

EGLENN, THOMPSON, 1968.

Artillery Corps 1923-1973.

ELECTRIC CENTRAL HEATING IS A

BARGAIN

NO MATTER HOW
YOU LOOK AT IT



Total running costs including water heating for the average semi-detached or terraced house on an all year round basis, are approximately £1.50 to £2.00 per week.



Regular servicing could cost you £12 or more per year extra with other systems. Not so with electric central heating. Because it's so simple it requires no routine maintenance.



(approximately)

Full electric system, fully installed, for an average three bedroom Semi-detached house, including a Dual Immersion Group for hot water.

Call in to your nearest E.S.B. shop or send in this coupon for a free fact-filled booklet on electric central heating.

**MR.
WYSE**
Finglas,
Dublin.



has this to say about his electric system! "We've enjoyed total electric central heating for some time.

Over the past 5 years I've kept a careful record of what it has cost. I suppose I'm a bit fussy about that sort of thing but it's proved to me that electricity does the job better, cleaner and cheaper than any of the other systems my friends have."

**The E.S.B. or your local
electrical contractor can
design and install a system
for your home**



Post to:
Domestic Development Section,
Electricity Supply Board,
Lower Fitzwilliam Street,
Dublin 2.

**Electricity - one of the cheapest
luxuries around.**



Name

Address

www

The fact that an article appears in this journal does not indicate official approval of the views expressed by the author.

under the auspices of
the Army Authorities

B. P. Kavanagh
Lt. Col. Regt

editor

Comdt. Con Costello

editorial

Army Headquarters,
Parkgate,
Dublin, Ireland
(Tel 771881)

advertising

The Manager,
An Cosantoir,
Army Headquarters,
Parkgate, Dublin.

375	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Foreword
377	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	At the Beginning . . . Lt. Gen. P. A. Mulcahy (Rtd.)
382	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	The Guns Comdt. M. J. O'Donnell
385	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	The Ack-Ack Comdt. C. P. O'Halloran
391	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Coast Defence Artillery Comdt. J. E. Dawson Lt. Cormac Lalor
397	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	The Artillery School 1931-73 Comdt. P. D. Kavanagh
400	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	The Artillery Corps 1936 John M. Hudson F. Glenn Thompson
405	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Thoughts of Depression Terry O'Sullivan

An Cosantoir is available from:
Officers' and NCOs' Messes; Easons, Dublin and Curragh Camp; Eblana Bookshop, Grafton St., Dublin; News Brothers, Cork, or by direct subscription from An Cosantoir, Army Headquarters, Parkgate, Dublin 7.

Cover: Uniform of the blue hussars, Drawing by F. Glen Thompson.

MORE TO COME. The January 1974 AN COSANTOIR will contain further features on the Artillery Corps by Professor G. A. Hayes-McCoy, Seamus Kelly, Capt. F. Maguire (Retd.) and Comdt. J. P. Duggan, B.A., M.I.L.

The Christmas issue will have special features on Model making of army equipment

ALLCON LTD.

NEWBRIDGE

Only 5 minutes
from town centre

SUPERB
4-BEDROOM
semi-detached
houses

BOOKING NOW £840

- ★ FULLY CARPETED
- ★ MORTGAGES ARRANGED

- ★ All carpets and wallpapers to your choice.
- ★ Luxury stained glass panelled livingroom and hallway.
- ★ Superb kitchen fitting.
- ★ Built-in wardrobes throughout.
- ★ Large garage and utility room.

Viewing daily to 8 p.m.
Saturday or Sunday 3-5 p.m.

Price £8,400 Nett

Call or telephone:

**18 DREWSBORO BUILDING,
NEWBRIDGE, CO. KILDARE**

Phone: Site 046/31412
or 045/31617, Ext. 1
or Dublin 903361 (24 hours).

IRISH SUGAR COMPANY

and

ERIN FOODS LTD.

Involved with
the Builders
of Rural Ireland

Their products spell
the message of
our farmers' worth
in 40 countries



FOREWORD

THIS issue of AN COSANTOIR carries a history of the Artillery Corps. It had to be condensed in order to fit it into a single issue of AN COSANTOIR.

We were fortunate to obtain an authentic account of the Early Days from the founder of the Corps itself—Lt. General P. A. Mulcahy. To him and the other contributors we feel deeply indebted and now offer our sincere thanks. To all it must have been a labour of love. I should mention especially Comdt. Ciaran O'Halloran for his research and as co-ordinator of the entire project.

We know that the Gunner—who does things that nobody else does as well—will relish this issue. The articles are not intended to indoctrinate our numerous friends throughout the Defence Forces—our hope is that they too will read them “not to contradict and confute, but to weigh and consider.”

MARK HARRINGTON, Colonel,
Director of Artillery.

November, 1973.

ARTILLERY CORPS DIRECTORS

COL. P. A. MULCAHY	Sept. 1931 - June 1935
COL. P. MAHER	June 1935 - Nov. 1942
COL. P. A. MULCAHY	Dec. 1942 - Jan. 1949
COL. J. McLOUGHLIN	Jan. 1949 - Nov. 1955
COL. D. J. COLLINS	Nov. 1955 - Dec. 1956
COL. P. J. HALLY	Dec. 1956 - May 1957
COL. P. CURRAN	May 1957 - Jan. 1959
COL. A. DALTON	Jan. 1959 - Aug. 1960
COL. J. H. BYRNE	Oct. 1960 - Oct. 1961
COL. J. MURRAY	Oct. 1961 - July 1969
COL. M. HARRINGTON	July 1969 - Sept. 1970
COL. C. M. MATTIMOE	Sept. 1970 - June 1973
COL. M. HARRINGTON	June 1973 -



FOREWORD

THIS issue of AN COSANTOIR carries a history of the Artillery Corps. It had to be condensed in order to fit it into a single issue of AN COSANTOIR.

We were fortunate to obtain an authentic account of the Early Days from the founder of the Corps itself—Lt. General P. A. Mulcahy. To him and the other contributors we feel deeply indebted and now offer our sincere thanks. To all it must have been a labour of love. I should mention especially Comdt. Ciaran O'Halloran for his research and as co-ordinator of the entire project.

We know that the Gunner—who does things that nobody else does as well—will relish this issue. The articles are not intended to indoctrinate our numerous friends throughout the Defence Forces—our hope is that they too will read them “not to contradict and confute, but to weigh and consider.”

MARK HARRINGTON, Colonel,
Director of Artillery.

November, 1973.

ARTILLERY CORPS DIRECTORS

COL. P. A. MULCAHY	Sept. 1931 - June 1935
COL. P. MAHER	June 1935 - Nov. 1942
COL. P. A. MULCAHY	Dec. 1942 - Jan. 1949
COL. J. McLOUGHLIN	Jan. 1949 - Nov. 1955
COL. D. J. COLLINS	Nov. 1955 - Dec. 1956
COL. P. J. HALLY	Dec. 1956 - May 1957
COL. P. CURRAN	May 1957 - Jan. 1959
COL. A. DALTON	Jan. 1959 - Aug. 1960
COL. J. H. BYRNE	Oct. 1960 - Oct. 1961
COL. J. MURRAY	Oct. 1961 - July 1969
COL. M. HARRINGTON	July 1969 - Sept. 1970
COL. C. M. MATTIMOE	Sept. 1970 - June 1973
COL. M. HARRINGTON	June 1973 -

GIVE I.
To the Nation



mission
OD
ERLusion Service

**Pelican House,
 Lower Leeson Street,
 Dublin.**

Space donated by

LETT DORAN LTD., Corporation Fruit Market, Dublin 1.

TONY SLOAN

CHARLOTTE STREET, NEWBRIDGE

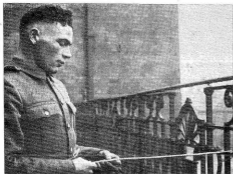
DECORATORS' SUPPLIERS

Wallpapers, Paints, Varnishes, Lacquers — Colour Specialist

DECORATING CONTRACTOR

Churches, Schools, Factories, Stud Farms

SPRAY PAINTING SPECIALIST



1940. Plaiting a lanyard in McKee Bks., Dublin.

At the Beginning . . .

Lt. Gen. P. A. Mulcahy (Retd.)

I wish first 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, Birr for example. That in itself would be an interesting story, but has nothing to do with Artillery.

We were in Birr 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 G.H.Q., 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 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.), Tom 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



1924. Artillery in ceremonial march past in Dublin.

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 ride 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 Hqrs. 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 was ordered in March, 1925, to occupy what was an old Artillery Barracks in Kildare. The Garda were there also, but they were being moved and we were to take over. We moved lock, stock and barrel down to McGee Barracks. One little thing which I remember now with a smile. There was an Infantry Platoon on guard in McGee Barracks and we kept them there for about a year and a half or two years until somebody "caught on." We had to supply our own guards from that on. We thought this was a great im-

position 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. Leger 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 Commander's 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 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 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 sug-



1931. Recruiting poster for the Volunteers (printed by Hely's). The gun is a 4.5 in. howitzer.

gestion 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, Ret.) 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 Glen Imaal

The School carried on, in Kildare and we opened up Glen Imaal Range. Glen 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 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 the men—at first we had only canvas but we had Coolmoney Hous 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 pdrs. marks I and II.

The AA

One day we were told there were two 3 in. 20 cwt. mobile and two 3 in. 20 cwt. semi-mobile anti-aircraft guns in Islandbridge (they had been there for a long time and nobody took any notice of them). I remember getting a phone call on a Friday. It was from G.H.Q. 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 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 Barracks and that 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 as 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 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 11!" In my time the horses and the 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

A. COMERFORD

BARRACK GATE, NAAS, CO. KILDARE

High Class Groceries and Provisions
DAILY DELIVERY SERVICE

Shop in Comfort at Comerfords

AMPLE PARKING FACILITIES

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 an 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 any ceremony. I remember on one rehearsal, they had to pull up in the grounds of an 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 Birr!

One other incident I remember which arose from a rehearsal of the Blue Hussars for the Congress of '32. 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 pdrs that were used against the Fourcourts. 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."

24-hour Towing Service

Specialist in Crash Repairs

Phone (01) 973238

NEW AND USED CAR SALES

PANEL BEATING - WELDING
SPRAYING

BILL HARMON

re 29 Grosvenor Square,
Dublin 6.

The Guns

Comdt. M. J. O'Donnell,
Columb Bks., Mullingar

The early days of great guns in our Army start in 1923 with the 9 Eighteen Pdrs. taken over from the British the previous year. It was the main field gun of the British in W.W.I and remained a major component of our Arty equipment until the end of W.W.II. Four of the original nine guns are still in service manned by the gunners of 14 Fd Bty (FCA). Several more up-to-date versions of the gun were added during the inter-war periods.

The opening of Glen Imaal Range by Gen. Roberts in 1899 brought modern artillery firing techniques to Ireland. The Glen, as it is popularly known to gunners, still remains the annual testing ground for tactical and technical efficiency in the Corps. Kilworth Range was used for firing practices in 1935 and another range used briefly at the same time was Kinnity in South Offaly.

The French 75

Neutral countries like our own had to indulge in a frantic hunt for military hardware in the war years. The 75 mm gun was one of the notable additions to the armoury, twelve being purchased in the USA in the years 1941/42. This was the famous French gun developed at the turn of the century and used to great effect by the French and Americans in W.W.I. They were withdrawn from service in 1968 but two of them remain to guard the ceremonial arch at Columb Barracks, Mullingar.

By 1940 all the guns had been mechanised. The Morris Quads took over from the horses, not without much neighing and gnashing of teeth on the part of both horses and gunners. Those interested in comparative logistics will note that when No. 2 Battery left Kildare to take part in the 1925 St. Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin, the single journey took eleven hours to complete. Nowadays it is not unusual for a Battery to leave Mullingar or Dublin for the Glen, fire its practices and return to base the same day.

The 4.5" Howitzer arrived at the beginning of the war. It had been used to great effect by the British in W.W.I and was, with the 18 Pdr,

our main arty weapon until the end of the war. The ultimate in shellpower, though scarcely in technology, came with the 60 Pdrs, which were issued at 41 and 42 Fd Btys (LDF). They had to be moved by ESB transporter to the Glen where they were fired from Coen area towards Knock amunion.

The Golden Age of Guns

W.W.II has been referred to as the Golden Age of Guns. Ammunition as well as guns had changed drastically since W.W.I. Shrapnel gave way to H.E., horses to the towing vehicle. The last shrapnel fired in anger was in the Spanish Civil War in 1936. Fuzes changed to include air-bursting H.E. and the Proximity Fuze.

The 25 Pdr gun was developed by the British between the wars and used for the first time in France in 1940. We got the first consignment after the end of the war and they remain to-day, with the 120 mm French mortar, the main component of our artillery armament. The 25 Pdr was often used as an A/T Gun in the war and was only dispensed with fully in that role with the advent of the 17 Pdr A/T Gun at the end of the war. The 25 Pdr. combined the best features of the 18 Pdr and the 4.5 Howitzer. It played a major role in putting down covering fire at Alamein; 400 of them fired over a million rounds during the 12 days of the battle.

In the meantime the use of wireless added to the speed of getting into action, aided by the new self-propelled guns, while fire control and fire direction were developed to embrace division and corps targets as well as regimental shoots. Air-artillery co-operation added a new dimension to target-spotting and observation.

The rapid massing of fires was a major development and proved decisive in many battles. Alamein was a notable example, where covering fire was co-ordinated with the advance of the infantry by timed concentrations at the rate of 100 yards every 3 minutes.

Old guns like old gunners may never die but they do get retired from service, a fate likely to



1967. A 120 mm heavy mortar of the 8th Infantry Group in Cyprus.



25 pounder in action.

befall the 25 Pdr very soon. It will be remembered nostalgically by a generation of gunners for its many fine performances in the Glen of Imaal.

An ideal complementary to the 25 Pdr was the 120 mm French Mortar introduced here in 1954 and a weapon that has continued to endear itself to gunners over the years.

It is light, mobile, accurate and most of the things that gunners have dreamed of for centuries. Taken pound for pound of projectile and mile for mile of Range it has few equals in the light artillery store.

After the War

The perfection of the recoilless gun was a major factor of the post-war period. The idea in its simplest form was that by controlling the escape of gas to the rear of the gun there would be no recoil. Such a weapon had been used successfully by the Germans in Crete in 1941 and was proving very popular with the British particularly in an A/T role. One of the best examples was the 120 mm battalion A/T weapon (BAT) which the British developed in 1954.

The U.S. started with the 57 mm, followed

by the 75 mm and 105 mm versions. These survived the Korean War, but have since been replaced. They even produced a 42' recoilless mortar. The 105 mm Pack Howitzer (helicopter-borne) and the 105 mm SP gun, the Abbott, became standard equipment for close support Regts in the British Army.

The F.H. 70, a 155 mm Field Howitzer, can be taken as the latest and most up-to-date in artillery hardware. It was developed jointly by Britain, Germany and Italy and fires a 96 lb. shell up to 15 miles. Guided Missiles and Rocket-Boosted projectiles such as the Honest John, The Sergeant and the Minuteman IBM, are capable of ranges from 50 to 5,000 miles.

This high-powered technological advance should not blind us to the requirement for training in the basic skills of gunnery. The Director, the Artillery Board and the map can still do the job when the electric circuit has failed. Sophistication and Technology, Rocketry and Guided Missiles may be alright for long-range strategic bombing but for pinpoint accuracy in the immediate battlefield area, cannon will always hold its place. Should something new displace it, it will be manned by gunners anyway!

Give

PLANTS

Make

FRIENDS

MUSHROOMS

MAKE THE MEAL

**TRY SOME
IN SALADS
TO-DAY**

IRISH NURSERIES LTD.



1941. 20 cwt. 3 in. AA gun on manoeuvres.

The Ack-Ack

Comdt. C. P. O'Halloran,
Arty. School

The story of the AA really begins with the departure of an arms purchasing mission to England in 1927; while there, they purchased 4 anti-aircraft guns, consisting of 2 two-wheeled and 2 four-wheeled 3 in 20 cwt. These duly arrived from England in March, 1928, and were stored in Islandbridge Bks which was then, and still is, an Ordnance Depot.

The record from this point until a date in 1931 is not at all clear except for one bright spot—the record shows where Lieut. M. P. McCarthy (now Lt. Col. Ret.) was sent to England to undergo an Anti-Aircraft Artillery Course at Larkhill in the latter half of October, 1929, and he arrived back in early January, 1930. What is certain is that the "Anti-Aircraft Battery" came into being on the 16th September, 1931.

Establishment

On the 16th September, 1931, the Final issue

of Daily Routine Orders for the Artillery Corps as it was then established, contained the new organisation in accordance with the terms of D.F.R. No. 57 of 1931 (Peace Establishments 1931/1933) and thus the Corps was strengthened by the inclusion of a new unit "The Anti-Aircraft Battery."

Routine Order No. 7 of the Anti-Aircraft Battery was published on the 17th September, 1931. The order provided for the new unit by stating the terms of D.F.R. 57, in fact it said "The Artillery Corps shall include the AA Battery," even the place of parade was provided for thus:

"Troops of the Anti-Aircraft Battery will parade on the EAST SQUARE facing EAST, the right hand marker in line with the 25 yards from the EASTERN END of building No. 130 (utensil store 2)."

The total inclusive strength of the Battery on

formation was 2 Officers and 48 other ranks; those were:

Lt. Maurice P. McCarthy, O/C,	71258	"	Mathews M.
Lt. James J. Dolan, 2 1/C.	71362	"	McArdle G.
24519 C/S Dickson R.	70817	"	McMahon M.
33050 Sgt. Hurley J.	71357	"	Sherry A.
9256 Cpl. Harpur J.	71277	"	Swain G.
60515 Cpl. Lynch W.	71242	"	Ward E.
367 A/COMS Copley W.	71207	Gnr.	Brennan J.
67035 A/Sgt. Carroll C.	71663	"	Byrne T.
16584 Cpl. O'Brien W.	71225	"	Carey D.
3775 Cpl. Webb P.	71259	"	Clarey T.
57787 A/Cpl. Bonner W.	71265	"	Condon J.
70690 Gnr. Byrne P.	71187	"	Currie P.
71519 " Campbell M.	71196	"	Fitzpatrick J.
71224 " Carey J.	71269	"	Griffin J.
68200 " Cooney D.	71181	"	Hogan J.
71206 " Conway I.	71374	"	Hoyce, J.
71268 " Dowling W.	71248	"	Kearney J.
71217 " Greaney D.	71154	"	Keogh J.
71184 " Guilfoyle G.	71270	"	Larkin J.
71226 " Jackson P.	71360	"	Lennon R.
71139 " Joyce M.	71353	"	Murray T.
71276 " Kinsley T.	71505	"	McBride A.
71171 " Kerley D.	71390	"	Nolan M.
71037 " Lee P.	71252	"	Surman G.
	71143	"	Walsh R.

This original party of pioneers helped to lay the foundations for the expansion of World War II and the basis on which the present AA Regt. rests. All have long since passed into retirement. The two original officers were later O/C and 2 I/C of the AA Brigade during the 1940s; many of the NCOs and men got further promotion but, most important, they were remembered.

Prior to the formation of the Battery all ranks had received training in, and were experienced in, Field Artillery work, this knowledge and experience speeded the work of changing category. Up to 1931, the equipment of the Corps consisted of 18 pdrs and 4.5 Howitzers only. The decision to organise a Battery of anti-aircraft artillery aroused considerable interest generally and particularly among the chosen few, for the latter, the prospect of a new and very different equipment added zest to their anticipation. That they regarded such assignment as a proud honour and privilege is reflected in the efficiency and fine spirit which permeated their work in after years.

The Battery spent the first week following its formation on intensive training. AA equipment was not available yet but there was plenty to be done pending its arrival. The 2 weeks programme was under way when orders were received for the Battery to proceed to Coolmoney Camp, Co. Wicklow, on special duty. That special duty was the construction of a large observation post known as Chrissadaun OP on Table Mountain about 4 miles from the camp at Coolmoney House and since it was winter and the weather poor it was somewhat of an anticlimax to the inauguration but the *esprit de corps* prevailed. The weather

in fact cancelled the whole operation temporarily and the Unit returned to Kildare to spend Xmas with the Corps as a whole for the last time. On the 7th January, 1932, the AA Battery moved to new quarters in Plunkett Barracks. It would seem that there was some haste about establishing the AA.

The Guns

The four 3" 20 cwt. AA Guns were in Island-bridge Barracks waiting for suitable gun parks and this was why the Bty moved to Plunkett where there was accommodation. During the Bty's stay in Plunkett another officer was posted to it from the 1st F.A. Bde, 2/Lt. (later to be O/C Air Corps) K. T. Curran on the 14th January, 1932.

The four 3" AA guns arrived on the 24th January, 1932, amidst great enthusiasm, and Gun Drill—3 in, appeared on the training programme for the first time on 30th January, 1932. From that date onwards it was a prominent feature of all programmes. A U.B.2 height-finder was then received by the unit on 19th April, 1933, and the training of First Class height takers was duly undertaken. It was not always possible to get a target aeroplane so many innovations appeared to ensure that the gunners and the height takers got in the required amount of training.

DON KELLY

(BLOODSTOCK)

PEDIGREES

STUD BOOKLETS

STALLION CARDS

ADVERTISING INSURANCE

BEECHMOUNT HOUSE, NEWBRIDGE,
CO. KILDARE, IRELAND

Telephone: Curragh (045) 31294

First Firing Practices

Orders were received that the Bty would conduct its first Practices in the Summer of 1933. Needless to say training went ahead with even greater enthusiasm. It was, however, suspended to enable 2 officers and 30 other ranks to go on special election duty in Tralee, Co. Kerry—the detachment as expected acquitted itself well, it returned to Plunkett on 28th February, 1933.

The guns were still immobile due to complete lack of towing vehicles but in the meantime drivers were sent to Islandbridge Barracks to be trained to drive tractors, the first of which was delivered on 8th July, 1933, and was used to tow one of the 3 in. 20 cwt. guns to Tobertoby practice camp, Co. Louth. On the 10th July, 1933, a second tractor was provided on loan by Messrs. Industrial Vehicles of Athy, Co. Kildare, and was used to move the section on the same date.

The journey to Tobertoby was uneventful except for a "burst tyre" which delayed the journey by an hour, but arrived intact with the Class "A" Reservists, then on annual training consisting of 2 NCOs and 11 men. Naturally there was great excitement in the preparation for the first shoot which took place on the 18th July, 1933. Present were the Director of Artillery, Major P. A. Mulcahy, Comdt. P. Maher and Capt. W. Donnelly of the F.A. Brigade and the M.O. was Lt. Dodd. These practices required an amount of preparatory work like notices to farmers, mariners, Harbour authorities; the requisitioning of land, hiring of boats to ensure that no intruder entered the firing arc. The ammunition used was called "Burst Short practice," a real plane was used as a target, but the shell burst short at about half the range. A recording instrument related the burst to the position of the aircraft (plenty of scope for imagination). It was recorded by the O/C practice camp, Lt. M. P. McCarthy, that this first practice camp was a conspicuously successful one.

In August, 1933, the Battery split for the Autumn manoeuvres; these took place in September in the area Kildare-Wicklow-Dublin, one section with Blue forces and the other with Red. Apparently the Battery again distinguished itself and was complimented for its high standard of tactical training and all round efficiency displayed in the field. The unit had by now received its second tractor. In the month of June, 1934, the delivery of the last two tractors was made and so the Battery was fully mobile for the first time, also during 1934 Lt. Curran was posted to the Air Corps and Lt. T. M. Banahan to the Battery. The second annual firing practices took place at Tobertoby (for the last time there) and exceeded the previous year in the performance of the shooting. This same year was also known

as the year of the "big wind" because of the havoc caused by a storm to the camp. The same year the Battery took part in rehearsals for an anti-aircraft display which was intended to be part of an Irish Aviation Day to be held in the Phoenix Park early in 1934. However, one of the aircraft taking part crashed and the display was cancelled.

Apparently, because the tractors were one seat jobs difficulty in control of the driver was experienced, nobody could sit beside the driver, and voice control from the platform of the gun by the NCO I/C was simply "not on," so a visual signalling apparatus was devised, which worked, and was subsequently known as "Apparatus Signalling Road Directions" and was later used as a model for an officially approved apparatus produced by Ordnance workshops in Islandbridge Barracks, Dublin.

The peace establishments as issued on 3rd December, 1934, provided a slight but significant change in the description of the unit; it was now called the 1st A.A. Bty and as such it made its appearance for the first time before the public on the St. Patrick's Day Parade of 1935. Training continued in all Branches of Air Defence and in 1936 closer co-operation with the Air Corps was established by having firing practices for the first time in Gormanston Camp, Co. Meath, 340 rds of short burst amm were used, the plane flew at 10,000 ft. on pre-arranged course. The ceiling of the burst was 800 ft. so that accidental damage to the plane was remote. The AA were most fortunate in having a volunteer reserve who played a most important part in the rapid expansion which was to come later.

Annual firing practices were now an established event and the AA became "well known" in the Gormanston area.

Kildare Auctioneering Co. Ltd.

AUCTIONEERS, VALUERS, LIVESTOCK
SALESMEN

Estate and Insurance Agents

Head Office.

MAIN STREET, KILCULLEN

Phone: Curragh 81213.

Also at 28 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin 2

Phone: 63525

Expansion

Because of the instability of the European situation the 1st Battery was moved to McKee Barracks, Dublin, in September, 1938, with orders to prepare for expansion.

The war came in September, 1939, and the 1st AA Battery mushroomed to an AA Brigade consisting of two medium Batteries, four Light Batteries and a Searchlight Battery. The Bde HQ was in Portobello Barracks. Later Lt. C. E. Shortall and Lt. M. J. McGrath were sent to England on a Bofors course. Four MK 1 40 mm Bofors had just arrived. In the meantime policy had to be decided and with the equipment to hand, and that expected, it was decided that Dublin, Dublin Airport, Rineanna, Cork Harbour were all that could be defended, so by 6th September, 1939, gun positions had been established at Vernon Ave., Clontarf, Trimbleston Estate, Booterstown, Ringsend Park and the N.E. corner of Alexandra Basin. It was then decided that the AA Brigade was unwieldy and an AA Bn was formed with its NCOs and 746 Gnr's, a total of 1,038; this was early 1940. McKee Barracks was literally seething with activity, training recruits, officers, NCOs and Gunners, searchlight operators, predictor operators, signallers, establishing new gun positions, searchlight positions and an anti-aircraft operations centre in Dublin Castle. It was no mean feat for such a small nucleus as the 1st AA Battery to accomplish all this and in such a short time, but the material was good.

In November, 1940, six 3.7" AA guns arrived and in December further searchlight equipment was taken over from the engineers.

It became obvious in 1941 that all the equipment required was not going to be obtained so a practical reduction in the establishment was necessary and was accomplished on May 31st, 1941, giving the Bn 36 officers, 125 NCOs and 492 Gnr's, a total of 653. In addition to the gun sites already mentioned, Ballyfermot had been added and searchlight sections—North Bull Wall, South Bull Wall; Howth; Blackrock Park, and Dalkey were in operation. Two Bofors were sited in Hibernian School, Phoenix Park; and two in Baldonnel Aerodrome.

Mine Disaster

A further task of the AA Bn was the employment of 12 pdrs. There were 5 in all, located as follows:—

- 2 at Hibernian Schools, Phoenix Park.
- 1 at Collinstown Aerodrome.
- 1 at the Pigeon House, later moved to Bull Wall.
- 17 at Sandycove Battery.

These were part of a 12 pdr. Battery formed in Kildare in June, 1941. This Battery also trained in Glen of Imaal on mines and on the 16th September a training mine exploded, accidentally killing 15 members of the AA Battalion who had been transferred to the 12 pdr. Battery. The Engineer Officer instructor was also regretfully a casualty.

Their names are enshrined in a plate glass window of the porch of the Garrison Church in McKee Barracks, Dublin, and on the 16th September annually a gallant band of the old AA reserve attend a remembrance service. A rather prophetic poem by one of the officers killed (Lt. Sean Fennessy) is given here. It was written before he went to Glen Imaal.

TWENTY-FOUR

*A thousand mad, wild thoughts packed into a day,
with a lovable, laughable, wild unruly crew,
a moment's sadness or a moment's gladness,
and yet no sound or hint of dread.*

*They placed us there together,
twenty four
Brady and Ryan and Dillon close to the door,
O'Loughlin and the black-haired mad O'Shea,
And so time fled like a single day.*

*Will we still be together when it ends?
How many dead?
How many no longer friends?
How shall we gather
In the Nation's need?
How many will tell the tale of glorious deeds
Performed by one we knew,
One of the twenty-four;
By Eager or Heron or Dillon by the door?
Perhaps in a week, perhaps this very night or next
Comes the dread call
A raid in the half dead light
A sileer twinkling speck in a searchlights ray;
A bomb on its way to earth hunting a prey.*

*Will it be one of the twenty four,
One of the lads I knew,
Who falls in the night
Shorn of his radiant life, one of the gallant crew,
Struck in his prime?
There lay his broken gun
And will they be there to tell,
The rest of the twenty four
How willingly he fell?
When at last the fight is over
Will there be more perchance
Than one to shed his blood
Dying beside his gun
Smilingly, even as he fell
Knowing the fight was good,
Knowing that someone will tell,
Some of the lads he knew,
Some of the laughing twenty four,
How even in death were true.*

L. J. FENNESSY.

AA in Action

On April 23rd of 1941 the AA went into action for first time against a German monoplane, the

first to fire were the 3" 20 cwts at Trimbleston who fired six rounds. A similar plane was later engaged that night by Ringsend AA Station. No hits were recorded. On the 24th, the following day, Ballyfermot AA Station was in action against an unauthorised aircraft which approached from the North of the gun position; four rounds were fired. On the 31st May, Stillorgan gun position opened fire on an unauthorised aircraft; three rounds were fired. Later that night bombs were dropped on the Phoenix Park and North Strand areas of Dublin; most AA gun stations were in action that night. 1942 was a hectic year for the AA as further reorganisation was necessary. Three more gun positions were established: Brownsbarn, Brackenstown and Elm Park. By now night alerts were practically a nightly experience and all AA stations had a rough time of it. The 12 pdr Bty was dissolved and taken over by the AA Depot and 4 MK II 3.7" guns were received; they were the last heavy guns to be received by the AA.

The 3.7" 4 AA Guns

It would be wrong to let the opportunity pass without comment on these excellent guns. They were a wonderful advance on 3 in, 20 cwt, where the predictor output was transmitted to the guns verbally—with the 3 in. 20 cwt. you either

trained hard or accepted gross errors—the 3.7s solved this to a great degree, because even though the Predictor, or computer, was mechanical, the gun data was transmitted electrically and with these guns, the greatest fault was firing on stale data or wrong fuze settings. The early fuze setters gave quite a lot of trouble until sufficient "know how" was gleaned from sheer hard practice, experiment and experience.

With the advent of 3 MK 7 Radar coupled to the Long Range 4 MK 7 and an electronic predictor much of the human error had been eliminated. The British had taken in all their 3.7s in 1944, modified them, and had, prior to this period, asked a slot machine manufacturer to produce a fuze setting machine which would be fool proof; this they did. It set the fuze, loaded the round (48 lbs.) and fired the gun at the precise moment in time that it should fire—all in exactly 1.8 seconds. However, speed, height of bombing techniques of aircraft and eventually age overtook them and they are now museum pieces. Our AA did not get as far as they would have liked to with modifications, but they got far enough.

The AA Battalion reached a peak of efficiency and man power in 1943. In sport they were the undisputed peers in all round sportsmanship—an enviable reputation, but none the less true, and were proud to have produced a "Golden Gloves" winner in Cpl. P. Dowdall.

Thanks to Army

Join the RANKS of Ireland's BLOOD DONORS — wonderful people with a wonderful gift to give — the Gift of Life.

Blood Donors are welcome at Pelican House.

Every Monday, Tuesday, Friday between
5.30 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.

Wednesdays and Thursdays between
8.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m.; 2.15 p.m.-4.30 p.m.

People who care are donating at Pelican House.

BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE BOARD

PELICAN HOUSE, P.O. Box 69, 52 LOWER LEESON STREET, DUBLIN 2.



Bofors. In May of 1943 two more Bofors 460s arrived. The "Bofors" was one of the most versatile light anti-aircraft guns ever made. It was distinguished for the many built-in safety precautions it had. Apart from protecting the crew, many of them were designed to keep the gun in action; it could even fire with broken parts! and did. It was succeeded by the 470, but that was later on.

Rundown

The tide of the war was obviously swinging in Allied favour and the pressure on our neutrality mitigating, that it seemed an obvious and practical step to ease the burden of maintaining so many gun and searchlight sections on active service, by closing down those with the lowest priority. This occurred in the latter half of 1944 and was accelerated in 1945 when many posts were evacuated, and large quantities of ammunition transferred to the Curragh magazine. In 1946, after a most distinguished performance, "The AA Battalion" was finally dissolved, and replaced by "Four Fixed AA Regimental Cadres," two in Dublin and two in Cork.

The AA kept ticking-over until 1949 when the first Radar to be issued to the Army arrived. A course was conducted in Kildare by Capt. Dan Buckley, R.A. and Sergt. Major Page, R.A.

In 1952 all regimental cadres were concentrated in McKee Barracks, Dublin, and a greater portion of the AA equipment put in "mothballs." This was a quiescent period.

New Establishment

On the 16th June, 1953, a new era of great activity was commenced for the AA by the establishment of an "AA Training Regiment" in Kildare with Lt. Col. Dalton as its Officer Commanding. This was a flexible organisation which could expand or contract as the occasion warranted, and in the years between 1953 and 1959 course after course was run, covering every aspect of Air Defence.

To keep abreast, and ensure thorough instruction, many courses in England were availed of by the officers of the Regt. These included Radar, Gun and Instruments (computers), Air Defence, Light Air Defence (Bofors), Aircraft Recognition. In 1957 the Regiment received its L70 Bofors—a magnificently designed gun. It was introduced into every NATO Army and each one experi-

mented on them in their own way in an effort to increase its range and all weather capability, not without success, though at the expense of mobility. Then the problem of putting all the bits and pieces on to one chassis was tackled and to a degree overcome but at a price.

F.C.A.

In 1959 the Army was integrated with the F.C.A. (Local Defence Force) and again the Regiment got a change of Establishment. It was called the 1st AA Regiment with its HQ, HQ Battery and the 1st Battery in Kildare; the 2nd Battery went to a Dublin location, and the 3rd Battery to Limerick. The 2nd and 3rd Batteries were F.C.A. with a large F.C.A. establishment and a small regular training cadre. In the years that followed the Regiment acted as HQ, School, Replacement Depot, and Training HQ to the Batteries.

The Regimental HQ carried the famous AA Reserve — where would we have been without you, "Gunga Din."

Epilogue

After Lt. Col. Dalton, the Commanding Officers were Lt. Col. O'Herlihy, Lt. Col. J. S. Nolan, Lt. Col. D. Burke, and Lt. Col. T. Walsh. The Regiment, while it continued to maintain contact with modern techniques, also supplied a constant stream of volunteers to the Congo, Cyprus and the Middle East UN operations, and had the distinction of a "D.S.M." in Battery Sergeant Christy Walsh.

Finally, recently, as the writer was walking along the corridor of McKee Barracks Officers' Mess he was arrested by: "Ah you don't know me, sir." I didn't—until I had a good look at the face under the bold head. It was Cpl. E. Douglas, one of the surviving and still serving members of the 2nd medium AA Battery, and with the writer the others are Col. T. O'Brien (Director of Signals) and Lt. Col. M. J. McGrath, OC II Fd Arty Regt.

He forgot Company Sergeant Tady McNamara, now the custodian of all our secrets (the switch operator in McGee Barracks, Kildare). He says he "bows to St. Barbara every time he passes her statue, as being one who might know a little more"! He always remembers the inscription "Be at the Bursting Doors of Doom and in the dark deliver us."

Coast Defence Artillery

Comdt. J. E. Dawson, HQ, S/Command
and
Lt. Cormac Lalor, CDA, S/Command.

Spike Island and Fort Mitchel

SPIKE Island, Headquarters of Coast Defence, did not just spring out of the sea, like Venus, in 1938, so any history of 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, the statement is at least open to discussion. Military interest, however, begins somewhat later, so let us leave the Holy Bishop with his optimism.

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 Walsh, 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 be 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 1920-21, 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 11th July, 1938, took over the defences on Spike Island. Lord Chatfield in his book, "It 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, R.A., handed over on behalf of the British Government. After the handover the British troops, headed by the Irish Army No. 2 Band, marched to the S.S. *Saorstát* on which they were conveyed to the M.V. *Innisfallen* en route for England. As the *Saorstát* 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 and many cabinet ministers and high ranking officers arrived. At 2000 hours 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 En-

gineers. 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 hours a day from 1st September, 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 R.S.M. Fort Mitchel) ranked among the best. His score direct from the corner flag in the Cork-Clare Gaelic match of 1949 is written in the annals of the G.A.A., 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 medal is remembered well in the Rebel County. Not only did the R.S.M. 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 F.A.I. 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 Championships in 1955, and the Robinson Trophy (All-Artillery S.M.G.) in 1959 and 1960.

In 1960 the first of our Coast Gunners under Cpl. (now Sgt.) Bernie Griffin 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 U.N.

Thos. La'grue & Sons Ltd.

Wholesale Potatoes Merchants

Phone 42339

Corporation Fruit Markets,
Dublin 7.

COMPLIMENTS . . .

LENNON & HARVEY

FRUIT

and

POTATO MERCHANTS

Corporation Fruit Market,
Dublin 7.

duty to the Near East and in the same year a detachment of P.D.F. and Comhion Dun an Mhistealaigh F.C.A. 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"—an important one in the economic life of the country—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 P.D.F. and F.C.A. first fired 120 mm 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 P.O.W. 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 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 target 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 pounders. 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 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, R.A., and his team of instructors. The Templebreedy gunner claimed that his shoot was the most spectacular of all. The 9.2" gun was indeed remarkable: consider a 380 lb. projectile leaving the barrel with the 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 almost five miles a target float was destroyed by a direct hit: the float is 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 Feely 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

WILLS'S BULWARK CUT PLUG



SALUTING BASE, DUN LAOIRE
PHOTO BY COURTESY OF PLAYERS WILLS

1951. 12 pounder CDA at the saluting base Dun Laoire, manned by (L. to R): Sgt. L. Harbison, Gunner P. Killeen, Gunner J. Norton and Gunner J. Brennan. Block by courtesy of Players Wills.

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 C.D.A. 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 lands local defence posts were to be built. Lookout posts were built so that by day and night visual communications would augment wireless and telephone. Thus Kilcradaun Head, Loop Head and the examination service on the North were linked with Doon Head, Scatterry Island and the Fort. The harbour master at

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.

Like all our men of 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 M.V. 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, Ardaraigh and Kerrin on the east of the island and at Derrycreeveen, Reenduff and Ardnakinna on the east. The total armament at that stage was 2 x 9.2", 6 x 6" and 2 x 9" and 8 x 12 pounder guns. Quite a stronghold but after World War 1 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 H.Q. 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, R.A., 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 of shoots 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 D'naher of the Artillery School and executed by C/S J. F. Scanlon, known throughout the Corps as Tiffy Scan, of the same Unit. Before the 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 Q.M.S. W. (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 of 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 Lesterkenny. 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

Edward WREST Ltd.

CABINET MAKERS

Specialists in all kinds of
HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE

9 BLACKBERRY LANE, DUBLIN 6.

Phone: 979127

formally took over on behalf of the Irish Government.

The A.F. 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 R.H.A., at 1200 hours on that day. Somebody had a sense of history.

Meantime in Lenan 2/Lt. P. J. O'Callaghan and his party were taking over. When he was reading through the Fort records Lt. O'Callaghan must have wondered at the T.O.E.T. 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 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 in the Corps that while the other Forts could equal or exceed the accuracy of the 9.2s 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 C.O. 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.



Look your gayest self . . .
when you leave my salon

JEAN MIKEADS

the latest in Hair Fashions.

A delight to the eye . . .

Wedding bouquets for that ultimate occasion.
Wreaths, fresh or artificial, at short notice.

MRS. B. LAVELLE

5 Eyre Street, Newbridge, Co. Kildare.

Phone: (045) 31613

DENIS MELIA

Menswear—Main Street

Fashion House—Shopping Centre

Newbridge

Phone: (045) 31401.

Shop with us for Value and Selection.

All Sportswear stocked.

STOCKISTS OF ADIDAS

GOLA — BLACKTHORN FOOTBALL GEAR

The Artillery School 1931-73

Comdt. P. D. Kavanagh

In many of the Corps of which our army is made up, the Corps School is the very heart of the Corps, the centre from which the whole spirit and atmosphere of the Corps emanates. It is, or can be, far more than a mere set of buildings, where officers receive necessary technical instruction from time to time. While this may not be true of all Corps and may even read oddly to some, it is certainly true of Artillery. Whatever *esprit de corps* exists among the gunner officers of the Forces, whatever mental attitudes they share towards the military life in general and their own specialised part of it in particular, was bred into them in their School and nurtured by successive contacts with it.

The place came into existence quite casually in 1931 on 16th September in the course of a re-organisation which affected the whole army, and surviving records (of which there are all too few) do not even tell us who was its first commanding officer (see below). Probably this lack of fanfare for the birth of an established School as such, arises from the fact that all the functions of a school, instruction and training of all kinds, had been a constant and relentless feature of life in the Artillery Corps almost from the day of its inauguration. Starting from almost nothing — a handful of guns, of untrained officers, indifferent men and hairy horses, the desire for technical competence had been pursued with fanatical zeal by Major P. A. Mulcahy, loyally supported by his subordinates of all ranks. Only the highest standards of competence were tolerated and it was a hard life on the easy-going or inefficient. A great step forward was taken when Major Mulcahy managed to get one of his officers, the late *Charlie Trodden*, included in an Irish military mission which our authorities sent to the United States in 1926. He did a fully-fledged American artillery officers' course at Fort Sill. At about the same time Mulcahy himself attended a Battery Commanders' Course at the British (now "Royal") School of Artillery at Larkhill, not without some misgivings as to how his English fellow-students might regard him a mere four years after the Anglo-Irish War of Independence. (The British, as might be expected, passed the whole thing off

with their customary aplomb.) Thereafter, a rather jerky, but never dried-up, stream of selected officers was sent to Larkhill to undergo the Long Gunnery Staff Course (a year's job) and a fine body of real technical expertise was built up. Names which were destined to rank among the greatest in the army first came to small prominence in this way—five Command O/Cs — Hally and Byrne, East; Rea and Donagh, South, and Shortall, West, all graduated from courses of this kind. It is of importance, too, to bear in mind that during all this time the whole Corps was stationed together in Kildare, feeding on each other's knowledge and abilities, supplementing and enhancing deliberate instruction formally given. An established Artillery School there may not have been until 1931 but artillery schooling there was a plenty.

Vying with the technical instruction in gunnery skills throughout all this period was the all-important subject of horsemastership. Every ex-Kildare man of this period, of whatever rank, is to this day full of memories and stories of his experiences, happy and otherwise, with the horse. My task in this article is to tell the story of the Artillery School as such. Other more able pens in this issue are covering the general history of the Corps but it would distort the account and utterly fail to convey the Kildare atmosphere of this period if one failed to mention the amount of time, thought, sweat and real love which made up the relationship between gunner and horse during these years. There are even those who argue that guns and gunnery took second place. But this can hardly be true because those of us who came to the Corps in its mechanised, post-horse days, found no shortage of very real gunnery expertise in the surviving ex-horsemen.

"Kildare," it may be mentioned at this point, was, during all these years, a hutted camp which had been built for the Royal Artillery in 1901. Our gunners were moved out of it just before Christmas of 1936 and remained in exile in Plunkett Barracks, Curragh, until 1939, during which years Messrs. Sisk, the well-known builders, were engaged in erecting the complex, which you and I think of today as Kildare Barracks. J Block,

however, which in fact is the School was not completed till 1942.

It was of course during the war years 1939 to 1945 that it really came into its own, as streams of young men, bent on the goal of a commission, passed through its lecture halls and practice rooms, while others were converted more or less willingly from infantrymen and young regulars, cocky from success in the Cadet School, began again as "Young Officers." More influential still was the School's dominant role in the annual competitions for the Battery and (later) Regimental trophies.

Nothing exactly like these took place in any other Corps, so an account of them may not be out of place. In any case no description of the School without reference to them would be anything like complete, for the School devised them and ran them and so was the arbiter of the destinies of every officer in the Artillery Corps at a time when there was quite a large number of officers indeed (by 1943 we had twenty-two full-strength batteries, organised into seven regiments). Spread all over the country and subject to all the calls of the Brigades to which we were integral, we trained frantically our officers, gunners, signalers, gun-position assistants and drivers, all of whom would be individually as well as collectively tested. Eventually the dreaded day came and we moved to Kildare, to bivouac in the fields behind the Barracks. Here a whole series of tests, written and oral, was carried out by the School staff. Though in our heart of hearts we probably all realised that the whole procedure was in the interests of efficiency and did, in fact, build up a peerless Artillery Corps, realism compels one to remember that the procedure was not calculated to induce good feelings between the testers and the tested and the School staff was something less than popular among the "line" officers of the day. There was no escape for anyone of any rank. While the officers sat in Trodden Hall sweating and grousing through a written paper of seemingly fiendish complexity, lowly gun-layers were being tested in Fuze-settings and Sight testing and suchlike and signalers were wrestling with messages, packed with pitfalls.

Then we set off for the Glen of Imaal. Here every officer did a test shoot with an intimidating audience breathing down his neck. Gunnery skill came into the quality of one's performance here, but so did luck and prayer. Asked to evaluate one officer's effort, Colonel Mulcahy (by then Director of the Corps) delivered the following judgment: "He engaged the wrong target; the target he did engage he didn't hit. Otherwise it was a very good shoot." To win the Shield was the ultimate, indescribable glory. To come last of the twenty-two competing batteries was to incur the

frightful penalty of being dragged from one's home station and attached to the School for a period of several months' intensive training.

With the end of the war, quieter days came to the School (as to the rest of the greatly decreased Army). But its stated role ensured that it was never idle.

From now on the students, in ascending order, were Cadets who came over from their own School for a few days at a time to be made familiar with guns and their effects; young officers, newly-commissioned and posted to the Corps, with everything to learn; standard officers of the Artillery qualifying for promotion to Captain and of the Infantry, studying to co-ordinate the fire-power of regiments and batteries into the over-all conduct of the battle; C & S students with the same object at a higher level. Finally, on a few occasions, very high-ranking groups gravely studied the very deepest aspects of matters, way above the heads of most of us rag, tag and bobtail. Strictly speaking belonging to the Depot, but handled by School instructors, were the Potential NCO Courses from time to time, a very rewarding occupation for those engaged in them. With a team of good NCO Instructors (and in those days the School never seemed to be short of those), it was a grand experience to watch a perhaps rather mixed bag of gunners sent in from

QUALITY DRY CLEANING

at Unbeatable Prices

CURRAGH

DRY CLEANING & LAUNDRETTE

BALLYMANY, NEWBRIDGE

OUR PRICES

LADIES & GENTS		CHILDREN	
COATS	45p	COATS	25p
SUITS	45p		
DRESSES	35p	DRESSES	20p
SLACKS	20p		
SKIRTS	20p	SKIRTS	10p
CARDIGANS	20p		
ARANS	25p	CARDIGANS	10p

Men's Shirts Washed and Pressed 12½p

their units grow and develop in knowledge and self-confidence and "jild." Unhappily some would not make it and have to be returned to unit but most would be formed into competent junior leaders and in every class there would be that sprinkling of hard professionals, the obvious sergeants and upwards of a few years time. To be in charge of and responsible for the formation of these men is an honour.

This then has been and remains the picture of life in the Artillery School, kept quietly and steadily busy on work of importance.

It was mentioned earlier that no record survives of the first holder of the appointment of School Commandant. This turns out to be not correct, because some good work by Officers' Records (who have been extremely helpful in all that follows and to whom I here acknowledge my debt) has established the firm fact that Captain *Charles Trodden* was given the appointment on its creation in November, 1931, and held it till June, 1933. A silence then falls until January, 1939, when it was taken up by Captain D. J. Farrell who had been there as "Staff Officer" since the beginning. May 1940 to November 1941 was Acting Commandant P. Hally, succeeded until March 1943 by Acting Commandant W. Donagh, who in turn passed it to Acting Commandant C. E. Shortall, March 1943 to July 1946. So far so good, but the next appointee, Major W. Donagh, while holding down the substantive appointment of School Commandant, was detached to the Military College and to Army Headquarters, and Comdt. Shortall was gazetted as "Acting School Commandant" from November 1947 to January, 1953. The late Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Dalton then took over but only until June of the same year when another of our regrettable gaps sets in. From 1959, however, all is well and we can set it down as a list—

October-Dec., 1959—Lieutenant Colonel W. Rea (having been "Acting" since Jan. '59).

Dec. '59 - Feb. '61—Lieutenant-Colonel C. M. Mattimeo.

Feb. '61 - Mar. '62—Lieutenant-Colonel R. Carew.

Mar. '62 - Jan. '69—Lieutenant-Colonel I. P. Noone.

Jan. '69 - July '73 — Lieutenant-Colonel D. Burke.

July 1973- — Lieutenant-Colonel J. E. White.

It may seem surprising, and it is certainly a pity, that there should be gaps at all, but human memory proves short and fallible and going around asking people who was in what appointment in nineteen so-and-so proves to be an unrewarding exercise. Officers' Records can and does provide accurate dates but has to be given a name to work on. So the compilation of a full and reliable list is a task remaining to be completed.

One is not giving away vital military information by saying that the Artillery just at the moment is perhaps not the Forces' most prominent corps. National circumstances are such that other aspects of military activity require more pressing attention. So one is writing about the Artillery School during one of its less flourishing periods. But those who truly understand military matters are fully aware that it is precisely in the possession of an artillery arm that an "Army" as such can be distinguished from a "constabulary" or "gendarmarie." Other arms can provide heavy fire-power but only artillery can sustain it and concentrate it and co-ordinate it to the degree that first-class operations of war demand. This capability of not merely bombardment but of bombardment readily switchable to vital areas and then capable of being sustained will never cease to be a primary requirement of battle, by whatever weapons or strange devices it may be carried out. The techniques by which this may be done have been taught by the Artillery School since 1931. There have been changes of personality, of weapons and of techniques but the School absorbs them all and awaits the future with quiet confidence.



1972. 11th Std Artillery Officers course firing the 3.7" howitzer in the Glen of Imaal.

("Irish Independent" photograph)

The Artillery Corps 1936

John M. Hudson and F. Glenn Thompson

THE use of artillery during the Civil War of 1922-1923 by the Pro-Treaty National Army was limited to single-gun actions during operations to force the Anti-Treaty Republicans to evacuate towns and defensive positions during the first months of open fighting. Trained personnel to serve the guns were so scarce that often high ranking officers, even generals, had to perform these duties, there being no organised batteries.

The Artillery Corps was formally established on 23rd March, 1923, at Islandbridge Barracks, Dublin; with a strength of 11 Officers, 62 Other Ranks, with 9 Guns and 10 horses. With time progress was made and with a draft of personnel, the 1st Field Battery was organised in June of that year.

The Government White Paper and Orders No. 3 published during July, 1924, laid down the following establishments: The personnel of the Corps Headquarters Staff consisted of 1 Major (Commanding Officer), 1 Commandant (Corps Adjutant), 3 Captains (Corps Quartermaster, Horsemaster and Gunnery Instructional Officer), 3 Sergeant-Majors (Corps Sergeant-Major, Gunnery Instructor and Riding Instructor), 1 Battalion Quartermaster Sergeant (Corps Quartermaster Sergeant), 1 Company Sergeant (Fitter), 5 Sergeants (Signalling Instructor, Physical Training Instructor, Police, Cook and Mess Sergeant), 3 Corporals (Orderly Room Clerk, Maintenance and Trumpeter), 23 Gunners (Orderly Room Clerk, Quartermaster's Clerk, Storeman, 4 Police, 4 Maintenance, 2 Drivers, 4 Batmen, 3 Grooms and 3 Mess Orderlies).

The personnel of a Battery Staff consisted of 1 Captain (Battery Commander), 1 Lieutenant (Second in command, had charge of wagons, ammunition supplies and horse lines), 3 Second-Lieutenants (Gun Position Officer, who was responsible for Reconnaissance Observation and Intelligence; Left and Right Section Commanders), 1 Company Sergeant (Battery Sergeant-Major), 1 Company Quartermaster Sergeant (Battery Quartermaster Sergeant), 5 Sergeants (1 Farrier and 4 Section No. 1's), 11 Corporals (Signaller, Artificer, Wheel Builder, Saddler, Clerk, Cook, Wagon Line Corporal and 4 Coverers), 93 Gunners (4 Signallers, 1 Saddler, 2 Clerks, 2 Cooks, 2 Pen-

celler Clerks, 2 Shoeing Smiths, 1 Orderly, 1 Storeman, 1 Tailor, 1 Shoemaker, 5 Batmen-Groom-Horseholders, 2 Trumpeters, 40 Gunners and 29 Drivers). To complete the establishment of 2 four-gun 18 Pounder Batteries were a total 125 horses. The 2nd Field Battery was formed on 5th January, 1925, at McKee Barracks, Dublin. On 30th January the entire Corps was transferred to Kildare Barracks.

Defence Force Regulation 30 of 31st May, 1931, established the 1st Field Battery, the Volunteer Reserve which was stationed in Cork, while Defence Force Regulation 62 provided for a Mounted Escort whose personnel were drawn from the Corps. In 1933 the 1st Anti-Aircraft Battery was formed and equipped with 3" 20 cwt. Quick Fring Anti-Aircraft Guns.

Defence Force Regulation 49 of 22nd October, 1934, which established "The Tactical and Territorial Organisation of the Defence Forces," scheduled the Permanent Force with 3 Batteries—1st, 3rd and 4th—which were organised as the 1st Field Artillery Brigade, 2nd Field Battery was in reserve. The 5th to 28th Batteries were provided by the Volunteer Force.

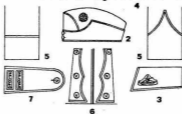
Along with a School and Dépôt, the disposition of the Artillery Corps in 1936 was:—

- 1st Field Battery, Cork.
- 2nd Field Battery, Kildare.
- 3rd Field Battery, Athlone.
- 4th Field Battery, Dublin.
- 1st Anti-Aircraft Battery, Kildare (Cadre).
- 5th (Dublin) Field Battery.
- 6th (Dublin) Field Battery.
- 7th (Monaghan) Field Battery.
- 8th (Drogheda) Field Battery.
- 9th (Cork) Field Battery.
- 10th (Tralee) Field Battery.
- 11th (Waterford) Field Battery.
- 12th (Clonmel) Field Battery.
- 13th (Mullingar) Field Battery.
- 14th (Longford) Field Battery.
- 15th (Letterkenny) Field Battery.
- 16th (Ballinasloe) Field Battery.
- 1st Light Battery, Kildare (Cadre).
- 2nd (Kildare) Light Battery.
- 3rd (Kilkenny) Light Battery.
- 4th (Castlebar) Light Battery.

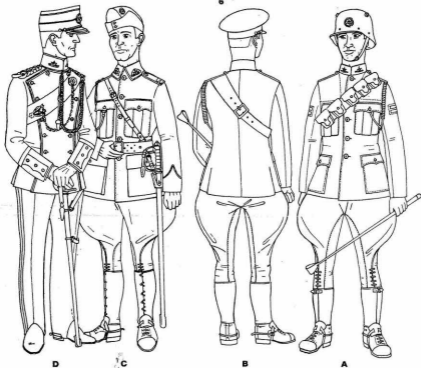
ΔΙΟΡΜΑ ΠΑ Η-ΟΠΛΩΝΑΙΡΕΑΧΤΑ



1



1



D

C

B

A

THE ARTILLERY CORPS : 1936



8



9



10

The Corps was equipped with 18 Pounder Guns; 4.5" Howitzers Mk I & II; 3.7" Howitzers Mk I; 3" 20 cwt. Quick Firing Anti-Aircraft Guns and 3" Stokes Mortars. The authorised Permanent Force Establishment at this period was 1 Major, 1 Commandant, 17 Captains, 12 Lieutenants, 76 Non Commissioned Officers and 342 Privates—a total of 449.

The Uniforms

Officers' Service Uniform. Standard Officers' uniform with Artillery Corps badges (1) in silver with the muzzles of the guns facing outwards.

Other Ranks' Uniforms — Figures A and B. Uniform, 1924 Infantry pattern, breeches reinforced with "Pads" painted cream with Science Surtan Blanco, and were treated preparatory to walking out in the evening. The "issue" breeches were further restyled by "Wings" inset by the unit tailor to give a greater flair. Brown leather bandolier with five ammunition pouches. White lanyard also treated with Blanco worn on the left shoulder. Brown boots and leggings with steel spurs. Caps or Helms as required.

The Volunteer Force Artillery Officers' Uniform — Figure C.

CAP: (2) Folding, green whipcord about 5" high, large folding peak in front, flaps at the side to let down and fastened at the front by two small white metal buttons. Sides of the crown dark green facing cloth. White metal Army badge on the left side, Other Ranks' pattern and size.

TUNIC: Green whipcord material, 2" high Prussian collar (3) of dark green cloth, front and bottom edged with orange piping. A pair of white metal Corps Badges (1) with the muzzles of the guns facing outwards mounted on an orange base, with the inscription in Gaelic script (4) "Diorma no h-Ollghunnaireachta," i.e. Artillery Corps, were placed 1" from the collar opening. The left edge of the tunic was piped with dark green facing cloth. Two breast patch pockets with centre box pleats, each with a three pointed flap fastened with a centre hole and a small button. Two large side pockets at the hips of the bellows type with flaps cut straight, centre hole with small button to fasten. Buttons large and small, white metal; the monogram—a harp between the initials I.V. (Irish Volunteers). The front had five large buttons. Pointed Cuffs (5) of dark green facing cloth, piped with orange facing cloth. The back of the tunic had an inverted centre pleat running from the middle of the shoulders to just above the belt. The back centre vent (6) cut from the waist with two slashes of the same material; each was two pointed with three large white metal buttons, bottom point 2 1/2" wide, centre point 2" wide tapering to 3/4" at the waist. The slashes and left side edge were piped with dark

green facing cloth. The Shoulder Straps (7) were detachable and were made of cloth, the top of which was covered with dark green silk with an edging of orange facing cloth. The Rank Insignia bars of white metal—Lieutenant's—of reduced dimension, with slightly rounded corners measured 1 1/2" by 3/4" on an orange cloth base. On the right side, a dark green lanyard.

BREECHES: Light fawn twill or Bedford cord.
TROUSERS: Green whipcord with two 3/4" dark green stripes.

BOOTS: Black ankle boots and laced leggings, steel spurs.

EQUIPMENT: Black leather Sam Browne belt. Sword scabbard black leather. The sword hilt was nickel plated, contained the Army Badge and a black plaited leather sword knot.

Officers' Full Dress Uniform 1935-1955—Figure D.

SHAKO: Dark blue whipcord, front 5" high and back 3 1/2" high. The Crown was of scarlet facing cloth and overlapped the sides to the extent of 3/4"; the seam was covered by a row of 3/16" gold Russia braid. On the crown was a line of dark blue tubular cloth 1/2" from the edge, and on the centre was a gold wire interlaced design. Half way down the side was a line of scarlet piping. The Army Cap Badge in gold wire, the star edged in scarlet thread; the centre portion consisting of the belt and F.F. monogram was raised on scarlet silk. All this workmanship was on a ground of scarlet facing cloth. The chin-strap of twisted gold cord with two runners, which were held in position by two small gold buttons crested



Royal Dublin Society

Dublin Horse Show

August
6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th,
1974

For programmes, Prize Schedules and all information apply:
The Royal Dublin Society, PO Box No. 121,
Ball's Bridge, Dublin 4.

with the Army Badge. Black patent leather peak 2½" deep with gold fern leaf embroidery around the edge for Field Officers.

TUNIC: Mounted pattern of dark blue whipcord cloth. Collar scarlet 2" high with slightly rounded corners; front and top edged with dark blue cloth with a white linen collar showing ½". A pair of gold Corps Badges (1) with muzzels of the guns facing outwards, were placed 1" from the collar opening. The front of the tunic was made with a full length plastron with a centre seam held in position by five large gold buttons equally placed on each side and by one button at each side of the neck. The top edges of the plastron were cut straight. All edges of the plastron except the bottom edge were bound with scarlet cloth pressed flat. A row of ½" gold Russia braid was laid alongside the scarlet edging. The back of the tunic was plain with 4" vents in each side seam. The Cuff (8) of the Corps pattern had a scarlet cloth patch 4½" high, 2" wide at the points and 1½" at the hollows with three small gold buttons. A horizontal band of ¾" Shamrock gold lace was fitted around the sleeve above and covering the top edge of the patch. White linen cuffs inside showed ½". White doeskin or buckskin gloves were worn. The Epulettes (9) were made of interlaced gold cord and were fitted to the tunic by a screw button, in such a way as to allow the caplines and bandolier to be worn underneath. A Colonel's Insignia of three diamonds. The diamond was made of gold embroidery wire on a scarlet facing cloth base, was 1½" measured diagonally from point to point and worn diagonally each ¼" apart. The gold Caplines started by looping around the base of the collar, down the centre of the back, looped around the left shoulder and continued plaited across the left breast to the front collar opening, there reverting to a single strand and ending in an acorn

The Bandolier was made of black patent leather 3" wide. It was fastened by a ring tap and stud to the Pouch. The Pouch (10) of black patent leather was 6" long and 3¼" wide and was worn over the left shoulder. The Pickers and Chains were gold. The Corps Badge (1) right die, was placed on the centre of the pouch flap.

OVERALLS: Dark blue barathea cloth with two scarlet stripes ¾" wide and ¾" apart. Boots: Black full or half Wellingtons or elastic sided Alberts, and were fitted for nickel steel box spurs.

SWORD: The hilt which contained the Army Badge and the scabbard were brass. The sword slings, suspended from a belt under the tunic were made of scarlet Morocco leather 1" wide and faced with ¾" gold Shamrock lace. The Sword Knot, of ¾" gold Shamrock lace ending in a full sized gold acorn.

CLOAK: The Cloak of black facing cloth hung down to within 10" of the ground. The collar was of black velvet. The Clasps and Chain were gold plated. Lining of scarlet silk. The cloak was worn thrown back over the left shoulder to show the scarlet lining to effect and to carry the sword unhindered.

SOURCES:

- Defence Force Regulations.
- An t-Ogláic, Volume 2, No. 13, 1924.
- Orders No. 3, 1924.
- Orders No. 4, 1924.
- Adjutant General's Provisional Letter of 5th February, 1936.
- Quartermaster General's "Specifications," 1st December, 1937.
- League of Nations' Armaments Year Book, 1938.
- The Army Handbook, 1940, 1941, 1945 and 1968.
- The Call to Arms, 1945.
- Actual Items of Uniform and Equipment.
- Commandant T. C. Brick (Ret.): An Unpublished Memoir.
- Historical Material and Photographs supplied by the Army Press Office.



R. PENDER

CIVIL AND MILITARY TAILOR

4 & 5 MANOR STREET, DUBLIN 7.

PHONE: 302813

JANUARY 1st, 1974. INCREASE IN CURRENT ADVERTISING RATES

SPACE	TYPE AREA	RATE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Standard Full Page	8½ ins. down x 6½ ins. across	£40	Series Discounts 10% for 12 inserts, 5% for 6 inserts.
Outside Back Cover Page	do.	£45	
Standard Half Page	4½ ins. down x 6½ ins. across or 8½ ins. down x 3½ ins. across	£22	Publication Date: 4th of every month.
Standard Quarter Page	2½ ins. down x 6½ ins. across or 4½ ins. down x 3½ ins. across	£12	
Standard One-Eight Page	2½ ins. down x 3½ ins. across	£6	Space Allocation may not be cancelled.

Subscription Rates on renewal:
 Monthly: 15p.
 Yearly: £1.80 (Ireland & U.K.)
 Overseas: £2.40 (Post incl.)

Hogan Motors Limited

Lower Eyre Street,
Newbridge, Co. Kildare.

Telephone: (04) 31711

CAR SALES — NEW AND USED
CAR SERVICE AND REPAIRS

—
CUT PRICE TYRES
—

Open 6 days — Monday to Saturday.
9 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day.

BRYAN S. WHELAN

Builders' Providers

RATHCOOLE

Tel. 589282

●
SAND, GRAVEL, LIME, BLOCKS
PLASTER, CEMENT, ECLIPSE
SCREEN BLOCKS
●

BRIQUETTES, TURF

Thoughts of Depression

Terry O'Sullivan

"ONCE a gunner always a gunner," I was taught, and that can be interpreted any way you like, depending on the time of the day or night and whether or not it's your turn to buy a round. One of the first bits of gun drill that I had to learn was "Change Rounds," and little did I think that the day would come when I would sink so low as to confuse gun-drill with bar drill. I climbed into my first uniform partly for the fun of it and partly for the money, for twelve shillings and six pence a week, and seven shillings marriage allowance was not to be sneezed at. This was the early Hitler period when the First Medium Antircraft Battery meant just that. Period. We didn't have any more, and the guns which you wound around by hand, like an attendant on a child's merrygoround, were stately affairs.

So were we, the gunners, for although there was a lot of jumping up and down on steel and timber platforms, we wore spurs in memory of the horses that used to pull the guns, and in the bitter winter of 1939-40 there were more horse troughs than guns in McKee Barracks. Because we rode on imaginary horses, we gunners didn't do an "about turn," because a horse couldn't do it, so we wheeled about, and Heaven help the outsidersman if he had short legs. To make a gunner's life even more interesting, we also learned how to man and fire the matronly three-inch guns through the medium of Irish, and wonderful was that part of the vocabulary that dealt with stripping and assembling the breech block.

In McKee Barracks in the late winter of 1940 we were paraded and told that we could go home if we liked. We were not told the reason why, of course, but we all knew why—it was a case of too many gunners and not enough guns. Most of the anti-aircraft Commissioned ranks were comparatively highly educated. One reason was that the stone age computer which was called the "predictor," and which fed by hand and voice data to the gun crews, required either an Honours

degree in maths or science—or else a vivid imagination.

I managed to get myself sent to the coast artillery fort at Dunree, north of Buncrana on the Inishowen peninsula. Nobody was surprised when an anti-aircraft gunner turned up there, for the garrison was the nearest thing we had to a foreign legion, controlled by phone from Athlone via Sligo, and made up of infantry from An Cead Cath Coisithe, signallers, engineers, ordnance, and artillery men trained in procedures on the couple of six inch guns built into a kind of Maginot Line concrete emplacement on the hill. The day the first airplane flew they, and all such, became obsolete, but they looked magnificent, and the shells, lifted up out of the magazines with chains and pulleys, and the sinister looking charges, and the innocent looking little detonator pistol were all part of the huge Wagnerian landscape of beautiful Lough Swilly.

My duty, after first parade every morning, was to climb the hill, unlock the door of the little glass-windowed hut containing the Depression Range Finder, check the plus and minus rise or fall of the tide, write it down, and then concentrate like mad on watching for submarines until dinner time.

I became very fond of that beautiful little Depression Range Finder, and, like that chap in the Gilbert and Sullivan opera, I polished it every morning. It kept on peacefully telling me that the tide was up four feet or down six feet, every morning at 0930 hrs., and I should mention that if the guns had to be fired the first data to be fed into them came from me—the height of the tide. The target, you see, would be up or down those important few feet—vital statistics to the layers on the guns. Then I bought a handkerchief and unscrewed the lenses and hawed on them and polished them and put the whole thing together again and came up the hill as usual the next morning for the routine check. And the D.R.F.

J. J. Mahon & Sons Ltd.

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL
WINE AND SPIRIT
MERCHANTS



Your Rendezvous for Best Drinks



KILDARE

Phone 21316

RED HOUSE INN

BAR AND
RESTAURANT

Newbridge, Co. Kildare

Bookings: 31516

COUGHLAN'S

Draper and Outfitter : Boots and Shoes

22 SOUTH MAIN STREET, NAAS,
CO. KILDARE

For your suit made to measure come to
Coughlan's. Fit and Finish Guaranteed.

Our Prices are the keenest in Ireland

Telephone: 7384

OSTA JOHN DEVOY

Baile Eoin, Bóthar Nás na Rí, Co. Chill
Dara.

Telefón: 045 7547

Johnstown, Naas Road, Co. Kildare.



For the most fastidious palate, choice food
and drink to please all.



Ideal for wedding parties, meetings, business
conventions, get together.



COMFORTABLE LOUNGE BAR FOR THE
CASUAL DRINK

announced with its little brass pointer on its drum, that the tide was down by thirty-five feet!

The Sergeant Major when I told him said "My God there's an f . . . hole in Lough Swilly," and the entire instrument went off by road, via Sligo of course to the Ordnance Depot at Islandbridge, leaving Fort Dunree helpless for three weeks.

Meanwhile, while a report on all this expensive irregularity was being prepared, there was a letter on the way from the Director of Artillery to Dunree.

The letter announced my promotion—to the rank of Corporal. Of course after that my career was assured.



THE BLUE HUSSARS

THE Mounted Escort was planned during 1931 and first appeared in public the following year during the great ceremonies of the Eucharistic Congress. Uniformed in light blue (officially, alizame sapphire) tunic and breeches, with gold frogging and lace of the near-standard international pattern and dark Sealskin busbies with orange-yellow plumes, the Escort had come near to presenting a very different appearance. A committee, which included the distinguished artist Seán Keating, RHA (since President of that Body), sat in the Spring of '32 and designed a uniform consisting of saffron tunic with six rows of black braid and black cuffs, a blue brat (i.e., fringed medieval Irish Shawl), tight pantaloons and black Balmoral cap with saffron feather. This was approved and the records do not reveal when or why it was abandoned in favour of the blue hussar style. £2,165 was the cost of the seventy-odd sets of uniform eventually purchased. The personnel of the Escort were not permanently embodied as a unit, but were called together for rehearsals and public duties as necessary. As the largest body of horse-soldiers in the Army of those days was the Field Artillery, the Blue Hussars tended to come from that Corps, whose Depot in Kildare stored the ceremonial clothing. Activities of this kind were in abeyance during the war years, 1939 to 1945, but later an attempt was made to reform the horsed Escort. There was no longer, however, in our mechanised army, a sufficient pool of trained horse-soldiers to draw upon and by 1948 ceremonial escort duties had been handed over to the motor-cyclists of the Cavalry Corps who handle them (and very effectively, too) ever since.

"Irish Defence Forces Handbook" 1968.

DUFFY'S GARAGE

NAAS ROAD, DROICHEAD NUA,
CO. KILDARE

Phone 31340

SHELL DEALER

Motor Engineer. First-class Repair and Overhaul Service.. Acetylene Welding. Battery Charging. Vulcanising, etc.

ALL TYPES OF CARS SUPPLIED

IRISH RUBBER LTD.

Manufacturers of Irish
Swimcaps — Exports to all parts of
the world.

Address:

KILCULLEN, CO. KILDARE.

Telephone: 045/81332-3.

Telex: 5160.

KERRIGANS

●
Leading Stockist for

LADIES', CHILDREN'S & MEN'S
CLARKS SHOES

" GREENISLE " SHIRTS

" KILMAINE " and CRESCENT
CLOTHING

●
Naas, Co. Kildare

Phone Naas 7427

IVAN'S BOUTIQUE

Ballymany Shopping Centre
NEWBRIDGE

●
Best Quality

LADIES DRESSES, SHORT COATS,
SLACKS, BLOUSES, SHIRTS,
MAXI DRESSES, ETC.

at Keenest Prices

●
IVAN'S BOUTIQUE

BALLYMANY SHOPPING CENTRE (front)

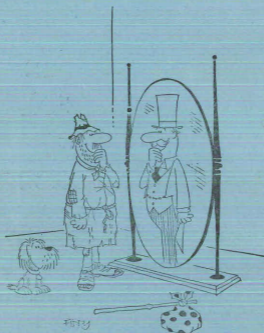


**Carrolls
Number 1
the taste
of good tobacco**



PACKETS CARRY A GOVERNMENT HEALTH WARNING

You wouldn't know yourself
A win could make a lot of difference



PRIZES: SUPER PRIZE £200,000. Numerous prizes of £50,000, £20,000 £10,000 and many other prizes.

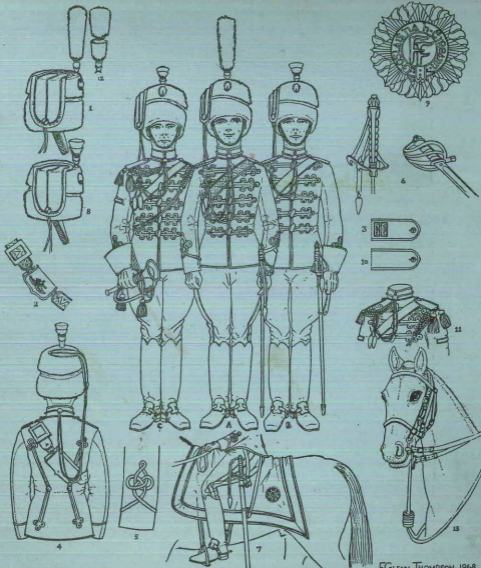
SELLERS PRIZES: Super Prize £20,000, numerous prizes of £5,000, £2,000, £1,000 and unplaced horse prizes £50.

Irish Hospitals' Sweepstakes,
Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.
Branch Sweep Offices at
Cork, Galway and
at 9 - 11 Grafton St., Dublin 2.
Tickets £1 each.

CLOSING DATE DEC. 3

Sweeps Hurdle Sweepstake

Caps



FGLENN, THOMPSON, 1968.