANGER

Price €4 – free to CRA members.



THE IRISH MEMORIAL TOWER, MESSINES, BELGIUM

Editorial.

Welcome to our fourth edition of the New Ranger. Again we would like to thank all the members of the Association whose membership fees and kind donations have kept the Connaught Rangers Association up and running. 2006 was another busy year for the Association with the setting up of our website and another organised tour to the battlefields. In addition four members of the Committee returned to France in September to attend the 90th anniversary celebrations of the liberation of Guillemont and Ginchy.

In May we again visited Co Galway where our Galway based Chairman Joe Loughnane organised a seminar in the historic town of Ballinasloe. Again the event was very well attended by the townsfolk of Ballinasloe, a town who lost so many young men in the Great War. In addition to all this frantic activity the Association has also made strong links with R-Past a cross community Project based in Belfast which is engaged in educating young people from both communities in their shared common history. The story of the Connaught Rangers in the First World War forms an integral part of this worthwhile project. Many thanks to the organiser of the project, Frank Higgins who has been of great assistance and given great support to the CRA Committee in the last year. More information on this Project and the Associations involvement can be found on our website www.connaughttrangersassoc.com which has a web link to R-Past. and we would invite all members to take a look and we welcome suggestions.

Articles in this edition of the New Ranger are :-

Learning from the Past, Building for the Future- William Beirne.

Sir Luke O Connor VC - Danny Tiernan.

Fete at Rockingham -Jack Fallon.

The Lavelle Brothers- Kathleen Villers-Tuthill

The Fabulous Pleasure Grounds; a Poem- Jack Fallon.

Journey's End; Guardsman Michael Blood – William Beirne & Oliver Fallon.

In Loving Memory of a comrade, George Sheahan - Oliver Fallon

Any other articles, stories or material would be most welcome for inclusion in future issues of the New Ranger. We would urge members to contribute and actively seek out stories, memorials or other issues relating to the history of the Connaught Rangers, the Great War or general aspects of Irish military history that we can include in future issues. At this stage we must apologise to those people who contributed articles or asked for items to be included who we were not able to accommodate at this stage. All submissions have been kept on file and will be included at a future date. We are constrained by space, time and finance but will do our best to include these items in future issues. In relation to this issue I am sure you will find many interesting and worthwhile articles and I would like to thank all contributors, especially Kathleen Villers-Tuthill, an accomplished and published writer, who has written many books on local Connemara history and who kindly contributed a very personal piece on her late father.

In relation to membership our renewal date for 2007 subscriptions is January 1st 2007. At our well attended AGM in November it was decided to keep membership fees at €15; £15 sterling; \$20; our lifetime membership remains at €150. We would ask people to send in their renewal subscriptions as soon as possible as the Association can only function and publish journals like this with your assistance. To those who have already paid up, many thanks. We would like to thank once again our hardworking and dedicated Committee who give up valuable time and money to attending meetings and keeping us on the road.

NB We would like to remind readers that the articles included in this Journal remain the copyright of the authors. Therefore the use of any or part of the pieces included in this Journal in any other publication or journal is not permitted without the permission of writers who can be contacted through the Association address. QUIS SEPARABIT.

Oliver Fallon, CRA Secretary and Researcher.

LEARNING FROM THE PAST BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Do cum gloire De agus onora na hEireann (to the glory of God and the honour of Ireland), the Gaelic inscription on the 16th Irish Division memorial at Wytschaete cemetery. (Pronounced Whitesheet by soldiers during the Great War).

Remembering the sacrifice of the 16th Irish Division and the 36th Ulster Division standing shoulder to shoulder at Messines Ridge, 7 June 1917, and it's relevance for all Irish people today.

On the 7th June 2007 at 3.10 am it will be the Ninetieth anniversary of the Battles of Messines Ridge and Wytschaete, which took place during the Great War of 1914-18. Most of us associate the old black and white archive footage of a giant underground mine of thousands of pounds of Ammonal, exploding and throwing tons of earth into the sky with the Great War. But it is impossible for us to visualise the horror and fear at that time, especially when not one mine but nineteen mines were detonated. One can only guess at the amount of lives which were vaporised in an instant, or thrown in all forms of contortions of human debris over the earth. This offensive of the Great War more than any other, I believe, has a special significance for us today in 'modern' Ireland whatever our beliefs are.

Standing together in that indescribable scene from Hell, waiting for the shrill whistle blasts from young baby faced officers that would send men over the top into the sights of the enemy guns were men from all over the Island of Ireland. Protestant, Catholic, Unionist, Nationalist whatever their beliefs and standing in their communities at home. They now stood together to face the whirlwind of the gathering storm of bullets and shells, their reasons were many but Peace, Freedom and support for one another were paramount. They died in great numbers throughout all the battlefields of the Great War. The eyewitness accounts of courageous charges by the Irish to save the line, or carry an enemy position are well documented and numerous. The Regimental war diaries of all the disbanded Irish Regiments record their great triumphs and also their terrible losses. Medals and memorials, flags and bands, pipes and drums, widows and orphans, the forgotten and the not forgotten, the 16th Irish and the 36th Ulsters, all things common place to military service.

So why when I was growing up whether at school or at home (coming from a military background and being a soldier now myself) was I not told about how Irishmen from the North and South of Ireland stood in the mud of France and Flanders and bled together for the same beliefs. I was taught however many other parts of Irish history, but not it all. Selective, I think is the word I am looking for. I firmly believe that their sacrifice needs to be looked at more carefully and respectfully by people from Southern Ireland today. If we are to truly go forward as an affluent modern society we must also come to terms with past military service whatever flag Irishmen marched under. The true strength of a society is to learn from history, but not live in it. The peace process that is ongoing in our country today, I believe, finally understands that phrase.

I am thankful that on two occasions I have been able to travel with the Connaught Rangers Association to France and Flanders to visit relative's graves. But especially to Messines Ridge and the Peace Park, built by Irish people for all Irish people who suffered death and wound, or the poor souls who were never found and have no known grave. It is a very reflective and sombre place to sit, to view the old battlefield and to contemplate the significance today of a sacrifice made long ago for peace. By opening our eyes today and again being able to stand up and be counted we can look forward to an all-encompassing future.

On my last visit to France and Flanders we met with a group of people from the North of Ireland at the Peace Park. We started talking and made introductions. We naturally talked about the War and the lost generations of men from all over Ireland. One chap commented on the fact that we were the fourth group

from Southern Ireland that they had run into in as many days. (Scotty was on, I think, he said his 15th visit). How times are changing, he said, there was a time you would never meet someone from the South out here, he said. We held a combined remembrance ceremony that day to remember fallen countrymen. Scotty took a group photograph, there were twenty cameras thrown at him; we were all posing for quite a while. I was proud to be a member of the C.R.A. that day, to be setting things right by remembering and to have it acknowledged by other Irish people who have always remembered their dead of the Great War with the greatest of respect and dignity. We all met up again two days later down on the Somme and it was handshakes all round. After awhile we went our separate ways, safe journey home and see you again sometime.



CROSS COMMUNITY GROUP FROM BELFAST

Another memorable group from the North of Ireland we met was a cross community group from Belfast, young teenagers wearing their Rangers and Celtic jerseys being ushered around by their leaders, full of youthful energy and curiosity. When they saw our green flag with the harp they asked, “Who are yee?” “Where are you from?”. “The West of Ireland, Boyle, Co. Roscommon, Ballymena, Newtownabbey, all over Ireland really” was our reply. We gave a quick history lesson on the Connaught Rangers in the Great War. Both groups then took part in a minutes silence for the dead. We had met under the Arch of the Thiepval memorial, the largest memorial to the missing on the Somme. The obligatory group photo was again taken. The kids all wanted to be photographed with our flag, another great memory, another bridge built.

So what is the relevance today for us on the Island of Ireland of this 90 year old battle? For me it is one story that has survived that I have read about many times in books and brought up in conversations. It means to me that ultimately the human spirit will find a way to co-exist against all the odds.

Without getting into the complexities of military terminology and movements, the 16th Irish Division and the 36th Ulster Division found themselves side by side for the big offensive. Major William (Willie) Redmond a Nationalist M.P. for West Clare serving with the 6th Royal Irish part of the 16th Irish Div, at the age of fifty-six, too old to be on active service, found himself looking across No Mans Land. He had begged Major General Hickie, OC, 16TH Irish Division to be with his troops for the big push, reluctantly Hickie agreed.



MAJOR WILLIAM REDMOND at the age of 54. (Feb. 1915)

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As the attack commenced the two Divisions went forward together. Unfortunately two mines in their line of advance were late in going off and the Irish suffered casualties immediately after going over the top. The village of Wytchaete was one of their many objectives that day. German defensives proved stubborn and the Irish suffered many more casualties. One of them was Willie Redmond. He received a minor wound to the arm, not wanting to be seen receiving attention from a medic he continued forward. He then was wounded in the leg and was unable to stand. As the assault was in full swing momentum had to be maintained so his own men carried him to a place of cover. It is believed to have been a dirt track dividing the line between the 36th and the 16th Divisions.

After a while a stretcher party from the 36th Division came upon this Nationalist M.P. lying on the ground. His insignia would have shown them which Division and Unit he was with. Pte. Meeke and his comrades could have easily ignored this casualty, no one would have noticed in all the confusion of battle. Politically and religiously they were complete opposites, but never the less they picked Willie up and carried him to their dressing station. Unfortunately, because of his age his wounds got the better of him, he knew that he was going to die and during conversation he asked that the 36th Ulster Division bury him. Full honours were tendered at his graveside and an ornate cross, paid for by collection from the men of the 36th Division, placed on his grave. While the men of the three other Provinces of Ireland observed the Last Post, the volley of shots and reveille, an elder statesman was laid to rest in a foreign field, hoping that his death and burial, I believe, in some small way may bring the people of Ireland closer together.



Ireland changed utterly during the Great War, political upheaval, a change by the people in their feelings towards the war. Who could blame them with all the casualties being suffered and no end in sight? At the end of it all what had been gained? Some returning soldiers taking up sides against one another, trained to kill without remorse during the Great War, turned this new skill on one another, in many ways an old skill for Irishmen, handed down from one generation to another right up to almost the present day.

And so here we are ninety years on and what has this land of Saints and Scholars learnt? When the first Sinn Fein Lord Mayor of Belfast, Alex Maskey, laid a wreath at the Cenotaph in Belfast for the fallen of the Great War, we learned to respect and remember. When the Messines Peace Park was opened by our President, Mrs Mary McAlleese, Queen Elizabeth I and the King of the Belgian's we learned to respect and remember. On the 90th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme at Islandbridge, Dublin the Irish Government and An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, recognised the sacrifice made by Irishmen from the North and South of Ireland in the Great War we learned to respect and remember.

I am proud to say that as a member of the Connaught Rangers Association I am part of this new resurgence in remembering this once forgotten generation. Ninety years on through their sacrifice they have given us common ground to talk to one another, forgetting about political and religious differences and to know that at one time Irishmen stood shoulder to shoulder for the same beliefs and died in their tens of thousands for peace and freedom.

A visit to the battlefields of France and Flanders I believe is a must for every Irish person. Many are now making that journey. To see the row upon row of Irish graves, those men who were air brushed out of our history books, so beautifully maintained and watched over by French and Belgium people, but they are still standing in a foreign field in mute witness to our own deeds to one another and the futility of war and hate that took yet another young generation from this land. We will remember them.

WILLIAM BEIRNE PRO CRA.



Luke O'Connor.

Sir Luke O'Connor VC

At the tender age of 17 years, the hedge school educated Luke O'Connor left his home near Elphin, Co. Roscommon to learn the grocery trade from relatives in the town Boyle. The year was 1849 and advance education was out of the question for the young Luke. His hopes of learning the grocery trade were also dashed when Luke found himself degraded to the position of boots and porter in the hotel also owned by his relatives. The disappointed Luke took his revenge on his relatives by turning on the taps of all the barrels and absconding himself from the hotel.

Luke joined the army and enlisted in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. From the beginning Luke was recognised as a good soldier and prior to the outbreak of the Crimean War he had reached the rank of Colour Sergeant (1850). On the 24th of September 1854, ten days after his arrival with his regiment in the Crimean, at the battle of Alma a young Lieutenant Anstruther was carrying the regimental colours. Lt. Anstruther fell mortally wounded, Sgt. O'Connor grabbed the colours and raced to the head of the regiment and planted the colours on the redoubt before those of the enemy who were near at hand could realise their perilous position. The effect on the rest of his battalion was instantaneous. The Welsh Fusiliers saw the heroism of Sgt. O'Connor and pressed onward to his support. The bayonet attack on the enemy position was successful. Sgt O'Connor carried the colours during the battle and was later awarded a commission.

Later Luke O'Connor was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions; he became the first soldier to win the coveted award and was presented with his medal by Queen Victoria in Hyde Park on 26th of June 1857. In 1873 the then Captain O'Connor returned to Boyle. When his return was announced the whole town of Boyle and surrounding area turned out to meet him. A large sum of money was subscribed to provide a presentation. His own choice was that a silver centrepiece for the regimental mess should be specially manufactured. This very elegant piece represents Luke O'Connor on a pedestal waving the flag at Alma. Luke O'Connor went on to serve in the Ashantee War, but was returned to England having suffered a severe fever when off the coast.



Sgt Luke O'Connor holding the Flag and leading the charge at Alma

On 24th June 1884, he succeeded to the command of the 2nd Battalion the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and in 1886 he went on half pay with the rank of Colonel. He was granted the Distinguished Service Reward, and retired on 2nd March 1887 with the rank of Major General. Luke was created a C.B. in 1900 and a K.C.B. in 1913 and in 1914 was appointed honorary Colonel of his old Regiment. Sir Luke O'Connor became ill and after lingering in a critical condition for some time, died in London on 1st of February 1915 in his 84th year. The remains of the late Major General Sir Luke O'Connor were buried in St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Kensel Green, London.



Baptismal Font Donated by Mjr. Gen. Luke O'Connor VC

Sir Luke never forgot his humble upbringing and today the beautiful Baptismal font in the Roman Catholic Church in Elphin as well as the ciborium light were a gift to the Church for Sir Luke O'Connor, as was the beautiful Baptismal font in the Old St. Josephs Church in Boyle.

The church in Boyle was destroyed by fire in 1974. In his will Sir Luke remembered the local nuns; he admired their charitable work and commitment to the local community.

Danny Tiernan

17th Feb. 2007.

FETE AT ROCKINGHAM

‘Germans Fall Back’
‘Further Retreat Foretold’
‘Another British Advance’

Those were the headlines that greeted readers of The Irish Times in a bullish mood on July 23rd 1918. After almost four years and with the Americans fully involved things were now moving in favour of the Allies. Yet the paper was calling for 80,000 more Irish men for the last push. As if to underline the point, the same edition carried an extensive report on the Fete, the previous day, held on the grounds at Rockingham, the stately home and wooded Demesne of Sir Thomas Stafford King Harman in Boyle, Co Roscommon. The last time Rockingham had seen such crowds was the occasion of the wedding of Edward, his eldest son in July 1914 which lasted for a week. Three months later Edward was dead, killed in action near Ypres at the age of 24. The fete held on the 22nd July in glorious weather was organised by the womenfolk of the surrounding stately homes for the benefit of the sick, wounded and prisoners of war. This was just one way in which the ladies of the Ascendancy found a role in the war effort; Lady Rosse set up an organisation at Birr Castle for sending parcels to prisoners; Sphagnum moss; renowned for its healing properties, came pouring in; shirts for the troops were stitched and Red Cross classes organised. But the Rockingham fete had a special attraction, for the distinguished guest for the event was the Lord Lieutenant himself, the hero of the Nile and Kimberley, Lord French, First Earl of Ypres. Addressing the attendance he expressed his great pleasure to be present at this fine house and to support the object of the fete.

Boyle was a garrison town with a military barracks, now known as King House and the headquarters of the 4th Battalion of the Connaught Rangers. At the outbreak of World War 1 hundreds of young men from the town and the neighbouring counties enlisted and was usually the case sons followed fathers, brother followed brother, neighbour followed neighbour through the barrack gate. According to reliable figures 206,000 Irishmen served during the War and over 35,000 would die before it ended. Now in the uneasy summer of 1918 an anti conscription pledge was taken throughout the country. This audacious move prompted the leader in the Irish Times to remark that ‘if the Party and the Church would display a quarter of the energy in getting recruits than they have displayed in resisting conscription the 80,000 men would be found in the next two months. Lord French is proclaimed as ‘an agent of destiny at Ypres and now a voice of destiny in Ireland.’ So there you have it. Although Flanders and the Somme was a sea of blood the call for more troops never slackens. Consider that by this time there were as many as 27 American Divisions in Europe. Already on the 28th of May of the same year the US had gone into action in the French region of the Somme and captured a German salient at the village of Contigney, the first all American action of the War. It was clear that the initiative had now pressed decidedly to the Allies.

But far away from war torn Europe on the gently sloping lawn of Rockingham the fete was a pleasant interlude in the sad tidings of war. Some, the Times, reported travelled by car and others by ass and cart; all were charmed as they made their way along the Beech Walk to the great mansion on the eminence overlooking lake studded Lough Key. The event by any standard was newsworthy not only for the muster of local gentry but particularly by the presence of His Majesty’s Representative, the Lord Lieutenant. No stranger to the locality, French had many family connections, including Lord De Frene and his brother from Frenchpark, both of whom died at the Front on the same day in 1915. So too others had perished, over 100 young sons from Boyle town and the locality had fallen already on the field of battle.



Field Marshall John French had a varied military career before his appointment to the Vice regal Lodge in May 1918. Credited with the relief of Kimberley during the Boer War, with a daring cavalry charge, he was the one destined to command the British Expeditionary forces in France in August 1914. Not the wisest choice. He was first and foremost a cavalry officer and not used to commanding infantry or come to terms with fact that cavalry were of no use in a War dominated by machine gun, barbed wire and artillery. Also he seemed of a haughty disposition, unable to adapt to the unfamiliar conditions of the Front or work harmoniously with the French Forces. The heavy losses at the Battle of Loos in September 1915 put paid to his military career and he was replaced by Field Marshal Haig in December of that year. Yet his achievements, however modest, are remembered in an elaborate plaque on the wall of St George's Church in the town of Ypres. He was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1918, at the age of 66, at a time of political turmoil in the country and bought the modest but pleasant Drumdoe House on the shores of Lough Arrow near Boyle where he used to entertain lavishly. Small in stature he wore a heavy, grey moustache and walked with the gait of a cavalry man. On the occasion of the fete he was in fighting mood delivering a stirring address. Coming so soon after the landmark election of Count Plunkett in North Roscommon the speech was anything but conciliatory. He attacked the wild and seditious speeches being made up and down the country at the time when the paramount necessity was the defeat of the common enemy. 'Regeneration' he boomed, referring to the Sinn Fein slogan, 'surely it is rather the regeneration of the youth of Ireland from their evil counsels, unpatriotic and false sentiments that is so much needed.' Like McMillan at a later date, Lord French declared that the country never had it so good; the war had brought a measure of wealth and prosperity to Ireland than it had never known. Tea And refreshments were served on the lawn; the distinguished guests lined up to meet the Lord Lieutenant, who was reported mingled with crowd and paid special tribute to two Connaught Rangers from Boyle, Ptes Conroy and McGovern, who wore their DCMs awarded courage in the field. It was a day to remember, even in wartime.



Lord French Memorial, Ypres

The summer sun descended over the pine tress of Rockingham and the crowd began to slowly disperse. The Irish Times described the speech, the next day, as ‘a sane and sincere statement of the facts of the situation.’ It has been pointed out that all the main newspapers supported the war and therefore there was no critical coverage of the military’s tactics or the full scale of the horror of the trenches, while scarlet Colonels at the base continued to ‘speed up glum heroes up the line’ top death’ as the poet Sassoon puts it. In its favour the Rockingham event served to focus attention on a war that still ebbed and flowed, still raged with unimaginable ferocity; it proved a measure of reassurance to grieving, praying mothers and relatives touched by the hand of war. Very soon their prayers were answered. August 1918 marked the beginning of the end of the war. As Malcolm Brown describes the coming of the great breakthrough for the Allies ‘this time an advance across the landscape of the Somme region would be marked different from the sacrificial attrition grind of two years earlier; it would have vigour, style, even panache, though it would have numerous local setbacks and would still inevitably, exact a massive toll in casualties, and at last a hundred days later, there would be silence on the Western Front.

During the great Allied advance when all the Allied armies were on the move together and they continued advancing, pushing back the remnants of the German Army. Sadly among those who enlisted in Boyle so long before, never realising, never dreaming that they would be a long, long time away, many fell in the last few weeks of the War. Amongst them were

William McKay from Grange, Boyle died of wounds October 11th 1918.

Patrick Sheridan killed November 8th 1918.

Michael Wynne killed October 10th 1918.

Lord French could hardly be accused of exaggeration on that July day at Rockingham, when he said ‘Now I do not believe young Irishmen are cowards; in fact they have proved to be heroes when the necessity arises’.

JACK FALLON President CRA 2005.

THE LAVELLE BROTHERS

It is difficult to say just how many Connemara men fought in the First World War, one reference I came across states that about 150 men enlisted and, out of the 755 Galway men listed in the Memorial Records, 44 have Connemara as their place of birth.

Among those who survived were my father, Michael Lavelle, and his two brothers, William (Willie) and Joseph.

The story of the Lavelle brothers' wartime experiences is fragmented to say the least. It is based on incomplete war records, one or two old photographs, contradictory tales gathered from family members now deceased, and a press clipping. It is frustrating trying to piece it all together and irritating when one considers that WW1 was not all that long ago. However, thanks to Oliver Fallen and his invaluable research into the war records of these who served in the Connaught Rangers, I have succeeded in filling in some of the blanks. Growing up, we were always told that the three brothers served in the Connaught Rangers, and while the records bear that out in the case of Michael and Willie, it seems that tracking down Joseph's record is proving more difficult.

The Lavelle brothers were the only sons of a small farmer, Michael Lavelle Snr, from Streamstown, just outside Clifden, Co Galway. At the outbreak of the war the brothers varied in age from thirty-one to fourteen: Michael (born 1883) was thirty-one, Willie (born 1894) was twenty and Joseph (born 1898) was fourteen. All three returned from the war with few visible scars, but the lives lived by each of them afterwards would indicate otherwise.

Willie was first to enlist. He was a member of the Irish Volunteers and was already drilling in the Connemara hills when war broke out. When the Volunteers split, Willie 'answered Redmond's call' and enlisted in the British Army. According to his army record, Private William Lavelle No. 5171, enlisted in the 5th (Service) Battalion The Connaught Rangers and later transferred to the 1st Battalion. The 5th Battalion was a new battalion set up in August 1914 when recruiting began for the estimated one hundred thousand additional men needed for the British Army at the outbreak of WW1. It isn't known exactly what date Willie enlisted but it is thought that he was among the early recruits to sign up at Renmore Barracks in Galway. Recruits to the new battalion received their training in Cork, the Curragh and later in England, before being sent on active service to Gallipoli on 9 July 1915. Willie would join them a month later.

In the lead up to the battalion's departure, the local papers were full of reports on the actions of the Irish regiments already at the front, along with lists of the wounded and tributes to those killed in action. Recruitment rallies were underway throughout the county and in Clifden the local parish priest, Monsignor McAlpine, along with local politicians, called on the young men of the district to enlist.

It was at this time that Michael applied for a commission in the Connaught Rangers.

Michael had only just been appointed Master of the Clifden Union Workhouse. And although his position was kept open for the duration of his service, his father would have preferred it if, at the age of thirty-one, he had stayed at home and minded his job rather than go chasing after adventure. But Michael was adamant and he applied for a Commission on 1st May 1915. He was commissioned to the 4th Reserve Battalion Connaught Rangers and sent to the School of Military Instruction in Cork on 7 July 1915. Two months later, on 4 September, Willie was sent to Gallipoli.

Michael spent a year in Cork before being sent as a 2nd Lieutenant to France on 18 July 1916. In France, he was attached to the 7th Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and within three months he was awarded the Military Cross for 'conspicuous gallantry in action'. The action in question took place at Spanbroek Sector on 11-12 October 1916. His citation states that he 'led a daring raid with great courage and determination, inflicting many casualties on the enemy. Later he skilfully withdrew his party'. Some years ago, while trawling through old Galway newspapers in the National Library, I came across an article on my father having received the Military Cross. The article quoted from a letter Michael wrote to a friend describing the events of the night.

A German machine gun was keeping the Allied line pinned down and a party of volunteers was called for to storm the position and take out the gun. At 2am, under cover of a barrage of artillery fire, four officers, each with a party of about twenty men, moved out into no-man's-land. The German barbed wire was to be

breached using ammonal tubes. Unfortunately one tube failed to explode, leaving a party of men, under the command of 2nd Lieut N.C. Kempston, stranded and unable to advance. Kempston and his men attempted to cut a way through the wire, but failed. The party came under fire and Kempston was killed and eight other ranks wounded.



Capt M. Lavelle, Dover 1919



2nd Lieut Noel C. Kempston

Michael's party reached the enemy trenches in record time and with very few casualties. However, once in the trenches they came under attack by machine guns, shells and hand grenades. They returned fire and, seizing the ammunition in the trenches, they bombed the Germans with their own bombs, successfully taking out the enemy. They remained on in the trench for about forty minutes, examining its construction and checking its defences. They searched it for mines, machine gun emplacements, saps, new wood etc., and succeeded in securing valuable information. The raiding party returned to their own line at about 2.41 a.m. bringing with them all casualties and two prisoners, one of whom was injured.

On returning to their own lines, Michael learned that he was the only officer to have survived and that many of the men had been lost. When leaving the German trenches, he had noticed the body of his good friend Kempston. On successfully completing his assignment, he returned to no-man's-land to recover Kempston's body, against the advice of his commander. Lifting the body on to his back, he crawled back to his own lines. Michael was fulfilling a pact made between the two men on the previous night; neither man was to be left on no-man's-land should the other survive. This was very important to them. Listening to dying men moaning and calling out throughout the night left the soldiers fearful of a similar fate befalling them. Kempston was buried the following day, with Michael making sure that his grave was marked with his full particulars for identification.

One Galway newspaper carrying the story of Michael's bravery, added that his brother, Joseph, had enlisted in the Connaught Rangers a few days earlier. Joseph was then just eighteen years of age. He was tall and handsome, I am told, but sadly I have been unable to track down a photograph of either him or Willie.

When Michael returned home on leave in December 1916, he was given a hero's welcome and a dinner was held at the Railway Hotel in his honour. The local newspaper covered his arrival, describing how the railway

station was crowded with friends and well-wishers who lifted him shoulder high and carried him triumphantly through the town.

The next reference I found for Michael was in volume three of *The Connaught Rangers*, Lieut-Colonel Jourdain's history of the regiment; from this I learned that Michael joined the 5th (Service) Battalion The Connaught Rangers in Egypt on 20 September 1917. Willie was still serving with the battalion at this time; we don't know if the two brothers met up in Egypt, one can only assume that they did. The regiment had arrived in Alexandria four days previously and was among the first British soldiers to enter Palestine under General Allenby. Using Jourdain's book, I am able to track my father's progress from Cairo to Jerusalem and learn of the experiences of a man that sadly I never met.

The battalion moved out on the first leg of their journey to Palestine on 27 September 1917. For three days they marched, following the line of the Canal to Base Camp at Kantara. Here they boarded a train at 4.40 pm on 29 September and they entered Palestine at Rafah at 6.30 am on 1 October. They were part of the 10th (Irish) Division that joined the Egyptian Expeditionary Force at Rafah. While encamped at Rafah, the Rangers marched to the beach each afternoon at 4 pm, a distance of five miles, to bath. There was a lot of sickness among the men, they had come in contact with malaria in France and were having great difficulty overcoming it. Because of this the 10th (Irish) Division were the weakest division numerically of the forces under General Allenby's command.

On 28 October, the battalion moved out to take part in the Third Battle of Gaza and the general advance on Jerusalem. During the following weeks the weather was intensely hot and stifling, but by early December the winter rains had arrived and had added to the difficulties the men were already experiencing.ⁱ The Battalion came under attack from machine gun and sniper fire and progress was slow. On 9 December word came through that Jerusalem had surrendered. The Rangers were relieved on the following day and pitched bivouac camp twenty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem, expecting to be moved at short notice. But the incessant rains, and the bitterly cold winds that accompanied them, hampered Allenby's plans and it was 26 December before the battalion moved out.

The battalion engaged the enemy on the following day, coming under heavy fire but succeeded in obtaining their objective nonetheless. Jourdain recounts that on 28 December, Lt Michael Lavelle was sent out with a platoon of men to aid the 6th Battalion Leinster Regiment in an attack on a village named Shabuny, only to discover that the enemy had already abandoned the village. Three days later the 7th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers relieved the Rangers. The enemy had fallen back and fighting had stopped for a time.

The heavy rains continued from January to early March of 1918, and movement on any large scale was proving impossible. Hostile action seems to have ceased at this time and the Seventy-Fourth and Tenth Divisions were ordered to hold the enemy west of the Nablus road. The Rangers occupied their time with training, road making and reconnaissance of the terrain up to the line held by the enemy. Hostilities recommenced in early March with heavy exchanges and many casualties on both sides. Here again Jourdain reports that, on 18 March, Lt Michael Lavelle was among four officers and sixty other ranks sent forward to hold a stretch of high ground. Michael's patrol encountered a detachment of twenty Turks. 'Sharp sniping broke out and went on for twenty minutes', until the artillery opened fire and the Turks 'hastily made off'.ⁱⁱ

In April word came that the Germans had broken through on the Western Front and the Egyptian Expeditionary Force was ordered to send as many men as possible to France. On 29 April, the 5th Battalion was relieved by the 1st Battalion 54th Sikhs of the Indian Army. The Rangers arrived back in Kantara and remained there until 23 May, when they boarded a train for Port Said. At Port Said they embarked on a ship named the '*Ormonde*' and sailed for Marseilles, arriving there on 1 June. They were not to know that it would all be over in little more than five months, but how many of them would survive that long.

The 1st Battalion arrived in Palestine in May 1918 and it may be that it was at this time that Willie transferred from the 5th (Service) Battalion to the 1st Battalion. But the exact whereabouts of both men in the months leading up to the end of the war is unknown. We were always told that Michael spent Armistice Day lying injured in an English hospital, not from anything as heroic as a bullet wound, but from a broken toe. Michael was transferred to the 3rd Reserve Battalion in October and was photographed with them at Dover

in December 1918. He later became attached to the Royal Army Ordnance Corps where he helped prepare men for civilian life.

On 4 December 1919, Michael received his Military Cross from King George V. at Buckingham Palace. He was discharged from the army on 16 March 1920 and returned to Clifden and his job as Master of the Clifden Workhouse. For the remainder of his life, Michael rarely mentioned the war although he did suffer a periodic nightmare that brought him back to those terrible days and nights at the front.

His brother, Willie, however, had a wonderful war despite having received several shrapnel wounds. Willie liked nothing more than to recount, over a pint of Guinness, his many encounters with the enemy at Mesopotamia and Palestine, and everywhere else that the Rangers took him. Sadly, I was not around to record them, he died when I was just six years old. Willie was awarded the 1914-15 Star, Victory and Service Medals.



After the war Willie worked for a time in England, but work was scarce and he soon returned home. As far as we know, he did not take part in the War of Independence; however, at the outbreak of the Civil War he joined the Free State Army and served in Galway. He later recounted that of all the action he had seen, the nearest he ever came to being killed was when his party came under attack from the Irregulars in Headford. The ambush seems to have gone on for some time, during which the heel of his boot was shot off. Willie later went back to England, where he lived for a number of years before returning to work the small family farm at Streamstown. He married and had a daughter, Josephine. Willie died in 21 January 1959.

As previously mentioned, Joseph's war record is lost to us. The official record no longer exists and, sadly, no one in the family seems to have kept a record either. However, we do know that Joseph was hardened by his experience of war and found it difficult to settle down to ordinary life. After being demobbed, he joined the RIC and served for a time in Cork. He later enlisted in the Palestine police. In Palestine he received a bullet wound to the leg, the bullet went right through his calf and came out at the sole of his foot. The wound never healed and frequently gave him trouble. Joseph was discharged from the Palestine police with a pension and returned to Clifden. However, he was soon off again, this time to America. He remained in New York for a year, but his health was breaking down by then and he again returned to Clifden. Back in Clifden, Joseph's health deteriorated and he died on 19 September 1939 at the age of forty-one.

On two occasions in my life I have tried to retrace my father's footsteps during those war years. The first was in March 1987, when I joined one hundred and seventy charity walkers accompanying Donnacha Ó Dulaing on, what was at the time, his annual walk of the Holy Land. We had come ostensibly to follow in

the footsteps of Christ, but secretly I was hoping to retrace the footsteps of my father. We covered the one hundred and twenty miles from Nazareth to Jerusalem on foot in five days, a truly memorable experience. Armed with the information from Lieut-Colonel Jourdain's book, I had hoped to visit some of the places where my father had been, but time constraints made that impossible. However, back in Dublin, with the aid of a 1930s map of Palestine that showed the battle lines and dates, I found it possible to plot his course. Today new battle lines are drawn up around Nablus, Gaza and Jerusalem, and the fighting continues. Historians tell us that the problems now experienced in Israel were started in the Palestine of 1917, with the 'Balfour Declaration' leaving us with two nations demanding recognition, both of whom call on history and God to substantiate that demand.



Spanbroek Strongpoint, Messines Ridge 2004. The Lavelle family at site of Michael's heroic action

My second attempt was a much more successful endeavour. In August 2004, I travelled, along with my brother and his son, both of whom are named Michael Lavelle, in the company of the Connaught Rangers Association on a four-day trip to France and Flanders. On day two we were taken to the site where the action that won my father his Military Cross took place. Oliver Fallon, Secretary of the Association, recounted the story of that night and pointed out where the men would have crossed the wire and where Kempston and the others would have fallen. We were then taken to Pond Farm Cemetery and shown Kempston's grave, where we laid a wreath and said a prayer for our father's fallen comrade. Words cannot express the emotions that ran through me that day. I felt sad that so many lives were lost on that night in 1916 and I was conscious of the memories my father would have carried away from it. For years I had wanted to visit 'Flanders Fields', but never felt brave enough to do so. I was thankful that Oliver had done the research and delivered us to this place, and I was glad that I was there in the company of, not just my brother and nephew, but also with the descendants of other Rangers.

I was born two months after my father's death, which took place on 19 November 1951, and for years my mother kept his memory alive with story of his time at the front and his life back in Clifden after the war. I grew up in a house that proudly displayed photographs of my father wearing the British Army uniform. The photograph of him with the 3rd Battalion taken at Dover in 1918 was five feet long and almost a foot deep, and it dominated the wall over the dining room sideboard, his Military Cross was kept in a drawer underneath.

Today, it saddens me that I have failed to uncover a photograph of either of my uncles and that so much of their war record is still unknown, but my research is ongoing. However, no matter how much we read or how much we research, we will never be able to fully appreciate what these men witnessed and endured during that terrible ordeal. **KATHLEEN VILLERS-TUTHILL**

¹ Lieut-Colonel H.F.N. Jourdain, C.M.G., The Connaught Rangers, Vol.111, p175, Schull Books, Cork, 1999.

¹ Ibid, p183

THE FABULOUS PLEASURE GROUNDS

Strident waters race through the monastic town
Great windows look out on Boyle's Pleasure Grounds
A heritage once the happy haunt of the privileged
While Rockingham was acclaimed for woodcock and pheasant
The Pleasure Grounds was once white clad home of tennis.

Here we are told a lady of the manor, in a game of mixed doubles,
Set her eye on a handsome Lieutenant of the local regiment;
Their liaison, I can tell you, had a blissful outcome,
Their daughter played the role of Tarzan's Jane in Hollywood.

And prominent in the grounds stands a curious plinth,
Bare like a riderless horse that has fallen at a fence
To the immortal memory of the glorious King William
Placed here by Robert, in the line of King, the mightiest.

What the poet Wordsworth wrote has the ring of truth:
'That which each man loved and prized in his peculiar nook of earth,
Dies with him or is changed'

The wind of change has come: no one now for tennis
And as you stroll the gravel paths, linger on charming bridges,
In this Sylvan paradise, this nature's wonderland,
You will think of many other fabled places:
The royal grounds of Versailles or the Winter Gardens of Beijing

Fabulous sweeps of grass; beds of lilies and the hollyhock,
Still as a convent garden at sunrise when the air vibrates
With birdsong
Where seasons can be measured by the beech's verdant green,
Or the petals of flowers, falling
When October winds stir.

Yes, the grounds are a pleasure, deviously uplifting,
A horticulturist's dream, a landscaper's ideal
And here you'll find
The weary weight of this mad world is mercifully lightened

JACK FALLON President CRA 2005.

JOURNEY'S END; REMEMBERING GUARDSMAN MICHAEL BLOOD

Last autumn William Beirne of the CRA received some items through the post which moved him very deeply. The items and letters came from Drogheda and had once belonged to a young Irish Guardsman who died in France in 1914. They had been carefully minded for over 90 years and their arrival prompted William to write about how much they moved him.

'I called into King House recently as I always do to check on the mail for the Association. On this particular day amongst the letters there was a small box that was very carefully wrapped and was quite heavy for its size. When I opened it I found Pte M. Blood's Death Plaque and a small but carefully written letter from Ms Bea Blood from Drogheda.

The letter read that she had noticed on 'Nationwide' (RTE 1) a similar plaque which was been shown to remember my Grand Uncle, Pte Joseph Higgins, Connaught Rangers and her wish was that Michael's Plaque would find a safe home. As she had included her telephone number I decided to ring her to thank her on behalf of the Association for sending such a prized family treasure.



Death Penny



Pte. Michael Blood

That evening I made the first of many contacts with Bea. She told me how glad she was to be able to pass on Michael's Death Plaque to us. I assured her that it would be treasured and that Michael would be remembered in our prayers on Remembrance Sunday. She informed me through our conversations that there were many other items belonging to Michael that she would like to donate. Unfortunately the soil to his grave was lost she said. I hope to remedy that for Bea this year when the Association visits Michael's grave to lay a wreath and remember Michael.'

Oliver Fallon the Association researcher began to research the battle Michael was involved in and this is what he found:

On August 12th 1914 the 1st Battalion Irish Guards left Wellington Barracks and boarded two trains at Nine Elms Station for Southampton as part of the 4th (Guards) Brigade. Although the destination was supposed to be a secret, most of the thousand strong Battalion were aware they were on their way to France. At Southampton docks they embarked on the *Novara*, which set sail at 7pm and made its way across the

Channel. The officers and men were filled with anticipation and in most cases eager to see action. The vast majority of the rank and file were Irishmen from all the 32 counties. The officers on the other hand were from their upper echelons of British and Irish society many of them 'titled gentlemen'. The CO was Lieut Colonel Hon. G. H. Morris of Spiddal, Co Galway who cut a dashing figure on his white charger.

They disembarked at Le Harve in France the following day and were billeted on a hill just outside the town where they spent their first night on foreign soil. "*Here they received an enthusiastic welcome from the French and were first largely introduced to the wines of the country, for many maidens lined the steep road and offered bowls of drinks to the wearied*" (Kipling p. 30). The atmosphere in the camp was reported as being one of drunken revelry with a bit of a circus thrown in.

Amongst the hundreds of Irish Guardsmen who sat around that first night in France were 25 year old Pte Michael Blood a former clerk from Drogheda and 19 year Pte Michael Donagher from Croghan Co Roscommon. One wonders what they thought that first night as they relaxed on that warm French summer night, on the brink of a great adventure.

The Irish Guards left Le Harve two days later and the party atmosphere was left behind. On August 23rd when the British army met the vastly superior German force at the town of Mons in southern Belgium, the war had begun in earnest. Initially the Irish Guards were used to provide a rearguard and were not involved in the fighting at Mons but covered the retreat as the British army withdrew south. On September 1st they got their first taste of real action as they stood and fought the advancing Germans in the deep beech forest of Villers-Cotterets. Many Guardsmen fell into the undergrowth as the battle raged through the trees and tracks of the forest. The German advance was halted but at great cost with many Guardsmen killed and others captured. Amongst the casualties was Lieut Col Morris shot off his horse by a sniper.

The retreat continued as the British and French armies headed further south and the Germans moved closer to Paris. On September 5th the Irish Guards bivouacked near Fontenay, a name synonymous with Irish courage from over a century before. They were now exhausted and directly east of Paris, it was thought that all was surely now lost, the French capital within range of enemy guns. The next day they marched through Rozoy to Mont Plaisir. "*Cavalry scouts brought news of two enemy columns, estimated at a thousand each, approaching from the direction of Vaudoy. Nos 3 and 4 Companies were ordered forward to prolong the line of the 1st Division, while Nos 1 and 2 Companies with machine gun entrenched themselves on the Mont Plaisir Road.*" (Kipling p. 39). That afternoon Lieut the Hon H.R. Alexander, from Donegal, went forward with a platoon on a reconnaissance toward the village of Villeneuve. They came under fire from a hostile battery at Le Plessis and 4 men were killed and 11 wounded. The battalion immediately went into action and British artillery put the enemy battery out of action within half an hour and Villeneuve occupied without further opposition.

The 4 dead Irish Guardsmen were buried in a field near where they fell. No 2925 Pte Michael Blood with a serious head wound was taken to a field hospital in the nearby town of Nesles where he died later that evening. He was buried in the local communal cemetery where today his grave is the only one of a British soldier in what is a quiet town graveyard. Within days the British and French armies had turned the German advance and the war moved northwards again leaving Pte Michael Blood from Scarlet Street in Drogheda to rest in peace. The war never returned to the area and for the next 4 years it raged with all its ferocity miles to the north and millions died and soon Michael Blood's supreme sacrifice paled almost into insignificance. Hundreds of the men who accompanied him to France also died included Pte Michael Donagher who went missing on November 1st 1914 at Ypres in Belgium. The officer who led that patrol from No 4 Company Lieut Alexander survived the war and later took part in the 2nd World War becoming Field Marshall Alexander of Tunis. During the years of the war the local people tended the graves of the Irish soldiers who had been killed defending their country on that warm September day in 1914. After the Armistice the Commonwealth Graves Commission opened a new cemetery at Montreuil-Aux-Lions north East of Paris

and gathered up the graves of British soldiers who fell during the retreat from Mons. The four Irish Guardsmen killed on September 6th and buried in the field were moved to Montreuil-Aux-Lions. However for some reason, possibly as he was already interred in a cemetery, Michael Blood was not moved and he remains today in the village cemetery of Nesles- La- Giberde, France. RIP. Pte. Michael J. Blood is also remembered on the Cenotaph in Drogheda town.

Ref: The Irish Guards in the Great War, the First Battalion; Rudyard Kipling.

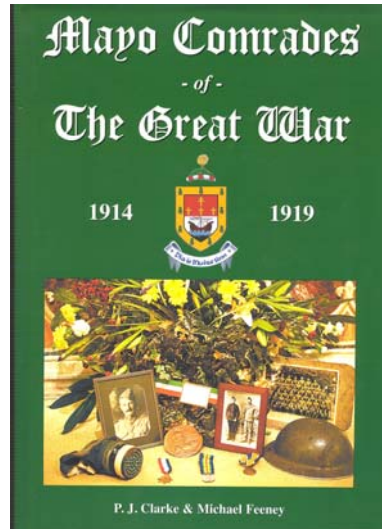


William kept his promise to Bea Blood and in September 2006 William, Francie Geelan, Joe Loughnane and myself travelled south to Paris from the Somme and in blazing sunshine reached the small village of Nesles-La-Giberde, East of Paris. We soon found the town cemetery and directly inside the gate was the grave of Guardsman Michael Blood. Generations of villagers were interred all around him. We conducted a short ceremony in the bright sunshine and played the Last Post before laying a bouquet of flowers.

OLIVER FALLON CRA

BOOK REVIEWS AND OTHER NEWS

One Book which was published in the last few months and I cannot recommend highly enough is Mayo Comrades of the Great War by P.J. Clarke and Michael Feeney. At 360 pages with numerous photographs it is a real must for enthusiasts of Irish military history relating to the Great War and anyone with a connection to Co Mayo. P.J. Clarke from Ballina is not only a great friend of mine but has worked tirelessly in remembering the men from Co Mayo and has spent literally years interviewing people, many now dead, saving memorabilia and artefacts such as photographs from houses that are now demolished and trawling through old newspapers in his research for this remarkable book. One feature of the book is that it lists all the men from Co Mayo who died in the Great War many of whom served with the Connaught Rangers. Many others fell while serving with other regiments and indeed other armies. Co author Michael Feeney from Castlebar, whose grandfather, Pte Patrick Feeney, fell with the 1st Battalion Connaught Rangers in France in 1915 has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Association. In addition he has worked for years trying to get a fitting memorial to all the men from Co Mayo who died in the Great War. Hopefully his efforts will reach fruition this year with the opening of a memorial garden in Castlebar. This book which is a great credit to both men is well worth the cover price and a credit to both P.J. and Michael. Well done lads.



Mayo Comrades in the Great War is a limited hardback edition and I am told has sold out completely in Co Mayo. However I am told copies are still available through DeBurca Rare Books, 51a Dawson St, Dublin 2.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF GEORGE SHEAHAN, A FALLEN COMRADE

Many members of our Association were saddened to hear of the death of George Sheahan. George and his grandson William were on our trip to Flanders in August 2004. George died on September 2nd 2006 and was buried in the Old Church Cemetery in Cobh. To his widow Madeline, daughter Joanne and grandchildren William, Laura and Lisa we extend our sincerest sympathies. George was one of our first and most loyal members whose grandfather, also George Sheahan, had been killed in action while serving with the 6th Battalion Connaught Rangers at Messines in February 1917.

Pte George Sheahan No 3/6793.

George Sheahan was born in Mainister, Co Limerick in 1883 and immigrated to Manchester sometime in his late teens. There he met and married Minnie in 1901 and went on to have 4 children before moving back to Croom, Co Limerick some years later. On August 25th 1915 George Sheahan then aged 32 years old took himself into Limerick and enlisted in the Connaught Rangers. He was posted to the 3rd training Battalion at Charles Fort in Kinsale. On December 18th 1916 he arrived in France as part of a fresh draft of men brought out to reinforce the 6th Battalion which had suffered heavy losses the previous September at Guillemont. After 11 days rigorous training at the notorious 'Bullring' Camp at Etaples he and the other new men joined the Battalion in the field on December 29th 1916 at Loche in Belgium. They were soon in the frosty cold front line trenches facing Messines Ridge. In the dark early hours of February 19th 1917 ... officers and men of the 6th Battalion took part in a raid on German trenches at Spanbroek. Their objective was to catch the enemy by surprise and gather intelligence and take prisoners as well as to keep the enemy aware that there was a War on.

The raid was a disaster German sentries became aware of the approaching men and opened fire. Despite a number of attempts to gain entry into the enemy trenches the Rangers were forced to withdraw. A short time later a German officer contacted the CO of the Connaughts and arranged a short ceasefire to allow the stretcher bearers to gather up the dead and wounded Rangers who lay out in No Mans Land. This was both highly unusual and irregular as the only wounded and dead were Irish and no reason for the Germans to allow this other than as an act of mercy toward the enemy. Lt Colonel Fielding CO of the Rangers agreed to the short armistice and the stretcher bearers went out from the Ranger's trenches and collected the few wounded and numerous dead. The bodies of 2 Connaught Rangers officers and 6 enlisted men were

retrieved. One of dead men returned for burial was Pte George Sheahan who left a grieving widow and 4 children in Croom, Co Limerick. He was buried in Kemmel Chateau Cemetery alongside the officers and men who were killed that day. Another officer and 2 men died of their wounds the following day.

Many of us in the Association have had family members who fought in the Great War. Some did not return. However for many of us it was indirect relative's mainly uncles and granduncles, young men who died before they could have a family of their own or children. In George's case when he came to Flanders with us in 2004 he was visiting the grave of his grandfather his own flesh and blood for the first time which, for anyone, can be much more emotional.

All of us who were privileged to be present that morning in Kemmel Château Cemetery were so moved as we saw George knelt down and lay flowers at the grave of his grandfather. He told us of how he had been brought up by his grandmother Minnie and how for every night of his childhood he knelt with Minnie by the bed praying for the soul of George Sheahan, his grandfather. Also present was George's own grandson William Howie.



George was supposed to come with us in August 2006 but unfortunately his health would not permit him and we again visited Kemmel Chateau Cemetery on his behalf and laid flowers on his grandfather's grave.

George himself had been so moved by his visit that he wrote a charming and moving article in Ireland Eye Issue dated February 4th 2005. In the article he vividly described his own emotions on that beautiful August morning at Kemmel Chateau Cemetery.

For the rest of us on the trip we so much enjoyed George's company as he kept us entertained night after night in the hotel with his good humour, singing and amusing tales of his own life in the Merchant Navy.

On Remembrance Sunday November 12th 2006 we read out a list of names of men who fell in action. George's name was read out alongside that of his grandfather during the ceremony. A touch we know he would have appreciated. RIP.

OLIVER FALLON Secretary CRA.

Poppy Day

A young man ponders the poppy parade
Queries an old man of the veteran brigade,
Why march with medals on your chest?
Why grieve for the men you laid to rest?
Your eyes brighten when the bugles blow
Why remember the wartime long ago?

Young man I wear medals on my chest
I grieve for friend and foe laid to rest
In my memory I see young men dying
I see the broken lives the mothers crying,
But we endured and civilisation gained
Human rights defended and maintained



SCHULL BOOKS, BALLYDEHOB, SKIBBEREEN, Co CORK
Schull Books are offering a number of copies the history of the Connaught Rangers to members for a limited special price of 250 Euros

THE CONNAUGHT RANGERS ASSOCIATION.

Founded 2002. Membership forms and details can be obtained from the Secretary, King House, Boyle, Co Roscommon, Ireland or from our web site www.connaughtangersassoc.com

Items for sale.

CRA Blazers – Euro 150 (Please state size and p&p will be extra depending on destination).

All other items include p&p.

**Blazer Crest – Euro 10; Cap Badge -Euro 5; Lapel Badge- Euro 5; Tie – Euro 15; Tie Pin – Euro 5.
DVD Trip to Flanders 2004 -20 Euros; Association Pen- 5 Euros.**

All items are priced in Euros and can be purchased from THE TREASURER, CRA, KING HOUSE, BOYLE, CO ROSCOMMON, IRELAND.

In addition to the above, beautifully embroidered Connaught Ranger cap badges are also available. The Badges are stitched in gold and silver thread and embroidered on St Patrick's blue cloth measuring 24 ins. high and 18 ins. wide (60 X 46 cms). Total number of stitches 58,403.

These embroideries look beautiful framed and made an excellent keepsake or present. For price and ordering details contact:

William Good, 23 Oliver Plunkett St, Bandon, Co Cork. Email: billygood@eircom.net

