

# ARDCARNE REMEMBERS 1913—1923

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APRIL 29<sup>TH</sup> TO MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> 2016

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2016

Clár Comórtha  
Céad Bliain  
*Centenary  
Programme*

## MAIN EVENTS

- *Opening Address by Mr. Michael McDowell, SC*
- *Series of Talks*
- *Memorial Stones and Information Board unveiled*

## **Ardcarne Remembers 1913-1923.**

### **Programme of Events**

#### **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April at 8pm in Crossna Church.**

Official launch of the week-end. MC Helen Smyth.

Welcoming address by Gerard Conlisk, *Chairman of Ardcarne Remembers Committee.*

Reading of the Proclamation..

Opening address by Michael McDowell SC.

Richie Farrell, Co-ordinator Roscommon Ireland 2016 Programme

Reception in the Parish House adjacent to the Church.

#### **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April**

#### **Conference: Crossna Community Centre, Cleen Hall.**

9.30-10.00 Registration: Martina Moffatt and David Gillespie.

Tea/Coffee.

9.55-10 Failtiú:-Welcoming Address- Geraldine Leydon

#### **Session One:**

Chair: Dr Kieran O'Connor, NUI Galway.

10.00-10.45 Professor Luke Gibbons, NUI Maynooth.

*"Modernising the Rising from the local to the Global"*

10.45-11.30 May Moran (local historian and niece of Patrick Moran, Crossna) *"Patrick Moran and his involvement in 1916"*

11.30-11-45 Tea /Coffee

#### **Session Two.**

Chair: Pdraig Harte, I.T Sligo

11.45-12.45 Turtle Bunbury (Independent Scholar)

*"Easter 1916-American Perspectives".*

12.45-1.00 Patricia Molloy, (niece of Joe Molloy)

*"Joseph Molloy, Aughnafinigan- an innocent teenage victim of the War of Independence"*

### **Session three:**

Chair: Tony Bambrick, Cootehall

2.15-3.15 Dr John Morrissey (NUI Galway)

*“Remembering the Great War in Ireland in 2016”*

3.15-3.45 Dr Kieran O’Conor (NUI Galway)

*“Fr Michael O’Flanagan-Priest and Patriot”*

3.45-4.00

*Tea/Coffee*

### **Session four:**

Chair : Martina Moffatt, Drumboylan.

4.00-5.00 Oliver Fallon (Connaught Rangers Association)

*“Ardcarne and the Great War”*

5.00-5.15 Padraig Harte (Sligo IT)

*“Terence Glynn, Drumshinney.-a gallant patriot from Cootehall.*

5.15-5.30 Concluding remarks by Chairman of committee- Gerard Conlisk

## **Sunday 1st May.**

### **Part 1**

- 2.00pm Unveiling of Information Board at Crossna Church. (Charles and Rita Moran).
- 2.30 Unveiling of Memorial stone at birthplace of Paddy Moran. (Seán Moran, his nephew)
- 3.00 Unveiling of Memorial stone at birthplace of Joe Molloy. (John Molloy, his nephew)
- 3.45 Unveiling of Memorial stone at birthplace of Terence Glynn. ( John Bambrick and Noel McShera).
- 4.15 Bus back to Crossna. Toilets available at back of church and in Parish House.
- 5.00 Ecumenical Service in Ardcarne Church followed by unveiling of Memorial Stone outside Ardcarne Graveyard to all those from the parish who died in the wars between 1914-1924.

**Transport will be provided to take people from Crossna to Aughnafinigan, then to Drumshinney and back to Crossna.**

**N.B. There is no place to park cars and the roads are very narrow so please avail of the transport to those two sites.**

## **Welcoming Address**

**By Chairman of Committee, Gerry Conlisk.**

I am delighted to welcome you all to the Ardcarne Remembers weekend.

This is an historic event for the people of the parish old and young.

I wish to extend a Céad Míle Fáilte to all our speakers and our guests.

The Ardcarne Centenary Commemoration Committee was formed in March 2015 and has been working hard for this historical weekend. I want to sincerely thank each member of the committee for their dedication and hard work over the last fourteen months. I also want to thank Richie Farrell, Co-ordinator for the Roscommon Ireland 2016 programme and Mary Mullins, Arts Officer, Roscommon County Council, for their assistance and for the funding allocated to us.

Finally, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our parishioners and visitors on this historic weekend and I hope it will be enjoyed by everyone.

## **Failtiú: Gearóidín Uí Loideáin,**

Ba mhaith le Coiste Comóradh Ard Cairn fáilte Uí Cheallaigh a chur romhaibh go léir. Is deireadh seachtaine iontach tábhachtach é seo inár bparóiste. Táimid ag déanamh comóradh ar na daoine ón bparóiste a throid agus a fuair bás ar son saoirse na hÉireann. Ina theannta sin táimid ag léiriú ómóis do na fir ón bparóiste a bhí ina mbaill d'Arm na Breataine agus a maraíodh sa Chéad Chogadh Domhanda. Chomh maith leis seo, táimid ag comóradh cúigear ón bparóiste a bhí ina mbaill den R.I.C. agus a cailleadh le linn na tréimhse casta sin, agus táimid ag cur i gcuimhne freisin leaid óg, neamhchiontach a bhí ag obair ar an bhfeirm nuair a scaoileadh urchar leis ag Fórsaí na Corónach agus ar maraíodh é in 1921. Maraíodh seacht nduine dhéag san iomlán ón bparóiste le linn na gcogaí idir 1914-1923.

Tá gach eachtra atá socraithe ag an gcoiste bunaithe ar na téamaí Cuimhneamh, Athmhuintearas, Cur i Láthair, Samhlú agus Ceiliúradh agus faoi dheireadh na himeachtaí seo, beidh breis eolais agus tuisceana againn go léir faoi staid na hÉireann céad bliain ó shin, beimid réidh chun súil úr, ghéar a chaitheamh ar an bPoblacht a bunaíodh agus beimid lán le dóchas faoin todhchaí. Bainigí sult agus tairbhe as!

## **Welcome: Geraldine Leydon**

On behalf of Ardcarne Centenary Commemoration Committee I wish to welcome you all here to our day of talks which we are hosting to remember the turbulent decade 1914 -1923 , its impact globally and nationally but especially on our parish of Ardcarne. We wish to remember and commemorate the seventeen men from Ardcarne who died as a result of the wars of that time. Two were Volunteers who lost their lives for Irish freedom, five were members of the RIC, nine had joined the British Army and were killed in WW1 and one was a fifteen year old boy out working on the family farm when he was shot and killed by the Crown Forces.

We have eight speakers lined up and , as with Michael McDowell last night, you will find the themes Remembering, Reconciling, Presenting, Imagining and Celebrating reflected in their speeches. Our weekend of events has been made possible through government assistance and especially the assistance of Roscommon Co Council and we want to publicly acknowledge the support and help given to us by Richie Farrell, Co-ordinator Roscommon Ireland 2016 and Mary Mullins, Arts Officer.

**Patrick (Paddy) Moran, (1888-1921),  
Captain D Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Dublin Brigade, IRA.  
He gave his life for his country on March 14, 1921.**

Paddy Moran was born in Crossna on March 13, 1888. He was the third child in a family of eleven children, born to Bartholomew and Bridget (nee Sheerin). A social activist, he was involved in the Dublin Lockout in 1913 when he was a member of the Grocer's Assistants Association. He was a founder member of the Irish National Union of Vintners, Grocers and Allied Trades assistants and its National President at the time of his death. He was an active member of Conradh na Gaeilge, the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the Irish Volunteers and the IRA. He fought with the garrison in Jacob's Factory, Dublin in the Easter Rising 1916 and as a result was deported and interned in Knutsford Jail, Manchester and in Frongoch Camp, Wales. He was active in the War of Independence and made the supreme sacrifice for his beloved country, on March 14, 1921, when he was executed by hanging in Mountjoy Jail, Dublin. Paddy Moran was re-buried in Glasnevin Cemetery with full state honours on October 14, 2001.

*Further information in "Executed for Ireland. The Patrick Moran Story" by May Moran. (Mercier Press, 2010).*

**Joseph (Joe) Molloy (1906-1921) was an innocent teenage victim of the Irish War of Independence. He was shot dead on March 26, 1921 in the aftermath of the Keadue Ambush, by British Crown forces, while working on the family farm with his three brothers, John James, Paddy and George. It was his fifteenth birthday.**

Joe was born on March 26, 1906 and was baptised on April 1, 1906. He was the son of George Molloy and Mary Molloy (nee Dunne), Aughnafinigan, (Cryanstown), Boyle. He was the fourth child in a family of nine children, seven boys and two girls.



The Military Court of Inquiry, in lieu of an inquest into his death, said that he was accidentally shot by the military in the course of their duty. Locally, it is believed that Joe was shot by an enraged and out of control military patrol and that there was no justification whatsoever for his shooting. His brother, John James, who was with him at the time, recalled the Black and Tans taking aim and shooting at Joe.

Joe's funeral took place on Easter Monday, March 28, 1921. He is buried in the family plot in Kileenan Graveyard.

*References: Roscommon Herald April 2, 1921. British National Archives, Kew. (WO35/155A report of Military Court of Inquiry). Family memories.*

**Terence Glynn (McGlynn), (1893-1921).**

**Volunteer, G Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Dublin Brigade, IRA. (Killed in action, April 6, 1921).**

Terence was the fifth child in a family of seven children born to Thomas and Elizabeth Glynn (nee Logan) of Drumshinney, Cootehall, Boyle. His brothers were Joseph, John Charles, Patrick, and James and his sisters were Mary Ellen and Winifred. He was a Grocer's Assistant and worked in King's of Ballyfarnon, (now Shivnan's), in Harold's of Longford, in Lynch and O'Brien's of Dun Laoghaire and prior to his death, he was manager of Thomas Hogan's Grocery and Bar, Dame Street, Dublin.

He was killed in action in an ambush in Harcourt Street, Dublin on Wednesday, April 6, 1921 fighting against a large contingent of British Crown Forces. Initially wounded, he continued to fight bravely to the end. He died of shock and haemorrhage caused by multiple bullet wounds.

He is buried in the family plot in Ardcarne Graveyard.

*Further information can be obtained from the Irish Times, Friday, April 8, 1921, the Roscommon Herald, September 22, 1921. The British National Archives, Kew, Surrey, England. Reference WO/35/150/80.*

**Fr Michael O'Flanagan (1876-1942)**  
**Priest, Republican, Social Activist and Scholar**

Fr Michael O'Flanagan was born near Castlerea, Co Roscommon, in 1876 to a bilingual, small-farming family who were imbued with a strong Fenian tradition. He was academically gifted and was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Elphin in 1900. Apart from his religious duties, Fr O' Flanagan was heavily involved in the Gaelic League, nationalist politics and social activism in the Sligo area between the latter year and 1915, when he was appointed curate of Crossna in Ardcarne parish, where he was to remain until 1918.

Fr Michael continued to involve himself during his time at Crossna in political activism and in the independence movement led by Sinn Fein. He liaised with Patrick Moran in bringing sixteen shot guns from Dublin to arm local Volunteers who were preparing for the 1916 Rising. In recognition of his contribution to the independence movement and indicating how respected he was in nationalist circles, Fr Michael was elected joint Vice-President of Sinn Fein in 1917. In 1919 he had the honour of saying the opening prayers in Irish at the First Dail. During the War of Independence, possibly without official sanction from other Sinn Fein leaders, Fr Michael met with Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, in an attempt to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. These activities seem to have damaged his status amongst many of his fellow republicans.

Fr Michael continued his political activities, social activism and scholarly work throughout the 1920s and 1930s up to the time of his death in 1942. This included being President of Sinn Fein from 1933 to 1935. Between 1927 and 1932 he produced about fifty typescript editions of the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ordnance Survey Letters for each of the twenty-nine counties for which they exist. A huge amount of information about placenames and antiquities can be found in these Letters and Fr Michael's editions of them are used by historians and archaeologists to this day. Fr Michael O'Flanagan is still remembered with great respect in the Crossna area today.

***Further information can be obtained in "They have fooled you again" by Denis Carroll. Published by Columba Press 1993***

## **World War 1 Casualties from Ardcarne Parish.**

**All received the British War Medal and Victory medal.**

### **Captain Edward Stafford King Harman**

1<sup>st</sup> Batt Irish Guards Killed in Action at Klein Zillebeke, Ypres, Belgium 06-11-1914. Born in Belfast on 13-04-1891. He was the eldest son of Sir Thomas Stafford and Frances Agnes King Harman, Rockingham Estate, Boyle. He married Olive Pakenham Mahon, only child of Captain Henry Pakenham-Mahon, of Strokestown Park House at Wellington Barracks on July 4, 1914. Their daughter Lettice May was born on April 10, 1915. The stained glass window behind the altar in Cotehall Church is dedicated to the memory of Frances Agnes King Harman and was donated by the family.

### **Private. PATRICK KENNEDY.**

No. 5349. **1st Irish Guards.** Killed in Action, France, May 18th, 1915. Born Cotehall, Boyle, Co Roscommon, enlisted Belfast, address Inch Island Fort, Co Donegal. Remembered on the Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

Plot 4 Panel 4.

Born 22-03-1892 to John Kennedy and Mary Maxwell (they married in Ardcarne Parish on 27-10-1888). Brackloon/Foxhill, Cotehall. Mary Maxwell was the daughter of William Maxwell and Mary Ann O'Hara (William and Mary Ann married in Ardcarne Parish on 26-01-1852), and John Kennedy was the son of Michael Kennedy of Killnean, Carrick –on-Shannon.

John Kennedy and Mary Maxwell had four children Anne (07-03-1889), Mary Ellen (14-08-1890),

**Patrick (22-03-1892),** and Catherine (01-09-1893).

### **Sergeant BENJAMIN DOLAN.**

No. 1603. **Royal Army Medical Corps.** Benjamin was killed in action at Gallipoli, Turkey, July 4th, 1915. He enlisted in Middlesborough, England but gave his address as Gloria, Cootehall, Boyle,. Co Roscommon. Benjamin is buried in Lancashire Landing cemetery, Gallipoli, Turkey. Canakkale Plot A40

Benjamin Dolan was son of John Dolan and Bridget Tiernan (They were married in Ardcarne Parish on 01-08-1870). John was the son of James Dolan and Bridget was the daughter of Michael Tiernan of Ballyfermoyle). John and Bridget had eleven children: Mary (03-05-1871), Daniel (07-07-1872), Joseph (10-08-1874), Cecelia Jane (21-06-1876), Martha (17-03-1878), James (10-04-1880), **Benjamin (20-04-1882)** John (12-06-1884), Wilfred (16-10-1888), Stephen (25-12-1890) and Walter (01-10-1893). According to the 1901 census they were farmers.

### **Private JOHN O'HARA.**

No. 17649. **6th Royal Irish Fusiliers.** John was killed in Action, Gallipoli, Turkey, Monday August 9th, 1915. He was born in Moigh, Cootehall, Boyle, Co Roscommon and he enlisted in Belfast. John is remembered on the Helles Memorial, Gallipoli, Turkey. Royal Irish Fusilliers Panel 178-180

John was the son of Michael O'Hara and Bridget Hogg. They were married in Ardcarne Parish on 23-04-1868. Michael was son of Patrick O'Hara, and Margaret (nee Meehan), Clegna and Bridget the daughter of James Hogg and Jane (nee Flynn) Cootehall.

John's parents, Michael and Bridget, had fourteen children: Honor (08-10-1869) (she married Michael Mc Cormack son of James McCormack Cleaheen on 21-06-1900) Patrick (15-02-1871), Mary (23-12-1872), Anne (03-08-1874), James (04-07-1878), William (26-05-1880), Teresa (06-04-1882) Joseph (19-04-1884), Bridget (18-09-1885), Michael (29-12-1887), Catherine (28-11-1889) (married Patrick Foley of Kilmore on 23-11-1914) **John (14-07-1891)**, Aloysius Roger (06-04-1893), Aloysius Austin (24-08-1897).

### **Private. PATRICK LYNCH.**

No. B/8685. **10th Highland Light Infantry.** Patrick was killed in action at Ypres, Belgium, December 14th, 1915. He enlisted in Gorebridge, Midlothian, Scotland and gave his address as Churchill, Cootehall, Boyle, Co Roscommon. Patrick is remembered on the Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Belgium. Panel 38 CWGC ( Commonwealth War Graves)

Patrick was son of Patrick Lynch and Anne Gray. (They married in Ardcarne Parish on 11-12-1874). Their children were John (14-09-1875), Anne (02-01-1881), **Patrick (09-03-1883)**, Anne Mary (02-08-1887), Thomas (28-01-1890), Michael (15-11-1891), Peter (12-03-1897). Patrick's paternal grandfather was John and his maternal grandfather was also John, his maternal grandmother was Mary Prior (born 21-12-1853). Anne (Patrick junior's mother) was an only child. In the 1901 census Patrick Lynch senior records that he is 60 years old (he was born therefore before 1843 when our records in Ardcarne parish begin) and Anne (nee Gray) was 48 years old.

### **Private THOMAS CONNOR.**

No. 6679. **1st Irish Guards.** Thomas was killed in Action, aged 20, at the Somme, France, September 15th, 1916 He was born in Derryherk, Knockvicar, Boyle, Co Roscommon. Thomas is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France. Panel Reference Pier + Face 7D .

Thomas's parents Michael Connor (24-03-1861) and Catherine Coen (06-07-1873) married in Ardcarne Parish on 16-01-1892. They had eight children Mary Anne (28-12-1893), **Thomas (21-04-1896)**, Bridget (14-03-1898), Patrick (28-03-1900), Agnes (08-05-1902), Michael (04-10-1905), John Joseph (18-08-1912), and Margaret born in 1909 according to 1911 census, but not recorded in the Ardcarne Parish registers. Thomas's paternal grandparents were Thomas Connor and Mary McGreevy. His maternal grandparents were Thomas Coen and Anne Gaffney. There were eight children in each of those families.



Captain Edward  
Stafford King  
Harman killed  
at Ypres, 1914.



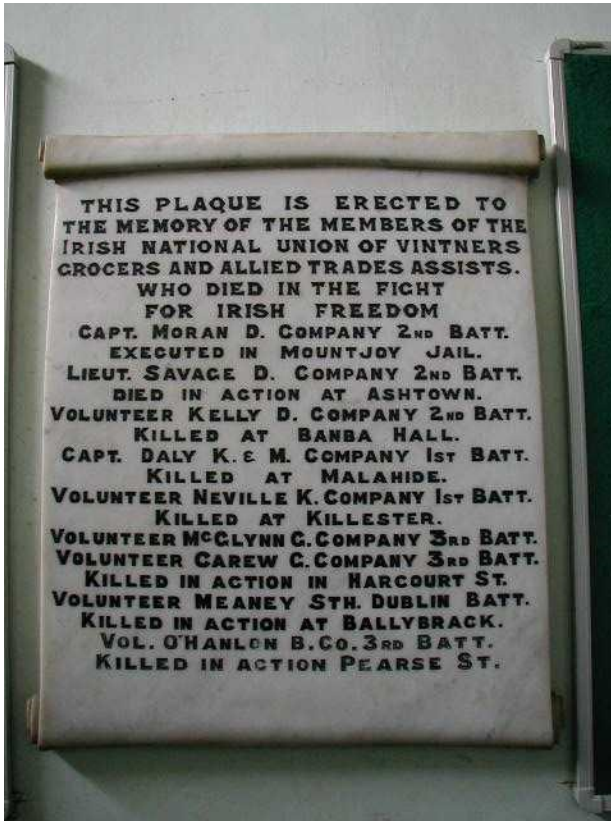
Fr Michael  
O'Flanagan.  
Curate in  
Crossna  
1915-1918



Michael Moffatt,  
Gloria, Shot dead in  
France 1918.



Paddy Moran  
Crossna.  
Executed on  
14-03-1921



The memorial to the Grocer's assistants in Banba Hall, Parnell Square. Paddy Moran and Terence McGlynn are both named on it.

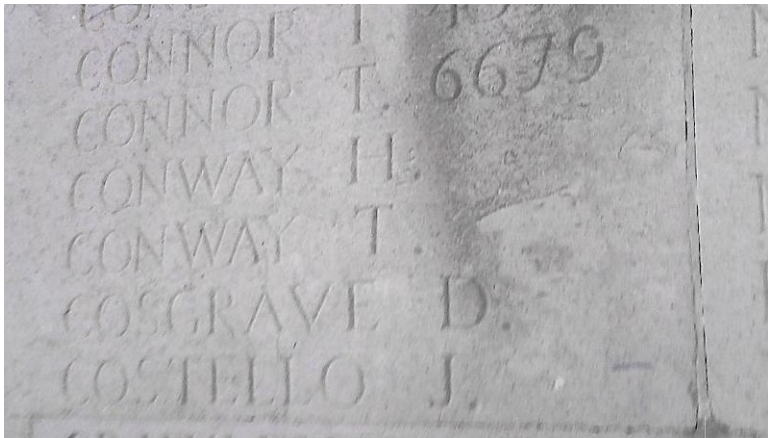
Thomas Bridges RIC Gravestone in Ardcarne.







Thomas Connor,  
Derryherk, killed at  
the Somme, 1916



Thomas Connor on Thiepval Memorial

### **Private JOHN CONLON.**

No. 18301. **2nd Leinster Regiment, formerly No. 4542, Connaught Rangers.** John was killed in action at Hazebrouck, France, May 3rd, 1918. He was born in Clegna, Cootehall, Boyle, Co Roscommon. He enlisted in Boyle. He was the son of Hugh and Catherine Conlon of Clegna, Cootehall, Boyle. John is buried in Cinq Rues British Cemetery, Nord, France. Burial Place Cinq Rues British Cemetery, Hazebrouck, Dept du Nord, Nord-Pas-De-Calais, France. Plot C6.

Hugh Conlon and Catherine (nee Barry) are not recorded as having married in the parish of Ardcarne. They had six children: Mary Anne (20-01-1872), Winifred (14-05-1873), **John (09-10-1874)**, James (07-10-1876), Patrick (30-01-1880) and Peter (07-12-1881). In the 1911 census Mary Anne, John and Peter are listed as living with their parents - they record that they had six children but only three living. Occupation is given as farmers.

### **Private. JOHN REA**

No. 553854. **Labour Corps**, formerly 5th Connaught Rangers. John died of influenza at Newtownards, Co Down on October 28th, 1918. He was born at Cloonybrien, Ardcarne, Boyle, Co Roscommon. He enlisted in Sligo. He was the son of John (army pensioner) and Mary Rea of Cloonybrien. He served 2 years in Salonika with the Connaught Rangers. John is buried in Asylinn Cemetery, Boyle, Co Roscommon.

His father John Rea married Ellen Mulhern on 11-01-1869 in the Ardcarne Parish. They had three children **John (14-04-1871)**, Thomas (15-06-1884) and Mary Anne (11-01-1883). In the 1901 census the family is recorded as living in Clooneybrien John Rea senior was aged 60, he was from Co Tipperary and was an army pensioner of the 89<sup>th</sup> regiment. His wife Ellen Rea was aged 50, his son John was aged 29, he was listed as an agricultural Labourer, His sister Mary Anne was aged 18, and Thomas was aged 16.

### **Michael Moffatt, Gloria, Cootehall .**

Michael fought with the American Forces in WW1 and died in France in 1918. He was repatriated later and is buried in the family plot in Kiltoghert Cemetery. He was son of Peter Moffatt and Ellen Doran, Gloria, Cootehall. Their children were, Mary (29-08-1877), Catherine (17-12-1878), Patrick (30-07-1880), Peter (16-01-1882), Anne (27-08-1883), **Michael (01-01-1885)**, James (13-02-1886), Helen (10-07-1887), Mary Joan (13-11-1888), Bridget (04-09-1894), Elizabeth (20-06-1897).

Michael emigrated to America in 1908. He sailed from Queenstown, Cork on the Oceanic on May 21, 1908 and arrived in New York on May 27, 1908. He enlisted in the American Forces on June 5, 1917. His address at that time was Manhattan, New York. He was employed by the Western Electric Company. Éamonn Moffatt, Gloria, Cootehall, says that his uncle, Michael Moffatt, was shot dead just before the Truce was declared in 1918.

*The information on the dead of World War 1 is from the following sources*

- *Oliver Fallon, Researcher for Connaught Rangers Association.*
- *Ardcarne Parish Registers, Ancestry.co.uk and Family Search.org., and Family members. It was compiled by May Moran.*

## **RIC casualties from Ardcarne Parish.**

### **Thomas Bridges RIC Constable number 69992)**

Thomas was born on 23-05-1899 to Thomas and Rebecca Bridges, Behy, Knockvicar, Boyle. Co Roscommon. He was the youngest of seven children. His three brothers were John, William and James, and his three sisters were Frances, Emily and Rebecca. He was killed in an ambush in Drumcollogher, Co Limerick on May 14, 1921 and is buried in Ardcarne Graveyard.

*Richard Abbott has this account in his book "Police Casualties in Ireland" Page 239.*

"Three constables had gone to the village of Drumcollogher to purchase groceries when they were attacked by IRA men of third battalion, West Limerick Brigade. Constable Bridges, a single man from County Roscommon was shot dead. He would have been twenty two years of age on May 23, 1921. He had one year police service having been a farmer before joining the RIC".

*The Irish Times, Tuesday, May 24, 1921 describes the funeral of Constable T Bridges.*

"The remains of Constable T. Bridges, RIC, who was killed recently in Drumcollogher, Co Limerick, were interred in the family burial ground, at Ardcarne, last Thursday. A short, impressive Service was conducted by the Venerable Archdeacon Wagner, LLD, in the Parish Church, Boyle. As the remains were borne from the church by the brothers of the deceased, a detachment of the Auxiliary Division presented arms. Four buglers of the Bedford Regiment and a detachment of the RIC under command of the district inspector, with arms reversed, headed the procession. The burial service was conducted by the Rev. J. MacCormac, M.A. of Ardcarne, assisted by the Ven. Archdeacon Wagner. Members of the RIC. formed the firing party, and the "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside by the buglers of the Beford Regiment."

A number of Witness Statements made to the Bureau of Military History in the 1950's by some of the participants in the Drumcollogher Ambush tell this story somewhat differently.

Timothy O'Shea says that "Con Foley took an IRA column into Drumcollogher on the night of 13<sup>th</sup> May 1921 for an attack on a patrol of Tans and RIC at 6pm on 14th May 1921.

We divided into two sections, when we arrived in the town, and occupied a house on each side of the Main Street to await orders for the following day. I was with the section that occupied the house and restaurant known as Lil Connors. Next morning while a bull sale was in progress in the town, several lorry loads of military arrived and took up positions at all main exits from the town. They searched or visited several houses or pubs during the day, including the restaurant over which the section to which I was attached was waiting. At 5pm they got into the lorries and moved off. At 6pm we took up positions. Shortly after a couple of police appeared on the street and were fired on. One of them was wounded. The patrol then left the barracks and was advancing to the ambush position proper when fire was opened on them by the other section”.

Daniel Doody takes up the story, he says “the first pair were fired on and one of them was killed instantly, the other escaping through a doorway”.

Daniel Liston says “I was ordered to take over the Post Office which was situated about one hundred yards from Lil Connors” He goes on to say: “As I was about to enter the Post Office I met a Black and Tan coming out. He saluted me in a rather friendly way and passed on. When I entered, I held up the staff and ordered them upstairs, after which I locked the entrance door. A short time afterwards the attack began. While it was in progress the telephone rang. I answered the phone and discovered that the call was from the RIC barracks which was situated about two hundred yards from the far end of the town. The RIC was enquiring as to what was wrong. I told them that the best thing to do was to call down and that I would give them full details of what was taking place”.

It appears that it was following this phone call that the RIC led patrol left the barracks. The IRA unit that was occupying Liston’s, opened fire on the patrol. Thomas Bridges was killed and two other constables were wounded. The day after the ambush the military returned and burned down a shop and three farmhouses in the area in reprisal.

For further information: *Bureau of Military History, Witness Statements.*

*WS 1213 Timothy O’Shea Pages 5-6 WS Daniel Doody Page 5*

*WS Daniel Liston Pages 5-6. The Irish Times Monday May 16, 1921 and May 24, 1921. Police casualties in Ireland” by Richard Abbot.*

## **The Greer Family, Knocknarrow, Cootehall.**

Martin John Greer was born 02-03-1893 to James and Norah Greer in Kiltoom, Co Roscommon. His father, James was a Royal Irish Constabulary constable in Kiltoom, he was a native of Donegal. His mother was Norah Nolan, a native of Galway. Martin John was shot with two others, Daniel Hoey and Edward McDonagh, at the junction of Parliament and Essex Street on their way to lunch on February 23, 1921. Constables Greer and Hoey died instantly and Constable McDonagh died a short time later.

Martin John was almost 28, he had been in the RIC for four months. He is buried in the RIC plot in Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin.

Bernard Byrne in his witness statement, WS 631, gives an account of this ambush. He says "Early in 1921 much uneasiness was being caused because of the practice then obtaining in police quarters of bringing RIC men to Dublin to identify country Volunteers who would otherwise be unknown to the DMP ( Dublin Metropolitan Police). Our intelligence was aware that three of these RIC men were due to visit Dublin Castle on a certain date, and that after their interview they would proceed from the Castle to the Ormond Hotel for lunch". He goes on to say that the IRA Intelligence people were certain they could identify the men and that Michael Collins's Squad were detailed to ambush the police. He says that he, Jimmy Conroy and Mick Reilly were the squad members who shot the three constables.

David Nelligan, author of "The spy in the Castle", in his statement (WS 380) says that Collins's squad attacked these three men, who were in plain clothes, because it was thought they were members of the infamous IGOE gang which had been terrorising the IRA and had shot some of its members. Nelligan says they were just dispatch riders.

James Greer and Thomas Greer were killed on May 27, 1922 outside their home in Knocknacarrow, Cootehall. James was a retired RIC Sergeant who had been in Cootehall for twenty years. Thomas had been an RIC constable for five years before the disbandment of the RIC.

The Roscommon Herald of June 3, 1922 gives an account of the inquest into their deaths. Valentine Greer, son of James and brother of Thomas gave evidence. He said that at about 2 am they heard a car passing and about fifteen minutes later his father got up when he heard a loud knock on the front door and asked who was there. They answered "raiders for arms". Valentine and Tommie went downstairs and opened the door and three men stepped inside. They asked for arms and the two Greers said they had none. James Greer, his son Joseph and his daughter Annie then came downstairs and the raiders asked for three Webley revolvers, James Greer said there was neither revolvers nor ammunition in the house and invited them to search the house. The raiders then said they would arrest James, but Valentine and Tommie said they would have to arrest them too.

The three were separated when they got to the road and Valentine was asked to stand in the middle of the road. Shortly afterwards a man rushed down from where James and Tommie were and released Valentine telling him to run for it. A few minutes later he heard a volley of eight or ten shots. Annie, Joe and Valentine came out and found Tommie moaning. He asked for blankets and told them to get the priest. Annie found her father, James, dead on the roadside. Tommie died a few hours later. Valentine told a juror that he asked Tommie what the raiders had said and he said that they said "you are the fellow shot Father Griffin". (Father Griffin had been shot in Galway by the British Crown Forces). Valentine said that was a lie because Tommie was stationed in Patrickswell, Limerick from the day he joined the force until it was disbanded except for three weeks spent in Mullingar. Tommie also said "I forgive them Val whether you do or not".

The remains of James and Tommie were taken to Cootehall Catholic Church on Sunday evening and Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated there on Monday for the repose of their souls. Their remains were later conveyed by motor hearse for burial in the family burial ground near Athlone.

The Times May 31, 1922 Page 7 called this “A Revolting Crime”. The report is similar to the above report from the Roscommon Herald.

The parish priest, Reverend Tom Flanagan said, at Mass on Sunday, that he could not trust himself to refer unmoved to a subject that had made strong men weep. Reverend Fr Feely said, as he understood the moral law, it was a case of callous and deliberate murder. He asked for the prayers of the people that the persons who did the deed might repent and not live on in this life with their minds dripping with the blood of murder. James Greer was living in the barracks in Cootehall until it was burned and then went to live in Knocknacarrow. He was about 60 years old and had retired in 1918.

According to Canon Henry Tonra in his book “The History of Ardcarne” local tradition claimed that James Greer was asked about the character of Paddy Moran before his execution and that he was reported to have said that he was a troublemaker. The evidence given by Valentine at the inquest doesn't bear that out and it is much more likely that it was his son Martin John who was asked, if anyone was asked, about Paddy Moran. Martin John was killed in the days following the Court Martial at which Paddy Moran had been wrongly convicted of being the man who held up a soldier cyclist in Mount Street on the Bloody Sunday, November 21, 1920. There are statements from two policemen in Dun Laoghaire in the file on Paddy Moran but none from any of the Greers.

According to local tradition also, the men who were involved in this crime had to flee to America and the younger Greer brothers pursued them there to exact vengeance for the deaths of their father and brother.

References:

*The Irish Times Thursday, February 24, 1921 Page 5.*

*The Times May 31, 1922 Page 7*

*The Roscommon Herald of June 3, 1922.*

*The History of Ardcarne by Henry Tonra.*



## **Constable Henry O'Brien RIC.**

Henry was born 1899/1900. He lived for a time in Moyoran or Drumlahard, Drumboylan. His parents were Patrick and Sarah O'Brien (nee Mc Cormack). He had five brothers, Michael, William, Timothy, Patrick and James and two sisters, Mary and Sarah. In the 1901 census, the family was living in house 1, Leitrim town and in the 1911 census, the family was living in a house belonging to Ann Moran, Drumlahard.

Henry was wounded on 29-05-1922 in Cullingtree Road, Belfast. He died the following day.

“Constable O'Brien and a colleague were engaged in conversation with a civilian near their barracks in Cullingtree Road, Belfast when they were fired on by a number of men from a range of fifteen or twenty yards. Constable O'Brien, a twenty three year old single man from Co Leitrim, was seriously wounded in the abdomen and left side but the other constable was able to return fire on their attackers possibly wounding one of the attackers. Constable O'Brien was moved to the Mater Hospital (Belfast) but died from his wounds the next day. He had two and a half years police service and was a labourer before joining the RIC”.

*Reference: Police Casualties in Ireland by Richard Abbott.*

*National Archives. Census returns for 1901 and 1911.*

Ardcarne Centenary Commemoration Committee wishes to thank the Roscommon Ireland 2016 Committee, Roscommon County Council, all the other agencies involved and the many people who helped in making this weekend possible. Everybody we approached was keen to help and many volunteered their services.

This weekend is truly a community event and we are very thankful for the support and the encouragement given to us. We endeavoured to make this commemoration inclusive and we hope that, in honouring the seventeen men for perpetuity, we have achieved our aim.

“ Now and in time to be,  
Wherever green is worn,  
Are changed, changed utterly:  
A terrible beauty is born”.

*Easter 1916 by W.B. Yeats.*

Members of Ardcarne Centenary Commemoration Committee with Luke Ming Flanagan MEP who launched the 'Ardcarne Remembers 1913-1923' weekend in Battlebridge on March 18th 2016.



Back Row : L to R: Gerry Conlisk, Helen Smyth, Tony Bambrick, Luke Ming Flanagan, MEP, May Moran, Kieran O'Connor, Pdraig Harte.  
Front Row: L to R: Geraldine Leydon, Patricia Molloy and Martina Moffatt.  
Missing from the picture: David Gillespie and Fr Brendan McDonagh.



The Ardcarne Centenary Commemoration .  
Committee.

Chairman: Gerry Conlisk, Secretary: Geraldine Leydon,  
Joint Treasurers: Tony Bambrick and Martina Moffatt,  
Members: David Gillespie,  
Padraig Harte, Fr Brendan Mc Donagh, Patricia Molloy,  
May Moran, Kieran O'Connor and Helen Smyth.