

Proceedings 2004

Annual General Meeting 2004

Colonel Donal O'Carroll presided at the Annual General Meeting which took place in the Auditorium, HQ 2 Eastern Brigade, at 11.30 a.m on Saturday 4th December 2004, with some twenty nine members in attendance. Commandant Paul Mullally, who in the course of the year had taken over the duties of the office of Honorary Record Secretary from Comdt Canice Mansfield, read the Minutes of the 2003 Annual General Meeting. When the meeting proceeded to the election of honorary officers, Comdt Mullally was confirmed in his office, as were the Society's other officers and the retiring Members of Council (Dr P McCarthy, Capt P Keane, Col P Kirby, Comdt F McGoldrick, Dr K Ferguson, Comdt C Mansfield, Dr D Bradley, Dr S Duffy, Mr P Kerrigan, Comdt E Kiely, Maj M C Kirby and Comdt L O'Brien).

Lectures:

Tribute was paid by the President, Colonel O'Carroll, to the members of the Lecture/Field Day Committee who had organised what was acknowledged to have been a successful season of lectures. Those in attendance at Griffith College on the second Friday of each month had heard the following lectures:

Froude on sixteenth century warfare, by Dr Ciaran Brady.

Colonel John H Patterson and the Zion Mule Corps 1915, by Mr Yanky Fachler.

'A work of Irish manufacture and the English duke': Wellington, Siborne and the large Waterloo model, by Mr Peter Hofschröder.

Faction and feuding in late medieval Ireland, by Mr. Peter Crooks.

Hitler's Irish emissaries, by Dr. David O'Donoghue.

The Desmond rebellion of 1579 - 83, by Dr. Anthony McCormack.

Harry Boland and the Irish Republican Brotherhood, by Professor David Fitzpatrick.

Field Days:

The Society's extended tour was on the weekend of 5th, 6th and 7th June where sites of actions in the War of Independence and the Civil War in the west Cork area were visited: the ambushes at Crossbarry and Kilmichael, both of which actions took place during the War of Independence, and Bealnablath, the Civil War ambush where General Michael Collins was killed.

On Saturday 5th June, a party of almost forty left Dublin by coach and were joined by many others, travelling by car, at the Anner Hotel, Thurles, where we halted for lunch. Proceeding to Cork, the first stand was at Crossbarry where Sergeant Pat Cremin, BA, Assistant Curator of the museum in Collins Barracks, Cork, gave an expert account of the action. On Sunday 6th June, the morning was spent at Kilmichael and the afternoon at Bealnablath. At both locations, Sergeant Cremin was again the speaker and demonstrated his profound knowledge of what had occurred. A lengthy discussion followed on all three actions and questions were ably dealt with by the speaker.

The party was accommodated at the Ambassador Hotel, Military Hill, where, on the Sunday evening, a large gathering enjoyed a communal dinner. The organisation of the weekend was in the competent hands of Commandant Frank Purcell.

On Sunday 5th September, the Society visited Kilkenny where Dr Patrick McCarthy, our Honorary Correspondence Secretary, lectured on the Cromwellian siege of the city and conducted a tour of sites associated with the event. Leaving Dublin at 11.00 a.m. that morning, we had lunch in Stephens Barracks, Kilkenny. After an opening lecture on the background to the siege, we visited the medieval room in Kilkenny Castle, the garden of the Butler House, the Black Abbey, St Canice's Cathedral and the old Franciscan church. Dr McCarthy's talks at these locations brought the events of the siege to life as was evidenced by the great number of questions with which he had to deal.

Communal dinner that evening was in the splendid surrounds of the Rivercourt Hotel where some ninety members and guests gathered. Once again, the organisation was in the hands of Comdt Purcell.

Membership

Col Pat Kirby reported that membership had remained fairly static over the year. Regular paying membership stood at 661 while close to 900 copies of each issue of the Irish Sword were distributed. Col Kirby reported that in 2004 significant efforts had been put into the matter of members in arrears and that this work would continue into 2005 with a view to removing non-paying members.

During 2004, 7 members died, 5 resignations were received and contact had been lost with a further 7 members. The first Newsletter in 2005 would include a list of new members.

The President said that the current state of paid-up the membership was a testimony to the very satisfactory job which had been carried out by Col Kirby. He also paid tribute to Capt Pádraic Keane, who is on a temporary residence in the USA.

Accounts

The Honorary Treasurer, Comdt. Francis McGoldrick informed the meeting that since the last Council meeting, at which the Auditor, Mr. J.W. Stone was in attendance, Mr. Stone's death had occurred. He paid tribute to Mr. Stone - "Bill" to all who knew him in the Society - who had proven a much valued support and loyal friend over the many years of his association with the Society.

In these circumstances it was not possible to present accounts to the meeting and he asked that, in respect of the approval of the accounts, and also in respect of the appointment of an auditor, the meeting should adjourn, so that appropriate arrangements could be made to deal with these two motions. It was agreed to hold the adjourned the meeting to 2005 to coincide with an evening lecture in Griffith College.

The Irish Sword

Four issues of *The Irish Sword*, numbers 93 to 96 issued in December 2004. Issue number 96 bore the date Winter 2004, and with its appearance a long-standing ambition to bring the publication of *The Irish Sword* up-to-date was achieved.

At the AGM, the Honorary Editor had mused that, after an existence of fifty-five years, it was understandable to apprehend that the veins of scholarly enquiry within the Society's field of study might become exhausted. He reported, nevertheless, that there was much that was fresh in the material about to be published. As always the contributors were a mixture of people close to the heart of the Society and of scholars who lived abroad. On this occasion, there was among the latter category a contribution from Finland on the legend of a Finnish regiment at the Boyne, while a lady in Paris had identified an adventurer called MacAdaras who had acquired the rank of General under the 3rd French Republic. The present set of Swords was also introducing the work of Major Ivan Nelson, a retired soldier who, following in the steps of Sir Henry McAnally, had done work on the Irish militia, a subject on which he had completed a doctoral dissertation at Queen's University, and of Yvonne McEwen from Edinburgh, whose interests lay in the statistical analysis of the extent of Irish volunteering during the two world wars. The editor reserved a particular word of appreciation for a forthcoming article by Eoghan O hAnnracháin, who had discovered in the town hall of Aire-sur-la-Lys a contemporary depiction of the siege of that place in 1641. In the picture, to be reproduced as the frontispiece of Volume XXIV, the legend identified the tents of Owen Roe O'Neill's regiment, a serendipitous discovery by an author who had contributed often and notably to *The Irish Sword* over the preceding decade.

Irish Commission for Military History

Once again, the principal event of the year was the Annual Congress, the XXXth, held in Rabat, Morocco from 1st to 7th of August on the theme "The Economic Aspects of Defence through the Major World Conflicts." The Society was represented by Mr. Peter Rigney, an official of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. He presented a paper entitled "*War, non belligerency and economic interdependence: the politics of coal in the Second World War.*" Mr Peter Mulready and Colonel. O'Carroll also attended the Congress, as did Mrs. Rigney.

The Congress was attended by 261 delegates and accompanying persons from 29 countries, in addition to 77 Moroccan delegates. A further 15 delegates attended as observers from five Arab states. Forty four papers were presented and topics ranged from the Dutch Revolt of the 16th century to the Italian war economy of 1943-45. This Congress continued two concepts introduced at the 2002 Congress, namely, a track two programme run in parallel with the main programme and a discussion session on new military books.

Once again the Society expressed its gratitude to the Minister for Defence for the subvention which covered the expense of sending a speaker to this important annual event

without the need to call on Society funding. The Department provided this support in addition to the payment of our annual subscription of 650 Swiss Francs (€425 approx.) to the International Commission.

The Bibliographie Internationale of the International Commission is published annually and consists of several hundred summary reviews of the latest military history books. Our contribution to the Bibliographie was continued in 2004 and reviews of eleven books of Irish interest were submitted for inclusion in Tome 26 which will be published in 2005. Tome 25 was published in September 2004 and contains nine reviews submitted by this Commission. The Society is particularly indebted to Dr. Patrick McCarthy, Chairman of the Books Committee, for his dedicated work in reviewing the books and compiling the submission.

In 2005, the annual Congress, the XXXIth, will be held in Madrid from 21st to 28th August on the theme "Terrestrial and Naval Power at the Age of Trafalgar". The Society will be represented by Colonel Donal O'Carroll, the President of the Society who will present a paper. Looking further ahead, the XXXIIth Congress is scheduled for Potsdam, Germany in late August 2006 on the theme "War and Nationalism".

Annual Dinner 2004

The 49th Annual Dinner of the Society was held in St Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle, on the evening of Saturday 4th December 2004 (by kind permission of the Minister for Defence). One hundred and thirty members and guests of the Society enjoyed the pre-dinner reception and excellent dinner that followed. The Guest of Honour was Dr Philip Nolan, UCD, who delivered a most entertaining and informative speech. Also present as guests of the Society were the Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Mr Dermot Gallagher, Brig Gen Dan Rea, representing the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces, and Mr Dermot Hegarty, Chairman of Griffith College.

The event was organised by the Dinner Committee, Chairman - Comdt Martin Lenihan, ably assisted by Col Pat Kirby and Comdt Louis O'Brien who also acted as Master of Ceremonies.

Acknowledgements

In his report to the Annual General Meeting, the Honorary Record Secretary expressed the Society's gratitude to: Mr Dermot Hegarty for his continuing generosity in allowing a room at Griffith College to be used for the Society's lectures; the President and Governing Body of UCD for their grant towards the publication of *The Irish Sword* and for the provision of an address for the Society; the Minister for Foreign Affairs for the continued co-operation of his Department and for the grant towards the publication of *The Irish Sword*; the Minister for Defence; the Defence Forces in general, the General Officer Commanding 2nd Eastern Brigade, and, in particular, the Officer Commanding Cathal Brugha Barracks for the assistance and facilities provided.