



Artillery Corps



1923



1998

November 1998



M

Message from the Director of Artillery

During this our 75th year it is important to pause, reflect on the past, and study the contribution made by the Officers, NCOs and Gunners who established the Corps and brought it to its present efficient and professional state. We remember, in particular, those Gunners who are no longer with us.

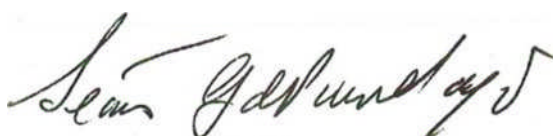
This commemorative magazine is not a history of the Corps. It is a collection of personal experiences and anecdotes which gives a picture of life in the Corps from its foundation to the present day. A number of the articles have been published in 'An Cosantóir' however their inclusion in this booklet adds to its authenticity.

A special Corps Day to commemorate the 75th Anniversary was planned for Glen Imaal on Sun 6th September. Unfortunately due to the imminent sale of Magee Barracks, Kildare and Murphy Barracks, Ballinacollig and the requirement to have them vacated before the end of Sept '98 we were obliged to defer these celebrations. The loss of both Magee Barracks and Murphy Barracks will sadden gunners of all ages who were stationed therein. It is a sharp reminder to us all that tradition cannot be built on bricks and mortar alone. Military traditions are built on achievements and professionalism and are fostered by the unit no matter where it finds itself.

This our 75th year has seen great changes in the Corps, many of which are positive. The delivery of twelve new 105mm Howitzers, a Bty each to the 1st and 4th Fd Arty Regts. The improvements in the sighting systems for the missiles and the planned refurbishment of the radar system are very welcome developments. In line with the recommendations on the programme for new Artillery equipment. These recommendations have been accepted by the General Staff. This leaves the Corps in a strong position to avail of any money, which becomes available for the re-equipment programme.

On your behalf I thank Capt Tom Clonan who edited this booklet. Capt Dave O'Neill of the Defence Forces Printing Press and his staff were most helpful and are deserving of our gratitude. I wish also to thank those individuals and units who provided articles and unit histories. We are also grateful for those articles obtained from An Cosantóir which were of great assistance in compiling this commemorative booklet.

The Artillery Corps has grown and evolved over the years, keeping up to date with modern developments. This was achieved by the commitment and tenacity of the gunners who went before us. Now is the time to acknowledge the debt owed to them. Today's gunners are tasked with continuing this proud tradition and taking the Corps into the next millennium. Let us not be found wanting.



J.G. PRENDERGAST
COLONEL
DIRECTOR OF ARTILLERY

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EDITORS NOTE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their invaluable assistance in compiling this magazine. Capt Dave O'Neill and Pte Andy O'Donovan of the DFPP, Col Prendergast and his staff in the Director of Artillery's Office. I would like to thank Comdt Victor Laing and Comdt Peter Young of Military Archives for their help in sourcing material and articles and Mrs Dorothy Dempsey of the Artillery School for her assistance in getting many of the articles on disk. I would like to thank our advertisers for their generous sponsorship. Finally and most importantly, I would like to especially thank all those gunners serving and retired, who have contributed to this commemorative edition.

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T.M. CLONAN
CAPTAIN
EDITOR



THE ARTILLERY CLUB

The aim of the Artillery Club is 'The Promotion and Fostering of Artillery Espirit De Corps'. Membership is open to all Commissioned Officers, serving or retired, who are or were members of the Artillery Corps during their service with the Defence Forces. Present membership is 126, with an annual fee of £5.00 each. Club activities include a golf outing, attendance at the Artillery Corps Field Day and firing practices, and celebration of the Feast of St. Barbara, December 4th, Patron Saint of all gunners, worldwide.

The Artillery Corps combat support role, is exemplified by co-operation within and between artillery units and with those supported. Technical and tactical proficiency, accompanied by a 'can do' attitude, typifies gunners. These attributes did not happen by accident. They are the

result of example and traditions handed down by successive generations, in an spirit of comradeship.

It is in this area that the Club makes a small contribution. It provides an opportunity for the renewal of comradeship between serving and retired personnel. It works in close collaboration with the Director and the Corps in all activities.

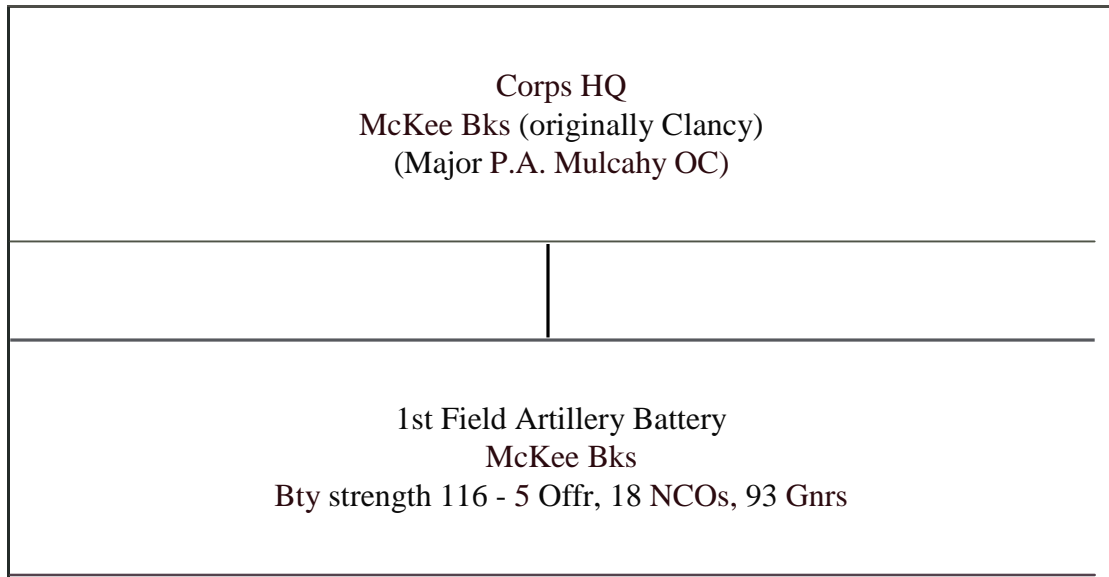
This year is the 75th Anniversary of the first shoot by the Corps in The Glen of Imaal. May the next 75 years be equally effective as the last, for all existing artillery PDF and FCA units.

Keep The Limbers Rolling'.

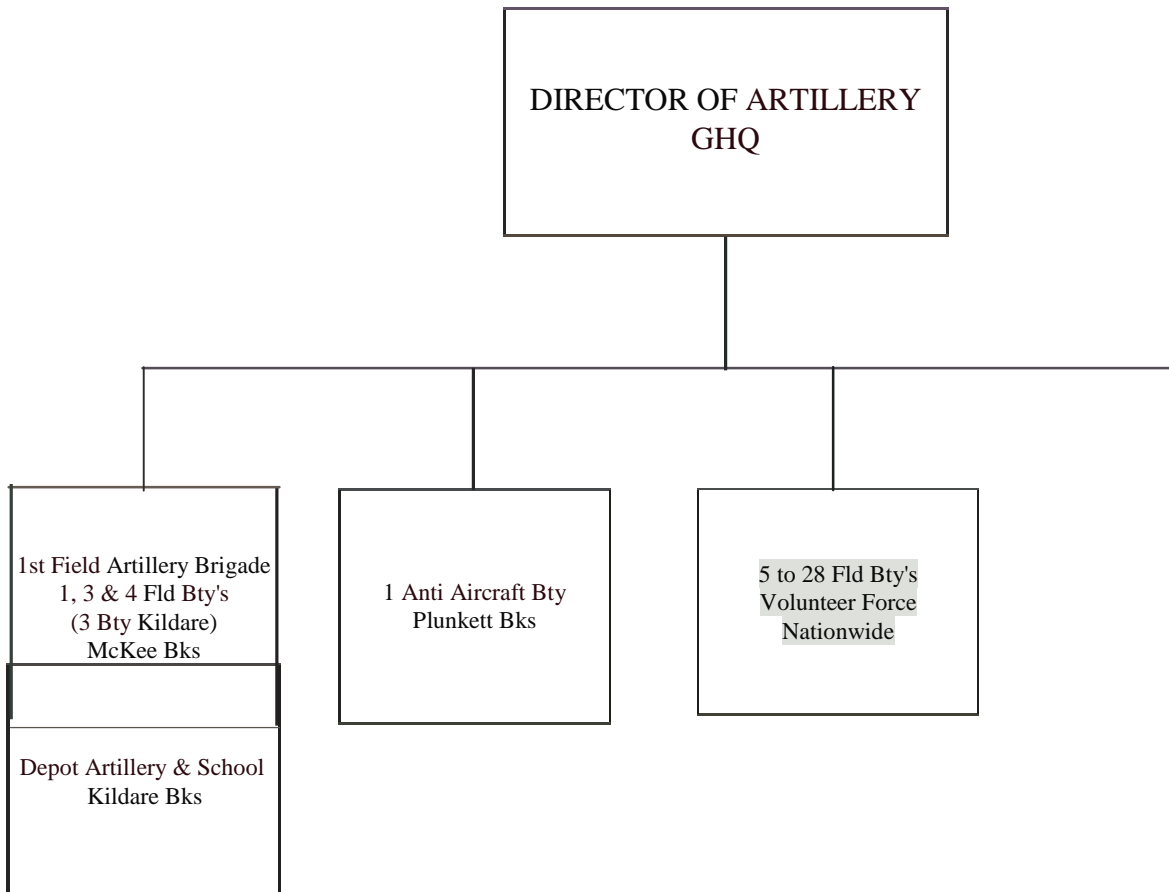
John Hall, Colonel, (Retd)
President
The Artillery Club

NB: Through the auspices of the Artillery Club the Jackie Jones Trophy is awarded to the best student on each Young Officers Artillery Course. The trophy and presentation is made by Capt Jackie Jones (ret'd) of MRBI Ireland.

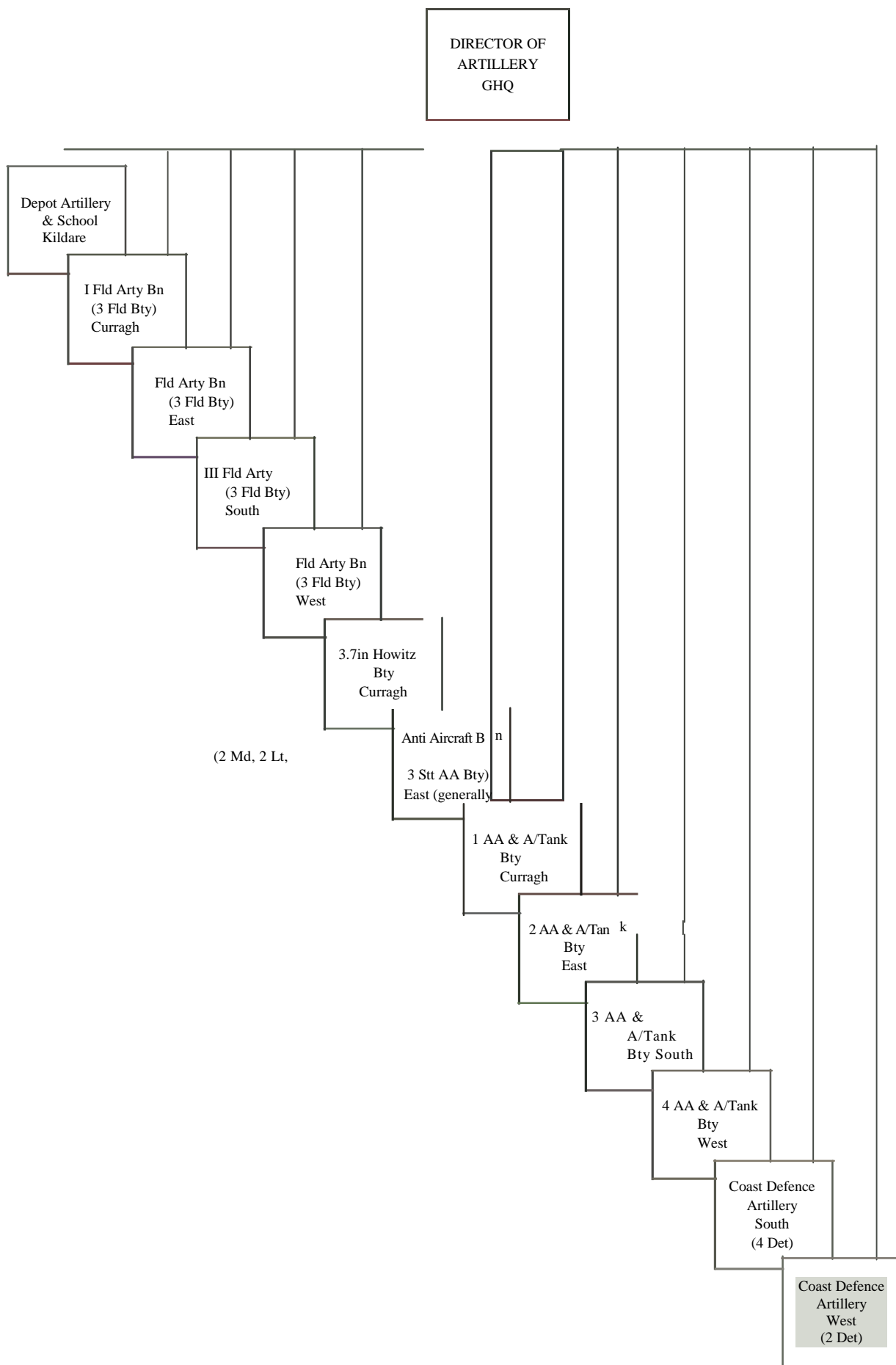
**Organisation of the Artillery Corps 1923 - Present
1923 (DFR No 3), Total = 1 Battery**



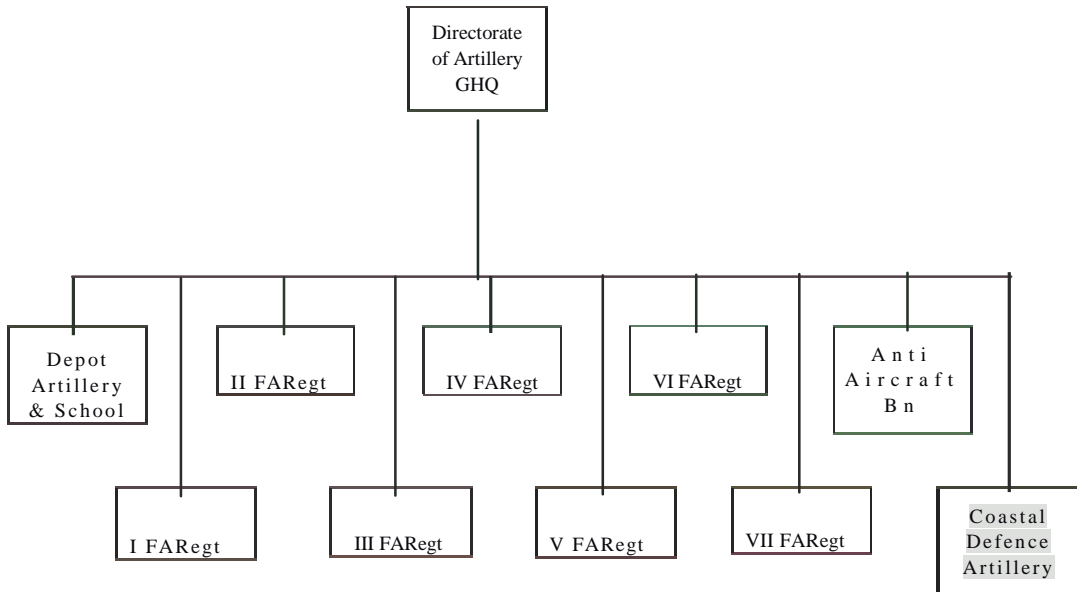
1934 (DFR 49/34), Total = 28 Bty's (inc 1 AA Bty)



1940 (GS 4), Total = 30 Bty's (inc 11 AA + 6 CDA)

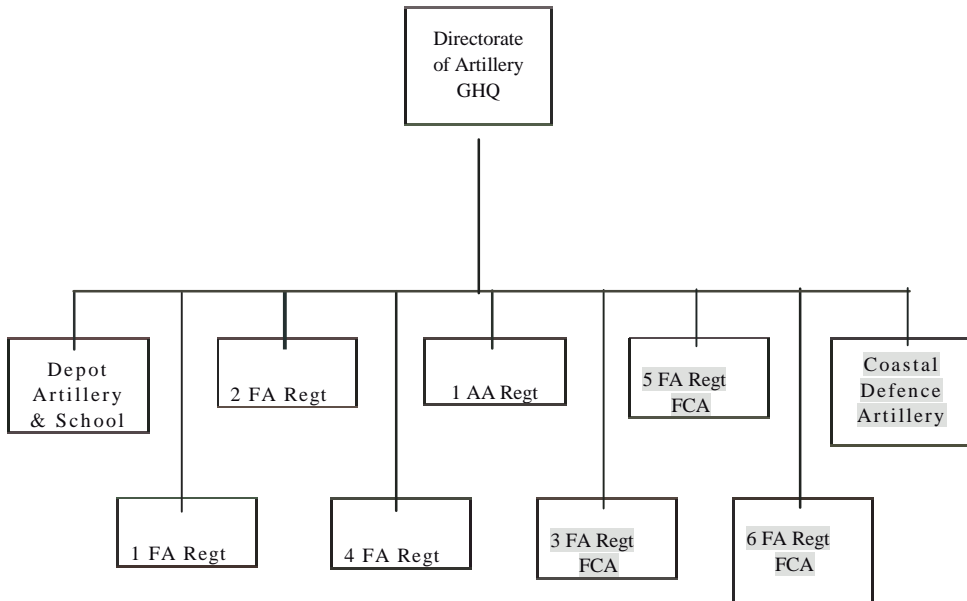


1943

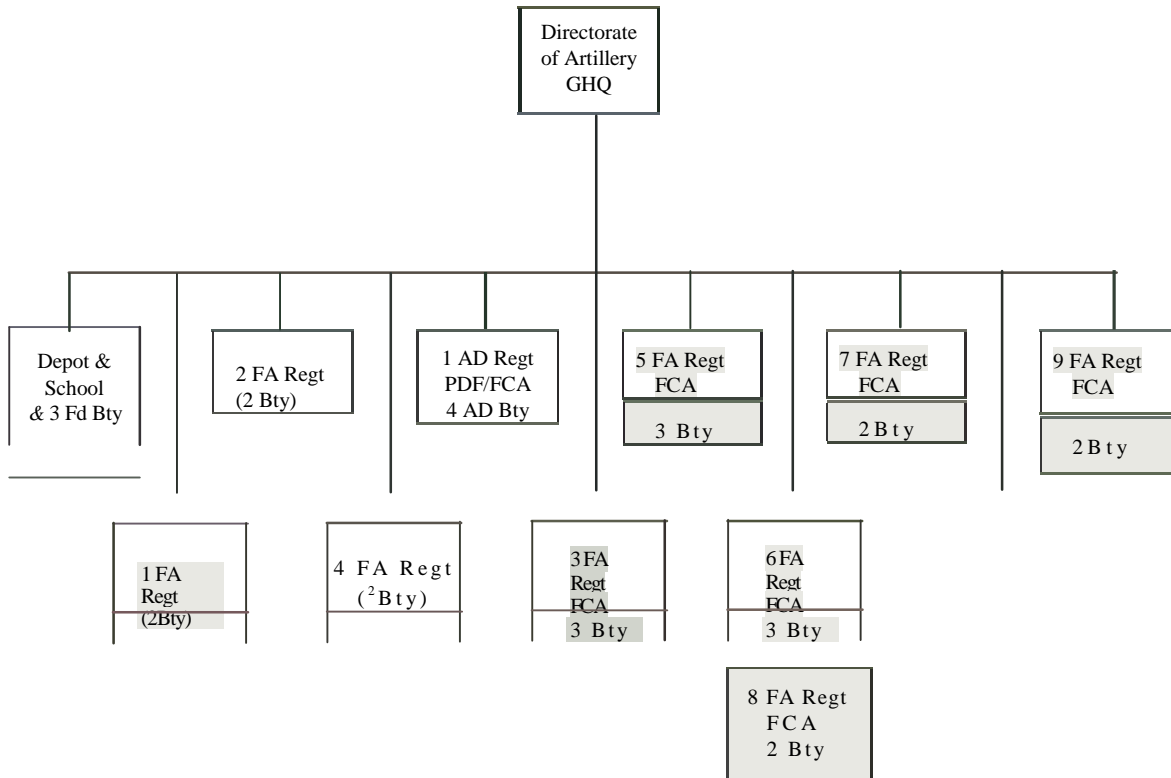


NB: Between 1948 and 1959, a number of independent FCA Batteries were in existence. These included the 41st and 42nd Btys in Dublin, the 44th and 45th Btys in Cork and the 46th Bty in Mullingar.

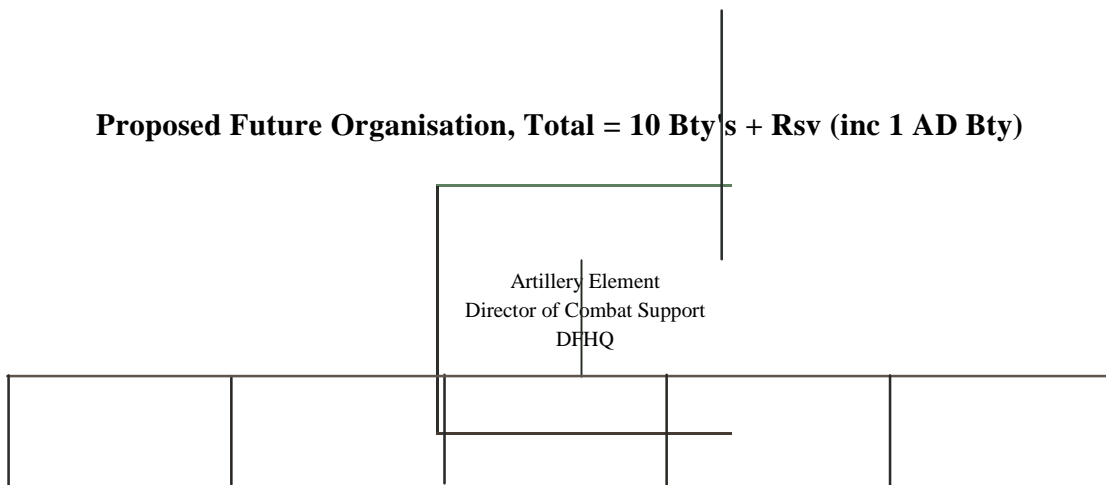
1959



1979 Total = 26 Bty's (incl 4 AD Bty's)



Proposed Future Organisation, Total = 10 Bty's + Rsv (inc 1 AD Bty)



GUNS OF THE ARTILLERY CORPS

Field Artillery

Weapon	Country or origin	Year of manufacture	Calibre	Breech	Projectile Weight	Max Range	Remarks
18 Pounder Field Gun	UK	1904	84mm	SQF	8.4 Kg	5,965m	Various Marks
60 Pounder Field Gun	UK	1904	127mm	IS	27.2 Kg	15,000m	
3.7in Howitzer	UK	1915	94mm	SQF	9 Kg	5,395m	Mountain Gun
4.5in Howitzer	UK	1904	114mm	HSB	15.9 Kg	6,675m	
75mm Field Gun	France	18 ⁰ 7	75mm	NS	7.2 Kg	6,850m	
25 Pounder Field Gun	UK	1940	s /mm	VSB	11.4 Kg	12,250m	In Service
120mm Heavy Mortar	France	1953	120mm	N/A	13 Kg	6,650m	AM 50 In Service
105mm Light Gun	UK	1974	105mm	VSB / SA	16.1 Kg	17,200m	L118 In Service

Anti - Tank Artillery

Weapon	Country or origin	Year of manufacture	Calibre	Breech	Projectile Weight	Max Range	Remarks
2 Pounder A/Tk Gun	UK	1936	40mm	VSB / SA	0.9 Kg	5,900m	
6 Pounder A/Tk Gun	UK	1941	57mm	VSB / SA	2.7 Kg	5,030m	
17 Pounder	UK	1942	76.2mm	VSB / SA	7.7 Kg	9,145m	

Anti - Aircraft /Air Defence Guns & Missiles

Weapon	Country or origin	Year of manufacture	Calibre	Breech	Projectile Weight	Max Range	Remarks
3in 20cwt	UK	1914	76.2mm	VSB / SA	7.2 Kg	11,330m ceiling	Mobile & Semi - Mobile Mks
3.7in A/A Gun	UK	1937	94mm	HSB / SA	12.7 Kg	18,075m ceiling	Data for Mk 6
40mm A/A Gun	Sweden	1929	40111111	VSB /A	0.9 Kg	3,000m ceiling	L60 variant In Service
40mm L70 A/A Gun	Sweden	1953	40111111	-	0.9 Kg	4,000m ceiling	In Service
RBS 70 AD Missile	Sweden	1973	N / A	N / A	25 Kg	3,500m ceiling	Missile In Service

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AT THE BEGINNING

Gen P.A. Mulcahy (Retd)

Iwish to express my pleasure on being invited to contribute to the commemorative Artillery issue of An Cosantoir, but hasten to add that I hope speaking of events which took place 50 years ago, I will be forgiven any lapses of memory which might give offence.

Before dealing with the actual formation of the Corps, I think it is necessary to set the scene prior to that event, so that the reader will have some idea of the many difficulties that had to be overcome.

Prior to the 11th July 1921, this country was occupied and in a state of war: there were Flying Columns throughout the country. I was in North Tipperary with one of those Columns. The Truce came and we were given various assignments, e.g. I was one of a number of officers who took over the various Barracks from the British, Bin for example. That in itself would be an interesting story, but has nothing to do with Artillery.



*18 pdr in action at Four Courts - 28 June 1922
pic courtesy: Military Archives*

We were in Bin for some time when I was instructed to take-over the old Hospital in Maryborough, now Portlaoise, as a Military post. While there I started a School of Signal Instruction.

I had no instructions to do this, but I thought that it would be very useful if the body of men which I had were trained in Signals, or I suppose a better word, communications, something I was particularly interested in. We were there several months; then the Civil War came on and, of course, we all took our part in that.

One day I was instructed to report to GHQ which was in Portobello Barracks at the time, where I was interviewed by the then Chief-of-Staff, Lt Gen Sean McMahon. He informed me that they were about to form an Artillery

Corps and that I was being put in charge! I remember saying: "*But, Sir, I know nothing about artillery.*" "*Neither do any of us*", he said, "*but still you are going to be in charge of it.*" He continued: "*I will nominate two officers and you can pick the remainder yourself and when that is completed, submit an organisation.*"

I went back to Portlaoise to start selecting. We had a lot of officers at the time and many were unwilling to sign up as regulars and stay in the army, but fortunately there were a few whom I had selected who were willing to stay, namely Paddy Maher (later Col), Tim Finlay (later Comdt - Jumping Team) and Ned O'Leary (later Comdt). So with these three, I set out for Dublin and was instructed to set up my Headquarters in Islandbridge Barracks, now Clancy Barracks, which at the time was mainly stores and a little ordnance, but it was a very disorganised place and not at all suited to our purpose, as we later found. Nevertheless, we went, got ourselves offices and 'dug in'.

"Guns"

I was soon informed that "Guns", they weren't even referred to as Artillery, were distributed throughout the Commands - there was one or perhaps two field guns in each Command, and these, with their crews, had been ordered to report to Islandbridge Barracks.

When they arrived Col Maher and I examined all the officers, most of them we returned to their units as they did not want to be Regular Gunner Officers and I agreed with some that they would be better employed elsewhere! Ultimately we finished up with very few officers but with sixty to seventy stout-hearted prospective gunners - the formation of a 'small' battery. I was a Major I/C, Ned O'Leary a Comdt and Adjutant Col Maher was a Captain and Assistant Adjutant and for the time being Comdt D. Mackey was Quartermaster, but ultimately he resigned and we got Capt R.J. Callanan, now Maj Gen (Retd) who remained with us for a long time.

Islandbridge, as I said before, was most unsuitable, consisting mainly of stores; there was no space for training, we had horses and most of our training was horse-riding which we had to learn properly. Most of us could ride - we could farm horses - but now we had to ride properly; there was no space for this in Islandbridge.

New Quarters

McKee Barracks was then occupied by the Garda Síochána who were being moved to their present quarters. Knowing that I was dissatisfied with our accommodation, I was informed by Headquarters that McKee Barracks was available to me. I went up there, met Gen O'Duffy,

Garda Commissioner, and the transfer was arranged, It was a wonderful change which provided us with great training facilities. We stayed for nearly two years until I

to me. I needn't have worried, I found their only interest in Ireland was they were terribly sorry to miss cheap hunting, fishing and shooting and hadn't the slightest



Artillery in Ceremonial March Past in Dublin - 1924

was ordered in March 1925 to occupy what was an old Artillery Barracks in Kildare. The Gardai were there also, but they were being moved and we were to take over. We Moved lock, stock and barrel down to Magee Barracks. One little thing which I remember now with a smile. There was an Infantry Platoon on guard in Magee Barracks and we kept them for about a year and a half or two years until somebody "caught on". We had to supply our own guards from then on. We thought that was a great imposition to ask Gunners to do. However, we did. That brings us down to Kildare.

Kildare

One thing that Col Maher and I were most interested in was to get somebody to train us. We weren't trained Gunners. So we got a Training Officer, a Capt Harry Froud St. Ledger Caulfield - he was employed for about three months. Then we got Capt Gary Brennan. Brennan was a fine type, a gentleman, and he gently taught us a certain amount of gunnery. But we were eager and soon surpassed his limited knowledge. Not his fault. He gave us what he knew. However, in 1926 a military mission was sent to America and included Major Charlie Trodden (decd) who was with us at the time. He did an American Gunnery Course and was later invaluable to us. I took the opportunity of suggesting that we send someone across to the English Gunnery School and I was told to go myself, for a month, on a Battery Commanders Course. There I met officers all about my own age and all of whom had seen service in Ireland. I was wondering how they'd react

interest in politics. They ran a very excellent course; suited me fine and I learned enough to come back and suggest other ideas. The principal suggestion was that we avail of the facilities of the Long Gunnery Staff Course, which was a year's job. The first two officers to undergo this course were Lt Denis Coady (later Lt Col decd) and Dan Farrell (later Comdt Retd). That was the opening, but from that on we tried to send one every year; we didn't get away with that, but we sent one periodically and they got wonderful training, brought back very good methods and very good technical instruction.

The School and The Glen of Imaal

The School carried on in Kildare and we opened up the Glen of Imaal Range. The Glen of Imaal had been a British Camp but during the early days our Army formed a "Salvage Corps" known to us all as the "Wreckers", but we didn't realise what wreckers could do until we went to Glen Imaal and found a lovely camp levelled, even water pipes broken, houses torn asunder. Luckily we had an Engineer Officer, a Belgian, Col Naus, I think he was a Capt Naus, but we always called him Colonel Naus because he told us he had been a Colonel in the Belgian Army, and who were we to say he wasn't. But whatever he may have been he was an excellent engineer; we gave him men and he put Coolmoney Camp back in excellent condition for us. It improved over the years and we enjoyed wonderful facilities - we had stables for horses, gun parks for guns, we had huts for men - at first we had only canvas, but we had Coolmoney House as the Officers Mess.

We went to the Glen regularly but it took us a long time to get ammunition. We had guns and we had knowledge but we couldn't start shooting practices until the ammunition arrived - eventually it did. I remember the morning the first shoot was carried out. The first round was fired at 10 o'clock on 1st September 1925, and was fired by myself to ceremoniously open it up. From there we continued to develop; anti-tank shooting became important. I remember I brought back a description of an anti-tank range from Larkhill and helped by the O/C Engineers, Comdt Jack Kineen (later Col), we built a range. It consisted of a Ball pulled by two horses and we used to have great fun with that; you'd have to see it to believe it could be possible, but that was the first Anti-Tank Range. Improvements came every year to both the range and the guns. The guns then were 18 Pounders, Marks 1 and 11.

The AA

One day we were told there were two 3 inch 20 cwt mobile and two 3 inch 20 cwt semi mobile anti-aircraft guns in Islandbridge (they had been there for a long time and nobody took notice of them). I remember getting a phone call on a Friday. It was from GHQ and that in itself was an event at the time.

The message was that I was to form an anti-aircraft battery immediately. I laughed at this when I heard it and hung up. I went next door to Comdt Paddy Maher, as he was then, and he too was amused at this order, as it was, we were short fifty men on our establishment. On Saturday morning I got another phone call to know was the battery formed yet. I said: *"It certainly isn't. I haven't the men."* Anyway I was informed I had better get it done immediately; I took no action. Monday morning I was rung again, a different voice this time, a friend, and he said: *"Paddy, have you formed that battery yet?"* I said: *"I haven't and I have no intention of doing it."* *"Well I'm telling you, you'd better get it done today"*, said the friend, *"and I'll be ringing you this afternoon and you'd better be able to tell me that the battery has been formed,"* and he hung up. I discussed the matter with Comdt Paddy Maher and we decided to appoint Lt Maurice McCarthy who had done an anti-aircraft course and Lt Jimmy Dolan as his 2 I/C. We sent them to Islandbridge Barracks; we had no idea how they were going to get the guns down or where they would bring them to but I said: **"Ye start bringing them down and we will find a place for them"**. We couldn't house them in Kildare; we had no buildings big enough, so we got permission to take over stables in Plunkett Barracks, Curragh Camp. When the guns came we directed them to Plunkett Barracks, we attached a few men under command of Lt Maurice McCarthy and so the battery was formed. Later my friend rang in the afternoon and I said: *"Yes the battery has been formed; they have an Officer Commanding, Lt Maurice McCarthy, and they are stationed in Plunkett Barracks, Curragh Camp."* *"Good"*, he said. The following day the mystery was

solved. There was a Dail question down for an answer on Tuesday by the Minister for Defence and the question was: *"It is a fact that there are guns - anti-aircraft guns - rusting in Islandbridge Barracks and there is no unit in the army to look after them"*, and the Minister was able to stand up and say that *"the answer to both questions is in the negative."* From there on the AA never looked back.

Change of Appointment

The Corps at this time was a very happy and efficient one. As a matter of fact, for its size and the number of officers in it, I don't think there was another unit in the army to compare with it. The officers had been through a great many courses as had the NCOs and Men. Now I'm talking about my own baby and every mother thinks her own is marvellous but I do think they were damn good and I hated leaving them and I did in 1935 to command the Air Corps. They were well disciplined - no doubt about that no doubt whatsoever. As a matter of fact I was often criticised by my senior friends in various parts of the army, of being too much of a disciplinarian - too much of a "spurs and Whips" but we had the kind of discipline that was not in many of the units of the army at that time and the fellows lapped it up and liked it and it made them better soldiers and much happier soldiers than some troops in other units who weren't so disciplined.

Mechanisation

We loved our horses and we hated parting with them. I never appreciated what a difference their going could make until I came back to the Corps in 1942 to take over from Col Paddy Maher, who had retired to run Shannon Airport. It was during this time as Director that full mechanisation came. I got a real surprise when we were arranging to go to the Glen for a practice shoot. I had Maj Gen Hally in, he was probably a Comdt or a Major then, to make arrangements for the move. I said: *"I suppose we'll move on Friday as usual, rest Saturday and Sunday, shoot Monday."* *"Oh no, Sir we leave at 9 o'clock Monday morning and we shoot at II!"* In my time the horses and men had to be rested. That really showed the huge change that had taken place during my sojourn with the Air Corps.

The Corps Sports

This was a two-day event and a wonderful time for everybody. The horses added to the occasion by providing such events as jumping; tent pegging and rivalry between batteries and sections was ever present. Sometimes we used to inveigle Supply and Transport to pit their horses against us. One occasion I remember, I tied with the S&T man, so there was a jump off. I was riding a lovely grey mare with a long tail, a grand jumper. In the jump off, as I was going into the "in-and-out" (quite a new thing then but quite common in Ballsbridge and other places now) I knew she was wrong; I simply threw the reins at her and said: *"You go on, you know more about this jump than I*

do" and she got through perfectly. I won the competition, and when handing over the mare to the groom, Oliver Hagens, I hadn't noticed that he was rather happy. I patted the mare and I said: *"She's a great mare Hagens."* *"She is, sir"*, says he. *"She won in spite of you"*. But they were wonderful sports. We had a musical ride which was introduced and trained by Sgt Major "Peggy" O'Neill. It took six months to train for this but it was marvellous to watch; we considered the Royal Tournament in the halfpenny place compared with ours! We built up a tradition of football and hurling that will be hard to surpass but in the final analysis I think we were better footballers.

The Blue Hussars

I must not let the opportunity pass without mentioning the Blue Hussars. They were established to provide an escort for the Papal Nuncio coming to the Congress of 1932. We were a "natural" for the job, as we had sufficient horses and riders. Col Dan Collins was in charge and he had with him Maj Gen Pat Hally and Lt Col Bill Donnelly among others and they were all fitted out in this wonderful Blue Regalia, the Busby adding another two feet of grandeur and stature. While everyone in the Escort could ride there was much rehearsal for the ceremony. I remember on one rehearsal, they had to pull up in the grounds of a hotel in Dun Laoghaire where they were to wait for some people to come. Lt Col Bill Donnelly was one of the group. They naturally attracted a lot of attention and Bill in particular. There was a group of priests looking on and suddenly one of them exclaimed: *"By God, 'tis Bill Donnelly"*, everything became natural then. The atmosphere of awe and splendour was lost for it was only Bill Donnelly from Bin!

One other incident I remember which arose from a rehearsal of the Blue Hussars for the Congress in 1932. We used to practice about 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning and were coming back from Dun Laoghaire and had arrived at Merrion Square. It was a slippery morning and I should have had more sense. I was riding a horse known as "Big Tom". I reined "Big Tom" and he fell. Fortunately he knew me as I knew him. When he fell he felt my leg under him. He momentarily lifted himself to enable me to get my leg out. Horse sensitivity was often very touching. If I may digress for a moment. I can recall many a tough character crying when his charge was being disposed of by the Remount Officer. The horses themselves knew their time had come, we had difficulty getting them out of Barracks, some of them we literally had to force out. We didn't like it but we had to. The Blue Hussars were eventually mechanised too - a cavalry motor cycle escort took over.

Guns and Howitzers

Before I left the Corps I was most anxious that we should have some Howitzers. The Secretary of the Department and I discussed the matter and it was decided that I should explain to the Minister why we needed Howitzers. We had a Minister at the time whom I knew fairly well and I knew he wouldn't be the slightest bit interested in the technical aspects, so at the interview the Secretary said: *"Tell the Minister the principal difference between an 18 Pdr and a 4.5 Howitzer."* *"Well sir; to make it clear, I think you know that it was 18 Pounders that were used against the Four Courts. It was useless using 18 Pdrs against the great walls of the Four Courts. Now if you had Howitzers with their high trajectory you would have taken the Four Courts in twenty minutes."* *"Ah be God"*, says he, *"we must get some of them."*

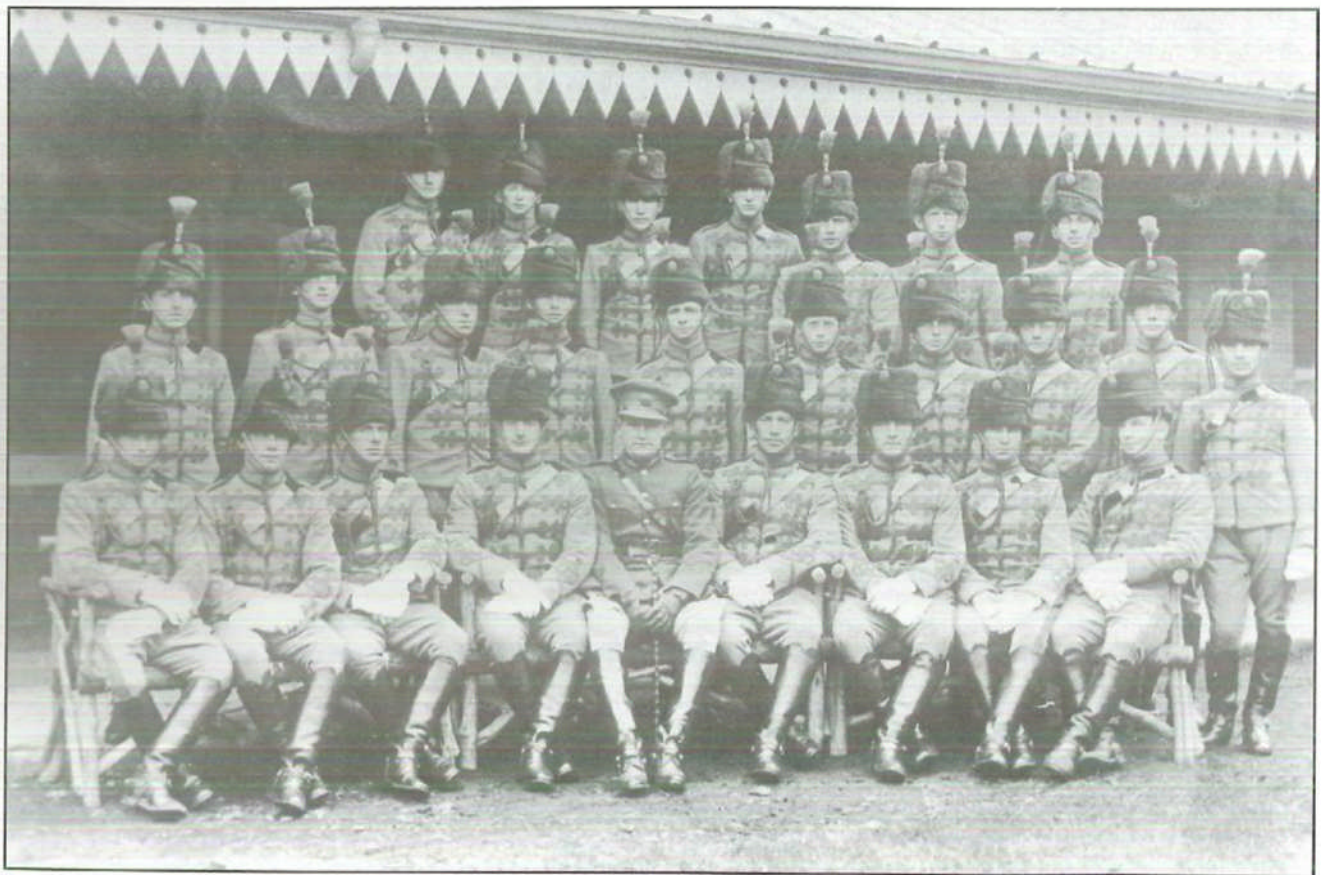
EARLY DAYS

(Sgt 'Pal' Byrne Remembers)

Ex-Sergeant John Byrne passed on these recollections to his son, Comdt Donal Byrne, 9 Regt FCA during the last weeks of April 1983. A few days later on 6 May, he departed this life, at the age of 77. The Officers, NCOs and men of the regiment, to which he gave such magnificent service, salute his memory and are proud to include his memories in their anniversary issue of An Cosantoir.

When I left Rathvilly County Carlow for Dublin in May 1922, to enlist in the Army, I had not intention of making it my career. Times were troubled and with civil strife imminent every youth felt he had to play a part on one side or the other. Rathvilly was strongly Nationalist, whether this was due to associations with Michael Dwyer and the 1798 Rebellion or the celebrations of its centenary, I do not know, but the execution of Kevin Barry, a school mate of mine, certainly fanned the flames of national awakening.

I spent the first months of the civil war escorting supplies from depots to barracks and it was not unusual to be fired on by unseen marksmen as we travelled along country roads. As the tide of war turned against the Republicans, I was sent to the Curragh to guard Republican prisoners interned in "Tin Town", a barbed wire enclosure containing galvanised iron huts. There I met neighbours, friends and relations on the other side of the barbed wire fence. Such are the fortunes of war.



"The way we were" - The Blue Hussars in Pre-Emergency pose.

Pic; Saoirse Devlin

I joined up in Portobello Barracks and in June when civil war was inevitable, a comrade and I left barracks and attempted to join the Four Courts garrison. Our offer to help the Republican cause was rejected as the Four Courts garrison was overmanned and two 'would be' rebels returned, crestfallen, to barracks to bed down with their Free State comrades. The fates had decided that I should be a Free State soldier rather than a Republican irregular. The following day I was more than just an interested spectator as I watched 18 Pdr shells bombard the Four Courts.

Train loads of prisoners from the south were detained at the railway siding at the Curragh Race Course and marched from there to "Tin Town". On one occasion as a train having brought its prisoners to the Curragh was returning to Cork, it was fired on, south of Kildare town. Following a round up on Republican activists in the Kildare area six of them were executed in the Curragh.

Having completed my two years engagement, I was demobbed and returned without regrets to civilian life.

Nevertheless I got a taste for army life, and in 1927 I re-enlisted and in 1928 I was posted to the Artillery Corps in Kildare Bks, then a hatted camp. I discovered great changes had taken place during my time out of the army. Discipline had become strict, very strict, and strictest of all in the artillery. Only the highest standards of training, drill and dress were tolerated and woe-betide he who was lax or sloppy. But we soon became accustomed to this new army style as we felt that it made us better soldiers and a better unit and in our knee britches, long leggings and leather bandoliers we felt that we were the pride of the army.



*John ("Pal") Byrne
in the uniform of the Blue Hussars c. 1937*

There was never a dull moment in the Artillery Corps, the horses saw to that. I don't wish to do an injustice to anyone but I feel that the horses were at least as important as the artillery. With over a hundred horses on our establishment, much time was spent on their care and welfare and also on the care and maintenance of their harness and accoutrements. Many an hour was spent shaking up and down sand bags filled with the metal parts of harness to rid them of the rust which appeared overnight.

The Corps was much in demand for ceremonial and festive occasions, St. Patrick's Day Parades, Easter festive Parades, Bodenstown and the Corps Sports where a musical ride, which took six months to perfect, was

performed. And then of course there was our annual visit to Glen of Imaal for firing practices. How the iron shod hooves and iron shod wheels of the 18 Pdrs rang out as the limbers went rolling along.

The highlight of my time in Kildare was the formation of the Blue Hussars and such a body of men has never been seen before or since in the Irish Army, with their light blue breeches and tunic with gold facings and dark busbies with orange plumes. The Hussars were established as an escort for the Papal Nuncio coming to the Congress in 1932. We rehearsed by day and by night and were given the stamp of approval by President de Valera when he inspected us in McKee Barracks. After our first public appearance as escort for Papal Nuncio Cardinal Lauri we provided escorts for many distinguished dignitaries.

In July 1938 it was good-bye to Kildare as I set out with trepidation for Spike Island. Spike Island heretofore had been unknown to me and I visualised it as a barren rock somewhere in the Atlantic. Not an appealing picture for one who knew nothing of the sea. But it was a proud day for me, when I saw the tricolour being hoisted over Fort Westmoreland for the first time and the Union Jack being lowered for the last. Then it was on to Bere Island for the handing over of the Ports there in September 1938.

I was now in Coast Defence Artillery and what I had learned of artillery in Kildare was now of little use. We had to start from scratch to master the intricacies of the 6 inch guns at Fort Lonehurt Battery and how well we succeeded can be judged by the fact that we were on a war time footing when World War 11 broke out. Duty on the Island was interesting and varied. Apart from the day to day training on the guns, boarding parties were provided for ships seeking temporary shelter in Berehaven and search parties were sent to locate the wrecks of strayed war planes which had crashed in the West Cork mountains. All our training activities were geared towards winning the Dunboy Trophy which was competed for by the various forts along the coast. Great was our pride where Bere island won the trophy due to a particularly successful night shoot. The people of the Island were the friendliest and most genuine I ever met and friendships I made then continue to this day.

In September 1946 I was posted to the 4th Fd Arty Regt at Columb Bks Mullingar and soon after the forts at Bere Island were closed down and the guns put in care and preservation. It was with sadness that the Islanders saw the departure of the troops from their Island, the same troops they had welcomed so gladly only eight years before. With the troops went the Island's greatest industry. The Island's economy was heavily dependent on the military presence which provided employment where it was scarce and generated business where none would have existed. Also to suffer was the Island's social life and entertainment which revolved around the films, dances, dramas, concerts and whist drives which were all organised by the army.

In Mullingar I was back again in the Field Artillery but the intervening years had changed its nature, gone were the horses which had taken a day to travel from Kildare to the Glen of Imaal. Now it was possible to travel from Mullingar to the Glen, fire and return the same day. But my visits to the Glen became less frequent as I more or less settled in as Mess Caterer in both the Officers and NCOs Messes.



Trumpeter W Lennon - 1935

To this day I don't know what motivated me to volunteer for service in the Congo with the Heavy Mortar Troop in 1962. Maybe it was because I thought that garrison life had become too "cushie" and I wanted something more exciting or maybe it was because it presented the opportunity of seeing my eldest son Sean, who was an Inspector in the Northern Rhodesian Police Force. With the 38 Inf Bn both wishes were fulfilled. The reunion with Sean almost took place at Christmas for while he was stationed at Ndola just over the border from the Congo, I was less than a mile away on the other side having seen action with the UN troops who captured Simba Hill and taken Kipushi. However, the meeting did not take place. The gunners were ordered back to Elizabethville and then eastwards to Jadotville and further east to Kolwezi. All seemed lost but the story was to have a happy ending. Soon I was back in Elizabethville and Sean arrived there for a happy reunion on St. Patrick's Day 1963.

On returning from the Congo it was time to look towards retirement and when I finally retired in 1965 it was not without fond memories tinged with sadness. I did not completely sever connections with Columb Bks, as I always felt sure of a warm welcome whenever I returned to the NCOs Mess and I have a great affection for the Garrison Church which I visit each Sunday. An army connection is maintained through my sons C/S Lorcan Byrne 4th Fd Coy AOC and Comdt Donal Byrne (FCA) OC 20th Bty, now a battery of the 9th Fd Arty Regt but until 1946 a battery of the 4th Fd Arty Regt.

The army has been good to me and to my family. Through it I met Officers, NCOs and men the likes of whom it would have been my privilege to meet anywhere else. It gave me the opportunity of leading a full and active life and it provided the means of rearing and educating my family. So now like all old soldiers I will just fade away to await the immortal trumpeter to sound his final reveille.

USE OF ARTILLERY IN THE CIVIL WAR (1922-23)

By Lt Col J.P. Duggan (Retd)

'There were enormous casualties on both sides in the American Civil War (1861-1865). In the Federal Armies there were 359,523 dead and 275,175 wounded. In the Confederate Forces 258,000 dead and 225,000 wounded.

The American Army emphasised the value of history in military instruction: therefore their Civil War is closely studied in their educational establishments. The

The War of Brothers

Two substantial histories on our own Civil War have already been written: one by Eoin Neeson¹ and the other by Calton Younger². A third by Michael Hopkinson was published by Gill and Macmillan this Autumn. It 'aims to adopt a fresh and scholarly approach and to place the conflict in a wide 20th Century Irish context'. This article

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Gun history sheet of one of the guns used in the Four Courts Bombardment. pic - Military Archives

campaigns also feature regularly over the years on our own Command and Staff School syllabi. A former well known School Commandant, the late Col Tom Feeley, was a great admirer of 'Stonewall' Jackson whose dictum was to 'mystify and mislead the enemy'. (How that would operate in a psychological warfare situation in a Glasnost context is a passing quibble). Generals Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant were equally clinically dissected not only for leadership lessons but also for, among other things, tactical, logistical and technological lessons (it was the first war to extensively use the railways, the telegraph, rifled ordnance, machine guns, war correspondents, proper medical care, aerial reconnaissance, land mines, sea mines and even a submarine!). There is a lot of food for thought there for the military student. Marshal Foch said that no study is possible on the battlefield: 'One does there simply what one can do in order to apply what one knows'.

aims only to examine very broadly the employment of artillery in that war and put forward for discussion the thesis that it was the employment of the artillery arm that tipped the scales of combat in various engagements throughout the erratic campaign.

As de Valera put it, the 'Free State Government had the equipment including cannon³. General Liam Lynch put all his hopes in the acquisition of mountain artillery⁴ phantom hope' de Valera called it). Lynch felt that even one mobile gun would make all the difference, though when a piece was captured in Dundalk in August 1922 it was put out of action⁵ rather than used.

J.T. Ryan ("Jetter") was negotiating for the mountain artillery - (3.7s presumably) - in the US and Germany and Lynch hoped to land them by submarine on the west

coast⁶. (I always somehow-ramblingly associate 3.7 Hows with the late Comdt Pierce Wall, a fine upstanding officer, and the late Sgt Major Downey who had seen active service with 'K' Battery in Vimy Ridge in WWI. On another note, the renowned outstanding guerrilla warfare leader General Tom Barry also fought with the British Army in WWI. He took the anti-Treaty side. That other legendary guerrilla fighter - the man who provided the blueprint for other countries fighting for their freedoms - fellow Corkman Michael Collins, took the Treaty side. That was the savage cruelty of Civil War. It was 'The War of Brothers'⁷).

The troops attacking the Four Courts at the outbreak of the Civil War (June 28 1922) were under Comdt Tom Ennis and the Artillery was under the command of Comdt General Emmet Dalton, an officer with wartime experience in France. He took over "the necessary pieces of artillery" from the British - four 18 Pounder guns (see Gun History Sheet)⁸. Tony Lawlor, an ex-Royal Flying Corps man, brought up an old 15 Pounder horse artillery piece left behind by the British in Athlone⁹. Dalton had ten shrapnel shells per gun. He had asked for HE but did not get them. Shrapnel was less effective against buildings (property). The shells eventually cracked a wall to breach the defences and the Four Courts fell to an assault party. These guns, which won the battle for the Four Courts, went on to achieve the same results against a reconstituted force in O'Connell St. An 18 Pounder was brought up to do the dislodging.

Campaign in the Country

The encircling forces which later cleared up the Blessington area were also equipped with artillery. In the west, Gen Sean McEoin regularly called up his ancient 18 Pounder to settle the tussle. In the battle for Waterford, Cpl 'Paky' Paul (well known to a later generation of Orderly Officers when he was Camp Commandant in McKee Bks) was directing the shelling and a 'near miss' hit his own house! It was an eighteen pounder which breached the jail walls there and forced the defenders to surrender. In Limerick it was the same story. It was the arrival of the artillery that ended the anti-Treaty occupation of the city (July 18 1922). Strand Bks was shelled front and back before the defenders surrendered. The historic King John's Castle was the next to be shelled. Then came the Ordnance Bks in Musgrave Street and strongholds in William Street. The main body withdrew and 'dug in' in Bruree and Killmallock. Shrapnel silenced the opposition in Quarry Hill outside Killmallock and it

was estimated that casualties were very high¹⁰. The difference was that one side had artillery and the other had not. There are many more instances of a well placed 18 Pounder shell deciding the issue. By the way, though of course there is no comparison in scale, the Federal Artillery was also superior to the Confederates. Failure to employ it properly however sometimes negated that advantage. In April 1863 when Lee turned the tables on

Hooker after the latter seemed to have out-manoeuvred him, "Fighting Joe" lost his cool and pulled back to Chancellorsville in the Wilderness where he could not effectively employ his superior fire power. Proper Reconnaissance, Selection and Occupation of a Position in fundamental: The old RSOP. As Von Moltke is alleged to have snapped when asked his opinion about the beautiful countryside through which they were journeying: "Not much good for Artillery"! That was his litmus test for scenery.!

A Tall Tale

Those historic 18 Pounder pieces all had lives and personalities of their own. The brothers Doyle, Commandants Johnny and 'Webley' from the sister Ordnance Corps, had many a tale to racyly tell. In another part of the field the story goes that a piece went missing once in the early days. Bit by bit it was painstakingly 'written off'. Then to the Board of Survey's consternation it turned up out of the blue and the process had to be reversed. Ledger rules OK! Probably only a yarn? But there were great characters in the 'tillery in them days. Capt Bertie Thompson captured some of them in his wicked caricatures.

No End of a Lesson

On both sides of the Civil War there were outstanding characters. Young men of great talents and bright visions. Ni bheidh a leitheid ann axis. The Civil War was a tragedy that blighted lives and promise. But that can't stop us from critically analysing any military lessons that might be there to be learned. Indeed it is our distasteful duty to detachedly and objectively do so. Before we rush to blame establishments for looking the other way and neglecting to promote a military study of the Civil War its as well to remember that a group of Command and Staff students did present a symposium on it in the Sixties. Time for another? Ni he la na gaoithe la na scolb!

Michael Hopkinson - something to look forward to opens with the following quotation from F.S. L. Lyons 'Ireland Since the Famine'.

'It was an episode which had burned so deep into the heart and mind of Ireland that it is not possible for the historian to approach it with the detached knowledge or the objectivity which it deserves and sooner or later must have. So many of the divisions and hatreds that were to scar the political and social life of Ireland for the next two decades - and are visible even today - stem from those months of internecine warfare that charity and the interests of truth demand a certain reticence about events which are still felt so profoundly and yet so little understood in their inner meaning'.

Let Calton Younger have the last word at this stage. Commenting on the Republicans failure to secure the critical terrain feature, Mount Misery, in the assault in Waterford he said:-

Perhaps they reckoned without Prouts 18 Pounder, one of the hardy pieces which, inexpertly handled though they were, contributed to the ultimate success of the National Army in the Civil War' 11.

Notes

1. The Civil War in Ireland by Eoin Neeson. The Mercier Press 1966./
2. Ireland's Civil War' by Calton Younger. Frederick Muller 1968.
3. Eamon de Valera by Longford and O'Neill. Arrow 1974, p.197.
4. Ibid p.218.
5. The Civil War in Ireland' op cit p.131.
6. Michael Hopkinson's Work: Part V 'The Wars End'.
7. Eamon de Valera by Longford and O'Neill, op cit. Chapter 16.
8. Gun History Sheet of one of the guns used in Four Courts Bombardment by courtesy Comdt P. Young, Army Archives who received from from Col Ivor Noone.
9. Ireland's Civil War op cit p. 312.
10. The Civil War in Ireland' op cit p. 139.
11. Ireland's Civil War' op cit p. 382.

WALK / MARCH

An affectionate look back at the Horse Days

By Comdt Tom Maher (Retd)

Horses? In the Artillery Corps? Today it is like looking at a Hat

Knapping through the wrong end of a binoculars. Nonetheless, it is a time well remembered as a joust with another form of living in the mid-thirties. Working with army horses helped create many cherished and particularly pleasant memories.

It was sergeant John Kennedy who first regaled me with his stories. John was Training NCO for the Third Light Artillery Battery Volunteer Force in Kilkenny. A photograph he treasured was one of the gun carriage carrying the remains of General Michael Collins and, sure enough, there he was, a prominent figure in the cortege. In his care in Kilkenny Barracks were the two 18-Pounder guns used in the attack on the Four Courts. His dress was to me spectacular. So, I called on Capt Martin Bates the Area Administrative Officer for the Volunteer Force. It was 1935. Not too long after Christmas, I, with a few others, left for the Artillery Barracks, Kildare in an army truck.

In charge was Corporal Daffy. Instead of being seated in his rightful place in the cab, he joined us in the back of the truck and enthused all about the Corps, the guns, the training, the horses. Horses? This was a matter of excitement and anticipation. "Ah No!" said Corporal Daffy, "there will be no horses on initial training. It's only 28 days". Dismay! There was snow on the ground in Kildare. In the middle of the town was the Kremlin we imagined. Spirits were high with anticipation.

In Hut No 11 we met our new hut mates, some from Derry but mostly from other parts nearer home. The day of arrival was devoted to preliminaries like talks on daily routine, bed making down and making up, falling-in, saluting, bounds and so on. Not a word about horses nor did we see one.

After tea we all tramped back to Hut No 11, made down our beds and chatted-up each other as to where we came from, etc. Mention of Kilkenny brought hurling stories about Lowry Meagher and the great players of the day. Some left to see the sights of Kildare Town.

"Is Tommy Maher here?" a voice said at the hut door. When the regular soldier came nearer in the dim light of 15 watt bulbs it became at once a childhood friend and neighbour, one Gerry McMurrugh of Nore Terrace,

Kilkenny. I was delighted to see him and later his younger brother Johnny, who was in the 3rd Battalion. The Gerry in short pants of long ago had a notorious talent for pranks. I was often the butt of his yarns and tricks but we enjoyed each other's company nonetheless.

While Driver Gerry (a horse soldier was called 'Driver' in the Corps) and I talked about long ago while sitting on the McDonnell Slider iron bed and the coir mattress in two halves called biscuits. Time went on and suddenly Gerry stood up saying, "What hut is this"? loud enough for all to hear.

"It's No 11", a few of the inmates said. The rest stopped polishing. "Well" said Gerry, "I wouldn't sleep in this hut and no one else in this barracks would either". Dead silence. A meek voice said "Why"?

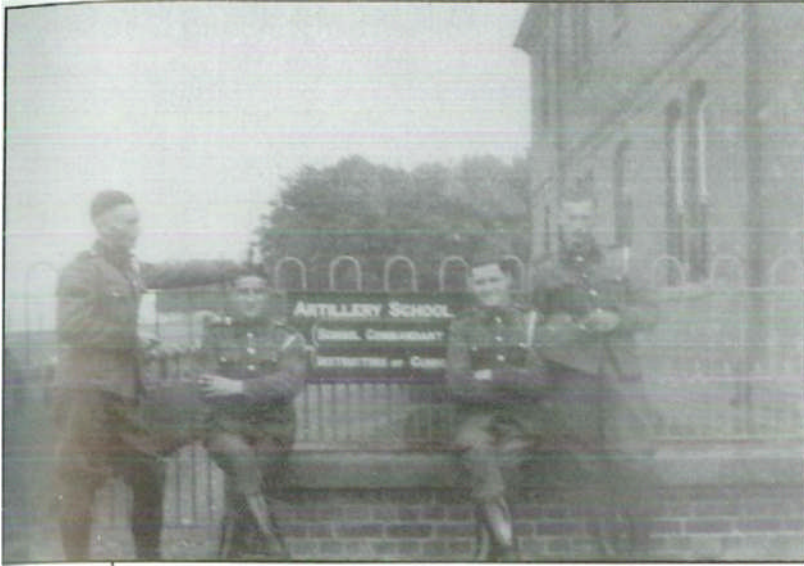
"Well" said Gerry, in a voice borrowed from Andrew McMaster, "It seems a Private in the 12th Hussars used sleep in this hut. he lost his head in the charge of the Light Brigade, the poor fellow. His horse died of a broken heart and at certain times, he comes around the hut looking for his master. They say anyone who ever saw the ghost horse dies of a pain in the neck. But, sure all that was in auld God's time."



Horses? In the Artillery Corps?

Normal hut life and subdued chat resumed. Suddenly a horse appeared in the hut, did a little turn between the stoves like in a circus ring and trotted out the door at the other end as the back door miraculously opened for it.

"Hey, what horse was that"? Gerry turned around slowly "What horse are you talking about"? Stunned silence was followed by grown up giggles. Well, ghost or no ghost we saw our first artillery horse.



Outside the Artillery School

That moment of drama over we learned from Gerry McMurrough and his accomplice that this horse was called Duffy, having in his early life had service in Duffy's Circus, and was used in a clown act by that famous institution, so he said.

Next morning all Volunteers on initial training were divided between four 4.5" Howitzers placed on the edge of the parade ground and two 18 Pounders. We had our first introduction to parts, workings, ammunition and fire power. As a Volunteer was about to ask a question all heads turned in the direction of the sound of hooves. Trotting on to the dirt square was a team of six horses hauling a gun followed by a team of four horses hauling an ammunition wagon. Each team had an outrider. This was a subsection and was followed by three more subsections. The soldiers riding the left hand horses and the same with the ammo limbers were, to us, brilliant in their shining appearance. Two officers with clip boards stood at the edge of the square. Tests seemed to be of driving drill, dropping the guns into action stations and so on. The square was alive as three more subsections were tested. During the lecture the scene grabbed attentive glances. Not one of us had seen the like before. We agreed we now felt we belonged to something real and exciting. "Did you never see a horse before", the corporal said sharply. "Now pay attention if you want to pretend to be soldiers."

After tea the whole membership of Hut No 11 and No 12 trooped across to the stables to see those horses - greys, duns, bays, dark browns and blacks. Secured with block and chain to the mangers, each had room to swing its head around, look at our strange uniforms and studiously ignore us.

A sign of changing times descended on the trainees when we were switched in the third week from 4.5" Howitzers to a new weapon. A sergeant introduced us to them in the barrack field. He said "now you are going to make a piece of artillery corps history, you fellows will be first, the very first to fire the 81mm Brandt Stokes Mortar". We did. We fired blanks. The blanks shot out and fell in the middle of the field to all-round amusement.

In the midst of it all we got a visit from the Chief of Staff, Major General Michael Brennan, old IRA Veteran, friend of Dev and a Clareman as well. The more informed lads referred to him familiarly as Mick, because of the War of Independence background mainly. We felt honoured to see him.

The mortar training made one ponder on the possible truth of army stories one heard. The third light battery of the Ossory Regiment in Kilkenny City was designated for 3.7" Howitzers on paper but the guns used there for training were 18 Pounders. The month ended on 81mm mortars and not a chance of getting up on a horse in the 28 days.

On returning to Kilkenny I got a message from Captain Martin Bates, the AAO to call to see him. "Come in, sit down. I want you to go on an NCO course. Its three months. In the meantime you have been elected to the Sluagh Committee to represent the lads. Dances are held on Tuesdays in the barracks. We have a committee to run them but you'll do that and collect the money, six pence for girls and a shilling for men. Let me see now, what else do I want to talk to you about. Ah yes I have got from the top, a list of songs for all volunteer areas. The song for Ossory Regiment is, ah yes, 'Follow Me Up to Carlow', I am sure you know it. For the next week-end coming you'll polish it up and be ready to teach it to the lads". All I can say today is that the 'interview' is the secret of how I came to sing 'Follow me up to Carlow' as a party piece evermore.

Off I went to Kildare on the NCO Course. It was a revelation, much of it was taken up with subjects like equitation, stable management, control of horse drawn gun teams and duties of the No 1 in action. The people on the course came from many parts of the country but also Regulars from the Artillery Corps itself like Driver Jim Sinnott who retired as Sergeant Major IVFA Regiment and Cook Joe Hall who retired as the eminent NCO Chef at the Officers Mess in Magee Artillery Barracks for many decades. The first day was an introduction to the riding school and to an assigned horse each. The horse just had on his head a halter, no bit, no reins, no saddle. The riding school floor was covered with what seemed to be a foot of turf mould in the form of fine grains of dust. When I say "mount", said Sergeant Hall, "you do what I

say - *Mount*". There was mock menace at it. We, of the Volunteer Force, looked at each other in shock. The horses just kept moving when we tried to get up on them. All the Regulars were aloft by simply giving each other a leg up. Eventually the last one came across to us and gave us a leg up. How he got up himself remained a mystery.

human endeavour in this life. At the end of the next period the instructor tapped on Jim Sinnott's shoulder who then went to a small room and returned with bridle and leather piece with two loops called a vaulting pad. These were put on his horse. Jim mounted. On a signal to move, he cantered around the area, jumped off and let the horse go



Subsection of 1st Fd Bty, 1st FA Brigade c. 1956 - No.1 Sgt Jim Sexton

Pic; Comdt Tom Maher

"Now", said Sergeant Hall, the quintessential Artillery Sergeant, "*Fold your arms high like this*". He let a 'quiet' descend on the riding school building before giving the next order. "*When I order 'forward' hold tight with your knees and press your heels against the animals flanks*". The order came with the crack of a whip against the woodwork. Within three horse lengths forward every one of us was lying on the ground covered with mould. Turf in our eyes and up our noses. Dismounting without an order was, we were told, an offence against good order and military discipline, punishable with death no less. The horses? Well they just stopped and looked on with indifference. The Regulars stayed aloft, to our admiration and annoyance.

Inside the programmed hour, when the first shock was over, learning to ride bareback with 'no hands' was hilarious and enjoyable. The horses continued at trotting pace even if sometimes one rider fell off, getting back onto a moving back was the beginning and end of all

on. He got on his back by running alongside and getting astride with the same ease as a trick rider in a circus. Then followed standing on the bare back, sitting, turning around and riding backwards. It was a brief, powerful performance. The the time the three months were over, we were not asked to do the like, but we all just got good at riding. Incidentally that artillery corps vaulting team was a huge attraction at horse shows and festivals during 'the Thirties.

By the end of the first weeks we had learned that the artillery horse was of the light draught category. If you looked closely here and there it has four legs - one left fore, one right, one left back and one right back. A nose band or halter was used in the stable and a bridle, reins, saddle and sursingle on duty. A folded brown blanket was placed under the saddle. We knew how and when the horse responded to spur and whip signals. On a lecture tour through the stables we came across Driver Gerry McMurrough again. There he was in his sleeveless

greyback shirt grooming horses with curry comb and dandy brush. A Derry lad was moved to ask a question.

"Eh, where did all these horses come from?" Gerry said, "The answer to that question is counties like Wexford, Tipperary and Cork Well, the best ones come from Kilkenny. Did you know that Kilkenny horses are very intelligent animals, much smarter than monkeys!"

"How's that?"

"Well it's this way. When the No 1 gives an order 'walk/march', to the team in harness Kilkenny horses always step off with the left hoof Isn't that right Tommy?". I nodded. The rest pondered the issue.

Learning all about stable management at NCO level, feeding, grooming, the difference between horses and mares, ages and faults. Equitation was a great subject. A time was devoted every day to going over jumps. No one was allowed to take a horse over 4'6" except on those occasions when no officer was present. Sometimes my allotted horse was a big grey called 'Big Tom'. Big Tom needed no urging to have a go at any height on a round. He blew woofa, woofa, woofa so loud you could hear him a mile away. That how I knew he held his breath going over just like a human.

Subjects like gunnery and other matters so pertaining are only obliquely remembered except one. The lecturer was a Lieut Donagh. No one other than this clean-cut much admired officer could inject quiet enthusiasm, real fascination and oral skill into an important military subject like cess-pits, latrine sites and sources of clean water. "Yeah that fellow should go far"

Officers, NCOs and Men wore brass arm badges on a red background affixed to upper left arm. These little items were impressive. A farrier wore a horse shoe, a layer wore a capital L like a sign for a £ and so far as I can remember, a driver wore a horses head. On the gun team the wheel driver wore a steel legging which was an iron bar padded and attached from under the knee with leather straps. Rifle knee scabbards for riding were available in stores but not ordinarily used. There was a touch of cowboy stories about the saddle which had a pommel and pintle. The daily stable inspection caused Company Sergeant Downey to report to Captain Wall, the Battery Commander, something like "*Block C twenty horses accounted for, nineteen fit for duty, one fit, one dead*". It seems that when a horse died it remained on the strength until 31st March when it was written off. A horse was sick if the vet Comdt Heffernan was called to look at something which troubled a No 1.

In government, President De Valera was well into his stride and addicted to pronouncements about how Ireland could be self-sufficient. One of these was the idea that people should turn to eating brown bread instead of white bread and drink a light beer. Whatever about the light beer the Army responded with undue haste to test brown bread

on the soldiers in Kildare barracks. The Army's own bakery in the Curragh Camp baked long pans for use with 100% bran. The moment one put a knife and butter on a slice the middle fell out onto the tin plate. Hunger forced diners to mix butter with the crumbs like mixing cement and eat it with a spoon. The other solution was to collect the bran crumbs and take them to a favourite horse as a tit-bit. The volunteers led the near mutinous protests which brought the Barrack Quartermaster Captain Tom Lambert, and other top officers to the dining room to maintain calm. When we left home we heard that Mr. De Valera's idea had been abandoned until the 'technique' was improved. The truth is that the Army's bakery beside the Curragh Cinema was a top class one always

Soon after the NCO Course I was promoted Corporal in the local unit and nominated for the next Officers Course which meant more horse business and gunnery in depth as well. One Easter Sunday I got a message to be ready in uniform to go to Cork. For what purpose I did not know but I left Kilkenny on an army truck for the 90 plus mile journey. The Easter 1916 Commemoration Parade was mustering on Easter Monday morning in Collins Barracks when I heard my name called. I found I was to act as lead driver to A Subsection of the Local Volunteer Force Artillery Battery. It would be my first public participation on a six-horse gun team and was truly memorable. In front of me and leading the way was Captain Trodden as Battery Commander and behind him was a newly commissioned V.F. Officer. Two decades later a fellow officer was enthusing about that parade in particular, so I put in my tuppence worth. "Oh yes, I remember that parade well because I was lead driver A Subsection. I was sent for". He exploded in anger. "*Ridiculous man, that didn't happen, what would you have to do with Cork? Impossible*". And worse. So the next day, I brought in a photograph. There I was tall in the saddle like John Wayne right behind Captain Trodden on his charger in Patrick Street. It must have been an important event after all.

The Potential Officers Course took place at Plunkett Barracks. The Artillery School of the day consisted of a staff of two. The School Commandant was Captain Denis Coady and his right hand man was Sergeant Frank Whitty, afterwards Sergeant Major and later Captain. In retrospect I feel that the combination of talents in these two men was astounding. The School and our living quarters were on that side of Plunkett Officers Mess facing the 'Plains', the Artillery School was simply two rooms marked 'servants quarters'.

The four months intensive course was of true quality, that is, compared with any others. There were only five students on it. Captain Coady, another Kilkenny man, exuded professionalism and talked with authority rather than lectured. Sergeant Whitty, who had a confident air, lectured and acted as administrator. He made friends with us all. Lt Col Coady was my CO some years later in Dublin and Mullingar.

Horses were part of the course including equitation. The exploits of the Irish Army Jumping Team in Toronto, New York, London and other great cities touched us mightily as the Artillery Corps was deeply invollied. One discovery reduced me a little. I always romantically thought of officers chargers and visualised a hussar officer charging into the valley of death waving his sword and riding way out front. Ah no, an officer went to the Quartermaster and signed for a horse which now was 'on charge' to him. He could ride to hounds with the Naas Harriers on his charger and use it as he wished.

Just below Plunkett Barracks a compound of small buildings housed the Naas Harriers Hounds traditionally associated with the army in County Kildare. It was a knacker's yard as well. When a dead animal was cut up and boiled the smell lay like a visible pall over Plunkett and Connolly.

We dined in the Sergeants Mess and engaged in the pleasantries of talking about horses, artillery and racing. Questions were always answered by motivated men, some oldish, some ex-British Army, some former Old IRA men and some National Army. Sergeant Major Cummings sat at his reserved table at the end of the room. His authoritative figure was straight out of Gilbert and Sullivan - the very model of a modern Sergeant Major. At breakfast on the first morning he roared "boy". The elderly waiter staggered back. The Sergeant Major again roared "a clean cup at once" and, with his two hands, broke a cracked cup in two pieces. The great man pitched the two pieces over his shoulder to fall where they may amongst the diners behind him. However, both Sergeant Major Cummings and portly BQMS McCabe were kind and responsive to our needs. So too were all NCOs we had dealings with during the four months.

At home while well on the way with arrangements for our commissioning day I decided to join the Regular Army. On the train to Kildare with me were Johnny O'Keefe who also joined on the same day. Many years later Sergeant O'Keefe was my right hand man on FCA Training in the Midland Area. Meeting occasionally after mass in Mullingar since retiring we often talk about the horse days. He reminded me about Pigeon, a notorious pest of a horse in the 4th Battery. One of Pigeon's favourite acts was to grab a passer-by by the shoulder and not let go. The trick made feeding him difficult and needed special techniques. It was a nasty way of Pigeon showing her love for the hand that fed her.

The time spent in the First Field Artillery Brigade commanded by Brigade Commander Captain Dick Callanan was for me crowded with little or big events which fed the memory. I was promoted Acting Corporal but could not be promoted substantively because I had not done a Regular Army Course and wasn't sent to one because I already had done one successfully. From Gunner to No 1 meant I could pick and choose a horse for myself. My Army Number was 77177 so I picked 177

named Jenny. Corporal Tom Walsh's horse number was 789. His own number was 10-11-12.

In the Regular Army training with horses was now very different from the Volunteer Force. Reveille was at 6.30 a.m. to the sound of a trumpet and 7 a.m. for the Infantry next door in Connolly to the sound of a bugle. The sounds of the two musical instruments were easily recognised being quite tonally different. Horses were watered and fed before the 3rd Battalion got up out of bed. Rain or snow, cooks brought buckets of tea to the horse troughs - for us not them.

Coming back one day from leave in Kilkenny I got off my bike in the lines and listened. The silence was eerie. Plunkett barracks, I quickly found out, was in quarantine. My third battery comrades came out onto the balconies and laughed their heads off, they knew what I didn't know. I was the only one free to feed, groom and exercise 45 horses or thereabouts.

Captain Wall joined me, if I may put it that way. Pleasant man as he was, he insisted on trotting, dismounting, walking. Although I was the only one he called the orders as if all his command were present. I still hear the cultured accept "W-a-a-l-k your horses". Many years later with the Emergency behind us I met him in O'Connell Street and with pleasure we remembered events. Once a horse soldier, always a horse soldier, Incidentally, "Walk your horses" meant dismount and lead them on foot whether in rain or snow.

Next day I took the horses out on my own. Two at a time, then three to speed things up. The extra two had only their headgear on and halter and chain, no bit. I dismounted to adjust the sursingle. The moment I let go the chains my two four legged friends dashed away across the plains of the Curragh. This was a problem. Coming up near one from behind he bucked with his back legs and a hoof grazed my ear. Dangerous. having learned something from reading 'Buffalo Bill's Weekly' I trotted around in a circle getting closer and closer each time until a chance came to reach down and grab a chain. After that episode I always fitted a bridle and reins.

The quarantine term did not finish without a few days heavy rain. The doctor admitted me to the Curragh Hospital with a had cold where I was put on No 1 Diet. Chicken every day in various guises plus medication. It was good, restful and a relief to take up reading books and magazines again.

One day Captain B.S.C. Thomson arrived at my bedside to see how I was. He took a pad out of his pocket and a black crayon pencil. While maintaining a pleasani chat he pencilled away and handed me the finished drawing. I recognised it was a work of art and thanked him. I kept it in my kit to bring home in due time but it drifted away amid all changes of the day. Ever since I retired I've searched on old books and albums for it but alas. That

drawing showed me resting with one elbow on the pillow and the other hand on my head.

August-September was a popular period of annual training for the Reserves. The Volunteer Force, artillery officers and men, came to the Curragh for annual training in 1938. The first week was to be spent under canvas at K Lines near Pearse, Barracks and the second week in Coolmoney Camp. No sooner had they settled down in tents and bivouacs than the rain started in downpours with no sign of stopping on the second day. There was no order to return to barracks until a VF Officer (it was rumoured) rang the Minister to tell him that they were soaked and had no change of clothes. The message came late at night. Within minutes the camp was deserted, leaving everything behind including us few Regulars. The result was a disaster for the few of us assigned to helping out. Right through the night we worked returning horses, guns and instruments. The horses were contrary because none of us knew exactly which horse was lead, centre, wheel, right or left. It was a flaw in corps horse training. The journey was mainly the length of Collins Road to Plunkett Barracks. We returned to the bivouac area running back on foot each time but at least we knew we had something to change into afterwards. Imagine being the one and only driver on a six-horse gun team and the devils fighting with each other in sheets or rain on a pitch black night. Just imagine it twice over at K Lines.

Training began to fill a gap in the Captain's Escort, better known as the Blue Hussars. Drills and evolutions took place on the Curragh Plains, watched with interest by many people including schools of riders from the many racing stables.

An exercise in horse control was to field 40 horses in line, each a horse width apart. A lance was issued to each of us leaving one with one hand on the reins. Sergeant Sexton ordered the line to advance with other NCOs behind, warning to keep the line straight. When "left wheel" was ordered the left horse so turned in its own ground as to be hardly noticeable. The right hand horse cantered. The rest conformed suitably. It was, we were told, quite a sight to see as there was no bulge in the line.

We learned about the role of the front and rear troops vis-à-vis the position of 'Personage's Carriage' ('VIP' had not been invented) and what would happen if the Personage was in danger. Also, we were exercised in 'tent pegging' with the lances - well just once away. This consisted of pieces of wood stuck at a slant in the ground to which we cantered and endeavoured to stick the lance in one. The word 'canter' was begot from an expression by pilgrims on the dirt paths to Canterbury Cathedral before Henry VIII betrayed his trust.

The battery was scheduled to leave early on Monday morning for Coolmoney Camp. Coming in on the Sunday night my bed was occupied by a stranger. That was par for the course so CQMS Keneavy gave me his key to the

store. Locking the door on the inside I fell fast asleep and awoke to find the battery had gone for over an hour. I met Mick Scullion, the farrier who was a friend. He told me there was a horse in the battery stable. It was 'Duffy' who, he said had a limp and was left behind but not to mind that. (Incidentally, Mick was killed in the Glen of Imaal explosion). So I saddled him up and fitted a bridle and reins and set off on four feet to catch up if I could.- Well, Duffy acted as if he were going on his holidays, with the tail up and a prancing gait he took off, then sometimes walking (4 mph) and sometimes cantering on the grass margins.

It always took two days for a horse drawn battery to get to the Glen of Imaal. The overnight bivouac area was in parkland entered by a recessed gate. The horse had had his breakfast but I hadn't. I had two pennies and bought a bar of chocolate in Kilcullen whole holding on to the reins. As soon as I tore off the paper Duffy grabbed the chocolate with his foamy lips and then dropped it on the sandy ground. For the rest of the journey, he paid for it. Limp or no limp, I turned in the gate having seen the bivvys over the wall but Duffy came to a dead stop. He must have felt cheated. The lads came to the gate with unhelpful suggestions and large grins. I got down and tried to haul him in but there was not a budge, only a back away. Company Sergeant Downey came on the scene. "Ride him down the road and back again passing the gate. Jump off and back him up". It worked. I removed the saddle and sursingle and he broke away only to happily run to his stable pals tethered under a tree.

Whitestown Hill is located where the road to the Glen joins the Baltinglass Road. It used to be known as Subsection Hill because horsedrawn guns were allowed to go ahead only one at a time. A Gunner jumped down and acted as brakeman. The brake wheel was located behind the gun shield. Firing practices took place and we returned without incident. All the horses were completely indifferent to the big bangs.

An ominous sign for those of us enjoying life with horses came one day. Two special detachments were formed. We travelled a short distance bringing only drag ropes. It was a wooded area and standing there were two 18 Pounders with rubber wheels. Also present were two foreign looking suited men, senior artillery officers and ordnance officers. It was a test of the Canadian built Parry Martin Adapters or so we were informed. Our job was to test the rubber wheels on rough ground and awkward terrain. It proved to be sweaty work. Somehow it seemed the centuries of horses hauling guns just might be coming to an end.

The week or so before St. Patrick's Day in 1939 was a sad one. Many artillery horses were taken over by Horse Transport Section of S and T Corps. We brought the remainder to Dublin by road. The auction took place in McKee Barracks. I had some kind of job standing near the stables as a pointsman for would be purchasers, catalogue

in hand, I directed enquiries. Experienced NCOs were available to answer queries and generally help. Most were sold in the most simple way. An abiding memory is of a lady with a slight limp in jodhpurs seeking 'Slievenamon', an artillery horse of the Army Jumping Team which won renown for Ireland in Toronto, New York, London and other great countries. It was a favourite in the stables but seen as on 'light duty' and much petted.

The purchaser of 'Slievenamon' was that young lady named Una Reddy of Celbridge, Co. Kildare. She really wanted it and she got it. Its departure through the back

gate to the park in a horse box marked, in a way, the end of a romantic era and intensive preparations for the Second World War. A new word was 'blitzkrieg'.

The writer Commandant Maher was the first Artillery Regular NCO to win a Cadetship and be commissioned in the Permanent Defence Forces. His comrades from the horse days marked the event by presenting him with an inscribed sword and Sam Browne Belt at a function in Kildare Sergeant's Mess in 1941.



Vaulting Team, Artillery Corps, RDS Ballsbridge - 1936

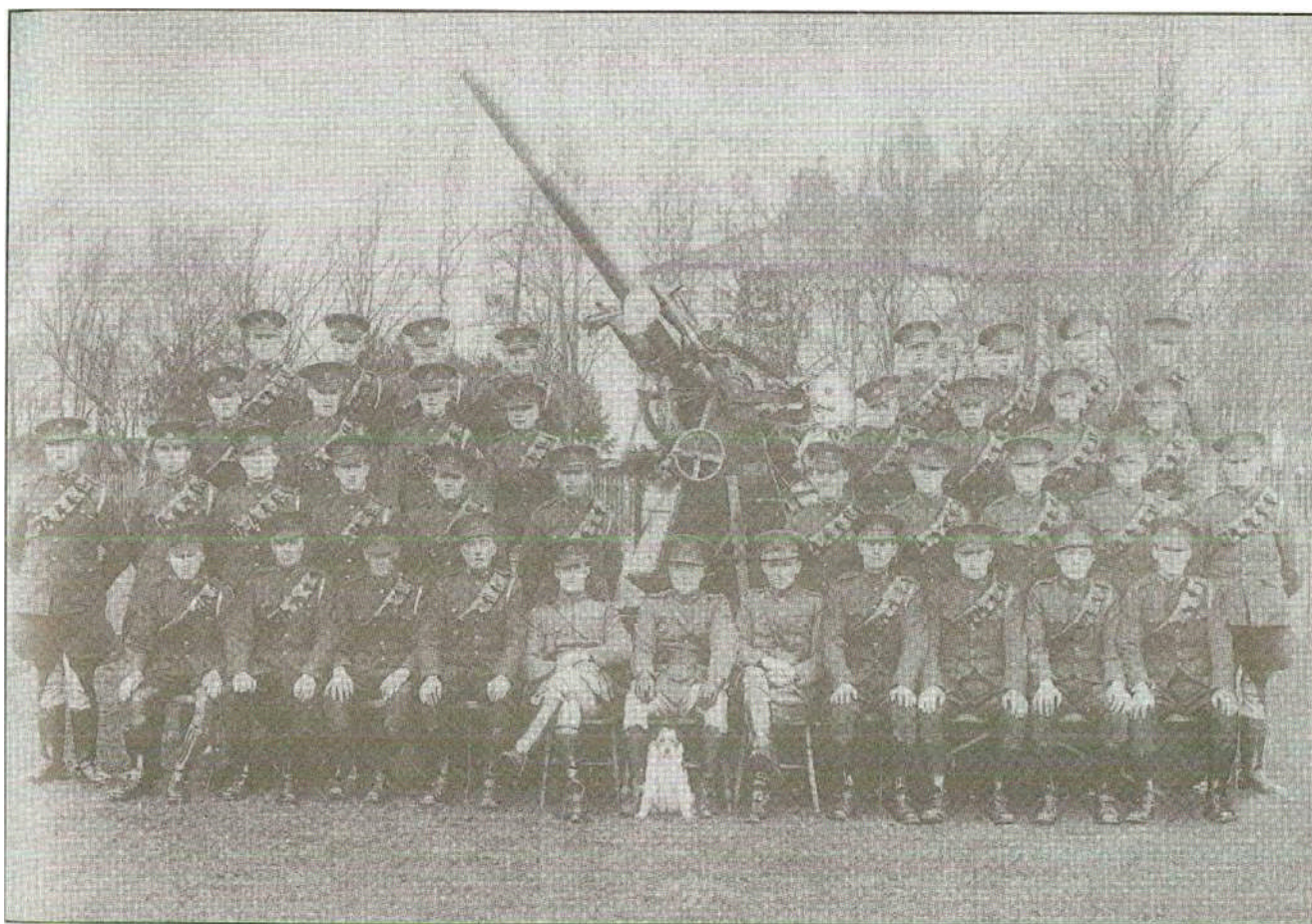
THE ORIGINAL ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY

By Sgt John 'Skeagh' Condon

Twatch with admiration those silent groups of 'camouflaged' soldiers on field exercises in the mountainous areas of West Wicklow as they study their maps and plod their way towards the hills. It is nice also to see the presence of female soldiers playing their full part in preparing for the unexpected as the units get ready for peace keeping duties abroad with the UN. Those scenes bring back to me a sense of pride in that 1, too, served in the same army 68 years ago when the Anti-Aircraft Battery was being formed.

As a youngster growing up in the farming townland of Skeagh near Callan in Co. Kilkenny I took a keen interest

In September 1930, when I heard the army was recruiting I set off by bike with two neighbours, full of hope and expectation. When we finally arrived at Portobello Barracks we were told that recruitment had been postponed and to return in a week or two. My companions then decided not to join but my determination remained and returning to Callan I lost my way in Naas and somehow ended up in the Curragh. Again I made enquiries in the camp and at Plunkett Barracks a kindly officer told me that recruitment would be open on the following week. Having explained the disappointment suffered in Dublin and my determination to enlist, that friendly soul arranged a job for me in the cookhouse in



The Original Ack-Ack Battery.

Members of the original Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battery photographed in 1932 with the first 3" gun delivered to the Corps. Centre, front row: Captain Maurice McCarthy (with the unit's mascot). On his right is Lieutenant Jimmy Dolan and on his left, Lieutenant Curran. The writer of the article on its formation, Sergeant "Skeagh" Condon, is third from left on row three.

Pic courtesy; Sgt Condon

in nature. I relished the country life and at the age of eighteen resolved to join the army. In looking back over the years I have no regrets, only pleasant memories of a healthy life full of comradeship and mutual respect in the Artillery Corps.

Ceannt Barracks for a week. I was half in, with bed and board, that week was like a holiday.

The following Monday I presented myself, passed both physical and the medical tests and much to my delight

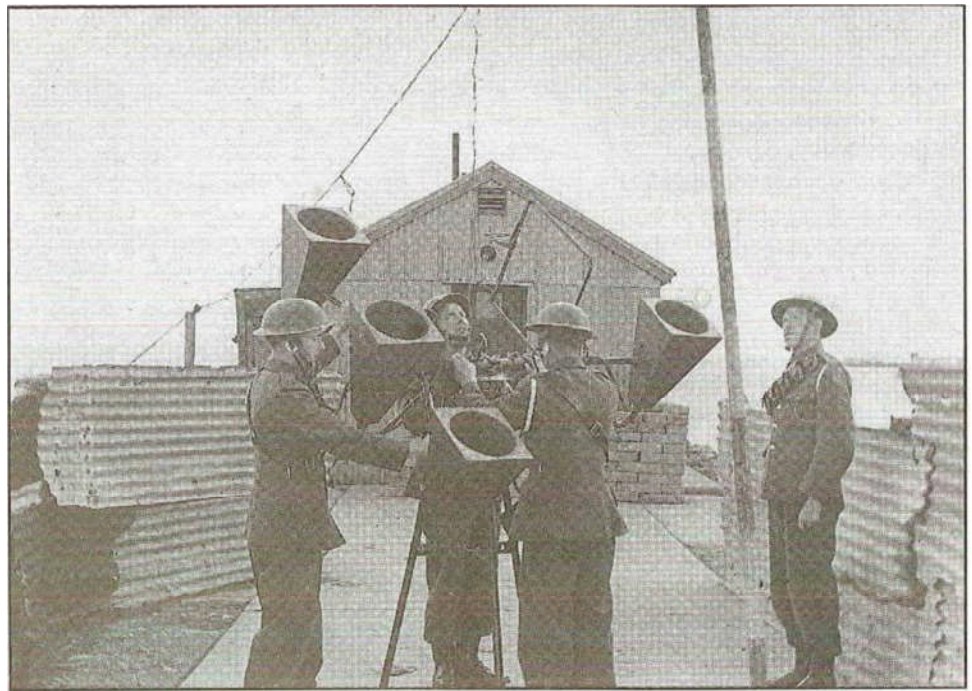
was accepted. I was appointed to McDonagh Barracks for a nine week training course with 700 others. This period enabled me to explore the wider world of Counties Kildare, Wicklow and Carlow during that fine autumn.

The big day for us was in December 1930 when all 700 of us were mustered on the square not knowing where we might be posted. We paraded in full kit, our personal belongings including a few bikes on the verges. Officers from various Corps selected men they thought suited their particular units. Lieutenant Jimmy Dolan (who had been in the army since its inception and who had risen through the ranks), accompanied by Captain Maurice McCarthy from Artillery selected 42 of us to form the first Anti-Aircraft Battery and without delay we climbed onto two lorries with all our personal gear and were brought to Dun Mhic Aoidh in Kildare town. Lodged in two wooden huts under Sergeant Joe Hurley who became Company Sergeant, later Sergeant Major in McKee Barracks and then in Baldonnel. Also waiting us there was Sergeant Christy Carroll who remained with us until his untimely death in St. Mary's Hospital beside the Hibernian Schools Complex in the Phoenix Park during the war years.

The following morning we were each issued with a bandolier, whip, spurs, lanyard, knee britches and leggings. We remained in Kildare until March 1931 when our group was posted to Coolmoney Camp to prepare the Artillery Range in Glen Imaal. There we were billeted in bell tents but later that month, during a ferocious storm, the tents were uprooted and blown to smithereens. Hastily we evacuated to Coolmoney House where we dried out and were permitted to sleep. Coolmoney House, now closed, was the essence of comfort. Our officers were accommodated in what is today the Camp Offices. Each morning we would march up through Knockanarrigan and Leitrim to Ford 'A' at Knickeen. There shovels, timber, sandbags, crowbars and cement, which had been dropped by truck awaited us. The bags would be filled with sand from the river bed and all the materials were carried on our backs, in stages, through Ford 'IV' to positions approximately half a mile apart and finally transported to the sites selected for the construction of observation posts. Thirsty work, but water was readily available in the streams which drained the

mountains and which fed the upper reaches of the River Slaney.

At noon, grub would arrive in a large General services (GS) wagon drawn by two strong horses. This consisted



Big Ears!

Mark III Sound Locator with crew, two listeners, sight reader and detachment commander, pictured at the end of the Bull Wall, Dollymount. Note Billet and Sentry box in background. Circa 1940

Pic courtesy; Sgt Jimmy Madden

of tea, half a pound of bread, half an ounce of butter and a special treat of two ounces of marmalade per man. That break and a few Woodbines provided sustenance and relaxation before trudging back through Ford 'B' to our working sites in the mountains.

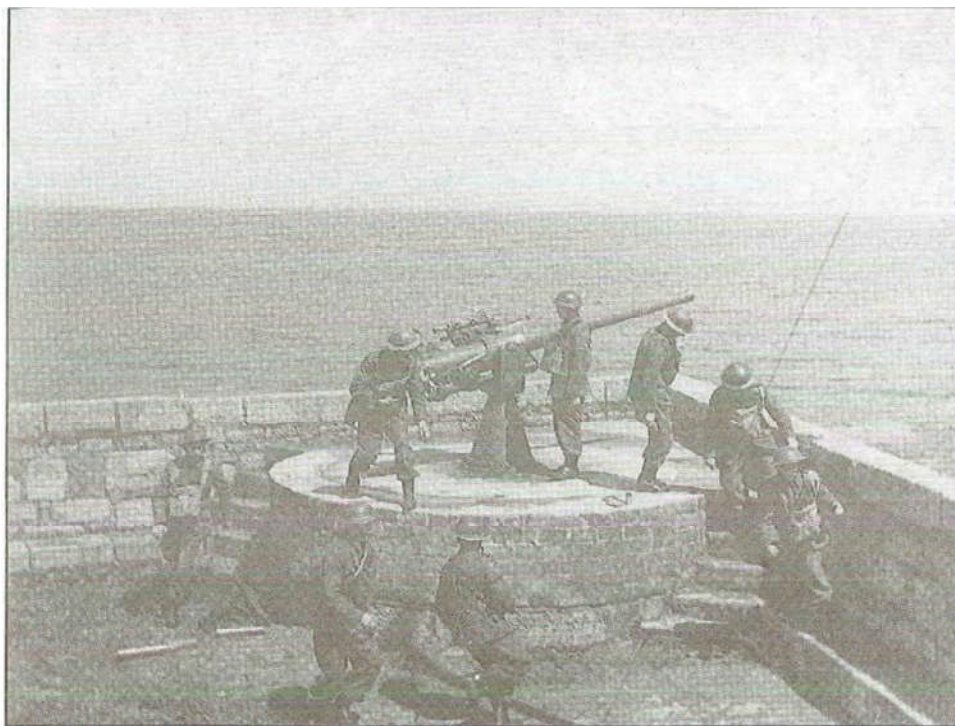
The Engineers would have blasted out the shelters from solid rock into which the observation posts were being built and we would cement in place the strong front wall, prepare the timber frames and shuttering to bear the reinforced roof to withstand an off-target shell.

Manhandling materials in stages was labour intensive. The Transport Corps was prevailed upon to help and loaned us six-pack horseS with saddles from which the materials were slung pannier fashion. This was not successful because once off the hard track the horses tended to sink into bogholes or become inextricably locked in drainage gullies. Another brilliant idea someone came up with was a series of telegraph poles along the verge of the track which carried a steel cable on which materials would be slung from a pulley and hauled up the mountain; this Heath-Robinson idea also failed and we were back again to the wearisome task of manhandling stage by weary stage.

Our return to Camp in the evenings would take over an hour of trudging down to Knickeen Ford and from there marching in formation back to Coolmoney Camp to devour a meal of spuds and whatever the cook had prepared, leaving clean plates before we eventually turned in. No gramophones, no radio, but our spirits remained high and we enjoyed an occasional evening in the local pub which entailed another long walk there and back. The daily grind continued until the autumn of 1931, returning to base in Kildare for the winter.

imbedded in a soggy lawn. Unable to heave it back onto the yard we had to enlist the assistance of a large mobile steam engine working in a nearby quarry to haul the gun back to its proper position.

Shortly after a fleet of four Ford tractors and two Morris Quad cars complete with winches capable of handling a strain of up to 45 tons joined the in-house transport fleet. Our infant battery began to develop into a self-contained sector of the Artillery Corps.



12-pounder gun with crew in training at Sandycove "Forty Foot" in early 1940s. Note soldier in foreground with Volunteer Force tunic which was adorned with six buttons on the back.

Pic courtesy; Sgt Jimmy Madden

The mission in Glen Imaal was accomplished and we were proud when the final test was successful the second 18 Pounder shell fired from Leitrim scored a direct hit on the roof of one of the observation posts which withstood the explosion leaving only a very slight crack.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, Sergeant Hurley had completed the construction of a remarkable life size wooden replica of the 3" ack-ack gun on order but not yet delivered (they came from the UK), complete with wooden 'shells' and our anti-aircraft training began in earnest. In due course, when the real guns were towed from Dublin and thanks to the preliminary training by Capt McCarthy, Lieutenant Dolan, Sergeants Hurley and Carroll we quickly mastered the guns, the height finder and the predictor. By that time we had moved to more spacious facilities in Plunkett Barracks in the Curragh where ample accommodation was available to house the guns and equipment. One day, when rolling out one of the guns it overshot the concrete forecourt and became

The Ack Ack Battery moved base once more upon the outbreak of the second world war, to McKee Barracks on Dublin's northside. Only some of the equipment on order had been delivered and selected outposts on the city's perimeter were developed and manned where possible. The battery became a battalion following large recruitment in the Spring of 1940. The total strength rose to nearly 800 men. The battery had expanded quickly and the original 42 'experts' were promoted rapidly to control the influx of recruits. I was promoted Corporal on a Tuesday, Sergeant on the following Thursday and Sergeant-in charge of Transport two or three weeks later.

There were Searchlight/Sound Locators based on Howth Summit, North Bull, South Bull, Blackrock Park, Sandycove and Dalkey; 3" Medium Batteries in Ballyfermot and near the present Montrose Hotel in the Stillorgan area; 3.7" Batteries were behind the tram sheds in Clontarf and in Ringsend Park; lighter gun positions such as 40mm Bofors at other locations completed the ring of defence around the city. Central command was in Dublin Castle and the city was well defended from air attack.

Alerted by Dublin Castle, all outposts were ready to meet planes which invariably came up the coast at night, recognised our warnings and moved out to sea. Many bombs were dropped on the city during those years; the greatest was the deliberate bombing of the North Strand in May 1941 causing havoc and great loss of life and much damage to property. All outposts rested during the day but were on alert at night.

The Glen of Imaal disaster in September 1941, when 16 men sacrificed their lives and many survivors lost their

sight or were permanently injured, was our greatest tragedy. It's annual commemoration creates a bonding of all ranks and this continues. A stained glass memorial was installed in the Garrison Church, Church of Our Lady Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, in McKee Barracks after the war and this year the Monument to the memory of those comrades was finally completed in Glen Imaal. They are not forgotten. Every Summer relatives of those killed visit the tranquil haven near the firing range.

Time has since taken its toll and most of those who survived that tragedy have gone to their reward. Only a handful of the original battery and the later battalion survive today and

many of them also occasionally visit the Monument in the Glen which personifies the spirit and comradeship of the Emergency years and of the initial batch of 42 men who, with their officers, formed the original anti-aircraft section of the army.

Sgt Condon son, also John, in due course joined the army and served in the Transport Section of the Air Corps as a Corporal. He served with a peace-keeping unit in Cyprus with the 9 Infantry Group. Now retired, he is Chairman of the No 1 Post of the Irish United Nations Veterans Association.



Sharing sunshine in Ballyfennot outpost during summer of 1944. Group from 2nd Medium 3" Battery.

Seated; 1. to r., Sgt Morgan, Capt Phil Eager, Lt Niall Ryan, Sgt Christy McElligott.

Standing; Sgt T.J. Byrne, Cpl P. Dowdall, Sgt "Skeagh" Condon, A.N. Other Sgt Tommy Downes.

Pic courtesy; Sgt Tommy Downes

SECRET REPORT ON ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE

Headquarters,
Anti-Aircraft Battalion,
McKee Barracks,
Dublin.

10th June 1941

Ref No: AA/34

SECRET

Director of Artillery,
Department of Defence,
Parkgate,
Dublin.

SPECIAL REPORT ANTI-AIRCRAFT AGAINST BELLIGERENT AIRCRAFT ON 31st MAY 1941

Sir,

I have the honour to report that, as a result of information received at 23.48 hours on 30/5/41 to the effect that unauthorised aircraft were heard east of Carnsore, Co. Wexford, and moving North, AIR RAID MESSAGE "YELLOW" was given to the guns and searchlights of the AA Defences, Dublin.

At 23.58 hours on 30/5/41, on receiving further information to the effect that these aircraft were now at Wicklow Head and still moving North, AIR RAID MESSAGE "RED" was given.

At 00.04 hours on 31/5/41, Dalkey and Sandycove Searchlight Detachments were "On Sound" of aircraft approaching the City of Dublin from a southerly direction. Both searchlights exposed, failed to illuminate and doused. Numerous exposures were made from time to time between 00.04 hours and 02.13 hours by searchlights on aircraft heard in the vicinity of Dublin. Aircraft were successfully illuminated for AA gun action on three occasions.

Fire was opened by AA Units as follows:

CLONTARF: At 00.35 hours, Clontarf AA Gun Outpost opened fire on an unauthorised aircraft seen illuminated East of Post, moving North. Height 7,000 feet. Four rounds of 3.7 in ammunition were fired - two at Fuze 13 and two at Fuze 18.

The proximity of the bursts in relation to the target could not be estimated, as the aircraft jinked from the beams before the termination of time of flight of the shell.

RINGSEND: At 01.28 hours, Ringsend AA Gun Outpost opened fire on unauthorised aircraft seen illuminated North-West of Post, moving South-East. Height 8,000 feet. Four rounds of 3.7 in ammunition were fired - two at Fuze 15 and two at Fuze 9. The first two rounds were observed to burst in the centre of the intersection of beams and close to the target. The aircraft succeeded in jinking from the beams, with the result that no observation for effect could be made on the two later bursts.

CLONTARF: At 01.28 hours, Clontarf AA Gun Outpost opened fire on an unauthorised aircraft seen illuminated West of Post, moving South. Height 8,000 feet. Four rounds of 3.7 in ammunition were fired - two at Fuze 9 and two at Fuze 8. The aircraft, a large monoplane, succeeded in jinking before the bursts in relation to the target were observed. It is considered that these bursts were very close.

BALLYFERMOT: At 01.31 hours, Ballyfermot AA Gun Outpost opened fire on an unauthorised aircraft seen illuminated East of Post, moving South. Height 8,000 feet. Four rounds of 3 inch ammunition were fired, all rounds being fuzed at 14. The aircraft took avoiding action and jinked from beams before rounds were observed to burst.

STILLORGAN: At 01.30 hours, Stillorgan AA Gun Outpost opened fire on an unauthorised aircraft seen illuminated North-West. Height 8,000 feet. Three rounds of 3 in ammunition were fired all rounds being fuzed at 12. The aircraft took avoiding action prior to shell bursts. No observation for effect possible.

During this engagement by heavy AA gun, the aircraft illuminated was observed endeavouring to get out of the searchlight beams. Two objects thought to be green flares were seen dropping from the aircraft, which coincided with and were probably the bombs dropped in the Phoenix Park. It would appear that the pilot of this aircraft, being unable to avoid the beams, thought it safe to jettison his bomb load rather than risk it being detonated as a result of a hit by AA shell. Two aircraft were observed illuminated during this engagement.

COLLINSTOWN: At 01.30 hours, Collinstown AA Gun Outpost opened fire with two Bofors 40mm and four Hotchkiss Guns on an unauthorised twin-engined monoplane seen over Post. Height 2-3,000 feet, range 1,000 yards. The aircraft was observed to turn back on being fired at, and then fly in a south-easterly direction. Rounds were observed to be low. 54 rounds of Bofors and 248 rounds of .303 ammunition were fired.

COLLINSTOWN: At 01.45 hours, Collinstown AA Gun Outpost saw a twin-engined monoplane approaching Post. Height 2,000 feet, range 1,000 yards. The aircraft was engaged by two Bofors 40mm and four Hotchkiss Guns 58 Rounds Bofors and 490 rounds of .303 ammunition were fired. Rounds were observed to be low.

In these engagements by Collinstown AA Guns, aircraft were easily discernible through being silhouetted against a background of bright sky.

In the engagement of heavy AA guns, the aircraft fired on were illuminated by searchlights for periods of over one minute.

Aircraft were not identified during the period of "alert" which lasted from 23.48 hours 30/5/41 until 02.32 hours 3¹/₅/41. Within this period, four bombs were dropped on the following areas in the city of Dublin, which resulted in loss of life and damage to property:-

Summerhill Parade, North Circular Road, Phoenix Park, Newcoinen Bridge, North Strand.

At 03.45 hours, information was received that an unauthorised aircraft was seen North of Dublin moving South. AIR RAID MESSAGE "RED" was given to AA Defences.

DALKEY: At 03.50 hours, Dalkey Searchlight Detachment opened fire with a Hotchkiss Machine Gun on this aircraft, a twin-engined monoplane flying at 1,000 feet. Thirteen (13) rounds of .3.3 S AA were fired. Rounds were observed to be low. Nationality unknown. Period of alert from 03.45 hours to 04.15 hours on 3¹/₅/41.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,

M.P. MacCarthy, A/Comdt

OFFICER COMMANDING, AA BATTALION

jinxed

Copy to/
Operations Officer,
Eastern Command.

OC Air Defence Command,
Dublin Castle.

THE HEAVY MORTAR HITS THE CONGO

By RSM Kevin Prendergast

rr he first 120mm Mortars to travel overseas was with

I the 39 Infantry Battalion to the Congo (Zaire) in November 1962 returning in May 1963. The strength of this 1st Mortar Troop was 42 all ranks drawn mainly from the 4 Fd Arty Regt. The Troop Commander was Capt Tom Boyle, DSM. The GPO/CPOs were Lt P. Hughes and Lt W. Dwyer who is currently serving as Adjutant General of the Defence Forces. As for myself, I was an assistant to the GPO/CPO having enlisted in the army 6 months, previous at the age of sixteen.

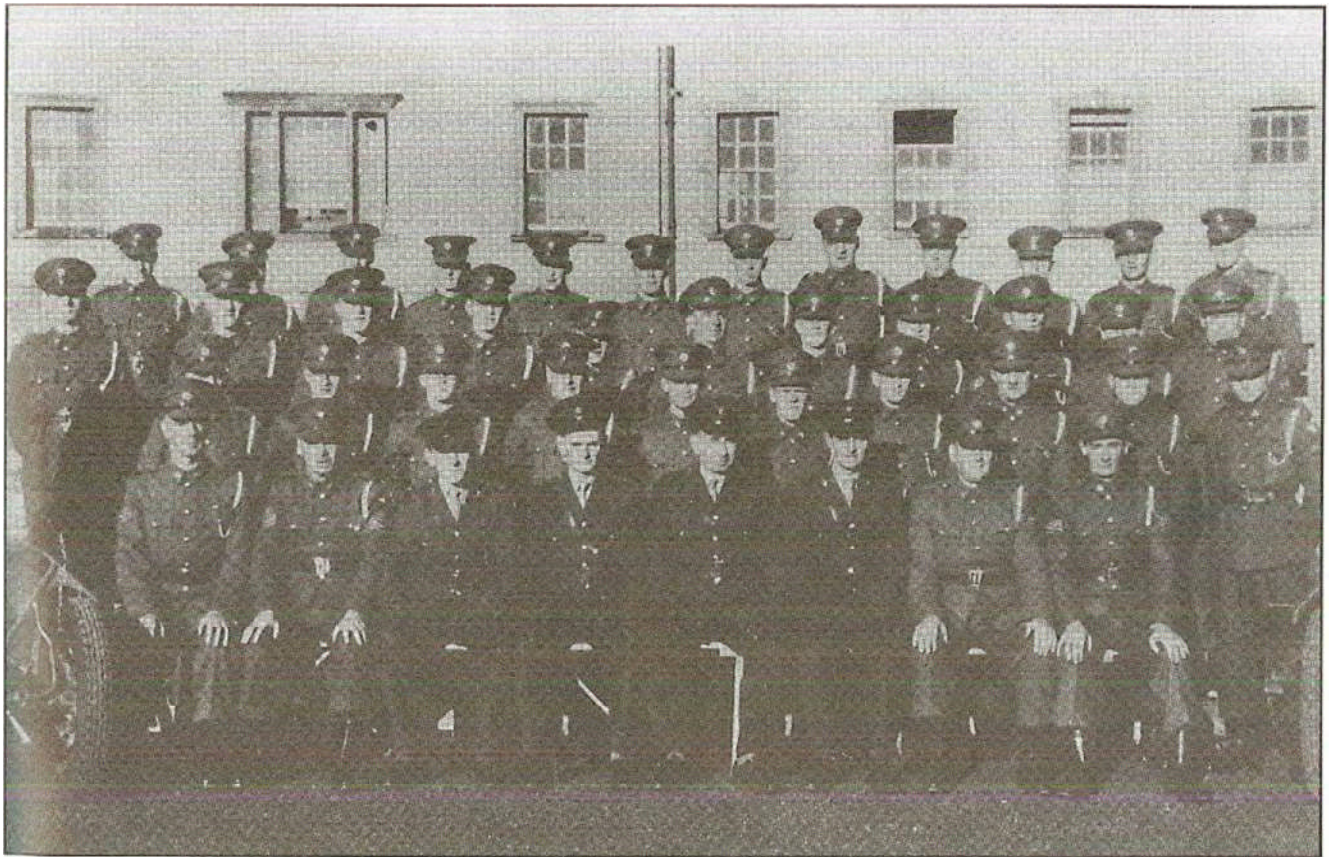
In 1960 the Congo was granted Independence from Belgium. Following elections, civil disorder broke out with fighting between rival groups. The province of Katanga seceded from the new nation and declared itself independent. This wealthy copper producing province under one Mr. Moise Tshombe wanted to go it alone with their own army called the Katangese Gendarmerie, trained and led by Mercenaries. At the invitation of the Central Government, United Nations Troops 30,000

some of the actions in which the Mortar Troop was engaged, namely KERA VIA, SIMBA HILL, KIPUSHI and LUFIRA.

From arrival in Elizabethville in early 1962 to Christmas, the troop (Heavy Mortar Troop) was engaged in training. Also in Elizabethville at this time was the 121st Hy Mor Bty of the Indian Army. During the latter fortnight of our training, instruction was given on the 120mm Mpr to Officers and NCOs of the Indian Mor Bty. On the 27 Dec (Thurs) when fighting broke out around Elizabethville, the Troop was informed that it might be expected to go out to support an Indian attack sometime on the 28 Dec.

28 Dec (Fri)

At 1000 Bty Comd of 121. Hy Mor Bty arrived with orders for the troop. The troop then proceeded to the Golf Club area where there was some very heavy small arms fire, with the intention of giving support to 2/5 Ghurka Bn in their attack on the radio station. The Ghurkas took the



*38 Inf Bn - Hy Mor Tp
Congo - October 1962 - April 1963*

strong, 6,000 of them Indian were sent to the Congo to restore order. A large number of these troops were concentrated in the Katanga province mainly around the capital Elizabethville. The following is a brief synopsis of

radio station. All this time the troop was under fire (small arms). At 1530 the 4 Madras Bn started to put in an attack on Karavia, a large Katangese Gendarmerie training camp

about three and a half miles forward of the Golf Club. Throughout the action the Hy Mor Troop gave them close support. 70 rds HE approx. At 1730 Karavia was taken.

29 Dec (Sat)

At first light (0530) the troop moved into a gun posn at the edge of Karavia to support the advance of the Ethiopian Bn along the Elizabethville - Simba Hill Road. However, no fire was called for and the troop was again moved at 0930 to a new posn 5,000 yards from Simba Hill

which was heavily fortified. It supported the Ethiopian attack on this hill. When the hill was taken the troop moved to a new posn just under Simba Hill and from this posn supported the advance of C Coy 38 Inf Bn on the hill beyond. This hill was taken and at 1830 hrs the troop joined the Irish Bn at Simba Farm.

30 Dec (Sun)

At 0830 the troop moved to a new position short of a broken bridge three miles from Kipushi. B Coy 38 Bii were ordered to take Kipushi, but the town was surrendered without much firing. After a short spell in the town the Hy Mor Tp moved back to Simba Hill to spend the night.

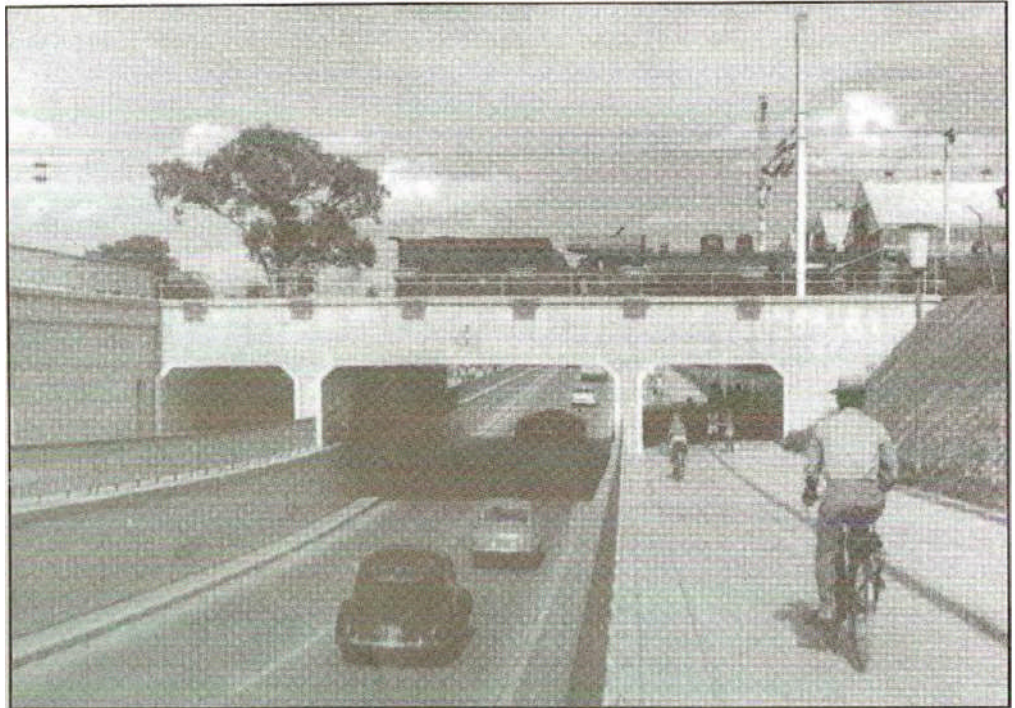
31 Dec (Mon)

At 1000 the troop was recalled to Elizabethville to prepare to move with an Indian Independent Bde Group towards Jadotville. The Hy Mors were ordered to support 4 Madras Bn and 4th Raj Rifles on Jadotville road.

1 Jan (Tues)

After 0300 hrs Mass the troop joined the Indian Bde Group at Old Airfield, Elizabethville. At 0430 hrs the Mor Tp moved out the Jadotville Road. Heavy resistance was met at Lufuni (about seventeen miles from Elizabethville). Indians suffered casualties 4 dead, 6 injured. They put in a coy attack and took the posns. The column continued for another short distance but again halted when the armoured car (leading) struck a mine. At 0845 the advance continued. NO further opposition was met until 1015 when the first broken bridge was encountered about thirty miles from Elizabethville. At this bridge the column came under mortar fire. The troop went into a gun posn here but did NOT fire due to the limited supply of amn. The Indian Hy Mors however, did

fire. After engineers constructed a short detour, the column advanced to the next broken bridge about four and a half miles from Lufira River. From a posn here the troop fired on the area around Lufira. During this firing a helicopter acted as Air OP. Later on the troop moved forward to another posn in a deserted native commune about one mile from Lufira Bridge. This bridge was also blown. The area around the bridge was heavily mined. Before darkness fell a number of targets were recorded. Heavy rain fell for the rest of the night and troops were



"The Tunnel" - Belgian Congo

soon ankle deep in mud. During these hours, the Indians worked on the minefields.

Just as night was falling a troop of Katangese 81mm Mrs started firing. The Indian Bty Comdr spotted the flash and called for the Irish 120mm Mors. The first round of Salvo Ranging put them out of action. During this time two Coys of 4 Madras Bn were crossing by the railway bridge which had been partly blown.

2 Jan (Wed)

At 0300 all were awakened by a tremendous explosion. The sky was lit up for fully 25 mins and a large mushroom cloud began to rise. The mercenaries had run a trolley car full of explosives down the railway line and blew the railway bridge. The troop immediately took post and was firing until dawn at Charge 7. All this time there was quite an amount of trouble with base plates in the soft ground. The troop was also fired at by a sniper who launched grenades. During the morning the Indian Engineers rigged up a raft and it was decided to send one section of 120mm mors across to support the leading coys. Lt Hughes, went across with this Sec and 20 rds of amn. This sec manhandled the mors, amn and CP equipment

forward about three miles. They had to remain in a rather isolated posn while the advance continued. Later that evening a number of mercenaries were captured near this posn. At 2230 Lt Dwyer crossed with food and orders that the sec was to move forward about six miles to the 121 Hy Mor Troop posn. This move was made with the aid of two jeeps. The new posn was on the FEBA. The mors were mounted and laid out in the darkness. Again it started to rain.

3 Jan (Thurs)

The second sec came forward to the new posn at first light. It was still raining and the ground was in a terrible condition. The mors remained in posn until 1000 hrs at which time they got an order to move forward another three miles, to a posn on the New FEBA with all possible speed. Thirty mins later they reported ready to fire in the new posn. By this time the Landrovers had come up. They fired one round of HE in the Jadotville direction. At 1700 they entered Jadotville.

Conclusion

During the seven (7) day operation the Hy Mor Tp deployed over a distance of some 180 miles.

The troop performed professionally throughout all operations. 50% of the troop were fresh off their Artillery Course, Gnrs, Sigs, CP. We also had a good mix of experienced personnel. The food was pack rations, dog biscuits and Spam so the cooks were available for unloading and opening ammunition boxes assisted by the S&T Drivers.

The Indians were impressive by their high standards, kit, equipment and self sufficiency. They were very decent with their daily personal supply of hard boiled eggs and chapaties, also the nicest tea you could drink.

The following members of the troop were awarded the Distinguished Service Medal:-

0.7275	Capt Tom Boyle
76595	Sgt Jack Quirke
81154	Cpl Billy Allen

"FIRE MISSION ... ILLUMINATING ..."

"The Glen" Tibnin, South Lebanon, 1982



THE FOUNDATION OF THE ARTILLERY SCHOOL AND A BRIEF HISTORY OF ITS DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN 1931 AND 1998

By Comdt R.P. O'Leary, Commandant Artillery School

The Artillery Corps was formally established on the 23 MARCH 1923 at Islandbridge Barracks (now Clancy Bks) Dublin, with a strength of 11 Officers, 62 Other Ranks and 10 horses. The British Forces had handed over 5 Mk I and 4 Mk II 18 Pounders on their departure, and the 18 Pounders were scattered throughout the country so they had to be brought to Islandbridge to form the initial equipment of the corps.

A proficiency in numeracy was a requirement for Gunnery Officers and on the 23 May 1923, 23 Officers sat for an entrance examination to the corps. Three officers were successful and were transferred to the corps along with 70 other ranks in the following month. On the 5 June 1923 Col Patrick Mulcahy, OC Regiment No 2 Inspection Staff (Athlone Command) was promoted OC of the Artillery Corps, but unfortunately had to settle for the rank of Major in the new army.

The corps continued to expand with the establishment of the 1st Fd Bty on the 10 July 1923 and the 2nd Fd Bty on the 5 Jan 1925, each Bty was equipped with four 18 Pounders.

The Government White Paper and Order No 3 published during July 1924 lead to the reorganisation of the Artillery Corp and a more structured approach to training.

The Artillery skills acquired during the Civil War of 1922-23 by the Pro-Treaty National Army were limited to single-gun actions generally during operations to force Anti-Treaty Republicans to evacuate towns and defence positions during the first months of open fighting. There were no organised batteries and trained gun crews were very scarce. Often the gun crews were made up of Officers. Gunnery Instructors were drawn from Officers and NCOs who had transferred from the British Army on their departure.

General Routine Order No 30 signed by Commander-In-Chief 18 April 1923, para 142 listed one Artillery training appointment in the Chief of Staffs Department. Capt H.E.S.T.G. Caulfield was appointed to that post, probably the first Training Officer with the Corps.

The entire corps moved by train from Islandbridge to Kildare Bks on the 20 Mar 1925. On arrival in Kildare the 18 Pdrs and Limbers were linked and harnessed to six horses. The late Bty Sgt Bill Bonnar described the move

as follows - "We came from the railway station with increasing speed and came around Graham's corner (into Market Square) at full tilt with outriders on the lead horses urging them on, drivers shouting, whips cracking, horses galloping and gun and limber wheels crashing on metalled road." No 2 Bty conducted the first shoot in the Glen of Imaal on the 10 June 1925, and I have no doubt that the move to the Glen by horse was as dramatic as the gunners arrival in Kildare.

From the date of the corps arrival in Kildare Bks on the 20 Feb 1925 as graphically depicted by the late Sgt Bill Bonnar, Magee Bks has become the spiritual home of the Gunners. The Bks which was built as a hutted camp for the 2 Brigade Division RFA and 1 Battery RHA in 1901, has been occupied almost continually by Gunners to this day. With the exception of a short period during the War of Independence and between 1936 to 1939 when Sisk the builders banished the Gunners to Plunkett Bks while they built the present day Magee Bks. 'J' Block which houses the present day School was designed as such and completed in 1942.

Capt Charles Trodden was appointed the first School Commandant in November 1931 and held the appointment until June 1933.

The Corps HQ had the following training appointments in 1924 - 3 Captains as Quartermasters, Horsemaster and Gunnery Instructors, 3 Sergeant Majors as Gunnery Instructors and Riding Instructors, and two Sergeants, one as a Signal Instructor and the other as a Physical Educational Instructor.

By Sept 1931 this Training Establishment was too small for the corps, the following units were established and additional equipment was purchased in order to cater for the increasing strength of the army.

The Directorate of Artillery
1 FA Brigade
The Artillery Depot and School
The AA Battery Nucleus

Additional equipment was also purchased from England:-

Two Mk IV 18 Pounders on the 2 Jan 1928.
Four 4.5 Hows on the 31 Oct 1929.
Eight Mk V 18 Pounders in Dec 1930.

Major Mulcahy was conscious that coupled with an increase in the size of the Corps and the new guns that were being acquired a more professional and structured approach to training was essential. To that end the establishment of a core group of professionally trained officers capable of training the expanding corps was essential. The most effective method of gaining that professionalism was to send officers on overseas courses.

In Nov 1929 Maurice McCarthy underwent the 1st Anti Aircraft Course in England. In March of the preceding year four 3" 20 cwt AA guns (two 2-wheeled and two 4-wheeled) were purchased from England. Lt McCarthy was a founder member of the Ack Ack, helping to establish the AA Battery Cadre in 1931 and on the 16 September 1930 founding the 1st AA Battery.

The policy of sending Officers on overseas courses particularly to Larkhill on the Long Gunnery Staff Course (1 Year) during the late 20s and 30s ensured that a core of expertise was being built upon. Four Officers who were graduates of the courses later became School Commandants and Command OCs - Hally, Byrne, Rea and Donagh and were pivotal figures in the establishment of the corps and Artillery School.

In 1926 a group of 6 Officers were sent on a mission to American Military Institutions which included 2nd Lt Charlie Trodden (Later to become the first School Commandant) who went to the Artillery School Fort Sill in Oklahoma. At about the same time Major Mulcahy attended a Battery Commanders Course in the British, now Royal School of Artillery.

On the 3 Jan 1930 Lt D. Cody and Capt Farrell underwent Artillery Courses at the Royal School of Artillery Larkhill.

The emphasis of training in the formative years of the corps were on basic technical gunnery skills, both field and ack-ack and on the all important subject of horsemastership. The importance of the horse can be appreciated when it is considered that one third of the instructional staffs of Capts and Sergeant Majors as outlined in the Government White Paper Army Order No 3 in 1923 were designated as Horsemasters or Riding Instructors and that it required one hundred and twenty-five horses to service two 4-gun 18 Pounder Btys.

An additional workload was placed on the school in 1938 when the first Coastal Artillery Installations were acquired on taking over the Treaty forts. The coastal forts were equipped with 9.2 and 6 inch guns.

The early 1930s was a time for the School to build up a core of trained NCO Instructors on the four weapon systems the corps had acquired, the 18 Pounder, 4.5" Hows, 3.7" Hows and 3" AA Guns, to design syllabi and structures to cater for the needs of the emerging army, but primarily to concentrate on basic skills. But World War 2

was to change this slow progressive approach, dramatically, and to stretch the School to it's limits.

On the 4 June 1940 the Government approved a War Establishment of 40,000. Within four months 23,000 were recruited in to the Army and throughout the Emergency, Officers, NCO and Gunnery courses were run in the Artillery School in rapid succession to fill the needs of the rapidly expanding army. By 1943 the corps had twenty-two full strength Batteries organised into seven Regts.

During the period 1933 to 1943 the following equipment was purchased and the Arty School would have been responsible for training on all new equipment.

- 4x3.7 How in Jan 1933
- 31x81mm Mors in Mar/Apr 1936
- 4xMk 1 Bofors in Jan 39
- 4x4.5 Hows July/Sept 1939
- 1x Mk 11 2 Pdr A/Tk Gun in Oct 39
- 6x3.7 HAA in Nov 1940
- 4xMk 11 18 Pdrs and 4x4.5 Hows in Feb 1941 -
4x75mm Hows in Dec 1941
- 4xFR 75 and 34 Morris Quads in Jan 1942.
- 8xMk 11 3.7 HAA between Mar and May 1942 2xBL
6" Guns and 4xMk111 3.7 HAA Guns in July 1942
- 6xMk 111 2 Pdrs in Nov 1942
- 20x4.5 Hows in Mar 1943
- 2xMk 111 Bofors in May 1943

By the end of the Emergency the Artillery School was well established and had a very competent body of instructors and a modern infrastructure in a Barracks that was barely five years old. It was during the Emergency years that the role of the school was expanded to cover the broad functions that it does today.

- a. To conduct courses in Field Artillery, Air Defence for Officers, NCOs and Gunners of the Corps.
- b. To supervise all live firing.
- c. To organise and supervise Corp Exercises and Combined Arms Demonstrations.
- d. Conduct sub-courses for the Military College, and other non Artillery personnel.
- e. Umpire Artillery Field Exercises and competitions.
- f. To evaluate modern developments, advise and conduct trials on equipment and to ensure that artillery training conforms to contemporary doctrine.

This was particularly apparent in the School's dominant role in devising and conducting the Annual Battery and Regimental Competitions. These competitions were unique to the corps at that time. A performance assessment of all members of the Battery was conducted

commencing with a written test for officers, a technical test for NCOs progressing to deployments and live firing in the Glen.

The Battery to come last of the 22 competitors had to suffer the ignominy of being attached to the Artillery School for several months intensive training.

In Dec 1946 the Proposed Peace Establishment disbanded 4 Fd Regts and retained the 1 Fd Arty Regt, 2 Fd Arty Regt, 4 Fd Arty Regt and the 1 AA Cadre. The weapons of the disbanded Regts were mothballed into the Artillery Technical Stores in Kildare and it has been said that if you look closely enough into the hidden reaches of Magee Bks you can still find some of them.

In 1959 under a new re-organisation plan the PDF and FCA were integrated and three new Regts 3rd, 5th and 6th were formed. During this period the School focused on the core activity of training Officers and Other Ranks in post war tactics and in converting gunners to the two modern weapon systems, 25 Pdr and 120mm Mortar, which were introduced into the Defence Forces in 49 and 53 respectively.

The Corps Policy was to equip all Fd Btys with 25 Pdrs or 120mm Mor while continuing to train on the serviceable guns from the emergency period until stocks of ammunition were expended.

The 4.5 and 3.7 Hows remained in action until the early '70s and were principally used by the Artillery School for the training of students.

By Feb 1962 the Corps had the following stock of Fd Guns -

25 Pdr	- 48
120mm	- 72
Mor 18 Pdr	- 20 (Max Serviceable)
4.5" How	- 16 (Converted to Gun Carriages)
75mm 3.7"	- 4
How 17	- 4
Pdr	- 12

By the late '60s/early '70s the School had become acutely aware of the radical changes in doctrine and practice of

modern warfare. In order to ensure that the school remained relevant in an increasingly more technological world it required an injection of new equipment and new ideas.

In 1974 the then Capt Ray Quinn was selected to attend the BA Long Gunnery Course (1 yr) in Larkhill.

Capt Quinn's return from England can be seen as the impetus for the beginning of change in the Artillery School. At around the same time as Capt Quinn returned, the Saab Scania BT-33 Fire Control Simulator came into service. It now meant that Observers could be trained and exercised in a classroom scenario without the expenditure of ammunition or even running the risk of passive smoking on the Raikes Range! It was a leap forward for



4.5" Howitzer - Glen of Initial

the School and a generation of Forward Observation Officers were thoroughly exercised in the simulator before making any costly and embarrassing mistakes in the Glen. In an increasingly more budgetary conscious time it became an invaluable teaching aid. At the gun end of Artillery we were about to see a whole new range of equipment on the Gun Position. In 1979 the Field Artillery Computer Equipment (FACE) came into service with the Corps. Two units came into service with the Corps and both were held in the School for courses but were kept available for loan to the Field Units for live firing.

The FACE is still in use today and despite its size by contemporary standards, it can still compute corrections in a split second putting the more modern and compact computerised fire control systems to shame. It was envisaged by the Royal Artillery that FACE should be used in conjunction with the 105mm Light Gun, and so in 1980 the 105 arrived in Kildare. As this was a completely different piece of equipment it was firstly necessary to

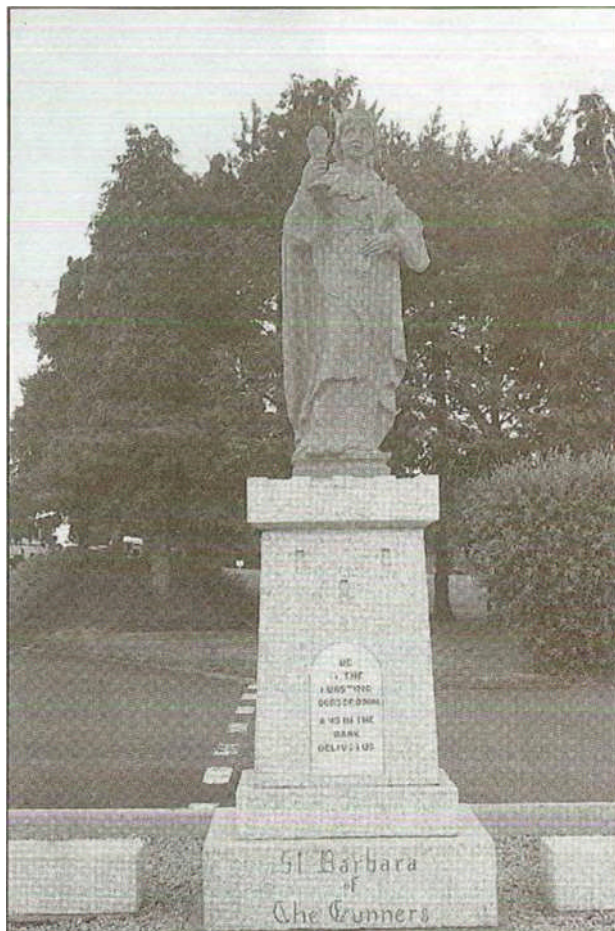
send School personnel to Larkhill to complete a conversion course, the then Lts Scully and O'Sullivan along with Sgts Page and Ryan duly went to England. On their return, twelve 105s were delivered and promptly entered service with the Corps. At around the same time, the Milan wire guided anti-tank missile was being introduced to the Defence Forces and peculiarly its first home was in the Artillery School where the School Staff became the first Army Instructors in this new weapon. For the majority of the eighties the Field and Survey Sections consolidated their work using the 105 and FACE as the cornerstone of many shoots in the Glen. Numerous Young Officers, Standard Officers and Number One Courses were successfully completed. It was with the beginning of the nineties that we saw the introduction of more new equipment as the face of modern warfare changed once again. The Gunzen replaced in many ways the FACE, a small calculator sized computer it could be used for both survey work and fire direction, although slower than FACE it is more user friendly to the modern generation of Gunner.

In 1995 the BT-33 Simulator was finally replaced by the state of the art Phoenix Simulator. Using the very latest in computer technology the Phoenix brings the training of Observers at, close to the field as is possible in the classroom. Comdt O'Grady, Capt Connors and B/S Morris were the first to be trained on this simulator. The Phoenix is now used year round by many courses and by both PDF and FCA Field Regiments prior to annual shoots. In 1996 the Global Positioning System (GPS) of the Gulf War came to the Artillery Corps. The specific model adopted was the Garmin GPS which can provide an accurate grid reference of your position to within 10m at the very least. Once again the School had first of all to master this piece of equipment and then to pass on this knowledge to the Corps. Capt Pat Graham was in the vanguard of this instruction, its application being in the area of general navigation and specifically in Quick Action Missions where speed is of the essence. The last twenty five years have seen the Field and Survey Sections develop and evolve to prepare the Corps to face the twenty first century safe in the knowledge that we have kept pace with the modern developments in gunnery.

In the field of Air Defence, the Guided Weapons and Air Defence Wing (GWAD) of the School was established at short notice in 1980 under the initial command of Comdt P. Walshe. Ostensibly it was formed to modernise our tactics in the area of Air Defence in conventional warfare but it also had the crucial mission of providing training for Aid to the Civil Power operations in defence of high profile visits and increasingly more European Political Summits in Dublin. The RBS 70 Missile came to the Defence Forces in 1980 and Capts O' Neachtain, Richardson, Donnelly, Fogarty and Brown were sent to Bofors in Sweden and trained in April and May of 1980 on this missile. A simulator was delivered later that year and it has proved invaluable in the training of Missile Aimers, the first course being run in January 1982. The

running of Aimers Courses has since become an annual course in GWAD Wing.

In 1986 the Giraffe Radar was delivered and this signalled a new era for the School with a complete Low Level Air Defence System now available to the Defence Forces. Again, a group were sent to Sweden to complete a course of instruction on this piece of equipment, led by Comdt Murray and including Capts O' Higgins and O' Neachtain. They returned to begin formal radar training courses in the School in October 1986. Whilst the RBS 70 is an excellent weapons system, its effectiveness at night and in poor visibility was greatly diminished and so in 1996 the Clip On Night Device (COND) was purchased for the RBS 70 to greatly enhance its performance. Lts Ledwidge, Deery and Cpls Doyle, Mulhall, Murray and Gratten were trained in Sweden and have since contributed to Night Aiming Courses here in the School. The GWAD Wing of the School has, like its Field and Survey Comrades, demonstrated its ability to evolve and adapt to deal with both the Conventional and Internal Security implications of our training and has been instrumental in keeping the Air Defence Regiment at full operational readiness particularly with the advent of so much new equipment.



*St. Barbara,
Patron Saint of Gunners*

In May 1998 the second batch of 105mm Light Guns was received, after a delay of 18 years. The Director of Artillery, Col J. Prendergast's tenacity and hard work paid off, and the 4 Fd Arty Regt and the 1 Fd Arty Regt are both waiting to receive a six gun bty of 105mm light guns.

As a consequence of the Gleeson Commission and the Defence Forces Implementation Plan Feb 1996 the Artillery School post 1998 will be dramatically changed both in it's command, organisation and establishment structures. The Artillery Depot established in 1931 is due to be disbanded and a much reduced in strength Artillery School will become the Artillery Wing in the new Combat Support College DFTC.

The challenges facing the School post the re-organisation are significant and our success in managing the change is dependent on our professionalism and commitment and a little common sense by our masters.

The professionalism, commitment and esprit de corps which is inherent in the Artillery Corps and which has stood us in good stead in the Artillery School over the last 67 years, will I believe take the new Arty Wing into the new Millennium providing an even better service to the Artillery Corps and the Defence Forces.

As stated in the title of this article it is a brief history of the Artillery School. I apologise for any omission or factual discrepancies in the article.



2 Fd Arty Regt depart McKee Barracks en route to perform a ceremonial gun salute in the Phoenix Park

Coast Defence Artillery

Comdt JE Dawson & Lt C Lawlor, An Cosantoir Nov 1973

SPIKE ISLAND and FORT MITCHELL

Spike Island, Headquarters of Coast Defence, did not just spring out of the sea, like Venus, in 1938, so any history of the Coast Defence must commence with a brief note about the island and its fort. "A most holy place, and most holy people reside on it permanently," said St Carthage of it in 620 A.D. As the island subsequently became a smugglers haunt and pirates gold is still reputed to be buried there, his statement is at least open to discussion. Military interest, however begins somewhat later, so let us leave the Holy Bishop with his optimism.



Spike Island - 11 July 1938

In 1790 the British Government, fearing a French invasion, bought the island and fortified it with a battery of 24 pounder guns. The following year the Earl of Westmoreland visited the place and plans were made to mount one hundred guns. In his honour the barracks was named Fort Westmoreland. In 1847, with the Napoleonic threat well past, Spike became a Penal Settlement. At one stage there were 2,000 unfortunates incarcerated there, some of whose crimes ranged from "treason felony" to poaching rabbits. John Mitchel was the most famous prisoner held there, from late May to early June 1848. Referring to his stay there in his Jail Journal, Mitchel wrote "... if they keep me here for many years I will forget what the fair outer world looks like. Gazing on grey stones my eyes will grow stony", because at the time he did not know whether his stay would be for months, years or even decades. He was visited by Edward Walshe, poet of The Nation, then a teacher of convicts children. His cell

is marked by a plaque and maintained by the present Garrison as it was in Mitchel's day. It was fitting that the fort was renamed Fort Mitchel or Dun an Mhistealaigh in honour of its Fenian prisoner. The Government Docks on Haulbowline and the Courthouse in Cork were built by the island's prisoners and remain as their memorial.

In 1883 the remaining prisoners, whose numbers had been allowed to run down, were moved to Mountjoy. The island reverted to the Military not to be a prison camp again until 1920 - 1921, when upwards of 500 Irish were held during the War of Independence.

Under the terms of the Treaty, British troops were permitted to remain in the various Coast Defence installations and it was not until a further seventeen years had passed that Irish troops on the 11th of July, 1938 took over the defences on Spike Island. Lord Chatfield in his book, "I might happen again" (chap 18), gives very good reasons for the handover, but Sir Winston Churchill in his "History of the Second World War" seemed to feel it was an act of treachery. Whether Churchill liked it or not, at 1810 hours on that day Spike Island was handed back to the Irish. Major P Maher, Director of Artillery, took over on behalf of the

Government of Ireland and Lt Col R. Love RA handed over on behalf of the British Government. After the handover the British troops, headed by the fish Army No 2 Band, marched to the SS Saorstat on which they were conveyed to the MV Inisfallen en route for England. As the Saorstat passed the Drill Shed on Spike a 21 gun salute was fired from a battery of 18 pounders manned by Irish troops - the first of many salutes fired from the island.

Shortly afterwards the Taoiseach, Eamon de Valera, accompanied by the Chief of Staff, many cabinet ministers and high ranking officers arrived. At 2000 hrs the Taoiseach raised the Tricolour over Cork Harbour and the work of the advance party of 3 NCOs and 6 men under the command of Captains Pierce Wall and Matthew Vaughan was over. Major Maher took over the running of the Coast Artillery until 14th July when Capt Charlie Trodden assumed command.

When the British left, the main armament of 6" guns was in exposed positions on the ramparts. In 1942 to get maximum displacement between the guns their positions were changed and to give protection they were placed underground beneath a reinforced concrete umbrella. This work was directed by Capt H. Armour of the Corps of Engineers. In 1943 a new D.E.L. (defence electric light) engineroom was built and equipped under the ramparts.

Though the guns of Spike were never fired in anger (well except once and that's a story for another day) they were nevertheless manned on an operational basis 24 hrs a day from 1st Sept 1939, until World War II ended. Their primary role was the defence of Cork Harbour, but their secondary role - the one which kept them busiest - was the control of the examination anchorage. All ships entering the harbour had to be searched and given the "Safe Passage" signal before being permitted to proceed. The 100 lb projectile of the 6" gun was the big stick which permitted Naval personnel to go confidently about their business of examination and inspection.

Because the war came so soon after the handover, our Gunners were preoccupied with learning from scratch to a war footing in a very short time. However Coast Defence found time to excel in the athletic world. Sgt Jimmy Cronin (now RSM Fort Mitchel) ranked among the best. His score direct from the corner flag in the Cork - Clare Gaelic match of 1949 is written of, in the annals of the GAA and his goal in the last seconds of the Munster Final against Tipperary in 1945 which brought Cork Seniors to Croke park and an All - Ireland is remembered well in the Rebel County. Not only did the RSM grace the grounds of Croke Park and the Polo Grounds in New York, but his lightning feet and flashing arms brought honour to Coast Defence when he won the Command Boxing Championship and featured in finals of Army and National Boxing Matches. But in the fight business Jimmy Cronin must give pride of place to Gunner J. Murray of Templebreedy. It was he in 1945 who brought an Irish Senior Bantamweight medal to the Harbour forts.

Then in 1944 our Soccer players crowned their victories of many Command and Army championships by winning the FAI Challenge Cup. Just to show that there was still a kick left in the depleted post - war strength, they won the Southern Command Football League in 1949, the Jerome Cup every year from 1950 to 1955, the Southern Command Soccer Championship in 1955 and the Robinson Trophy (All Artillery SMG) in 1959 and 1960.

In 1960 the first of our Coast Gunners under Cpl (now Sgt) Bernie Griffen went to the Congo to serve with the 33 Bn. In 1962 Sgt Mossy Doyle, Corps of Engineers, Spike Island was awarded a certificate of gallantry for saving a drowning child at Cobh pier.

In 1964 the first of our troops went on UN duty to the Near East and in the same year a detachment of PDF and Comhlión Dun an Mhistealaigh FCA, fired their annual

6" practice from the guns of Fort Dunree, the first time those guns had been fired since 1945.

Also in 1964 Spike adapted a new role "in addition to present duties" - when the Department of Agriculture's new Quarantine Station was opened.

In 1969 the gunners from Spike fired their most recent 6" shoot from Fort Davis (Carlisle), and their next live practice was in 1972 when combined PDF and FCA first fired 120mm mortars in Glen Imaal. Versatility, yes, but perhaps also the end of an era and the shape of things to come.

FORT DAVIS (formerly FORT CARLISLE)

Fort Davis on the eastern tip of Cork Harbour was built about 1797 and was first used as a POW camp for French troops of the Napoleonic campaigns. Between 1860 and 1868 the fort's present form began to take shape and by 1901 the armament consisted of two 9.2", two 6" and four 12 pounder guns.

The Fort was taken over on 11th July, 1938, at the same time as Spike Island. The preliminary work was carried out by the advance party under Lt Barry O' Brien who arrived on the 6th July. They were relieved by the main body under Capt D.J. Collins. The British flag was lowered by Master Gunner Berret of the Royal Artillery and the Tricolour was hoisted simultaneously with that of Spike Island.

All 6" shoots in the harbour were fired from Fort Davis.. Each summer, day and night shoots were fired as the culmination of the year's training. A coast shoot was most interesting to watch. Away on the horizon would be seen a launch with its three targets floats strung out behind, on a thousand yards of cable. The launch would make about nine knots. The order "Wind in" would come and the fronts of the targets would rise out of the water now turned to foam as the winching speed was added to the launch speed. Within seconds, projectiles would raise spray to engulf the targets. Scoring a direct hit did not necessarily require the target float to be struck, as rounds plus or minus within certain limits would strike a hostile craft on the superstructure or under the waterline. Scoring was marked by an officer aboard the towing vessel looking through an instrument known as a "rake". At the end of the day merit marks would be awarded by simple computations, speed and accuracy being the factors.

Such was the accuracy of the guns, that an experienced crew could - and when they wanted to, often did, cut the towrope. This to the colourfully expressed chagrin of the crew of the launch, which had to round up its straying chicks - often in the dark.

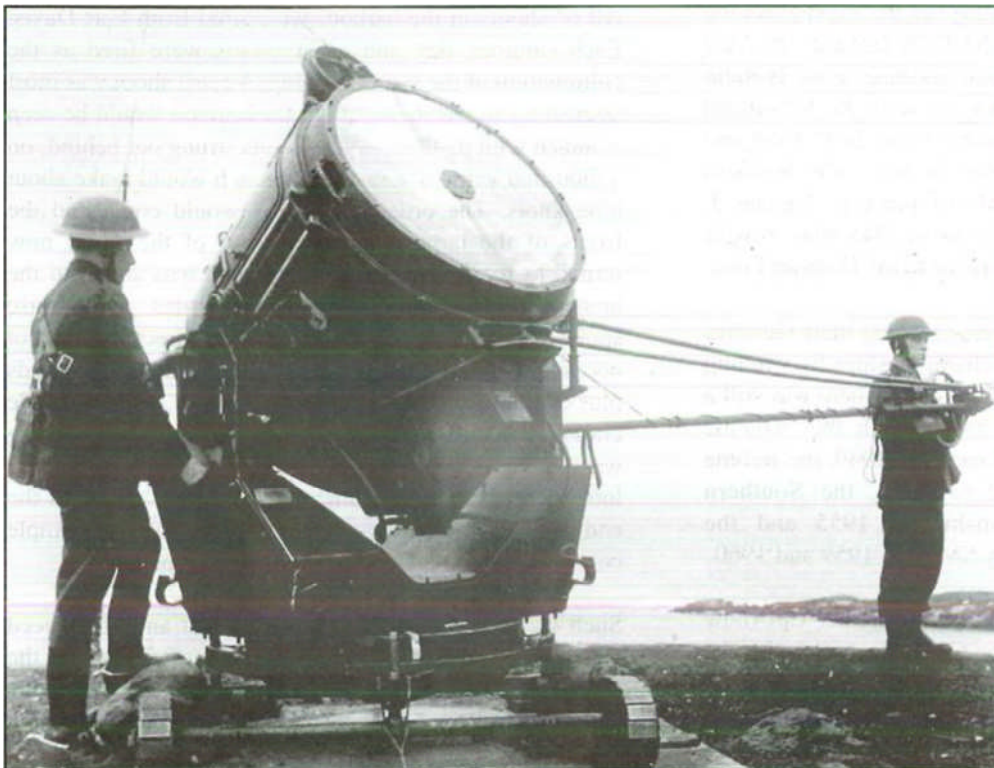
A night shoot was even more spectacular, as the gunners were aided by powerful searchlights to illuminate the targets. The disappearance of the target in a column of

floodlight spray was most gratifying and raised a cheer from the hundreds - military and civilian - who came to watch.

On July 12th, 1946, Comdt D.J. Farrell closed Fort Davis, but that was not the end for the guns were put under care to be brought to life each year by the gunners of Fort Mitchel.

FORT TEMPLEBREEDY

Fort Templebreedy is situated on the western approach to Cork Harbour, about two miles south of Crosshaven. As it is outside the harbour proper, its role was solely C.B. (counter bombardment). The construction of the fort was commenced in 1904 and was completed in 1909, armed with two 9.2", two 6" and four 12 pounder guns. In July, 1938, the fort was taken over by Irish troops under Capt Fred Slater, Lt W. Donagh, 2/Lts Mark Harrington and P. O' Callaghan. An interesting facet of the handover was the discovery that the tube of a 9.2" gun was split. In keeping with the spirit of the handover, the British undertook the first warranty job on our newly - acquired forts. In October, 1938 the renewed piece was mounted and calibrated. The calibration - i.e. determination of the muzzle velocity by firing - was a complex technical operation for our new coast gunners. The accuracy of their work, borne out in many subsequent shoots, reflected credit on the training given by Major Otten RA and his team of instructors. The Templebreedy gunner claimed that his shoot was the most spectacular of all. The



shot supply and were generally concentrated in the Dublin area and with the Coast Defence Artillery positions

9.2" gun was indeed remarkable: consider a 380 lb projectile leaving the barrel with a muzzle velocity of 2700 FS (feet per second). The accuracy of the gun and the skill of its gunners was seen in their first shoot, when at a range of five miles a target float was destroyed by a direct hit. The float was about the size of a 12' punt.

In April 1946, the Fort was closed by Comdt M.P. McCarthy. The guns were fired once more in the fifties before being sacrificed to the vats of Irish Steel.

FORT SHANNON

On 21st May, 1946, Col Tom Feeley wrote a letter which commenced "Fort Shannon will be evacuated on 31st May, 1946". Thus ended a Coast Defence presence in the Shannon Estuary which began when troops from Cork Harbour Forts and Kildare Barracks occupied the newly built fort. The estuary was a controlled port and in 1941 it was decided that the examination service at the beautiful little port of Cappa on the Clare side would need artillery support. To this end a CDA installation would be built near Tarbert in Kerry and would be named Fort Shannon. The installation would have a battery of 6" guns, D.E.L. and a platoon of machine guns.

A five acre plot of land was bought from a local landowner. Leasing arrangements were made with others on whose land defence posts were to be built. Lookout posts were built so that by day and night visual communications would augment wireless and telephone.

Thus Kilcraudaun Head, Loop Head and the examination service on the North were linked with Doon Head, Scatterry Island and the Fort. The harbour master Limerick with Naval rank of Lt Comdr, was responsible for the entry of all shipping into the estuary. Close liaison was vital between his office and the Fort.

Comdt Mick Sugrue came from Fort Davis to assume command and he also enters history as the man who closed it down. As there was no heavy Coast Defence equipment apart from this Fort between Bere and Lough Swilly, he and his men had an onerous task.

Searchlights were in very

Like all our men of the World War II period the

gunners in Fort Shannon preserved our sovereignty and neutrality by ensuring that a potential invader would think twice. But the men in the estuary are best remembered for the assistance they gave with lights and equipment when the coaster MV E.D.J. was driven on the rocky coast near Cappa by a gale in 1945. In a letter to the Fort Commander the managing director wrote: "fortunately no lives were lost, but the story would have been otherwise were it not for your help, without which we would not have got our crew ashore."

Fort Shannon was designed and built to kill, but on that January night the resources and experience of its gunners and engineers were used to save life. Their training was not wasted.

BERE ISLAND

Bere Island is situated one mile south of the Beara Peninsula and covers the approaches to Bantry Bay. Work on the fortifications was commenced in the closing years of the last century and by 1903 there were batteries at Lonehurt, Ardaragh and Ken in on the east of the island and at Derrycreeveen, Reenduff and Ardnakinna on the east. The total armament at the stage was 2 x 9.2", 6 x 6", 2 x 9" and 18 x 12 pounder guns. Quite a stronghold, but after World War I this was reduced to 2 x 6" and 2 x 12 pounders. An interesting reminder of how things haven't changed is a letter from a Major Halliday in 1927 requesting a tractor to assist in the removal of some guns and a reply from HQ at Chester refusing his application and pointing out that he had a steam roller at his disposal.

Our troops moved in in September, 1939, when an advance party of Irish under the command of 2/Lt Bill Rea commenced the take over from Major Clarke RA, commanding the British garrison. The formal handover took place on September 29th when Capt Jim McMonagle arrived with the Main Body.

Day to day life was similar to that on the Cork Harbour Forts with day to day training culminating in the annual firing practices in July and August. A system of marking results had been worked out so that firing practices in the various forts could be compared and competition was keen as the Unit which did best was awarded the Dunboy Trophy. This Trophy was a magnificent model in wrought bronze on a green marble slab mounted on a base of oak of one of the canon used in the defence of Dunboy. The model was designed by Capt Kevin Danaher of the Artillery School and executed by C/S J.F. Scanlon, known throughout the Corps as Tiffy Scan, of the same unit. Before letters start flooding in to the Editor I better add that other aspects of training were included in the competition but the Shoot was the prestige item.

Training took pride of place in those years but sport was not forgotten and our teams from Bere were well known

on the football fields of the country. Sgt Tom McNamara of the Corps of Engineers Detachment (now Mr McNamara, BFW Ballincollig) looked after the cultural side with his many amateur dramatic presentations for soldiers and civilians during the long West Cork winter nights. Battery QMS (Robbie) Robinson, Master Gunner now on Spike Island can tell many tales of those days as he worked as a boy in the N.A.F.F.I. during the British days and as a Gunner on Bere before his transfer to Fort Mitchell.

In 1947 Comdt Fred Slater presided over the close down on Bere Island Forts but the Guns are still there, though in heavy care and preservation, ready to roar their defiance should the need arise.

FORT DUNREE AND FORT LENAN: THE NORTHERN FORTS

Fort Dunree is seven miles from Buncrana and 40 miles from Letterkenny. With Fort Lenan, 5 miles north, it protected our northern approaches. Dunree with its six inch guns was to fight the close-in battle and cover the examination anchorage, while Lenan fought the enemy at greater range.

Like the southern forts, they remained in British hands after the treaty. Then at 1630 hours on 29th September, 1938, an advance party of Irish troops under Lt Bill Donagh arrived at Dunree to commence the take over from Major Laing of the 17 Battery Heavy Artillery. At 1130 hours on October 3rd the Union Jack was lowered, the Tricolour was raised and Lt Donagh formally took over on behalf of the Irish Government.

The AF 115 of the day has been preserved and it is an interesting document as it shows Lt Donagh, Bde HQ, Field Artillery Bde taking over duties of Orderly Officer from Lt West, 17 Bty RHA at 1200 hours on that day. Somebody had a sense of history.

Meantime in Lenan 2/Lt PJ O' Callaghan and his party were taking over. When he was reading through the Forts records, Lt O' Callaghan must have wondered at the TOET problem presented in 1915 when the fort's machine guns were changed from Maxim to Colt, from Colt to Lewis and from Lewis to Vickers, all in the same year. An interesting though hardly entertaining exercise.

The British main body left for Derry at 1330 hours on October 3rd and the rear party under Capt Dykes left on the 10th, the last of the British except for the instructional staffs to leave the Forts.

Training commenced and the first shoot from the Swilly troops took place in the summer of 1940. the results are still on record and were a foretaste of the excellence which the Northern Gunners would achieve. Year followed year and shoot followed shoot and it was

generally recognised within the Corps that while other Forts could equal or exceed the accuracy of the 9.2" guns at Lenan, their speed in action could seldom be beaten.

The importance of Dunree will be realised when it is considered that the general depth of Lough Swilly is 60 to 70 feet and there is ample anchorage space for almost one

hundred vessels each of 3000 gross tons. But the economics of peace had to prevail and in July / August, 1940, Comdt Mark Harrington, the last CO of Lenan, moved his men to Dunree. In December, 1952, Capt Joe Higgins took the troops from Dunree leaving only a maintenance party under CQMS Quirke to care for the guns lest some day they should be required once more.

Artillery Corps Directors

Col	P.A. Mulcahy	September	1931
Col	M. Maher	June	1935
Col	P.A. Mulcahy	December	1942
Col	J. McLoughlan	January	1949
Col	P.J. Collins	November	1955
Col	P.J. Hally	December	1956
Col	P. Curran	May	1957
Col	A. Dalton	January	1959
Col	J.H. Byrne	October	1960
Col	J. Murray	October	1961
Col	M. Harrington	July	1969
Col	C.M. Mattimoe	September	1970
Col	M. Harrington	June	1973
Col	J.S. Nolan	June	1974
Col	T. Walsh	September	1976
Col	T. McDunphy	September	1978
Col	C.J. McGuinn	April	1982
Col	P.F. Monahan	July	1983
Col	S.B. Condon	August	1986
Lt Col	P.J. O'Farrell	September	1988
Col	M. Moriarty	January	1989
Col	M. McMahan	April	1989
Col	G. Murphy	December	1989
Col	M. Shannon	December	1991
Col	M.P. Dunne	March	1994
Col	J.G. Prendergast	January	1996

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PAST DIRECTORS - ARTILLERY CORPS



Former Directors of The Artillery Corps (1988)

REAR: Brig Gen P. Monahan, T Walsh, Maj Gen C.J. McGuinn

FRONT ROW: P. Curran, T McDunphy, M. Harrington, J.S. Nolan (Cols retd)



*Colonel Maher and De Valera (then Taoiseach)
Pictured in The Glen of Imaal - early 1940's*

*Colonel Maher, Director of Artillery 1935 - 1942
Pictured here in 1928*

Pic Courtesy: His Daughter, Eimear

Artillery Officers of the General Staff

Chiefs of Staff

Major Gen P.A. Mulcahy	1955 - 1959
Lieut Gen T. O' Neill	1986 - 1989
Lieut Gen J.N. Bergin	1992 - 1994

Adjutants General

Colonel P. Hally	1957 - 1962
Major Gen C. McGuinn	1987 - 1989
Major Gen T.A. Wall	1992 - 1996
Major Gen W. Dwyer	1996 - to date

Quartermasters General

Colonel P. Curran	1962 - 1968
Colonel W. Donagh	1968 - 1971
Major Gen K. Duffy	1991 - 1993
Major Gen P.F. Nowlan	1997 - to date

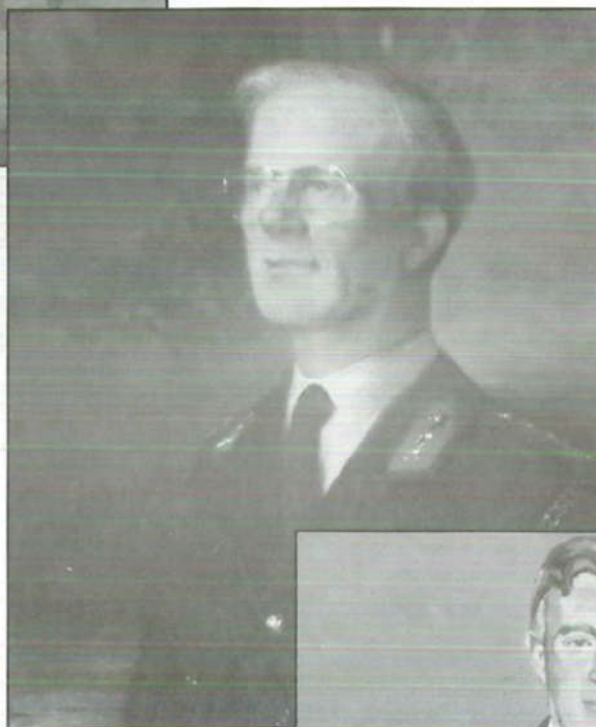
Assistant Chiefs of Staff

Colonel R. Callinan	1961 - 1962
Brig Gen P.F. Nowlan	1994 - 1997

ARTILLERY CHIEFS OF STAFF



*Maj Gen P. A. Mulcahy
(1955 - 1959)*



*Lieut Gen T O'Neill
(1986 - 1989)*



*Lieut Gen J.N. Bergin
(1992 - 1994)*

HISTORY OF THE 1ST FD ARTY REGT

Regiments in the army were not formed until 1944 - up to this, arty units were formed in batteries. The 1st & 2nd Btys as their names denote, are two of the oldest batteries in the Artillery Corps. Together with the 3rd Bty, these two batteries were formed in Clancy Bks, Dublin in 1927. In these early years, the Bty organisation was as a 4 gun battery, the 1st Bty being equipped with Mk.1 18 pdr Gun - Howitzers.

In 1928, The batteries were moved to Kildare, and even though they were stationed together there, each individual Bty was assigned to a specific Infantry Bn as a supporting arm; The 1st Bty being assigned to the 4th Bn here in Cork, and the 2nd Bty to the 5th Bn in Dublin. What this effectively meant was that whenever the 4th Bn, for example, went on manoeuvres, the 1st Bty accompanied them. This, of course, was a logistical headache to the Bty, since the principle form of transport in the early years of the Artillery Corps was the horse! So, in order for the Bty to move it's guns, horses, limbers and men, special trains had to be used. Equipped with closed wagons for the horses, open flatcars for the guns, and carriages for the troops. These trains arrived at platforms in the Curragh, where everything was to be loaded aboard and the Bty and proceed entrained for Cork Bks where everything was unloaded, hitched up and up to St Luke's to Collins Bks. The following morning would see an early rise, with an 0400 reveille, when they would depart for Kilworth, where they arrived at about 2000 at night! Though this time would include stops to rest the horses. On one occasion, in 1936, they made the trip from Kildare to Cork by road, which took them 8 days to complete. This trip was to attend a Military Tattoo in the Showgrounds.

During this time, the 2nd Bty had it somewhat easier, as their assigned Bn, the 5th, generally exercised in the Glen of Immal, which is, as everyone well knows, a trifle closer to Kildare than Kilworth is!

In 1936, the Bty's gun equipment was updated, when the army acquired the Mk.4 18 pdr "split - trail", which being less than ten years old, was recognised as an up to date gun at the time. These guns became available because the British army were in the process of switching over to their new guns, the 25 pdr.

By 1937, there had been an increase in the number of Bty's in the army, and the 2nd Bty was made a reserve Bty.

In early 1939, the first arty gun became mechanised - by this it meant the spoked wheels were replaced by tyre and tube wheels and it was sent to the 1st Bty to be tested. At

that time, work was about to commence on the building of a reservoir at Poolafooka in Co. Wicklow, which nowadays supplies Dublin with it's water, and the gun was to be tested on a number of houses due to be demolished at the site. As the gun crews had never before seen a tyre and tube style wheel fitted to a gun, the test firing was approached with some trepidation and apprehension. Predictions were that when the firing lever was pulled that the gun would bounce all over the place on this new fangled thing! However, when the firing lever was actually pulled, these apprehensions and suspicions were proved wrong, and the gun performed exactly as it had previously, an event that paved the way for the conversion of all other guns. This resulted in the entire Artillery Corps being mechanically drawn by 1940. Horses were phased out over that period, even though they had served the Bty and Corps faithfully. In fact, it was horses from these Bty's which helped to make up the Military Escort known as the "Blue Hussars", who escorted VIP's at the Eucharistic Congress in 1932 and who also provided Presidential Escorts.



With the outbreak of war in 1939, the 2nd Bty was brought from reserve status to full - time service and in 1940, the 1st Bty was assigned to Fort Duncannon in Co. Wexford to defend Waterford harbour. In 1941, the 1st Bty was assigned to the 10th Bn in Templemore and the 2nd Bty to the 13th Bn in Cahir. It was during that year that one of the most intensive training periods in the history of the army took place. This was a 1st Brigade exercise, held in Newtownaner near Clonmel. This training began every morning at 0700 and the weekly programme of training consisted of a 35 mile route march every Monday and Thursday, with night marches of the same distance on Tuesdays and Fridays. Wednesday and all the weekend were devoted to tactical training - this programme of training lasted for a full month.

Early in 1943, the 21st Bty was formed in Kildare and in the latter half of the year was moved to Clonmel, together with the 1st and 2nd Bty's, where the following, under the command of Comdt T. Murray, the 1st Field Artillery Regiment was born. During that period, the Southern Command was divided into three brigades, with the 1st Field Artillery Regiment assigned to the 1st Infantry Brigade, and again with each of the three batteries assigned to Infantry Bn's, within the Brigade; the 1st Bty (under the command of Capt J.P. Noone) to the 10th Bn, the 2nd Bty (under Capt Foran) to the 13th Bn and the 21st Bty (whose BC was Capt Kearney) to the 21st Bn in Youghal.

In 1945, the 1st FA Regt from Clonmel and the 7th FA Regt from Limerick came to Murphy Bks, Ballincollig to

join up with the 3rd FA Regt who had already been sent to Ballincollig for the purpose of demobilisation. The demobilisation process took place over a period of twelve months, at the conclusion of which the remaining members of the three Regiments were combined, with the new 1st Fd Arty Regiment being reborn under the leadership of Comdt Murray, with Comdt Sugrue as his 2 i/c Regimental HQ was under the command of Capt T.V. Furlong, the Anti - Tank Bty Comdr was Capt J. Kenny, the 1st Bty Comdt was Capt G. Glendon and the 2nd Bty Comdr was Capt Foran (during Demobilisation the 21st Bty was disbanded).

Two years after the establishment, the appointment of a Regimental Commander was upgraded from Comdt to Lt Colonel, with the then CO being the late Lt Colonel A. Dalton, who was later D/Arty. In 1949, the trusty 18 pdr which had given long and valuable service was withdrawn and the Regiment was equipped with the QF 25 pdr Gun - Howitzer which had seen extensive and dependable service with the British and Commonwealth forces during the war. By this time, the Bty organisation had also changed, from being a 4 gun Bty to an 8 gun Bty.

There were no major changes in Regimental or Bty organisation for the next decade, until 1959, the appointment of a Battery Commander became a Commandant's appointment rather than a Captain's one. The same year also saw the end of all PDF integration with FCA personnel on sub - unit level and the unit was reorganised to comprise 3 gun batteries; the 1st Bty being the regular Bty, equipped with 25 pdrs and the FCA comprised the 2nd and 21st Bty's, which were re-established and two FCA batteries being equipped with 4.5" Howitzers (the 2nd Bty), and 120 mm Mortars (the 21st Bty)

THE ARTILLERY CORPS

On the 24th of March 1942, Major P.A. Mulcahy (later to become Chief of Staff from 1955 - 1960) with two officers, took over nine 18 pounders at Islandbridge Bks, (now Clancy Bks). In June of the same year, the 1st Battery was established. It's strength was 11 officers, 62 men and 10 horses. The same month, The Battery made it's first ceremonial appearance at the Wolfe Tone Commemorations, where the white lanyard was proudly on display.

The Battery move into McKee Bks (Then called Marlborough), in Autumn 1924. However in January of 1925, the gunners redeployed to Kildare Bks which has been home of the Corps ever since. Glen of Immal in September 1925, was the location of the Corps first annual firing practises.

Initially the Field Batteries were equipped with 18 pounders, French 75mm guns, 4.5" and 3.7" Howitzers. The first guns in the Ack Ack were four 3" 20 cwt medium guns, 2 of which were mobile, (they had 4

wheels), the other two were semi - mobile, they had 2 wheels. The arrival of the 3.7" AA guns and Bofors LA 40's in 1940, coincided with the expansion of the AA in the Defence Forces during the war years.

The 120mm heavy Mortar was purchased in 1954. Using a modified artillery board, the mortars were first fired in Oughterard. This weapon was deployed with the United Nations in the Congo and since then the guns have seen service in the support role in Cyprus and Lebanon.

Between 1977 and 1982, the Corps underwent major changes in it's organisation and equipment. September 1979 witnessed the separation of the FCA Batteries and the PDF Batteries and the establishment of FCA Regiments. Simultaneously, Coastal Defence elements were reduced and a Guided Weapons and Air Defence Section was introduced to the Artillery School. Each PDF Regiment was increased by an additional Battery.

The same period saw the introduction of FACE, AWDATS, LASER RANGE FINDERS, PACER and MORCOS. October 1980 heralded the arrival of the RBS 70 Surface to Air Missile. The initial firing of the 105mm light gun on the 12th. of March 1981 was the first firing of a new field gun for the Corps since the 25 pdr. was fired at Seskin Gun Position in March 1949.

In recent years, the challenge of updating Field Artillery with the required modern technology has been undertaken. Giraffe Search and Track Radar, GUNZEN and Multi Role electronic fuses have enhanced the Corps capabilities. The Corps provides conventional fire support, as required, by combat units of the Defence Forces.

Today, the Artillery Corps has two main branches, Field Artillery and Air Defence. There are 3 PDF Field Artillery Regiments and 6 FCA Field Artillery Regiments. The Air Defence has 4 Batteries, one of which is PDF and the remaining 3 are FCA. The Directorate is located in McKee Bks and the Artillery Depot and School are in Magee Bks, Kildare.

THE ROYAL GUNPOWDER MILLS

The Ballincollig Gunpowder Mills date from the wars between Britain and France at the end of the 18th century. In 1794 a member of a well known Cork bank family, Charles Henry Leslie, established the mills along the southern bank of the River Lee.

Eleven years later, Napoleon was defeated and sent into exile in St. Helena, so the demand for gunpowder produced in Ballincollig, as well as other mills in Britain, dropped considerably and Ballincollig was amongst the mills closed down. Over the next twenty years the canals and millrace became overgrown and many of the buildings decayed.

Life returned to the mills in the 1830's when a Liverpool merchant company, Tobin and Horsfall, acquired the mills for £15,000. Thomas Tobin (knighted in 1855), the eldest son of one of the partners, was sent over to manage the mills.

Over the next twenty years the mills expanded rapidly. In 1837 the mills employed about 200 workers and produced about 16,000 barrels of gunpowder. But, by the mid 1850's the Ballincollig Royal Gunpowder Mills, as it was known then, was one of the largest industrial establishments in the Cork area. About 500 men and boys were employed and a wide range of skills were in use in the mills, coopering, millwrighting, carpentry, as well as the many skills associated with gunpowder production. The Cork Constitution in 1856 presented a picture of a closely knit community, under the parental care of the company. The company provided houses for the workers and their families. 'Each family resides in a little cottage, with a small piece of ground attached, rent free. (The dwellings have a neat appearance ... with their clean whitewashed walls and trimly kept gardens ... apart from the comfortable wages enjoyed by the workers ... the neatness and cleanliness of the cottages is secured by the periodical inspection of an officer employed for the purpose ... and any defect is at once commented on and remedied ... when a workman, either from illness or accident or old age, is incapacitated, temporarily or permanently, for further usefulness, he is favourably considered according to his previous character and the

duration of his service. The order, completeness and perfection which reign through the entire establishment reflects the highest credit on Sir Thomas Tobin, who ... is assisted by Mr. Somerville, the superintendent of the works).

But the picture did not last. By the last quarter of the 19th century the demand for black gunpowder declined as other explosives were invented. In this period the Ballincollig Mills changed ownership on a couple of referral. It was bought by Briscoes in the 1880's and in 1898 with the amalgamation of a number of British explosive firms, the mills came under the control of Curtis and Harvey. A number of gunpowder mill were closed down in Britain about this time and Ballincollig suffered a similar fate at the end of June, 1903. Over 20 years later, a further series of amalgamations resulted in I.C.I. (Imperial Chemical Industries) becoming owners of the Powder Mills lands.

THE MILLS TODAY

Since 1983 Cork County Council, in whose ownership most of the mills property now lies, has been restoring various parts of the former manufactory as part of it's development programme for Ballincollig Regional Park. A large part of this restoration work has been completed and the Mills are now open to the public, to enable them to see how the Mills Complex once operated.



25 pdr firing - ceremonial - 1 Fd Arty Regt

4TH AIR DEFENCE BATTERY

The 4th Air Defence Battery (FCA) is part of the 1st Air Defence regiment based in Magee Bks, Kildare. The 4th A D Bty has a rich and colourful history in the Artillery Corps. It originated in the Coastal Defence Artillery and was based in Fort Mitchell on Spike Island. When the LDA was disbanded the unit became part of 1st A D Regt and adapted to its new role defending Cork Harbour from the air rather than from the sea.

In March 1985 Fort Mitchell was handed over to the Dept of Justice and the 4 A D Bty moved to Belmont Military Post in Cobh. The Battery continues its tradition of military service in Cobh and its hinterland under the guidance of the Bty Comdr Comdt Dermot Moynihan. The Battery is noted for its participation in all aspects of FCA activities in the Southern Command and throughout the Defence Forces. The 4 A D Bty forte is the annual Air

Defence firing practices at Gormanstown Camp, Co, Meath.

Each year the Air Defence deploys as a unit at a Vital Installation. In 1997 the 4th A D Bty planned and organised an exercise at Whitegate Oil Refinery, Co. Cork. The deployment was a major success with four batteries (PDF and FCA) of the 1st A D Regt working together with the RBS 70 missiles and Bofor L60 guns. It was a very good example of how PDF and FCA work together as an integrated unit.

This brief history would not be complete without saluting the previous PDF Cadre Commanders who laid the foundations for the present healthy state of the 4th A D Bty These include Capt (now Comdt) Joe Buckley, Capt Vinnie Bourke, Capt John Murphy, Capt Denis Connell and Capt Timmy Daly.

HISTORY OF THE 2ND FD ARTY REGT

The 2nd Field Artillery Regiment was founded in 1943. However in order to appreciate the events leading up to its formation it is necessary to go back to 1934.

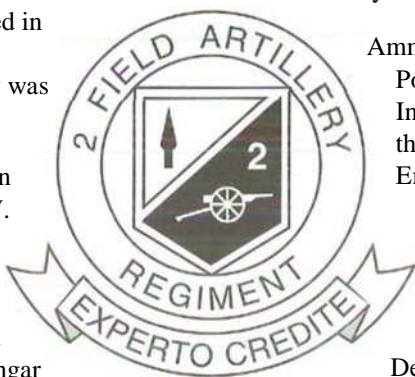
In the Spring of 1934 the Govt decided to create a Volunteer Force. The 1st Field Arty Bde was a part of this. It was organised into 3 Bty's. 1st Field Bty in the South, 2nd Field Bty under Capt BSC Thompson in the East and 3rd Field Bty in the West. The Bty's were trained in Kildare leaving a small cadre in each Comd to cater for training. The 1st Field Arty Bde was located in Plunkett Bks. McKee Bks had a taste of Artillery at this time as the 1st A D Battery was stationed there.

The Second World War was looming and in April 1939 Comdt R. Callanen and Capt W. Donnelly were tasked with organising a new II Arty Bde, comprising 4 Fd Btys and a mortar Bty, only one of which was "Regular". At the outbreak of war the II Fd Bde moved to its Wartime station in Mullingar leaving behind a small Cadre in McKee Bks to forward volunteers. Three Bty's were accommodated under canvas in Mullingar Bks and two Bty's took over Knockdinn Castle. The volunteer Gnr's of the West were amalgamated with the II F A Bde. In 1940 the mortars were sent to the Infantry. The Bde was changed to Bn status and was reduced to 3 Bty's 6, 10, and 11. The II F A Bn was stationed in Collins Bks.

In 1943 the planners yet again justified their existence and out of the II Fd Arty Bn came the II Fd Arty Regt, the IV

Regt and the VI Regt consisting of 3 Fd Bty's and 1 anti-tank Bty. The 2nd and 6th Regt's were moved to Hibernian Schools on the 8th October. Comdt W. Donnelly was the Commanding Officer. Throughout the Emergency the Regt was equipped as follows.

10 Bty	75mm Gun
14 Bty	75mm Gun
19 Bty	4.5" Howitzer
2 A/Tank Bty 2 Pdr A/Tank	



Ammunition was stored for the guns in Portobello Bks and Hibernian Schools. Interestingly the Regt was responsible for the provision of its own turf during the Emergency. The Regimental bog was located near Allenwood.

Training during the Emergency was paramount, and standards were high. For the Arty Corps it culminated in a 72 Gun Shoot in 1944. In October 1945 Demobilisation started, the numbers kept on were small. For example out of 20 Officers in the Regt 4 were granted permanent commissions.

The period from 1946 to 1959 saw the Regiment distributed between three military barracks - Cathal Brugha, Collins and Griffith. The Regiment was equipped with 8 x 25pdrs. However 1959 the year of integration, saw major changes in the Unit, the FCA 7th Regiment and 2nd Regiment were amalgamated and the Artillery in Dublin was located between McKee and Collins Barracks.



*"What ever happened to the likely lads?"
2 Fd Arty Regt Gunners getting the "inside track"
Pic courtesy; Comdt Laing*

UN involvement started in 1958 with observers heading to Lebanon. The Regiment contributed troops in 1960 to peace enforcement in the Congo. Unfortunately it also suffered its first casualty in the service here, Sgt Pat Mulcahay was killed by a mortar round in action during the Battle of the Tunnel. Since that time Regiment personnel have served on all overseas missions that the Defence Forces have been involved in.

A further two personnel lost their lives while on service in Lebanon, Sgt Charlie Forrester and Gnr Paul Cullen, both of whom have brothers serving in the unit today. It has at the moment twenty five personnel on overseas service in Lebanon and Bosnia.

On 25th August 1969 the Taoiseach Jack Lynch mobilised the reserves, they reported to Barracks on Saturday 26th August. On the 28th the Regiment moved to Letterkenny and Gormanston. There were approximately 30 regulars and 84 first line reservists on duty at this time. After the Northern troubles stabilised, the duties of the men in Gormanston were to look after some 1000 refugees. They eventually returned to Dublin.

The 7th Regiment has existed as an independent Unit since 1979 when it was newly formed as part of the organisation consequent on PRI. The sub-units however have existed since the early days of the LDF. The 41st and 42nd Btys have fired their artillery weapons annually since 1944 to the present (except 1946 when the FCA was formed) a record for which they are justifiably proud. In 1959 the 41st Bty and the 42nd Bty became the 19th Hvy Mortar Bty.

The 70's, 80's and 90's have seen the priorities of the Defence Forces change from being principally conventional in nature to having a greater emphasis on Aid to the Civil Power and Peace Keeping. In the 70's the unit was trained to be the army's riot squad, it was used in this capacity during riots in Monaghan and Dundalk, extricating the Garda Síochána from very dangerous situations. Lt Hayes particularly distinguished himself during the riot in Monaghan. The unit now spends a large amount of time on Aid to the Civil Power duties such as cash escorts and prison guards.

In 1982 the 2nd Field Artillery Regiment became the first Artillery Regt to be equipped with the 105mm light gun. Artillery training in the Unit continues to have a high priority and culminates annually with at least one shoot. The 2nd Regiment continues to lend dignity to "what otherwise would be an unseemly brawl".

2nd Field Artillery Regiment - '*Experto Credite*'.



Field Artillery Battery in Active Service Order c. 1935

HISTORY OF THE 3RD FD ARTY REGT

The 3 Field Artillery Regiment (FCA) was established in late 1959 from the then Tipperary Area FCA, drawing its personnel from the Ely, Templemore and Thurles Infantry Battalions. Its members adapted quickly to their new role and within the year they were to carry out their first Artillery Firing Practices. Initially the Regiment was armed with two Btys (9 Bty and 12 Bty) of 4.5 inch Howitzers and one Bty (16 Bty) of 120mm Mortars. In 1978 the 4.5 inch Howitzers were taken out of service. Four 25 Pdr Gun Howitzers were given to 9 Bty and four of the eight 120mm mortars were relocated from 16 Bty to 12 Bty giving the Regiment its current armament of 4 x 25 Pdr (9 Bty) 4 x 120mm Mor (12 Bty) and 4 x 120mm Mor (16 Bty).

McCann Barracks

The Barracks and Land occupied by the Garda Training College was originally Richmond Barracks, built in the first decade of the 19th century by the British Army. Thurles was the original location chosen for the Barracks. However that site, adjacent to the local Ursuline Convent, was successfully objected to by the nuns. As a result of this the War Office decided to build the barracks in Templemore. When completed, the barracks had two squares, surrounded by company lines, stores, married quarters, Officers Mess, military prison, a church and a hospital. It was completely surrounded by a high wall with projecting fire positions at each corner. Many units of the British Army passed through the barracks including the West Norfolk Militia, the 1st Depot Battalion, the 59th Regt. The First World War brought a period of intense activity to Richmond Barracks. During the first years of the war, hundreds of Prussian Guards were interned in four large concentration cages. When the Germans left, the Barracks became a vast training centre for the Munster Fusiliers. Thousands of Fusiliers were trained here prior to embarkation for the tragic battlefields of Paschendale and the Somme.

During the 1916 Rising a request for reinforcements for Dublin was received and the 4th Battalion, Dublin Fusiliers was sent from Templemore. During "The Troubles" the Northamptonshire Regiment occupied the Barracks. During those years, along with the Black and Tans and the Auxiliaries, troops were used against the IRA in Co. Tipperary. After the Truce the Barracks was handed over to the Irish Provisional Government. The 10th Battalion of the Northamptonshire Regiment were the last unit of the British Army to occupy Richmond Barracks. The last British Soldier to leave barracks was the Transport Officer of the Northamptonshire Regiment. On leaving barracks he locked the gate behind him and gave the keys to the caretaker, a local man, Mick Dunne.

Mick's son Sean Dunne is currently serving as a Gunner in the PDF Cadre of the 3 Fd Arty Regt (FCA).

The 2nd Mid Tipperary Brigade IRA took over the Barracks, and the name was changed to McCann Barracks. During the Civil War, the Barracks was held for a time by the anti-treaty forces, it became a prominent target for the National Army. When the Barracks was surrounded by the National Army, it was only



through the intervention of the Arch Bishop of Cashel and Emly, Dr. Harty, who arranged a truce, that great bloodshed was avoided. The truce allowed the troops in the Barracks to evacuate, and the National Army to march in. They remained in occupation until 1929. On the commencement of "The Emergency" in 1939, the Barracks was reoccupied, this time by the 10th Uisneach

Battalion and until the end of the war a large garrison was stationed here. After the war, the Barracks was again vacated until 1959. On the integration of the FCA with the Regular Army, McCann Bks became the Headquarters of the 3 Fd Arty Regt (FCA).

Further changes to the Barracks took place with the Government's decentralisation programme in 1964. A large portion of the Barracks was taken over by the Department of Justice as a Training Centre for An Garda Síochána. Further modernisation of the Garda Training College in 1988 reduced again the area held by the Dept of Defence to its current size.

Pierce McCann

Pierce McCann was born on the 2nd of August 1882. He went to school in Dualla about 4 miles from Cashel and Clongowes Wood College. After his schooling he managed the family farm in Ballyowen. He was one of the first pioneers of the Sinn Féin movement, becoming President of the Tipperary Sinn Féin Executive. He joined the Volunteers and eventually became OC of the Tipperary Brigade. He was arrested and deported after the Easter Rising. While in prison he gave lessons in Irish to Arthur Griffith. Such were his wholehearted efforts for the revival of the Irish Language, that it was considered that he might well have replaced "An Craoibhin", Dr. Douglas Hyde, when he resigned from the league. As a result of the "Alleged German Plot", Pierce was arrested and deported without trial, where he found himself imprisoned in Gloucester Jail. During his imprisonment the historic General Election of 1918 took place. Pierce was elected the Republican representative for East Tipperary under the Dáil Presidentship of Cathal Brugha. He was, however, never to take his seat. An epidemic of influenza struck Gloucester in February 1919. Pierce

succumbed to the virus and died on Thursday morning 6th March 1919. Following Pierce's death it was announced immediately in the House of Commons that all Irish Prisoners interned in British Jails were to be released. His remains were brought to the Pro-Cathedral in Dublin. The coffin was borne through O'Connell St., Westmoreland St., Dame St., Parliament St., and along the Southern Line

of the Quays to Kingsbridge Railway Station on the shoulders of Michael Collins, Harry Boland and Sean O'Muirthle. The funeral from Thurles to Dualla was said to have been the biggest ever witnessed. Cathal Brugha gave the funeral oration. Today, McCann Barracks is the headquarters of the 3 Field Artillery Regiment and the headquarters of the 9th Field Artillery Battery.



3 Fd Arty Regt on 120mm Mortar shoot in the late 70's - Glen of Imaal

HISTORY OF THE 4TH FD ARTY REGT

Mullingar has a long military history resulting from its location on the road from east to west. It was the only route between the two lakes - Lough Owel to the North and Lough Ennel to the South. The town was fortified in 1690 by the Williamite forces during the Siege of Athlone. The local population were driven from the town and took shelter in the area now known as Irishtown.

The present barracks which is the third barracks to be built in the town dates from 1815. In 1807 the land, on which the barracks now stands, was purchased from the Earl of Granard for the sum of £1800 10s 0d (£1800.50). There also exists a right of way leased from one Fulke Southwell Greville Nugent which is recognised by the Guinness Book of Records as the longest in the World - 10 Million years! The first unit to occupy the barracks was the 78th Highlanders (The Ross Shire Buffs) from January to August 1819.

During much of the 19th century the barracks was occupied by depot companies of Regiments serving overseas. Prior to 1873, Regiments had no fixed Regimental depots; they moved from place to place recruiting and training drafts to replace time expired, sick or deceased soldiers for their Regiments abroad. Hence the large number of Regiments in which Mullingar men have served.

First World War

During World War I the barracks was a hive of activity as was every other military post. Among the units mobilised here were the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and the 10th and 11th Battalions of the Hampshire Regiment. Shortage of accommodation led to the establishment of a temporary camp at Newbrook racetrack where the Tarkett factory now stands. The latter units were some of the first volunteers for Kitcheners New Army who were to be slaughtered on the Somme in 1916.

For the people of Ireland events of greater significance were taking place at home. The Rebellion of 1916 led to the executions that provoked the War of Independence. Columb Barracks played a part. During the war Sean Mac Eoin "the Blacksmith of Ballinalee" was captured by the British and held in the barracks. The cell in which he was held is still marked.

Irish Troops

Following the Treaty, on the 18th January 1922, the last British Troops, the East Yorks under their O.C., Lt Col

T.A. Headlam marched out and Irish Troops under Brigadier Sean McGuire marched in. Preserved in the Barracks Museum is the first routine order issued by the new Free State Army. Even though the Anglo-Irish Treaty was ratified by the Dail, It was not accepted by many who had fought in the War of Independence and civil war broke out. It was an incident in the period leading up to the Civil War that gave the barracks its name.



During an incident on 27th April 1922, Company Adjutant Patrick Columb of Colmcille, Co Longford was killed in Mary Street, Mullingar. He was one of a party engaged in an attempt to free nine men being held by Anti-Treaty Forces. He was only 20 years old. Occupation of the barracks ended in 1928 and it became overgrown with weeds. It was used during the period of the economic war as a pound for cattle seized for non payment of rates.

The Emergency

Columb Barracks took on a new lease of life when war broke out again in Europe in 1939. The 2nd Reinforced Brigade arrived and set up headquarters in The infirmary, now headquarters of the Westmeath County Library. Troops were also stationed at Knockdrin Castle and in Tudenham House. Early in 1943 the 2nd Artillery Battalion arrived under the command of Comdt R. J. Callinan. On the 17th of February of that year this became the 4th Field Artillery Regiment and Comdt J. Nolan was its first O.C. Comdt T.C. Maher, then a Lieutenant and a founder member of the new Regiment tells how he arrived in Mullingar at this time by train from Dublin. He recalls that there were two trains per week to Mullingar. The trains were turf fired and therefore took an inordinately long time to get any where. He tells how unimpressed he was with the town on first sight. The town, being a market town, appeared deserted and had a very unkempt appearance, showing evidence of the very lively cattle trade for which the town was then known. He gathered up his belongings, including his sword, and headed for the barracks. His first impressions did not last and he still lives in the town more than 50 years later.

4th Regiment

In 1946 the 5th Regiment, then stationed in Kildare, was amalgamated with the 4th Regiment. The 20th Battery was disbanded and the Regiment then consisted of HQ, 4th Anti-Tank Battery, 8th and 15th Batteries. This organisation remained until 1959 when the anti-tank battery was disbanded and the 15th Battery became an

FCA battery. The 20th Battery was reactivated also as an FCA battery and consisted mainly of gunners from the 46th Battery, an FCA Battery of the Midland Area.

The 5th Regiment was reborn in 1959 and the 4th Regiment repaid the debt incurred in 1946 by supplying Officer and NCO staff to re-establish the Regiment. Shortly before this, in 1954 a new 'weapon arrived from France. The conventional artillery pieces were joined by the Thompson-Brandt 120mm mortar. This weapon arrived with little more than a set of range tables.

A small, but dedicated, band of pioneers set about devising a means of firing these new weapons using conventional artillery fire control procedure. In other armies mortars are regarded as infantry weapons. Comdt M. Sugrue, Lt L. Donnelly, 2/Lts M. Moriarty and P. O'Farrell together with Cpls W. (Birdie) Early and E. Columb experimented over a long period and eventually the first mortar round was fired in Oughterard using an improvised mortar board with plywood arm and arc. The present mortar board equipment was produced from these prototypes.

United Nations Service

In 1959 the Army stirred itself out of the tranquillity into which it had slipped after the "Emergency". This reawakening was brought about by the prospect of United Nations service in the Belgian Congo, now Zaire. A mortar troop, mainly composed of men from the 4th Regiment went to the Congo in 1960. These were not however the first members of the Regiment to serve overseas. Captains M. O'Donnell and J. Croke served in the Lebanon in 1958.

The mortar troop, under the command of Captain T. Boyle, saw action in the Congo and three members of the troop received Distinguished Service Medals for their services. The recipients were Captain Boyle, Sergeant J. Quirke and Corporal W. Allen, all of the 4th Regiment. 120mm mortar troops became a feature of all battalions and groups serving overseas and saw service in the Belgian Congo, Cyprus and of course the Lebanon.

Comdt. J.P.(Johnny) Kane who was the first O.C. of the 5th Regiment also took part in the fighting in the Congo and returned to take command of the 4th Regiment in 1963. Indeed he was the longest serving O.C. of the Regiment from 1963 to 1972.

He became a legend in his own time because of his occasional eccentricities. Stories, some apocryphal, are still told about him, even by those who never knew him. The Regiment celebrated it's coming of age in 1964 with an open day which has since become a feature of Regimental celebrations. The citizens of Mullingar came in their hundreds to visit the barracks, view the armament displays, visit the newly established museum and enjoy the hospitality of the messes.

Similar celebrations were held for the silver jubilee of the Regiment in 1968.

During this period the Barracks began to see much needed renovations. The 1916 Commemoration Arch was built, as was the Fenian Fountain. A pitch and putt course was developed on the Barracks Green but this was eventually displaced by the present dining complex. Work also proceeded on central heating. Those who can remember the numbing coldness of the barracks on a Winter morning will realise what a boon this was.

In 1975 the Regiment had the first of it's many successes in the All Army Competitions. A tradition it has maintained ever since. The dining complex was completed and officially opened on 18th October 1976, an event which received widespread press coverage at the time.

In 1978 the Regiment won it's first All army Rifle competition. 1979 saw the integration between the regular army and the FCA, which had lasted since 1959 come to an end and the 4th Regiment gave birth to the 9th Regiment under the command of Comdt M. P. Dunne, now Colonel and Director of Reserve Forces. As part of this reorganisation, a subunit from the past, the 22nd Field Battery was reactivated under the command of Comdt R. A. Twomey.

The Regiment again won the All Army Rifle Competitions in 1980 and 1981. In 1991 the Regiment won the All Army 84 mm Anti-Tank Competition and in 1992 Sgt T. Owens won the All Army Sniper Competition, reducing still further the number of All Army Competitions which have not at some time or another been won by the unit.

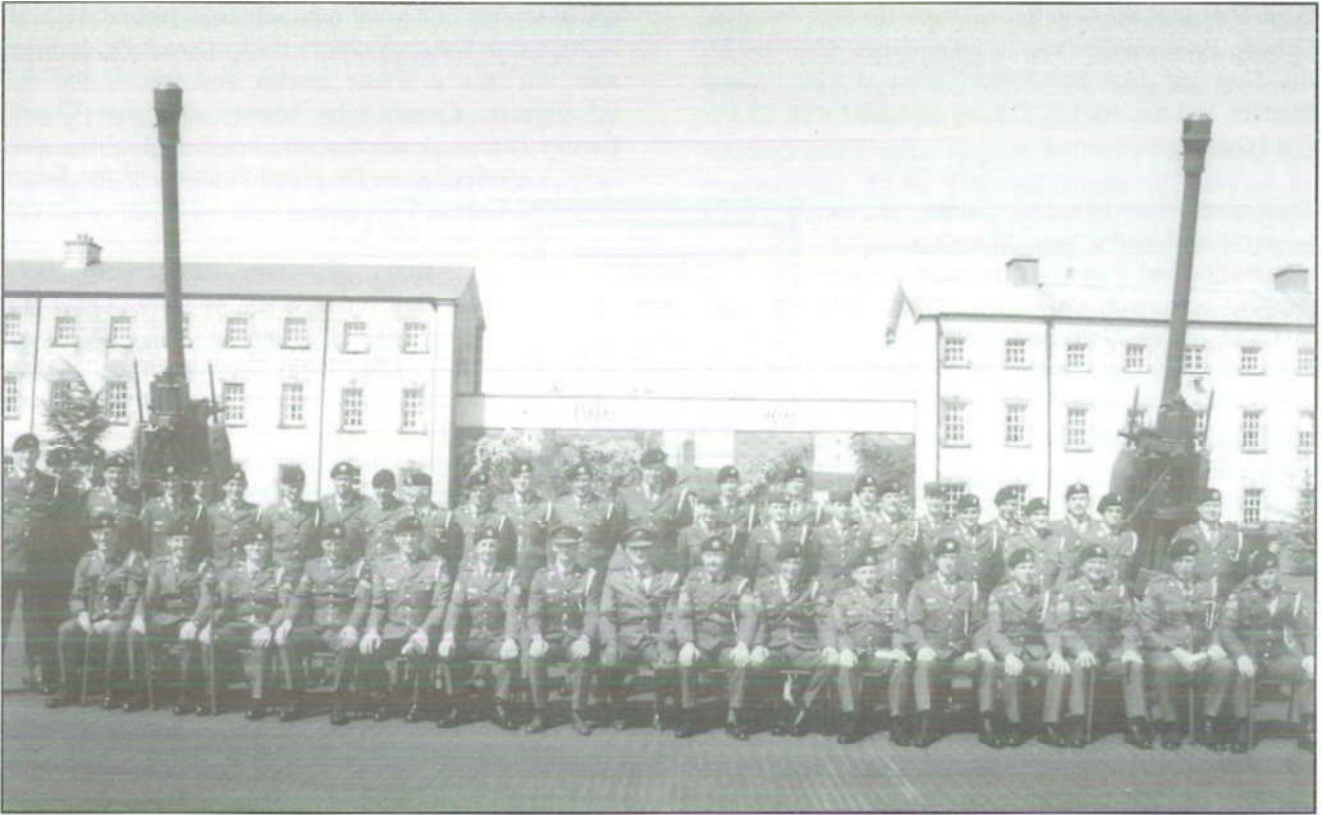
1993 saw the Regiment celebrate it's golden jubilee in the style to which the unit and town have become accustomed. An anniversary dinner for all former and serving officers of the Regiment was served and a B ar-B-Que for all members of the Regiment and their families was held. A military tattoo, depicting the 50 years history of the Regiment was enacted in the Town Park as part of Mullingar Festival Week. The Tattoo met with great acclaim from those who attended.

Lt Col R. A. Twomey took command of the Regiment in 1996. He has twice been associated with milestones in the history of the 4th Regiment. He was the first battery commander of the newly formed 22 Battery back in 1979 and was, as Commanding Officer of the Regiment, the first C.O. in 44 years to receive new artillery pieces into the unit. On 18 May 1998, the Regiment received it's first battery of 105 mm Light Guns at a formal parade ceremony presided over by the Director of Artillery, Col J. G. Prendergast, himself a former Commanding Officer of the 4th Field Artillery Regiment.

And so military life goes on. 1998 sees the 4th Regiment still carrying on it's primary role, firing artillery practices in the Glen Imaal to it's normal high standard, aiding the civil power when requested as was done in the 1940's and 1950's, supplying troops for United Nations service in all

corners of the world and also supplying guards of Honour to Aras an Uachtarain when required.

No matter what the future may bring the men and women of the 4th Field Artillery Regiment will not be found wanting whatever tasks the Nation may require of them.



Historical Occasion - Monday 18 May 1998

Pictured in front of two of the new 105mm Light Artillery Guns are members of the 8th Bty, 4 Fd Arty Regt, after they were formally handed over by the Director of Artillery, Col J.G. Prendergast.

Pic courtesy; Lt Col Twomey OC 4 Fd Arty Regt

A BRIEF HISTORY OF 5 FD ARTY REGIMENT

By Comdt J. T. Burke

1

The 5th Field Artillery Regiment came into being in 1959 in what was then called integration. The three Battery's which were to form the Regiment were the Tuam Battalion, the Gort Battalion and the 50th Battalion Galway. From this embryo of Infantrymen came the 7th Bty Gort and 13th Bty Tuam, equipped with 120mm Mortars, and the 4th Bty Galway equipped with 25 Pdr Field Guns.

Transition was slow as some of the Infantrymen found it very difficult to change their badges and flashes and to adopt the new Artillery methods. Under Comdt J.P. Kane (the first CO of the Unit), no mean cajoler in Artillery ways, they finally saw the Gunnery Light and were moulded into a Regiment capable of laying down Artillery Fire in the Glen of Imaal.

The Gort Battalion FCA had been formed from LDF (Local Defence Force) Units which were disbanded in 1946 at the end of the Second World War. They became part of the West Galway Area with a PDF Commandant in charge. The first FCA Battalion Commander was Comdt Martin Dolan who still commanded the Unit at integration when it became 7th Bty, 3th Field Artillery Regiment. He was the local school teacher and storyteller and made the transition from Infantryman to Artillery man with such aplomb that his very first round in the Glen was a Target Round. Comdt Johnny Kane, OC 5 FAR, called it a miracle but went on

to write later that the man was a character whose name he heard mentioned in 1960 in San Antonio, Texas by a former pupil of his - Unusual then to hear the name of a school teacher of a small rural school in Ireland. He was succeeded as Battery Commander by Comdt Paddy Fahy who was also a school teacher and one of the old Infantrymen. Comdt John Murray and now Comdt Dermot O'Connor are the new breed of Artillery men carrying on the proud tradition of the South Galway FCA



men. The Tuam Battalion FCA were very entrenched Infantrymen who also found the transition to Artillerymen (13 Bty, 5 FAR) very difficult. Long hours were spent in Training Huts and Halls figuring out Grid References and OT Angles but eventually the wonders and mysteries of the Gunners conquered all. The present Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant

Pat O'Hora was a '15 year old' Gunner in the fledgling Artillery Battery who took his .303 Rifle to school with him and then on to a Training Night. Pat also claims to be the Gunner who fired the first Artillery Round for the new 5th FAR and now to be the last serving FCA member of the 13th Bty Gun Crew to fire a demonstration shoot for the Swiss Ambassador "Where were you when we fired for the Swiss 9" Comdt Tom Higgins FCA was the first Battery Commander and he was succeeded by Comdt Plunkett Marron who in turn was succeeded by Comdt Tom Houlihan. Keeping the Gunners Flag flying over Tuam and North Galway at present is Comdt Sean Fahy.



The New 5 FAR - 1959

*Includes Comdt J.P. Kane the first OC of 5 FAR
and Staff Officer Capt Martin Greaney and Lt W. Donnelly, Training Officer*

The 50th Battalion Galway, now the 4th Bty, 5 FAR was the last of the newly formed 5th Field Artillery Regiment to surrender its Infantry ways. However to persuade them to change their old insignia was the most difficult task facing Comdt Johnny Kane in 1959. But after some years and the injection of new blood he wooed them to the Gunners table. The 4th Bty are the Galway City Unit and fire the 25 Pounder Guns.

They boast of some well known people who served in their ranks - Mr. Robert Molloy TD, once Minister for Defence is a former member and to this day talks fondly of his time in the 4th Bty. Mr.

Seamus Brennan TD is also a former member of the 4th Bty. Other former members of the Bty went on to become Doctors, Builders and Businessmen and can be found in all parts of the world.

Comdt Sean Cullinane was the first Battery Commander of the 4 Bty and recently Comdt Ruaidhri O' Tuathail took over from Comdt Hugh Duffy who led the Battery for many years, and whose son Brian now carries on the tradition as a Lieutenant in the Battery.

Above I have given a short account of how each battery evolved to the present day 5th FAR. Apart from Comdt Jolmny Kane who was the first CO there were many PDF CO's over the years, each contributing in his own way to the development and esprit of the 5th FAR. The Cadre Staff of PDF NCO's and Gnrs have stoically held the ship and steered it on course for the Glen each year. There have been many changes since 1959. Females are now

part of the Unit, the Uniform fits better, the FN Rifle has replaced the .303, Gun Towing Quads are now Ac mats and Dafs and the hand held Gunzen and Morcos have replaced the larger Plotter and Mortar Board etc, etc., Artillery Corps events such as the Gustaf/BAP Shoot and the Mortar Race Competition have been won on several occasions by 5th FAR. In 1996 and 1997 the Unit won the All Army FCA Pistol Competition and this year 1998 we achieved 2nd place in the individual competition. This was my 'Dream Team' and with the attention paid to Super-Subs there are many more All Army's to be won.

The 5th Field Artillery Regiment serves away quietly and unassumingly in the City and county of Galway. Its Regimental Headquarters is in Dun Ui Mhaoiliosa where it has a very respected status among all the other PDF and FCA Units. The Unit continues to train and educate young men and women in the now sophisticated art of Gunnery. Each one will remember and carry on the tradition in some form to the year 2,000 and beyond.



"DREAM TEAM"

*The double winning All Army Pistol Team of 1996 & 1997 includes 2nd Individual 1998.
Back Row, left to right: Gnr B. McGrath, Lt S. Dooley, Comdt R. O'Tuathail, Comdt J. Burke,
Capt P White, Cpl J. Creavin, Capt G. Lyons
Front Row, left to right: Lt N. Monahan, Sgt P.J. Fallon, Capt D. O'Connor,
Capt T Shaughnessy, Sgt C. Gillespie*

8th FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT

Missing from the LDF Group of Corps in the Southern Command during the Emergency was Artillery. However shortly after the formation of the FCA, this omission was put right and the new 44 Field Battery came into being in April 1950.

Capt Tom Furlong took the task of converting Infantry into Gunners. Among his early assistants were Sgts O'Callaghan and Keating (later RSM of 1 Fd Arty Regt) BS Flanagan, Sgt Leblanc and Sgt B. Dillon. The 44th's first Battery Commander was Comdt Jack O'Connell.

The conversion to gunnery in the early 50's was so satisfactory and strengths so healthy that a new Battery, the 45th was formed. The two batteries were "twinned" in that all ranks wore shoulder patch inscribed "44 - 45 Bty".

The 44th and 45th Batteries continued until integration in 1959 when the 44th Bty became the 2nd Fd Arty Bty and the 45th Bty became the 21st Hy Mor Bty. Integration coincided with the introduction of the then 120mm Mortar. Capt Dan O'Keeffe was the 21st's first Training Officer and Capt Paddy Conway its first Battery Commander. Theirs was the task of introducing the new 120mm Mortar, a conversion achieved most successfully.

From 1959 onwards, both Batteries were part of 1 Fd Arty Regt. Both Batteries had the good fortune of long dynasties of Battery Commanders: 2nd Bty was commanded by Comdt Jack O'Connell, Comdt Paddy Gillen, Comdt Cyril Foley and now Comdt Sean Kennedy. 21st Bty had Comdt Paddy Conway, Comdt Frank Geary, Comdt Tom Goulding and now Comdt Paschal Cullen.



In 1979 came the break from 1 Fd Arty Regt and the foundation of the new 8th Fd Arty Regt, the two batteries retaining their designation. The first Unit Commander was Comdt Tim Galvin (RIP) followed by Comdts M. Verling, C. Lalor, T.F. O'Connor, M.A. Hartnett and now Comdt F.J. Hannon. The first Staff Officer was Capt D. O'Connell followed by Capts M. Baston, P. Coleman, H. O'Neill and now Capt L. Keena.

Both Batteries, with very distinct identities perform well not only at gunnery, but at Small Arms Competitions (1998 All Army Falling Plates Champions) Adventure Training, Orienteering, Charity Walks and Sports. The traditional recruiting area is Ballyphehane / Bishopstown / Togher, with a welcome and increasing population of locals from Ballincollig.

THE AIR DEFENCE REGIMENT

The birth pangs of Air Defence were traumatic and no great strategic decision launched the formation of its first unit. Lt Col Barry's articles in *An Cosantoir* of September 1989 clearly shows that were it not for the professionalism and enthusiasm of our first AD Gunners this form of Artillery gunnery might not have survived, Lt Col Barry takes up the story :

"In 1927 an army purchasing mission to Britain purchased four 3" 20 cwt Medium Anti-Aircraft guns, two of these were mobile - they had four wheels and the other two were semi mobile - they had only two wheels. They were delivered to the Ordnance Depot in Islandbridge Barracks (now Clancy Barracks) in March 1928. Later that year Lt M P McCarthy (later Lt Col and now deceased) underwent an Anti-Aircraft Artillery course at Larkhill Artillery School in England from late October 1928 to early January 1929. An Anti-Aircraft Battery came into being on 16th September 1931. It will be noted that three and a half years elapsed between the arrival of the guns and the formation of the Battery.

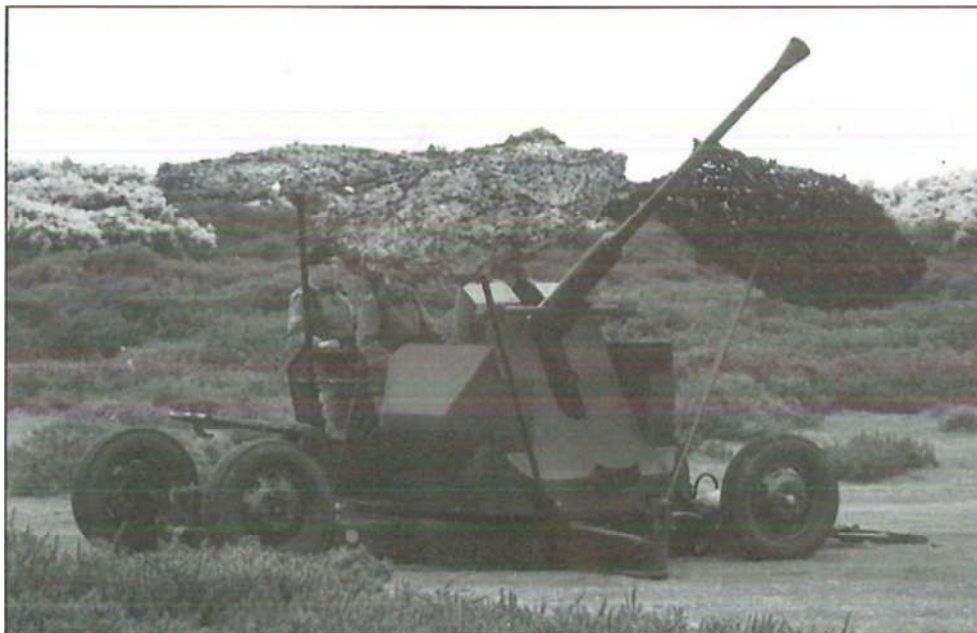
Gen Mulcahy takes up the story.

He recalls that one day he was told that two 3" 20 cwt (mobile) AA guns and two 3" 20 cwt semi-mobile guns had been in Islandbridge Barracks for a considerable time and nobody took any notice of them. He remembers getting a phone call on a Friday. It was from GHQ and he comments that this was in itself an event at that time. He

does not state the date of the call but we can conclude that it must have been around mid-September 1931. The message was that he was to form an Anti-Aircraft Battery immediately. His reaction was to laugh and hang up the phone. He went next door to his 2 TIC Comdt Paddy Maher (later Col Director of Artillery and Manager of Shannon Airport and now deceased), Comdt Maher also

laughed. They were already short fifty men in their establishment and considered forming a new battery a joke. However, on Saturday morning he got another phone call from GHQ to enquire whether the battery had been formed and he replied: "It certainly isn't, I haven't the men." He was informed to get it done immediately. He took no action. On Monday morning he was rung again - a different voice, a friend. He said: "Paddy, have you formed that battery yet?" Gen Mulcahy replied: "I haven't and I have no intention of doing

it." "Well I'm telling you you'd better get it done today" said the friend, "and I'll be ringing you this afternoon and you'd better be able to tell me that the battery has been formed", and he hung up. Gen Mulcahy discussed the matter with Comdt Maher and they decided to appoint Lt Maurice McCarthy, who had done an Ack Ack course as OC, and Lt Jimmy Dolan as his 2 IC. They arranged to have the guns brought down to Plunkett Barracks as there was no room for them in Kildare. They attached a few men under Lt McCarthy and so the battery was formed. Later his friend rang and he informed him that the battery have been formed and had a CO, Lt Maurice McCarthy and they were stationed in Plunkett Barracks.



Bofors 1170 Light Anti-Aircraft Gun

The following day the mystery of the urgency was solved. There was a Dail question down for answer on Tuesday by the Minister for Defence and the question was: "Is it a fact that there are guns - Anti-Aircraft guns - rusting in Islandbridge as there is no unit in the Army to look after them?" The Minister was able to stand up and say that "the answer to that question is in the negative". Thus the Ack Ack was formed and Gen Mulcahy commented: "From there on the AA never looked back."

Lt Col O'Halloran indicates the details of the formation

of the battery as follows: "On 16th September 1931 the Daily Routine Orders for the Artillery Corps, as it was then established, curtailed the new organisation in accordance with the terms of DFR No 57 of 1931; Peace Establishment 1931/1933 and thus the Corps was strengthened by the inclusion of a new unit, "The Anti-Aircraft Battery". The unit was located at Kildare Barracks.



*3.7" Heavy Anti-Aircraft Crew in Training
During the 1940's*

Pic courtesy: Wittily Archives

Routine Order No 7 of the Anti-Aircraft Battery was published on 17th September 1931 by stating the terms of DFR 57; in fact it said the Artillery Corps shall include the AA Battery. The total inclusive strength of the battery on formation was two (2) Officers and 48 Other ranks.

The four guns arrived on 24th January 1932 amidst great enthusiasm, thus enabling Gun Drill to commence. This appeared on the programme for the first time on 30th January 1932 and thereafter was a prominent feature of all training programmes. A UB 2 Height and Range Finder was received on 19th April and added variety to the training programme. This involved initial training on stationary targets, to select persons who would make good Height Takers and the further training of these to the standard of First Class Height Takers on aeroplane targets. The battery had still no towing vehicle but drivers were sent to Islandbridge Barracks to receive training as tractor drivers.

Orders were received to carry out the first Firing Practices by the battery in the summer of 1933. The first towing tractor was received on 8th July 1933 and another was lent to the battery by Messrs Industrial Vehicles of Athy, Co. Kildare and enabled the Gun Section to be moved to the practice camp at Tabertoly, Co. Louth. All members of the battery attended the camp plus two NCO's and eleven men of the Class "A" Reserve. The organisation of the camp and Safety Precautions for the Firing Practices involved considerable administration work, particularly the Safety Precautions as it was the first time that firing out to sea was undertaken. These involved "Warning Notices of Red Flags", and keeping the Firing Area clear of boats and vessels by a patrol boat.

The first shoot took place on 18th July 1933. Present were the Director of Artillery Major P A Mulcahy, Comdt P Maher, Capt W Donnelly of FA Bde and the MO was Lt Dodd. The battery fired Burst Shot Practice Ammunition at a plane flying a course roughly parallel to the coast line, but there was no danger of hitting the target as the ammunition used had a reduced propellant charge which ensured that the shell burst considerably short of and below the plane. However, the ammunition was so designed that if the gunnery data was correct the shell would burst on the line of sight from an observer at the firing position to the target and giving the impression of a direct hit. It was recorded by the OC of the Practice camp, Lt M P McCarthy, that the first practice camp was a conspicuously successful one."

The war years signalled a heightened awareness of Air Defence. The main threat to the country and to Dublin in particular, was from the air and the service went through a period of rapid expansion. In reflection on this period Comdt Phil Eager remembers :

"Early in 1940 the AA unit went through a period of rapid expansion which was speeded up by the arrival of a ship load of brand new modern 3.7" AA guns (some mobile and some for placing on static sites) and also new Bofors LA 40s (high rate firing automatic light AA weapons). They were purchased from the British Army and transferred to Ireland to assist (as far as possible) in the defence of the larger town's, ports and airports. So rapid expansion and intensive training of all ranks was the order of the day in 1940. New officers were trained and commissioned and many potential NCO courses were completed.

So when the war really got rough towards the end of 1940 and air raids in England and N. Ireland became the order of the day and night, the AA Battalion (as it was then called) was ready to occupy both gun and searchlight outposts in the Dublin, Cork and Shannon areas. In the Dublin area for instance the following outposts were occupied and prepared for action:

Ballyfermot (before the new housing was started).
Hibernian Schools in Phoenix Park.

Browns Barn, close to Baldonnel.

Dalkey.

The Bull Wall.

Stillorgan.

Ringsend.

Clontarf.

Brackenstown, near Dublin Airport.

The Hill of Howth.

Shannon Airport was also supplied with an AA Defence Battery.

The duty Officer in each battery and searchlight outpost had the full responsibility for engaging aircraft from the countries involved in the war once he had identified them as hostile. (He did not have to request permission from

dropped a 1,000 lb landmine on the North Strand area (killing 38 people). Most of the Dublin gun and searchlight outposts were in action that night.

Aircraft engaged during these years included a Sunderland flying boat, a Blenheim twin engine bomber, a Hawker Hurricane fighter and an American Flying Fortress bomber. This US bomber had lost its bearings and the crew thought that they were over France - fuel was running out so they decided to land at Collinstown, but not before it had been engaged by the 3.7" battery at Ballyfermot. This was in 1944 and as the centre of gravity of the war had moved to Eastern Europe the number of fly-over incidents declined almost to nil and the guns were to remain silent until future practice camps were held in Gormanston Camp.



12.7mrn Heavy Machine Gun

any higher authority.) The result was that, as the German/British/American air operations increased in 1941/42/43 and 44 we opened fire on several occasions on aircraft identified as belonging to the air forces already mentioned, in defence of our neutrality. The first case of opening fire occurred on St. Stephen's Day 1940 when a German Heinkel twin engine bomber was identified flying over the city from east to west. The 6 AA Battery located in Ballyfermot engaged the bomber until a flight of Gloster Gladiator fighters took off to engage - but the bomber entered large dense clouds and escaped. Shrapnel from the exploding 3.7" rounds fell on Clondakin village. Other allied and German aircraft were engaged by the batteries in Stillorgan, Ringsend, Clontarf and Dublin Airport in 1941/42/43. On the two nights that Belfast was heavily bombed by German aircraft (they flew up along the east coast and over Dublin) they were engaged by the battery of Bofors near Dublin Airport. The most spectacular (and most tragic and serious) engagement took place during the early morning hours when a German bomber remained over the city for some time and

From what I have written it must be noted that the officers, NCO's and gunners of the wartime AA Battalion were almost the only troops to open fire with full charge HE ammunition on several occasions between 1940 and 1944. It made for excitement and uncertainty countered the long hours of waiting and loneliness and boredom associated with outpost duty of this nature."

As night sights as we know them today were non-existent and most air raids took place at night. Search lights became an integral & essential part of the organisation. Sgt Jimmy Madden gives us an insight

into the search light Cadre

"Searchlights were first introduced to the Defence Forces in 1939 where the first Searchlight Cadre was formed. The cadre was composed of regular army personnel drawn from various infantry units, and were billeted in Ceannt Barracks in the Curragh. The cadre who were now members of the Corps of Engineers under the command of Lt J N Kilcullen did their Searchlight training in Hare Park. The equipment used in training was the Searchlight lamp; Mk 111 sound locator and a GOY lorry. The lorry was specially designed for Searchlight work. It had a crew compartment, a large generator and switchboard. After initial training in the Curragh the cadre moved to McKee Barracks in Dublin. The cadre was now augmented with members of the Volunteer Force and a Engineer Officer, Lt M J McLoughin who died tragically in the Glen of Imaal mine explosion in September 1941 (see article "The Shadow of the Glen").

The cadre moved to Gormanston Camp for night exercises with Air Corps Aircraft and AA Artillery Units. On completion of these exercises the process of



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TRIDON

Each generation of the Bofors 40 mm AD Gun has been improved and matched to current threat developments. Today it's a mobile, high firepower, autonomous weapon system with short reaction times and high firing endurance.

And if you fill its magazine with Bofors 6-programmable 3P rounds it'll down just about any and defeat lightly armoured vehicles, concealed ground forces and hovering



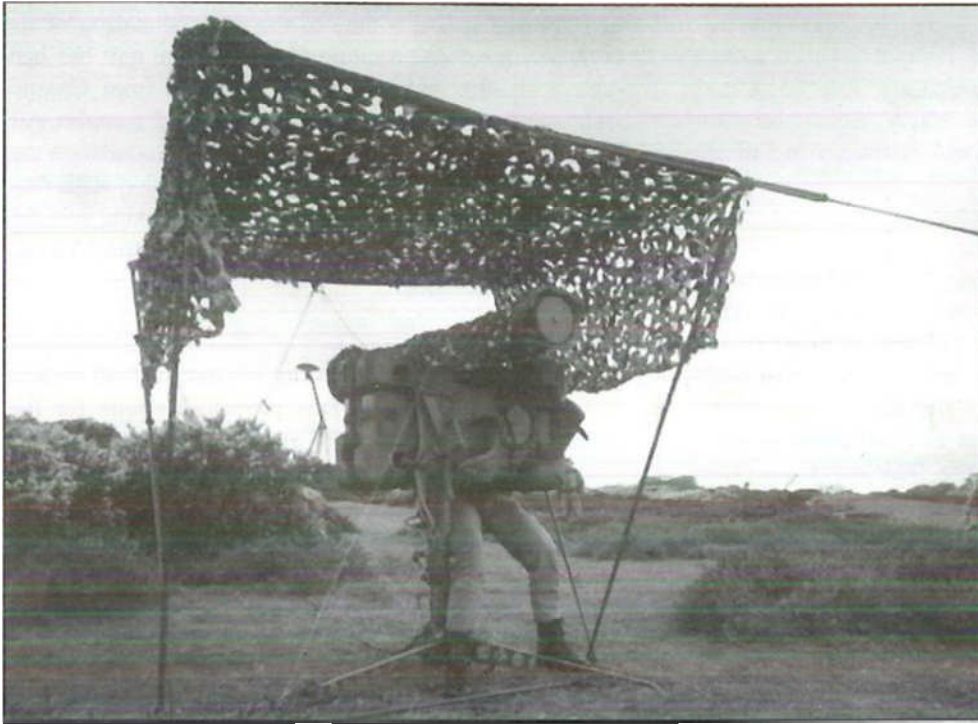
mode any aerial threat surface targets, helicopters.

Celsius

BOFORS WEAPON SYSTEMS

Bofors Weapon Systems, SE-691 80 KARLSKOGA, Sweden
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transferring the cadre into the AA Artillery Corps was muted. World War II was declared in September 1939 and following De Valera's "call to arms" broadcast, thousands enlisted. Suffice it to say, many of these volunteers were posted to the AA Artillery to build up and man the gun and searchlight outposts. In 1940 six Searchlight outposts were set up around Dublin city:



RBS 70 Missile System

12. Howth Summit
13. Bull Wall
14. Pidgeon House
15. Blackrock Park
16. Sandycove
17. Sorento Park, Dalkey

In 1941, following the bombing of South Circular Road, a mobile outpost operated at night in the Phoenix Park. The same year the unit moved to Ballsbridge and from there a mobile unit operated from Herbert Park, Donnybrook. In the early days of World War II invasion was preceded by heavy air raids and the first line of defence was the Searchlight and AA Gun batteries. Around the coast were what was known as "Lookout Posts" manned by personnel from Coast Watching Service. Their Duty was to watch for and report anything seen or heard that might indicate an invasion or attack. These incidents were directly reported to Air Defence Command in Dublin Castle who were on a direct line to the searchlight and Gun outposts. These reports were checked and where aircraft were involved the Gun and Searchlight outposts were alerted as follows :

"Air Raid Message Yellow" meant unidentified aircraft seen or heard in Fighter Zone.

"Air Raid Message Red" meant some aircraft coming into or approaching an Artillery Zone.

"Air Raid Message Green" all clear, alert over.

As Britain was under constant aerial bombardment, it was understandable that the sound of aircraft was constantly being reported to Air Defence Command, resulting in the Searchlight and Gun outposts being continually called into action stations day and night, which meant very little sleep or rest for the personnel. There were several engagements belligerent aircraft, but the most serious was the North Strand bombing on 31st May 1941, in which 36 people were killed and hundreds injured and left homeless. The Searchlight detachments in Blackrock Park had the experience during the engagement of hearing shrapnel from bursting "pinking" on the railway lines close to the outpost.

The Searchlight outpost consisted of two NCO's and twelve men. The NCO's worked a 24 hour on/off schedule while the men operated a 24 hour on and 48 hour off system. A Searchlight detachment consisted of nine personnel. They were numbered as follows:

1. Detachment Commander.
- 2 & 3 Spotters, using reclined rotating chairs with binoculars with AA sights affixed.
4. Lamp Controller on the guiding arm.
1. Lamp Attendant operating electrical fittings, main switches and beam adjustment.
2. Sight Readers on sound locator. 7 & 8 Listening Members on sound locators.
- 9 Engine and generator operator.

The end of the war brought demoralisation and the Defence Forces moved into a period of quiet introspection. Air Defence continued to evolve through a series of stages, Bty Cadres, Training Regt, Integration up to the arrival of our latest recruit the 4 AD Bty Corp. This leaves the present situation of the RHQ and 1 AD Bty in Kildare with FCA Btys and Cadres in Dublin, Limerick

and Cobh. At present the AD Regt is unique in the Defence Forces as the only operational composite PDF/FCA Unit. Despite the geographic spread, this mix has worked smoothly and a deep unity and Esprit De Corps exists between all the Air Defence Gunners both regular and reserve.

1 st BATTERY

This Bty, the regular Bty, is the operational work horse of the unit. In addition to Barrack routine it is responsible for vital Cash in Transit and other internal security tasks. However, its most exciting operational role is at the national airport for VIP visits which allows for the deployment of all our operational resources including modern missiles and radar.

2 nd BATTERY

The origin of 2 AD Battery (FCA), 2 AA Battery prior to 1986 lies in the 1959 reorganisation of the PDF. The Battery came into existence in October 1959 when 10 Officers selected from FCA infantry units in and around Dublin came together in Griffith Barracks on transfer to the new unit, under command of Lt Paud Holahan who had been given command of the fledeling team. The training and firing was done at an annual camp but for a period of ten years until the ariel target was acquired firing generally took place on a weekend in September. In 1978 to 81 the annual camp has been confined to one intensive week in Gormanston with three batteries to fire.

3 rd BATTERY

The first shoot of 3 AD Battery took place in the Glen of Imaal in July 1960. After all the practice it turned out to be a tremendous drill. The first time the guns of 3 AD

fired to the sky in Gormanston was in 1978 with the Air corps providing assistance towing the target drogue. The 3 AD Battery take an active part in various fund raising events and have represented the Air Defence well on numerous occasions such as the visit of Pope John Paul II and various Guards of Honour.

4 th BATTERY

The 4 AD Battery has grown in stature since its formation in 1979 and it is a tribute to the professionalism of its FCA personnel and training Cadre that the unit has had such a smooth and rewarding transition from Coastal Defence Artillery to the more modern and complex Air Defence Artillery. Over the years since its foundation the 4 AD Battery have had considerable succession achieving a very high standard in Air Defence Firing having won the Air Defence Shield on numerous occasions during Annual Camp.

EQUIPMENT

The AD Regt has an interesting mixture of both mature and modern equipment. This provides a basis for the currant doctrinal mix of guns and missiles.

The Guns

The Regt is blessed with being equipped with probably the most successful Air Defence gun of the 20th Century. First marketed in the thirties, the Bofors Gun is still a valuable asset to-day. The Regt has two variants, the L60 and the L70 and proposed retrofits will give these guns a lease of life will allow them to make a meaningful contribution into the 21st Century

40mm BOFORS L/60 LIGHT ANTI AIRCRAFT GUN

1. MANUFACTURER: BOFORS OF SWEDEN 1952
2. Bore 40mm
3. Crew of 7 - 2 NCOs and 5 GUNNERS
4. Rate of fire 60 rpm single shot 120 rpm Automatic
5. Maximum Range 3500 yds or 2 miles approx
6. Muzzle Velocity 2780feet per second
5. Can engage targets up to a speed of 500 M.P.H. Max
6. Weight of Gun 2.5 Tons
7. Ammunition 3 types: HE Tracer. HE Armour Perching Tracer
 Solid Shot

40mm BOFORS L/70 LIGHT ANTI AIRCRAFT GUN

18. MANUFACTURER: BOFORS OF SWEDEN 1956
19. Bore 40mm
20. Crew of 7 - 2 NCOs and 5 GUNNERS
21. Rate of fire: 120rpm single shot 240rpm automatic
5. Maximum range 12500 mts.
6. Muzzle Velocity 3280 fps
22. Weight of Gun 4 3/4 tons
23. Ammunition 3 types: HE Tracer HE Armour Perching Tracer
Solid Shot

G.P.M.G. 7.62 AND TRIPOD

24. Weights
Gun 10.74 kg Tripod 11kg
25. Crew of 4 - 1 NCO and 3 GUNNERS
26. Cycle Rate of Fire; 600 to 1000 rpm
27. Rate of Fire during Engagements; Normal 100 rpm
Rapid 200 rpm
5. Range: 600 metres aerial targets only
7. Tracer Burn out 1100 mtrs
28. Types of Ammunition:
Ball, Tracer, Armour Perching

12.7mm HEAVY MACHINE GUN AND COBRA LOW LEVEL AIR DEFENCE SYSTEM

1. Weight 38kgs
2. Crew of 4 - 1 NCO and 3 Gunners
3. Cycle Rate of Fire 450 to 550 rpm
3. Rate of Fire during Engagements: Normal 40 rds minus per min
Rapid 40 rds plus per min
4. Effective Rate of Fire 150rpm
29. Range: Minimum 688mts Effective 2000mts
30. Tracer Burn Out 1500 mts

COBRA LOW LEVEL AIR DEFENCE SYSTEM

31. Weight of Cradle 24kg
Weight of Tripod 12kg
32. Can engage Tgts up to 200mph and a Range of 1500mts and an Altitude Range of 300mts

The Missile

In choosing a missile the Regt opted for a European constructed Beam Rider considered to be state of the art, the RBS 70 remaining with the Bofors family which has served the Regt so well.

RBS 70 MISSILE SYSTEM

Weight:	
Stand with Harness	23.5 Kg
Sight with Harness	35 Kg
Missile in Container	24 Kg

Crew of 3 - 1 NCO & 2 Gunners

Range : 5 Km Max

Height Coverage: 3 Km

Guidance Principle : Optical Beam Riding

The Radar

The Radar in operation with the Regt is the Giraffe 40 Target Acquisition and tracking Radar which provides;

Early Warning (EW)

Data direct to missiles and crews access to higher level EW in order to complete the overall air picture

SEARCH RADAR PSS (GIRAFFE)

Weight: 6000 Kg
(Excluding Vehicle)

Crew of 4

Antenna Operating Height: 12 m

Frequency: C - Band

Range Coverage: 20 or 40 Km Settings

Power: V.W. Type 122/30

The AD Regt is a perfect example of a unit which has evolved to take account of the ever changing landscape of the Irish Defence Forces. It has a mix of personnel and equipment to form a vital part of the Defence Forces operational commitment and can take its place with pride alongside the other members of the Corps of Gunners.

GUNNER MAGEE

The Defence Forces Connection.

It is not surprising that the fledgling Defence Forces in its formative years chose an individual such as Magee as a historical figurehead of the Artillery Corps. It is in him that all the essential characteristics of any fighting force is embodied, those of courage, heroism, devotion to duty and resourcefulness. All of which typify the ethos and spirit of the Artillery Corps, that regardless of the sacrifices, the guns continue to fire at all costs, against insurmountable odds.

It was with the construction of one of the new Free-State barracks in Kildare Town, Co. Kildare that the Defence Forces and especially the Artillery Corps eventually got the opportunity to formally acknowledge one of the many who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that Ireland would one day be free. Magee Barracks, completed in 1932 and sited on the

edge of the Curragh plains is home to the Depot and School of Artillery as well as the HQ of an Air Defence Regiment. It covers over 62 acres and houses some of the most sophisticated and technologically advanced training simulators, surveillance and RADAR equipment. It is a fitting tribute to a man whose resilience and unquestioning valour in the face of superior forces a fact that is made all the more poignant considering the futility of their stand. In more recent times this uniquely Irish hero has been commemorated in other fitting ways, in the form of 'The Magee Gun Trophy', researched and constructed by the Depot and School of Artillery and also in poem by Eoin O' Tuairisc.

Historical Background.

Gunner James Magee, by contemporary accounts was an 'efficient soldier who had belonged to the Longford militia, joined his countrymen at Castlebar



The Battle of Ballinamuck

and threw in his lot for the patriot cause'. Himself and another gunner by the name of Gunner Casey had acquired two French 6 pounders, which represented all the firepower that the insurgents possessed. They were however hopelessly outnumbered by the English, who possessed numerous field artillery pieces and substantial reserves of ammunition.

The order of battle was as follows, the English artillery with their ammunition wagons were located near the Catholic Chapel in the village, while at Gaig, a few hundred yards eastward on the road, was General Blake accompanied by his meagre artillery under the charge of Magee and Casey. For some time the guns on both sides intermittently discharged their grape and canister at the opposing lines, when a well aimed shot from an English gunner disabled Casey's gun. Encouraged by this the English rallied and a chain-ball from Magee's gun stopped their progress and killed, it is said, more than had fallen up to this in the entire battle. A second chain-ball struck and exploded an English ammunition wagon.

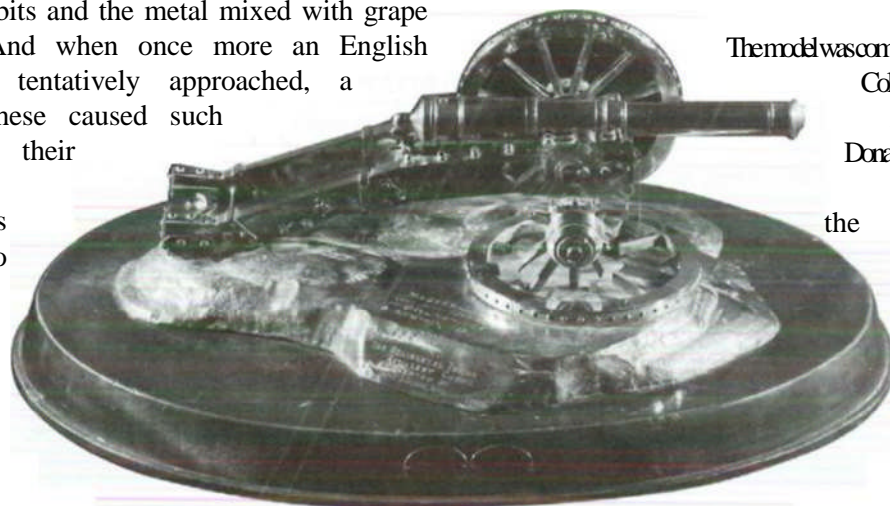
For a single artillery piece Magee's gun was having an effect way beyond what would have been expected from several of his number and so on the roadway near Gaig, Gunner Magee with a small body of pikemen were still making a forlorn stand. Soon after the blowing up of the English magazine, his supply of ammunition became almost exhausted. To supply the deficiency, camp pots and kettles were hammered into bits and the metal mixed with grape and canister. And when once more an English cavalry squad tentatively approached, a discharge of these caused such confusion in their ranks that it was forced to retreat. Preparations were once again being made to load the French gun, when a ball from the English lines struck it and broke the stock of one of it's wheels. In order to render the gun capable of being fired, however, three members of the gun's detachment heroically came forward and the gun was placed on their shoulders. Magee applied the match, the gun boomed out, but the gallant detachment were killed by the recoil. An enemy corps then moved rapidly towards the gun position

without opposition and, capturing the gun, made Magee a prisoner. A drumhead court-martial on the battlefield subsequently condemned him to execution, by hanging "As a deserter from His Majesty's Army".

With the last of the French 6 pounders disposed of, the last phase of the days events were to be tragic and bloody. As is well documented by contemporary journals of the day, the ensuing onslaught by the English was 'Bloody and Unrelenting'. There was for some time a dogged and heroic resistance on the part of the insurgents, who determined to sell their lives dearly, fought with the frenzy of despair. It was without doubt among them that it was to be a choice between death now on the battlefield or later by the hangman's rope.

The Magee Gun Trophy.

The Field Artillery trophy commemorates the courageous and heroic exploits of the Irish Gunners in the historic events of Ballinamuck. It is a fitting tribute to commemorate a true Irish hero, the unquestioning loyalty of his crew, their ultimate sacrifice and their resourcefulness in their ability to keep the guns firing whatever the cost. In their actions, Magee and the guncrew embodied all the virtues which the present day Artillery Corps hope to capture and emulate. The trophy itself is an actual replica of the French six pounder fired by Sergeant Magee against the English forces during the battle on September 8th, 1798.



The model was completed under the direction of Lt Col A. Dalton, Depot and School, Artillery Corps, Captain C. Ua Donachair from the Artillery School

carried out the research necessary to authentically design the period French 6 pounder. Assistance in research and construction was

given by Dr. Richard Hayes, Dr. Hayes Mc Coy, (National Museum), Dr. J.H. Delargy (Irish Folklore Commission), Col J.J. O'Connell, (G.H.Q.) and Comdt J. Doyle, (Ordnance Corps).

The replica is mounted and suitably inscribed complete with the right wheel broken exactly as it

was before firing for the last time on that fateful Autumn day. The gun itself was constructed in the workshops of the Depot and School, Artillery Corps, Magee Bks Kildare in 1943. The mount was prepared by Captain T.J. Lambert, Depot Artillery

Corps. The field artillery piece itself wrought in bronze, is the skilful craftsmanship of Coy Sgt J. F. Scanlan of the Depot and School, Artillery Corps.

This trophy was presented as an annual award by the Depot and School Artillery

*At Ballinamuck one Saturday we lost the fateful day,
When the French General and his soldiers to the enemy gave way.
We, ourselves were on a hillock, engaging forces of the Crown,
"May God direct the Missile" said Magee with Hopeful frown.*

*Our cannon ball, it's deadly path it tore across the sky,
An landing midst the powder it blasted it sky high.
The cloud from the explosion obscured the midday sun.
"Oh Bravo to the iron" says Magee. "Good work! Well done"!*

*But that was the final missile of our meagre little stock.
We broke buckets, pots and kettles, tin cans and bits of rock,
We ripped hobnails from our footwear, we rammed buttons down the bore,
"This has a mighty appetite" Magee says with a roar.*

*But a ball from English cannon broke the carriage on our crew. It's
wheel in smiddereens was smashed, the barrel all askew. They
quickly jumped to action, Tommy, Paddy and young Bill, "Put your
shoulder underneath it" shouts Magee with dogged will.*

*But sad the sight to witness when the smoke of battle cleared.
The three poor chaps lay lifeless, 'twas what Magee had feared.
He quickly was surrounded by a horde of foreign men. "The
game is up, come take me" spoke Magee's defiant grin.*

*At Ballinamuck one Saturday we lost the fateful fight.
But the saga of this GUNNER is recounted day and night.
On a gallows tree they hanged him as the sun sank in the sky.
"Christ be with me on this journey" - prayed Magee to God on High.*

For Selfless Service and Bravery: DECORATED ARTILLERY CORPS PERSONNEL

Nominal Roll of Recipients of An Bonn Mileata Calmachta (The Military Medal for Gallantry) and of An Bonn Seirbhise Dearsena (The Distinguished Service Medal).

The Military Medal for Gallantry is the highest military honour in the State. The medal may be awarded in recognition of the performance of any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry (other than one performed on War Service) arising out of, or associated with Military Service and involving risk to life or limb. There are three classes: with honour, with distinction and with merit which equate with the three classes prior to 13 December 1984, 1st Class, 2nd Class and 3rd Class respectively.

To date only eight awards of the medal have been made, six 2nd Class awards and two 3rd Class awards.

BMC (MMG) RECIPIENTS.

Rank	Name	Class	Date of Incident	Location.
Capt	Ainsworth, Adrian.	2nd Class.	7/4/80.	At Tiri, South Lebanon.

The Distinguished Service Medal may be awarded in recognition of individual or associated acts of bravery, courage, leadership, resource of devotion to duty (other than any such acts of duty performed on War Service) arising out of, or associated with, service in the Defence Forces and not meriting the Award of An Bonn Mileata Calmachta. The medal may be awarded in the following classes; with Honour, with Distinction and with Merit. These classes equate with 1st Class, 2nd Class and 3rd Class respectively as in the case with the Military Medal for Gallantry in awards made prior to 13 December 1984.

BSD (DSM) RECIPIENTS.

Rank	Name	Class	Date of Incident	Location / Incident.
Sgt	Quirke, John	2nd Class	Dec 62 - Jan 63.	Katanga.
Cpl	Allen, William	2nd Class	Dec 62.	Katanga.
Capt	Boyle, Thomas	2nd Class	Dec 62 - Jan 63.	Katanga.
Sgt	Mulcahy, Patrick	3rd Class	Dec 61.	Congo.

GLEN OF IMAAL MEMORIAL

Roll of Honour

Rank	Name	Unit
Lieutenant	John J. Brierton	Anti-Aircraft Battalion
Lieutenant	John D. Fennessy	Anti-Aircraft Battalion
Lieutenant	Michael J. McLoughlin	Corps of Engineers Anti-
Lieutenant	Thomas O. O'Neill	Aircraft Battalion
Company Sergeant	Patrick McMahan	Artillery Depot & School
Sergeant	Michael Scullion	Artillery Depot & School
Sergeant	Thomas Stokes	Anti-Aircraft Battalion
Corporal	Denis Cleary	Artillery Depot & School
Corporal	Colm Heffernan	Artillery Depot & School
Corporal	Edward J. Kennedy	Anti-Aircraft Battalion
Corporal	William Shannon	Anti-Aircraft Battalion
Corporal	John Taylor	Artillery Depot & School
Gunner	James McDonnell	Anti-Aircraft Battalion
Gunner	John Murphy	Anti-Aircraft Battalion
Gunner	Gerard P. O'Hagan	Anti-Aircraft Battalion
Gunner	James Osborne	Anti-Aircraft Battalion

for Them *Pray*
Guidh ar a son

**i FOUR OFFICERS
'AND' ELEVEN
SOLDIERS
DEAD**

**Mine
Explo
During Army
excises**

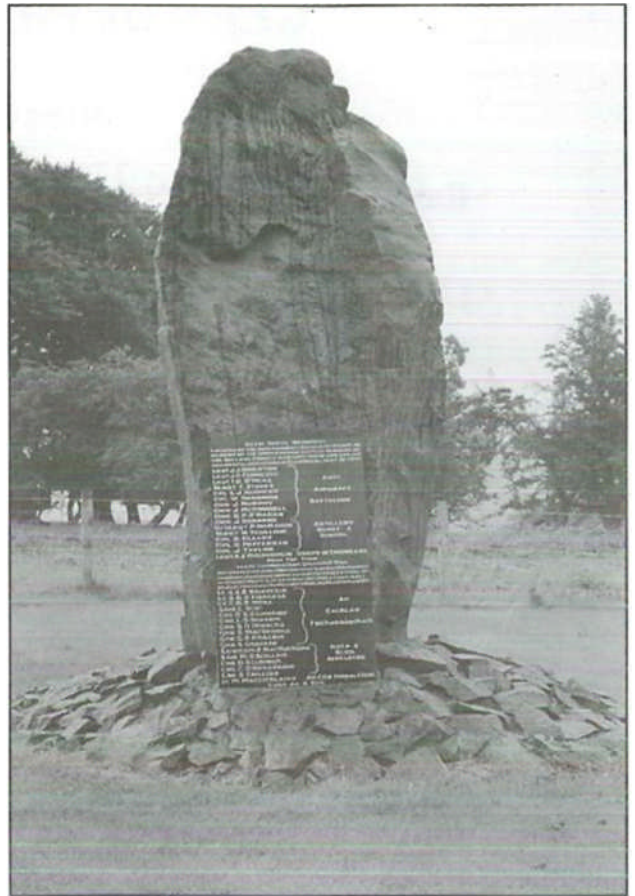
Newspaper cutting of the period

The Memorial Monument commemorates the tragic death of the above-named Defence Forces personnel who lost their lives as a result of an accidental explosion in Glen of Imaal on September 16, 1941.

The site of the explosion is near the Demolition Dump in the Range two kilometres NNE of the Memorial.

The Monument consists of a 14-ton basalt monolith erected in 1986 upon which is mounted a polished granite plaque. Sixteen individual local rick-stones form a forecourt and the sixteen Mountain Ash trees, as they grow, will embrace the whole and provide a tranquil and pleasant bower, a fitting and appropriate Memorial to the sad event of September 16 in 1941.

The Monument as situated in The Glen of Imaal in remembrance of the personnel who lost their lives.



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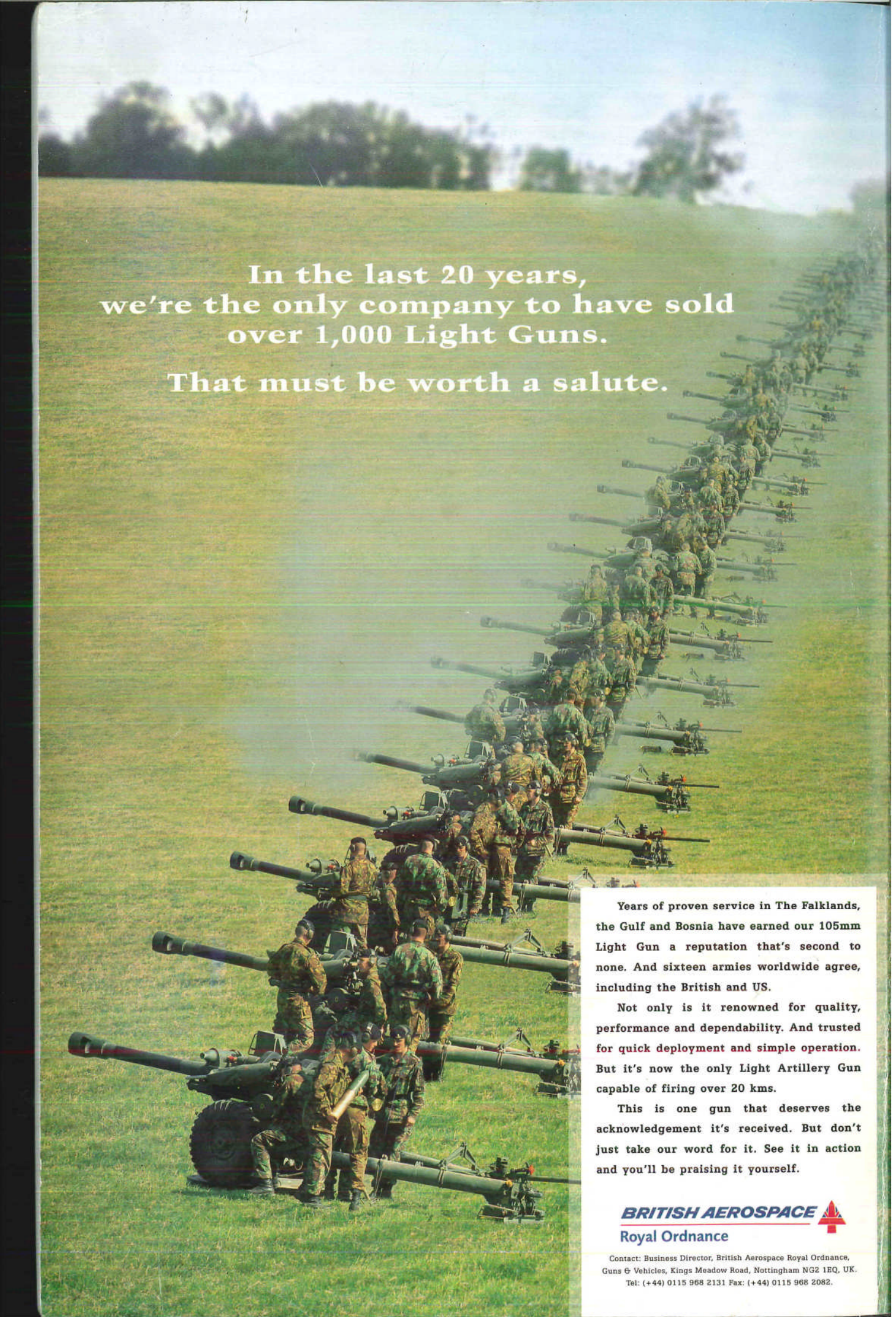


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The cost of monthly repayments may increase - if you do not keep up repayments, you may lose your home.

A 1% rise in interest rates will increase this repayment to £429 a month.

A long, diagonal line of British 105mm Light Guns stretches across a vast green field. Soldiers in camouflage uniforms are positioned around the guns, some standing and others appearing to be working on them. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

In the last 20 years,
we're the only company to have sold
over 1,000 Light Guns.

That must be worth a salute.

Years of proven service in The Falklands, the Gulf and Bosnia have earned our 105mm Light Gun a reputation that's second to none. And sixteen armies worldwide agree, including the British and US.

Not only is it renowned for quality, performance and dependability. And trusted for quick deployment and simple operation. But it's now the only Light Artillery Gun capable of firing over 20 kms.

This is one gun that deserves the acknowledgement it's received. But don't just take our word for it. See it in action and you'll be praising it yourself.

BRITISH AEROSPACE 
Royal Ordnance

Contact: Business Director, British Aerospace Royal Ordnance,
Guns & Vehicles, Kings Meadow Road, Nottingham NG2 1EQ, UK.
Tel: (+44) 0115 968 2131 Fax: (+44) 0115 968 2082.