

THE LILY & THE POPPY



REMEMBERING
THE SOMME
1916-2016

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME
OCCUPIES A SPECIAL PLACE
WITHIN ORANGE AND UNIONIST
COMMUNITY MEMORY

On 1 July 1916 the 36th (Ulster) Division was given the task of taking German trenches astride the River Ancre and capturing the heavily fortified area of the Schwaben Redoubt. Just after 7am on that morning the Ulstermen were lying flat in No Man's Land prior to the ending of the artillery bombardment of the German lines, and thus pushed forward more quickly than any other unit on that day.

Within their ranks were many Orangemen, some wearing their sashes or orange ribbons and others shouting

"NO SURRENDER!"

It was, after all, the 226th anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne.

As Major-General Oliver Nugent, the Division's commanding officer noted in correspondence to Sir George Richardson (commander of the UVF),

"WE COULD HARDLY HAVE A DATE BETTER CALCULATED TO INSPIRE NATIONAL TRADITIONS AMONGST OUR MEN OF THE NORTH."



The banner of Falls LOL No. 498 commemorates the opening day of the Battle of the Somme. It depicts a section of the painting 'Attack of the Ulster Division' by J. P. Beadle.

ORANGE INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR

It is estimated that
200,000
Orangemen from across the world served in WWI

Thousands would see action at the Battle of the Somme.

Many Orangemen were serving in the army
BEFORE THE OUTBREAK
of war in 1914

A typical example was Bro. Thomas William Irwin from Castlederg. While serving with the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) he was wounded during the retreat from Mons (August–September 1914) and sent home to recover. After the war he would help establish LOL No. 899 under a military warrant in India.



William Ferguson Massey,
Orangeman and Prime Minister of
NEW ZEALAND

during World War 1 encouraged many New Zealand
Orangemen to sign up to fight for King and Empire.

As an additional contribution to the war effort an
'ORANGE WARD'

was established at Nottingham County Cricket ground with funds raised by the
Orange Institution. James Craig, a prominent Orangeman, gave part of his home
at Craigavon House to be used as a hospital.



LOL No. 899 was formed under a military warrant at Sialkot, India, in 1919. Thomas Irwin of the 1st Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers was the first Worshipful Master of the lodge.

Orange lodges were depleted during the war as
THOUSANDS ENLISTED



Churchill LOL No. 871 (Londonderry) had 96 brethren on active service by May 1918.

The call to arms was particularly strong in
CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND

Indeed, in February 1916 the Grand Lodge of British North America appealed for
Orangemen 'unable to go to the front' to enrol in Home Defence and free others for
frontline service. Some Home Defence Corps were also funded by local County Grand
Lodges. By May 1916 it was reported that 35,000 Orangemen were members of the
Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). The Twelfth of July celebrations in Canada in 1916
was known as the 'Khaki Twelfth' due to the number of soldiers parading with their lodges.

AT LEAST FIVE

Orangemen were awarded the Victoria Cross

for gallantry during the war. One of these was awarded during the Battle of the Somme.

There were Orangemen serving on
EVERY SINGLE BRITISH BATTLESHIP
during the war



THE LILY & THE POPPY



REMEMBERING
THE SOMME
1916-2016



Photograph of the local UVF Company taken at Ardres House, Portadown, Co. Armagh in 1912. Many of the men who enrolled in the UVF also enlisted with the 36th (Ulster) Division.

INITIAL ENTHUSIASM



John Chittick was a member of LOL No. 740 North Star. He served with the 10th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles. Prior to the war he had been a member of 3rd Battalion (South Belfast Regiment) of the Ulster Volunteer Force.



As a global organisation, the Orange Institution had a close connection with service and sacrifice during World War I. Thousands of Orangemen would serve during the war.

Local lore has it that Orangemen and members of the public jostled each other in order to be the first to 'sign up' in Derrygonnelly Orange Hall, such was the expectation of a quick war.

Given the importance of Orangeism to many, the war marked the reintroduction of military warrants, largely under the jurisdiction of the Grand Orange Lodge of England. Lodge meetings at the front provided a welcome break from the carnage. It was a brief aspect of normality; somewhere where old friendships could be renewed and new connections made. The egalitarian spirit of Orangeism was also a comforting feature. To have officers attend meetings and recognise an NCO or other rank in the chair as Worshipful Master helped maintain the comradeship, especially in the Ulster Division.

Orangemen throughout the Empire responded to the call. One example was from the newly formed LOL No. 1063 in Newtowncunningham, Co. Donegal. By 1916, 37 of its 72 members were serving at the front.



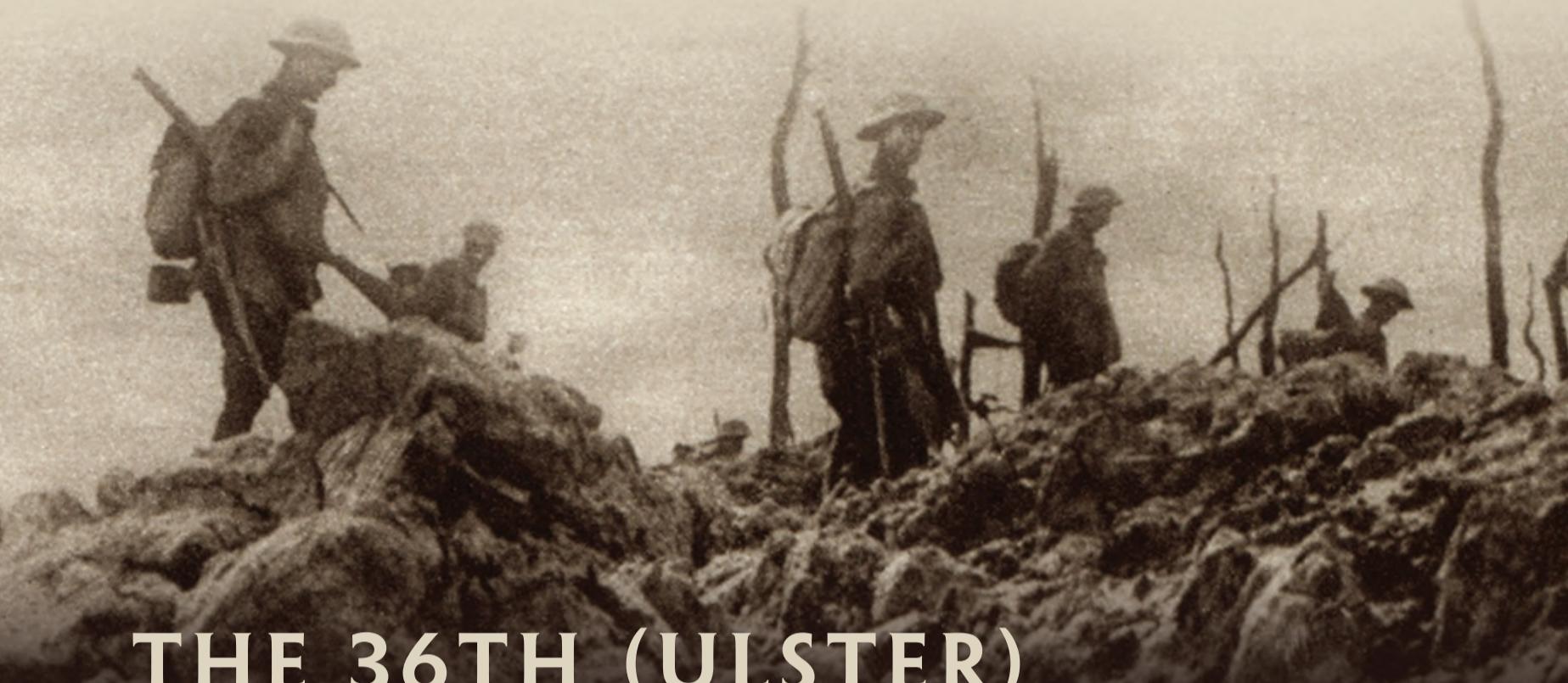
THE BACKGROUND

By the summer of 1916 any hopes of a swift conclusion to the war had evaporated amidst the mud and bloodshed of the Western Front. Other theatres of war including the Middle East and Gallipoli had brought home the bitter realities of modern warfare to both soldiers and the general public alike.

The war dragged relentlessly on. The professional ranks of the British Expeditionary Force had been thinned and elements of Lord Kitchener's 'Volunteer Army' were being pressed into service. The first big test of Kitchener's volunteers would be at the Somme.

The military warrant of LOL No. 862 East Belfast Volunteers. This lodge formed at the 36th (Ulster) Division training camp at Seaford, England in August 1915 and was one of a number of such military lodges formed during World War I.





THE 36TH (ULSTER) DIVISION

At the outbreak of war the small but professional BEF was dispatched to France. Although there was much bravado about a 'short war' many quietly expected the conflict would not be over by Christmas. Preparations were made to establish a New Volunteer Army. Men who lived and worked together would enlist together and fight side by side. Families as well as friends volunteered together.

MANY BROTHERS JOINED, SERVED AND IN SOME CASES DIED SIDE BY SIDE.

For example, on 1 July 1916 three brothers from Comber; James, John and Samuel Donaldson, were killed as the 13th Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles advanced. They were all members of Comber Old Standard LOL No. 567.



AS VOLUNTEERS FLOCKED TO JOIN, THERE WAS CAUTION IN ULSTER.

Home Rule was still a burning issue and many in the UVF feared elements of the Irish Volunteers would launch a rising in Ulster. These concerns were quickly addressed. The new Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener, was keen to have the UVF in the new army. On 3 September Carson announced to the Ulster Unionist Council that a new Division was being formed. This 'Ulster' Division established its HQ at 29 Wellington Place, Belfast and by 7 September the first recruits were on their way to a training camp at Ballykinlar. Other training centres were established at Clandeboye, Newtownards and Finner in Donegal.

MANY HUNDREDS OF ORANGEMEN WERE WITHIN THE RANKS.

It was not just in Ulster that Orangemen flocked to the Division. The newly appointed Major F. P. Crozier, an Orangeman, recruited NCOs from England and also Orangemen from Scotland to help the cause. While returning to Belfast he crudely described the boisterous and raw enthusiasm of the new recruits as they headed for training in the city as "blasphemy, booze and banners."

The camp commandant in Newcastle was also an Orangeman, Colonel Robert H. Wallace. Wallace belonged to the 19th (Reserve) Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles.

SAMUEL WHITE, ONE OF THREE BROTHERS FROM CANADA

and member of Aughrim Rose of Derry LOL No. 2159, served with the 36th (Ulster) Division and was taken prisoner at the Battle of the Somme. LOL No. 2159 actually had two sets of three brothers serving at the front; Samuel White's brothers, Joseph and David with the Canadian Expeditionary Force and with the North Irish Horse respectively, and John, James and Hugh Stitt with the 15th and 16th Battalions, CEF.



THE LILY & THE POPPY

REMEMBERING
THE SOMME
1916-2016



This story of an incident which took place during the Battle of Verdun appeared in The Orange Standard, June 1916.

“ILS NE PASSERONT PAS!”

General Robert Nivelle,
23 June 1916

One of the main motivations behind planning an offensive on the Somme was to relieve pressure on the beleaguered French forces holding Verdun.

On 21 February 1916 over 1,400 German guns began an intense bombardment on French fortifications around Verdun. Verdun was politically important to the French cause and many of its fortifications had been set in place after the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71). The subsequent German advance was designed to break the stalemate of the Western Front. The campaign began to drain men and resources. By the end of March, France had lost almost 90,000 men and the Germans just over 80,000. France was determined to hold Verdun at any cost.

In order to assist the French, it was decided that the British would launch an offensive further north – in the Somme region.

Photograph taken during a visit by the Grand Master and the Grand Secretary to the Ulster Division in Bramshott Camp, England, in September 1915. In the group are several prominent Ulster Orangemen. This photograph appeared in The Orange Standard of November 1915.



THE LILY & THE POPPY

REMEMBERING
THE SOMME
1916-2016

SPRING 1916



PLANS FOR ATTACK

Camerons to celebrate the 12th in France.

Bro. David McPherson, of the 5th Camerons Machine Gun Section, France, writes to say that he has met several brothers in the Camerons, and they are arranging to celebrate the glorious 12th in the "good old way," if God in His mercy spares them, and he appeals for some Orange ribbon. Bro. and Sis. Clark, of Edinburgh, have promised to send them not only the ribbon, but medallions of William III. for each Bro. The brethren spend their spare time together—learning perfectly the lectures.

This article was printed in The Orange Standard, July 1916. The 5th (Service) Battalion, Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders was raised at Inverness in August 1914. They had seen action in the Battle of Loos in 1915 before deployment at the Somme in 1916.

The British plan sounded practical and achievable on paper. A massive bombardment of German strongpoints would obliterate their fortifications, disrupt communications and allow battalions to advance quickly into strategic points such as La Boisselle, Beaumont Hamel, Thiepval and Pozieres.

COMRADESHIP & HUMOUR
On 17 March officers in the Division received shamrocks from Irish Nationalist leader, John Redmond. In return Major Crozier, in a letter of thanks, expressed the hope that Redmond would wear an Orange Lily to mark the Twelfth of July!

Battalions occupying trench systems, especially those from the new Volunteer Army, would give them familiar names from home. Prior to the arrival of the Ulster Division, Scottish regiments had occupied the area around Thiepval. Soon, however, 'Paisley', 'Greenock' and 'Hamilton' would be joined by 'Antrim Villas', 'Royal Avenue' and 'Sandy Row'.

THE DIVISION IN PLACE

The Spring of 1916 witnessed incredible activity in the allied sector of the Somme. This did not go unnoticed by the Germans who intensified their bombardments and attacks. One such occasion was on 10 March when the newly arrived 'Derry's' (10th Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers) were shelled and attacked in Thiepval Wood. Although the engagement was intense, they held firm.



ARTHUR STANLEY REID

served with the 15th (Edinburgh) Battalion, Royal Scots. The unit went over the top at 7.30am on 1 July 1916 to be met with a hail of machine gun bullets. They made such good progress that they were left isolated and had to withdraw after dark, leaving behind the body of Arthur Stanley Reid. Reid was a Classics Master at Motherwell Higher Grade School and had been a member of LOL No. 98, Edinburgh District.



The funeral card of a German soldier, Joseph Maier, who was killed in action on 10 July 1916. He served with the 16th Infantry Regiment and had received a military honour, the Military Cross 3rd Class with Swords. He had served for almost two years and was 24 when he died. Courtesy of Dr David Hume, MBE.



Das Liebste hat uns der Tod entrafft.



Herr, gib es zu tragen, uns Mut und Kraft!

Christliches Andenken im Gebete

an den tugendsamen Jüngling

Joseph Meier,

Meierbauerssohn von Moos,
Pfarrei Wang,

Infanterist im 16. Infanterie-Regt., 10. Komp.,
Inhaber des Militär-Verdienst-Kreuzes 3. Kl.
mit Schwertern,

welcher nach 23monat. treuer Pflichterfüllung im Alter von 24½ Jahren
am 10. Juli 1916 bei einem Sturmangriff den Heldentod fürs Vaterland starb.

Mußte meine lieben Eltern u. Geschwister verlassen
Und fort zum Dienst fürs Vaterland
Und dort mein junges Leben lassen
Das ich gegeben in Gotteshand.

Liebe Eltern und Geschwister gedenket mein
Schickte meine letzten Grüße Euch noch heim
Gute Eltern und Geschwister, trauert nicht

allzusehr

Gottes Wille war es, geben wir ihm die Ehr.

Heiligstes Herz Christi, erbarme dich

der sterbenden Krieger. 300 Tg. Abl.

Vater unser.

Ave Maria.

FR. DEMPF, WASSERBURG.

THE LILY & THE POPPY

REMEMBERING
THE SOMME
1916-2016

28 JUNE 1916

THE MARTINSART SHELL

Martinsart was the Divisional command base for the 36th (Ulster) Division.

On 28 June the 13th Royal Irish Rifles (1st County Down Volunteers) began to form up in the village. They had received orders to replace the 11th Battalion (South Antrim Volunteers). 'C' Company of the 13th RIR were to occupy "Antrim Villas", the name given to a section of trench previously occupied by elements of 11th Battalion.

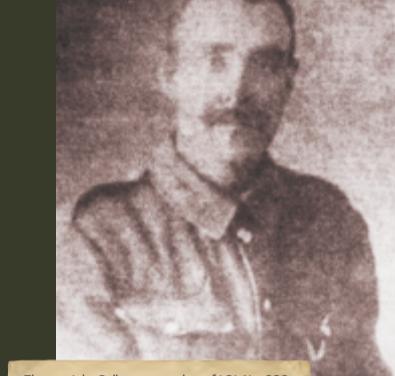


As this was taking place the German artillery was shelling Thiepval Wood beyond. At 8pm, as 'C' Company were forming up, a German shell landed in their midst. 14 men, including at least six Orangemen, were killed instantly. Rifleman David Dale, a member of LOL No. 423 and RBP No. 53, along with Rifleman James Carson, were killed. Both were Orangemen from Banbridge in County Down. Another 39 were wounded, 6 of whom would later die.



At least four other Orangemen died in the attack; Thomas Bell from LOL No. 828, Thomas Brown and William Darragh, Ballaney LOL No. 287, and Albert Crangle, LOL No. 140. Included amongst the wounded were Major R.D. Percival Maxwell and his adjutant, Lieutenant W.M. Wright.

The men who died were all from Hillsborough, Dromore and Banbridge and, like thousands of others, had joined Kitchener's new Volunteer Army together.



Thomas John Bell was a member of LOL No. 828. He was in the Somme sector on 28 June as the 13th Battalion were moving to the front line to relieve the 11th Battalion. As the last platoon in 'C' Company formed up to march off, a German shell hit. Thomas Bell was one of 14 killed that day and he was the first burial in a new British War Cemetery near the village of Martinsart.

THE INCIDENT AT MARTINSART WOULD BE A PRECURSOR OF THE TERROR TO FOLLOW



James Carson enlisted in the 13th Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, and played in the RIR Band. He volunteered to be a stretcher bearer during the 'big push' at the Somme but was killed during the Martinsart explosion on 28 June. A member of an Orange lodge in Banbridge he left behind a wife and child.



James Carson pictured with his family. He lived at The Straits, Lurgan Road, Banbridge.

Line of gravestones in Martinsart cemetery. These are unusual in that they are carved from sandstone rather than limestone.



THE LILY & THE POPPY

REMEMBERING
THE SOMME
1916-2016

1 JULY 1916

A Royal Irish Rifles embroidered postcard sent by William Logan to his sister Maggie. William Logan was a member of Rose of Sharon LOL No. 471 in Crumlin.



THE FIRST DAY

The attack was divided into three main zones –

- The Centre, along the Albert-Bapaume road, leading to La Boisselle
- The North around Beaumont Hamel
- The South towards Thiepval

Originally planned for 29 June, the date was pushed back to allow for final supplies and better weather. Finally, on 24 June, massed artillery opened up on the German trenches. As British battalions assembled, the Germans retreated below ground to deep bunkers which protected them from the shelling.

Many of the Division's objectives, especially on the south side of the river Acre, were given names from home – Lurgan, Lisburn, Cavan, Lisnaskea and Omagh.

Unlike many other Divisional Commanders, General Nugent started to send soldiers into No Man's Land in advance of zero hour. North of the river Acre members of the Armagh Volunteers crawled towards the German Lines. This allowed them to take the Germans by surprise shortly after the artillery had stopped.

As whistles blew at 7.30am on 1 July, signalling the main advance, few could have imagined the carnage that was about to unfold. The Battle of the Somme did not conclude until 18 November.

Not all enemy units would be surprised. Emerging quickly from their dugouts, German machine gunners on high ground on each side of the Ulster Division's sector riddled the advancing Antrim and Down Volunteers. Casualty rates were high and families devastated.



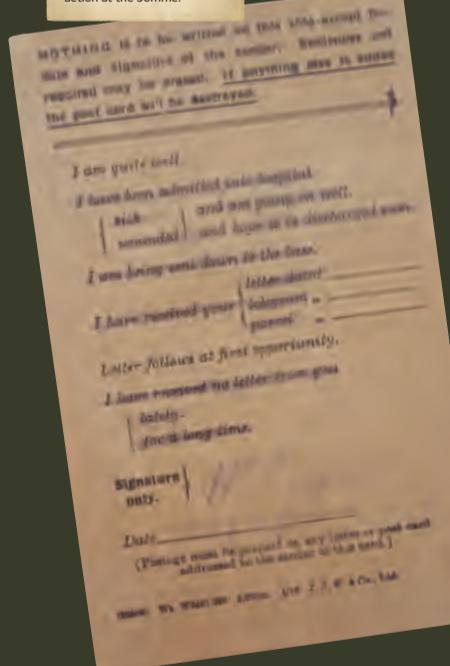
On that morning William and Johnny Logan from Rose of Sharon LOL No. 471, Crumlin, charged forward. While Johnny survived, William was never seen again. His name is commemorated on the Thiepval memorial.

Painting by J. Prinsep Beadle showing the attack of the Ulster Division on 1 July 1916. It depicts soldiers of the 11th (Service) Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles (South Antrim Volunteers). The painting is on display in Belfast City Hall.



An article from the Northern Whig, 29 July 1916, describing the actions of the 10th Battalion, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (Derry Volunteers) at the Somme.

This Field Service Post Card was sent by William Logan on the day before he was killed in action at the Somme.



ULSTER DIVISION'S ATTACK. Men Charge Wearing Orange Lilies.

Private R. Laverty, Derry Volunteers, in a letter to his father, Mr. George Laverty, Londonderry, says:—"The — have made a name for themselves and old Derry. When we got the order to charge on the glorious 1st of July every man went over the parapet as light-heartedly as on parade. A lot of our chaps went down before we got far, but seeing them fall only made us more eager to get at the Germans. Nothing could stop our men. Our officers acted magnificently, every one of them. Captain Wilton fearlessly led us over, keeping in front all the time and encouraging us as we went forward, and exposing himself to the very heavy fire. At length he got wounded, but still on we went, some of the boys shouting, 'No Surrender' and 'Good old Ulster.' Some of them had orange lilies in their caps, and one sergeant I saw had on his orange sash going over the parapet to meet them. He kept shouting, 'Come on, Ulster.' I heard an officer of the Irish Rifles—and a fine chap he was—shouting, 'Come on, Derry, and remember your watchword is still No Surrender,' and away we went again to meet the foe."

THE LILY & THE POPPY

REMEMBERING
THE SOMME
1916-2016

1 JULY 1916

ULSTERMEN ADVANCE



Lodge seal of LOL No. 862,
East Belfast Volunteers.



Lieutenant Lawford B. Campbell served with 12th Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, "C" Company (Central Antrim Volunteers). He was Killed In Action on the 1 July and is commemorated on the banner of Carnmoney Memorial LOL No. 919.



36TH (ULSTER) DIVISION & THIEPVAL

On the morning of 1 July 1916 the men of the Ulster Division had been gathering in the assembly trenches that ran through the wood opposite the village of Thiepval and a formidable German strongpoint known as the Schwaben Redoubt. Prior to 7.30am men from the Division crept quietly out into No Man's Land.

The 1 July was a day of great significance for many waiting in the trenches. Under the old calendar it was the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne and many Orangemen, who had taken part in lodge meetings the previous evening, wore Orange ribbons or carried their sashes as they prepared to advance.

As the creeping artillery barrage fell silent they quickly rushed into the German trenches. Despite stiff German resistance

they took the first line of enemy trenches and the heavily fortified Schwaben Redoubt. Events elsewhere on the front were to seal the Ulster Division's fate.

The units on either side of their advance had been unable to make ground. The seven-day bombardment had not yielded the anticipated results. German barbed wire remained largely intact as did their positions. As a consequence, the salient created by the men of the 36th was subject to German counter attack on each flank. As reinforcements moved up to assist the attack they came under heavy machine gun fire. When the battalions of the 107th Brigade (Belfast) advanced they were met by a hail of bullets.

Rifleman Taylor, West Belfast, described the scene on 1 July as the troops moved forward:

"Captain...(name redacted)...waving an orange handkerchief shouted 'Come on, boys; this is the 1st July. Let the enemy have it!' They went into action at 7am and took five lines of trenches, and about 1,300 prisoners. There were some of our fellows who had orange lilies in their breasts, and one sergeant of the Inniskillings went over with his orange sash on him."

**JUST WHEN THEY APPEARED TO WAVER,
MAJOR GEORGE GAFFIKEN OF 9TH ROYAL
IRISH RIFLES LIFTED HIS ORANGE SASH
ABOVE HIS HEAD AND CRIED**

**"COME ON, BOYS!
NO SURRENDER!"**

THE MEN RESPONDED WITH ZEAL.

James and John Cumberland were members of Kilnacart LOL No. 296 in Co. Tyrone, and served with the 9th Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers. They were both killed in action on 1 July 1916. In a letter to their mother Colonel Ricardo wrote that "John and James took part in the great attack on July 1 and were last seen gallantly advancing with their company against the German trenches...I doubt if they were taken prisoners, for 'No Surrender' was the feeling that day in the Ulster Division."



THE LILY & THE POPPY

REMEMBERING
THE SOMME
1916-2016

1 JULY 1916

SUCCESS AND HORROR

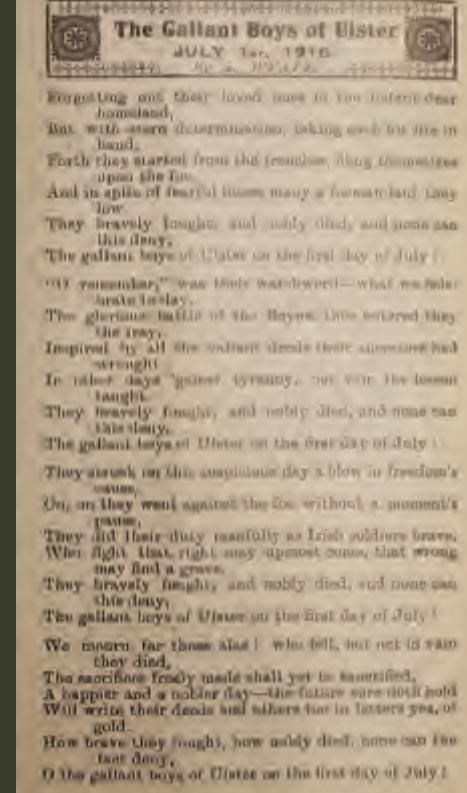
The fighting was intense. One Orangeman, William Campbell of Falls LOL No. 498, would later describe the spent bullets as "falling like rain." After taking the Schwaben Redoubt, many detachments pressed on towards Thiepval itself. However, with few officers surviving and exposed to their own creeping artillery barrage, they were forced to turn back.

In an attempt to reinforce the Ulstermen, the 49th (West Riding) Division was hurled into the fray. As Private J. Wilson recorded later, the scene was one of carnage –

"We went forward in single file, through a gap in what had once been a hedge; only one man could get through at a time. The Germans had a machine gun trained on the gap and when my turn came I paused. The machine gun stopped and, thinking his belt had run out, or he had jammed, I moved through, but what I saw when I got to the other side shook me to pieces. There was a trench running parallel with the hedge which was full to the top with men who had gone before me. They were all either dead or dying."

– The Battles of the Somme, Marin Marix Evans.

Towards lunchtime Major Gaffiken and others rallied a mixed group of Rifles with the Derry and Fermanagh Volunteers to press on. Their efforts helped consolidate the Division's position but the Germans were gradually reinforcing and pressing on each flank.



The poem 'The Gallant Boys of Ulster' by S. Wyatt was published in The Orange Standard, September 1916.

William Logan, brother of Johnny, enlisted in the 11th Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles. William was originally classified as missing on 1 July 1916 but subsequently declared Killed In Action. He was the son of Campbell and Eliza Logan and husband of Aggie.



Johnny Logan enlisted in 11th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles (South Antrim Volunteers) with his brother William. He was a member of Rose of Sharon LOL No. 471 in Crumlin. Johnny survived the war and became chauffeur for Major Pakenham in Kent. The Logan brothers had worked on the Pakenham estate outside Crumlin before the war.





HEROISM

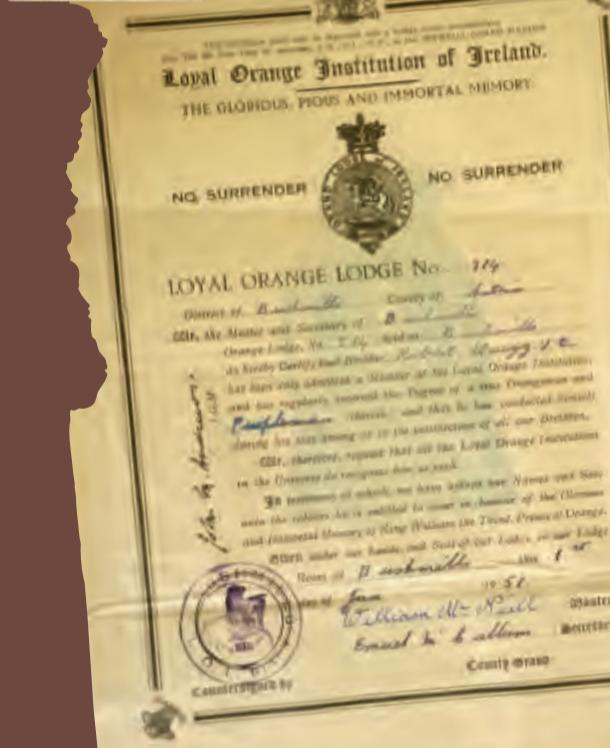
The Orange Standard in September 1916 recorded the words of Wilfred Spender as he witnessed the advance of the Ulster Division:

"I WISH I HAD BEEN BORN AN ULSTERMAN, BUT I AM PROUD TO HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THESE WONDERFUL MEN - THE MOST GALLANT IN THE WORLD. I DO NOT BELIEVE MEN EVER PASSED TO ANOTHER WORLD IN SO GLORIOUS A LIGHT."

The bravery of many British soldiers on that day is without question. One story which exemplifies such gallantry was that of Robert Quigg from Bushmills in County Antrim. Like many Orangemen in the area, Quigg had joined the 12th Battalion, the Royal Irish Rifles, and was in the thick of the action on 1 July 1916. Upon returning to allied lines on the night of 1 July he discovered that one of his commanding officers, Sir Harry MacNaghten, was missing. In a vain attempt to find him, Quigg ventured out into No Man's Land seven times between 1 and 2 July. On each occasion he returned to the trenches with a wounded soldier but was unable to find MacNaghten, whose remains were never recovered. For this, Quigg received the Victoria Cross.

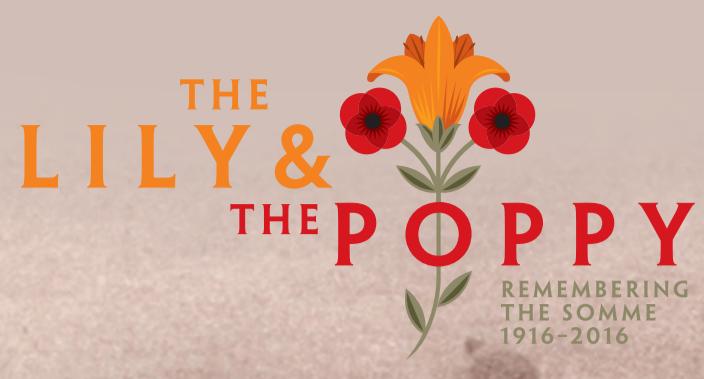
On 2 July the Ulster Division was pulled out of the front line after 48 hours of bitter fighting. The Division had been the most successful of any unit, taking five lines of German trenches before being forced to withdraw. Of the 10,000 men who had advanced the previous day, 5,500 had been killed, wounded or taken prisoner. Cities, towns, villages and homes mourned the loss of loved ones.

Robert Quigg VC's certificate from LOL No. 914, Bushmills. He transferred to this lodge from Aird LOL No. 1195.



Robert Quigg VC was a member of Aird LOL No. 1195 and later Bushmills LOL No. 914.





LA BOISSELLE AND BEAUMONT HAMEL

LA BOISSELLE

Major-General E.C. Ingouville-Williams of the 34th Division was confident that his forces would push through the village of La Boisselle on the first day of the battle and advance for Pozieres. At 7.28am explosive mines at Y Sap and Lochnagar shattered the silence created by the end of the artillery barrage. Huge columns of dust, smoke and debris filled the air as the swirl of the pipes heralded the advance of the Tyneside Scottish and the Tyneside Irish. Initial expectations were damped as the Germans, sheltered in deep bunkers, quickly took up positions and opened fire. Of the 2,500 men of the Tyneside Irish who advanced, only 50 were left unwounded by the end of the day. Only the Royal Scots managed to push the Germans back about half a mile but at great cost. This Division lost 6,392 men, of whom 1,927 were killed.

BEAUMONT HAMEL

At 7.19am elements of 1st Lancashire Fusiliers; 1st Essex Regiment and 1st Battalion, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, paused before advancing. It was expected that this would be one of the most difficult areas of the advance, and so it proved. For the Newfoundlanders, many of whom were Orangemen, this would be a terrible day. In less than an hour only 68 of the 800 men who advanced were able to continue fighting. So devastating were losses in this part of the front that it would take four months before an attack would be mounted again.



HERBERT GREY

Known as Bert was a member of Redrock Presbyterian Church and of Killycopple LOL No. 345. Bert had joined up in the original draft to the 9th Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers, confirming that he was a member of the Ulster Volunteer Force. An eventful war saw him wounded three times, including at Hamel on 1 July 1916, before eventually being discharged as no longer physically fit for war service. Bert maintained that his life had been saved at Hamel by a New Testament he had been given and which he always carried with him. A bullet struck the Testament at his chest and ricocheted into his arm.

The Newfoundland Memorial in France is dedicated to the commemoration of members of the Dominion of Newfoundland forces who served in World War I. It is near the village of Beaumont Hamel in the Somme region. The caribou is the emblem of the Newfoundland Regiment. Courtesy of Iain Carlisle.



Robert Hill Hanna was born at Aughnahoy, Co. Down and was a member of LOL No. 343b. He immigrated to Canada in 1905 and joined LOL No. 2226. He served with the 29th Battalion (Vancouver) of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and saw action at the Battle of the Somme in 1916. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at the Battle of Lens in 1917.



Major-General Sir Sam Hughes was the Canadian Minister of Militia and Defence from October 1911 to November 1916, and was a driving force behind Canada's early war effort. He was a member of LOL No. 557.





Enlistment Appeal for the 36th (Ulster) Division carried in The Orange Standard.

EXTENDING CONSCRIPTION

As the war dragged into its third year many countries had introduced conscription. The same was suggested in the United Kingdom with the exception of Ireland. As the politicians talked, the sentiment of many Orangemen serving at the front was captured by a meeting of LOL No. 871 on 12 July 1916;



"That this meeting of brethren representing the Young Citizens' LOL 871 do hereby reaffirm their loyalty to the Crown and Constitution of Great Britain and Ireland, being Protestant, and calls on all loyal men of Ulster who have not joined the colours to come forward and replenish the ranks of the Ulster Division in order that the Division may remain truly representative, and at the same time help to prosecute the war with vigour...the brethren also deplore the heavy losses sustained by the Ulster Division on the date of 1st July 1916, and do hereby convey their deepest sympathy to the relatives of their gallant comrades who fell on the field of battle."

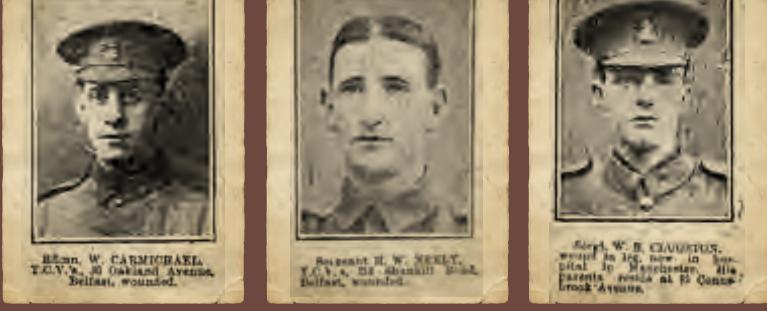
The meeting also noted the loss of 4 brethren killed in the attack and 23 wounded, one of whom was Bro. C.W. Neely, the lodge secretary.

Recruitment Appeal for the 19th (Reserve) Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles. This appeared in The Orange Standard newspaper in 1916. The commandant of the Battalion was Orangeman R. H. Wallace.

CONTINUING STRUGGLE

British commanders had been stunned by the carnage of the first phases of the Somme but attempted to press the attack with troops from across the Empire and Dominions. Over the next few months men from South Africa, India, Australia and New Zealand would follow those from the British Isles and Canada into the Somme sector. At Longueval, Delville Wood and Pozieres the British pressed forward.

Some of the members of Young Citizens' LOL No. 871 whose names were read out at the meeting on 12 July 1916.
Courtesy of Nigel Henderson.



ULSTER DIVISION

MEN are Urgently required for the . . .

19th (Reserve)

Battalion

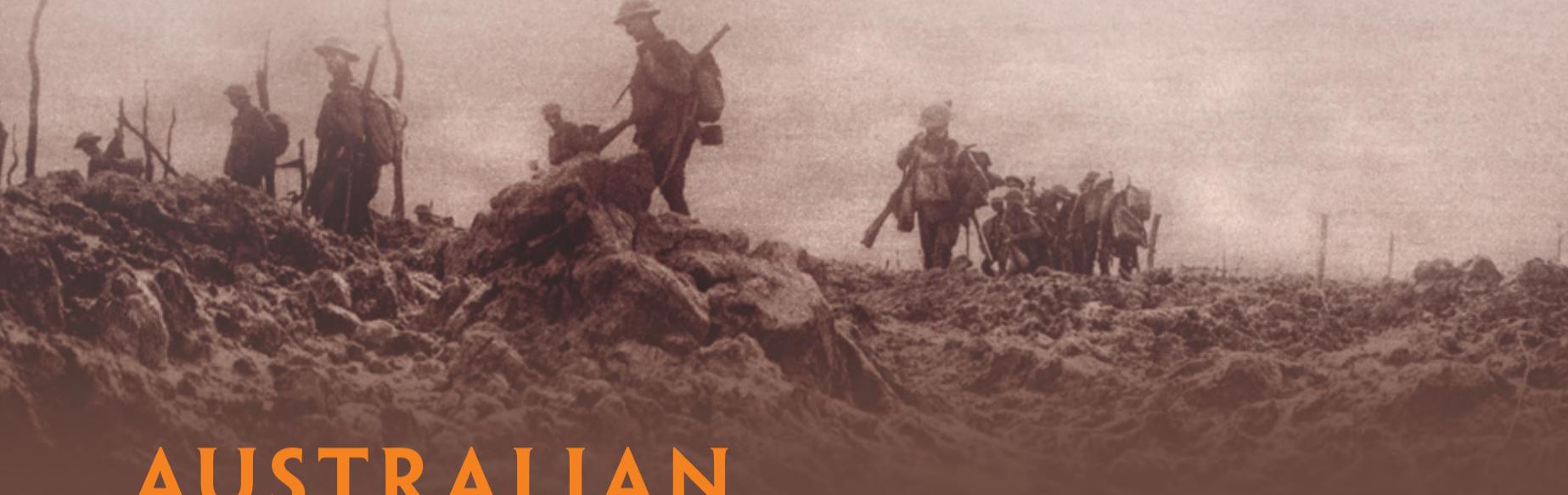
Royal Irish Rifles

Newcastle, Co. Down, Ireland.

Commanding Officer :
COL. ROBERT H. WALLACE, C.B.

Go to the nearest
Recruiting Office and
Enlist into this Battalion.

I appeal to every Orangeman about to enlist, to join the above Battalion. If accepted, your fare will be paid to Ireland.
Louis A. Ewart,
Grand Secretary.



AUSTRALIAN INVOLVEMENT

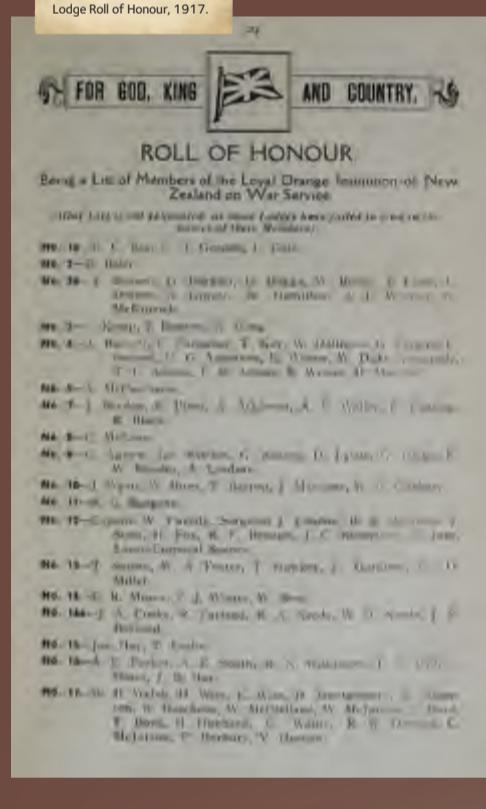
On 21 July the Australians joined the battle. At 1.30am on 23 July elements of the 1st Australian Division advanced on Pozieres. Within an hour they were into the town and, along with the 2nd Australian Division and other units, they pressed forward. Over the next four days they suffered 3,500 casualties. More Australian blood was shed at Pozieres than at Gallipoli, a fact not fully appreciated.

At the end of July the Germans still held the ridge at Pozieres, which had been a first day objective of the Somme assault. Casualties were mounting. The British had suffered at least 40,000 dead and some began to question the project. Surely the Germans were running out of reinforcements? At the beginning of August Lieutenant-General The Earl of Cavan, commander of XIV Corps, proposed changes.

Future attacks would be accompanied by close 18 pounder artillery support to target enemy trenches and barbed wire, communications between advancing troops and command posts would be a priority during the attack, and the amount of equipment required by each soldier would be reduced.

The Australians took Pozieres on 4 August.

ARTHUR LEANING MISCAMBLE
served with the Special Reinforcement 1st Australian General Hospital. The hospital arrived at Rouen in April 1916 and remained there until the end of hostilities. It was a tented hospital with beds to treat 750 patients. Many of the casualties of the Somme were treated at Rouen, and by the end of the war, 90,298 patients had passed through. MISCAMBLE was a member of an Orange lodge in Roma District in Queensland. He survived the war and returned to his job as a coachbuilder, becoming Mayor of Roma in the 1930s.

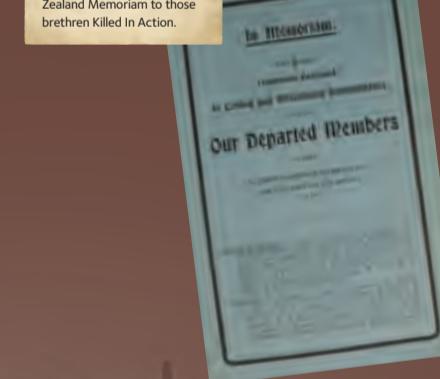


NEW ZEALANDERS

On 9 September, soldiers from New Zealand entered the front lines at the Somme. Their arrival, along with returning Canadian troops, coincided with the unleashing of a new weapon – the Tank.

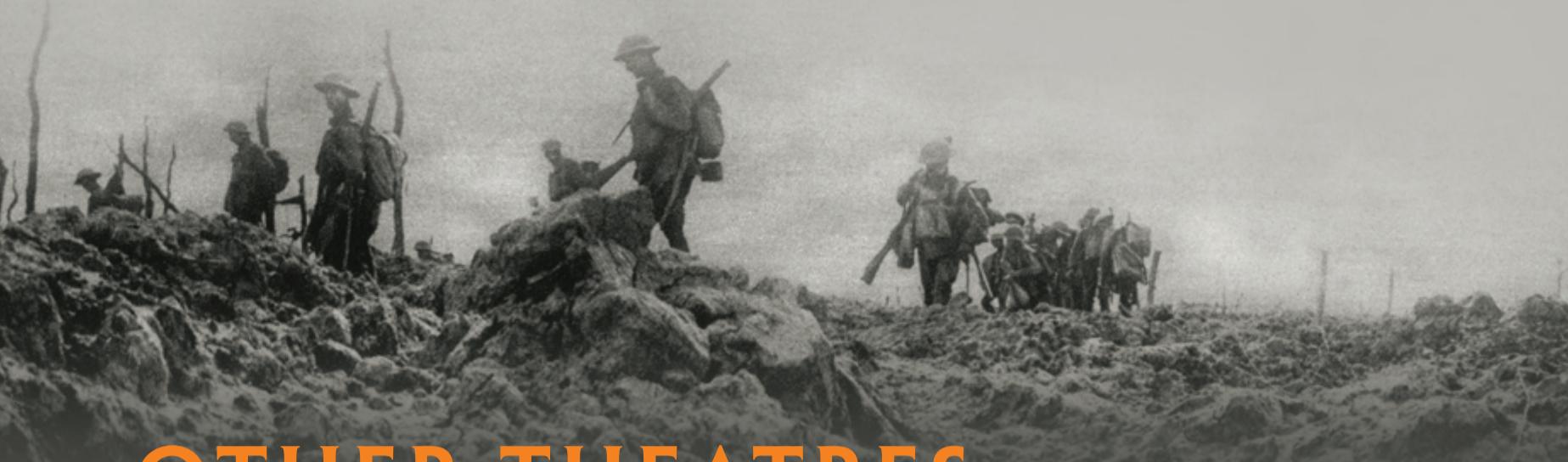
On 11 September tanks rumbled into position. Although hopes were high that the weapon would make a significant impact, the 49 available was significantly short of the requested 100. By the day of battle, 15 September, this number had reduced by 17 due to mechanical failure. Geoffrey Malins described their deployment:

"What in the world was it? For the life of me I could not take my eyes off it. The thing – I really don't know how else to describe it – ambled forward, with slow, jerky, uncertain movements... At one moment its nose disappeared, then with a slide and an upward glide it climbed to the other side of a deep shell crater which lay in its path..."



British Army Mark IV Tank.
Tanks like this one were first used at the Battle of the Somme.





OTHER THEATRES OF WAR

Orangemen were involved in various actions throughout 1916. One incident noted in The Orange Standard in July 1916 was the loss of an entire Orange Lodge aboard one of His Majesty's battleships and with the sinking of HMS Hampshire;

"One English lodge, which met on H.M.S. ----- has gone down with all officers and members. A large number of brethren were also on H.M.S. Hampshire, with Lord Kitchener, when she went down."

HMS Hampshire was sunk after hitting a mine en route to Russia on 5 June 1916. All but seven members of the crew were killed.

So many Orangemen were serving in the armed forces that in many places the annual Twelfth of July celebrations did not take place. Liverpool was one such city where it was recorded that 15,000 members of the institution were serving in the forces.

In Belfast the Twelfth of July parade did not take place in 1916. However, at midday on 12 July 1916 all work was suspended and trains and trams stopped as people remembered the fallen in silence. Such was the feeling of communal loss it is unlikely that the annual Twelfth celebrations would have taken place had they not previously been cancelled.



JEAN VICTOR BATES

a founding member of Ladies LOL No. 133, drove an Ulster Motor Ambulance in Serbia during the war.

STOKER RICHARD McMAW

served on board HMS Queen Mary, which sank during the Battle of Jutland (31 May 1916) with the loss of 1,266 lives. He was from the village of Eden near Carrickfergus and was a member of Kilroot LOL No. 1544.

SIR WALTER DORLING SMILES

was a key figure in a Royal Naval Armoured Car unit that fought alongside the Russians on the Eastern front in 1916. Smiles would go on to serve on the Grand Committee of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland.

ORANGEMEN FROM COOKSTOWN AND DUNGANNON

serving in the 10th (Irish) Division, celebrated the Twelfth of July, 1916 in Salonika. Beneath the shadow of a large chestnut tree Orangemen, and their Roman Catholic colleagues, marked the day with song and fellowship.



Members of LOL No. 885, Thiepval True Blues on board HMS Benbow. Benbow led one of the squadrons of the Fleet in the Battle of Jutland, 31 May - 1 June 1916.





FAITH AT THE FRONT

There are many stories of Orangemen taking refuge in their faith as destruction and chaos raged around them. The Grand Orange Lodge of England – who held the stewardship of the military warrants during World War I – launched an appeal to fund Bibles and New Testaments for soldiers. By August 1916 this appeal had raised over £1,000.00.



In at least one case the provision of a Bible was a physical as well as a spiritual help. Bro. J. Pye of Birmingham wrote to the Orange Standard in February 1916 that a New Testament with which he had been presented had stopped a bullet. The bullet lodged at Philippians Ch.2 v15&16:

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. Holding forth the Word of Life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

As with all periods of crisis, there was comfort found in the Lord. In the weeks leading up to the Somme offensive one Orange Chaplain wrote about Bible-classes at the front –

"Last Friday I was having a Bible-class in a dug-out, not 150 yards from the German line. The men stuck their bayonets in the sand-bags which formed the wall, and then stuck a candle on the flat of the blade. We could not sing, but we read, prayed, and discussed the chapter. Once or twice the bullets from a German machine-gun pattered so incessantly against our parapet that we could not hear ourselves speaking..."

Matters of faith were incredibly important to the men of the Ulster Division. Often the presence of lay preachers in the ranks was of greater impact than the many army Chaplains embedded with the battalions.

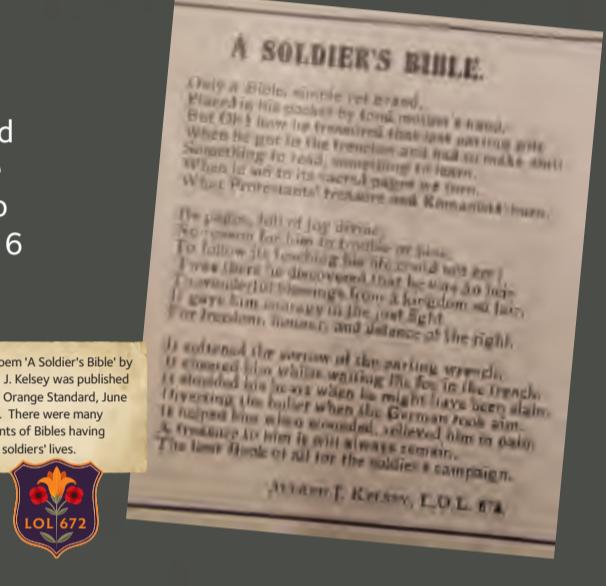


Impromptu prayer meetings and lodge meetings were held along the trenches of the Ulster Division in the hours leading up to the attack on 1 July. One such prayer meeting was led by Lance Corporal David Johnston, a member of Belleisle True Blues LOL No. 1314 in Fermanagh. Johnston was killed in action on 1 July 1916.



This pocket Bible was given to John Marshall by members of Military LOL No. 703, Rising Sons of India. Marshall served with the Royal Irish Rifles and was a prisoner of war from October 1914 until the end of the war. LOL No. 703 saw service at the Somme, but returned their warrant in 1917 "stained with blood - tattered and torn like a flag that has seen much service."

No 6284
Riflemen
John Marshall
J Company
1st Royal Irish Rifles
D.C.R.
India



The poem 'A Soldier's Bible' by Alfred J. Kelsey was published in The Orange Standard, June 1916. There were many accounts of Bibles having saved soldiers' lives.



I sustained the sorrow of the parting wrench,
I crossed him while waiting the foe in the trench,
I stumbled in his way when he might have been slain,
Overturning the bullet when the German took aim,
It helped him who wounded, relieved him in pain,
A treasure to him it will always remain,
The last book of all for the soldier's campaign.
Alfred J. Kelsey, F.O.L. 672



This Bible was given to Samuel McIlwraith by the officers and members of LOL No. 671 in December 1914, before he left for the front.



Lance Corporal David Johnston served with the 11th Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and was a member of LOL No. 1314. He was a lay preacher in the Methodist Church and would lead his men in prayer before they climbed out of the trenches. Johnston was killed on the first day of the Somme.





THE ORANGE WARD

In January 1915 Nottingham Country Cricket Club was opened for the reception of wounded soldiers. Initially it contained 20 beds. With the support of the Orange Institution, and others, the hospital's capacity expanded to 90 beds. The increase in capacity was especially needed after battles like the Somme. In October 1916 a general appeal was launched to raise an immediate sum of £300.00 with a target of £500.00 by the end of the year.



Donations secured the establishment of an 'Orange Ward' with 12 beds initially. Orange Lodges rose to the occasion. For example, Churchill LOL No. 871 held a concert in Londonderry in aid of the Orange Ward Fund. This was supplemented by the opening of the 'Ulster Hut' in 1917 as a recreation and convalescence room for patients.

Lady Bruce, honorary agent for Lady Carson's 'Fund for the Ulster Division', was appointed President of the Hospital. She was also President of the North Derry Ulster Women's Unionist Association and the North Derry Ulster Volunteer Nursing Corps.

As well as providing an area for recreation, the Ulster Hut hosted a religious service every Sunday evening.

The provision of the 'Orange Ward' and the 'Ulster Hut' was in addition to the UVF wards and hospitals already established in Ulster in places like Craigavon House and Queen's University, Belfast.

The children of Lady Bay Sunday School in Nottingham gave up their prizes amounting to £2.10s for the benefit of the Ulster Hut in 1917.

Lady Bruce, President of the Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital, Nottingham, standing outside the Ulster Hut.



The 'Orange Ward' at the Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital, Nottingham. This was built with funds raised by an appeal to Orange Lodges. A 12 bed hospital ward and a recreation room were opened in January 1917.



An interior view of the 'Ulster Hut' with some of the wounded soldiers. Lady Bruce, President of the Hospital, and some of the nurses can be seen in the background.



An exterior photograph of the 'Ulster Hut'. This was the recreation room at the Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital, Nottingham which was built with the funds raised by Orange lodges.





VALOUR

The first Victoria Cross at the Somme was awarded to a Belfast soldier who gave his life for his colleagues. On 1 July the British barrage had opened up. Soon this was joined by trench mortars in short bursts of intense fire. This was known as the 'hurricane' bombardment. "As the shells passed over our heads, the air hummed like a swarm of a 100 million hornets" one soldier observed.

BILLY MCFADZEAN

The bombardiers were particularly busy and a tragic incident occurred in one group of Young Citizens Volunteers. Billy McFadzean and his fellow grenadiers were making final preparations; boxes of grenades were open and bombs were being handed out. Shells were dropping all around.

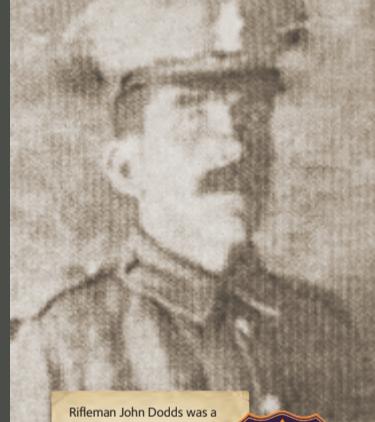
Billy McFadzean was opening a box, using a knife to cut the cord around it, when the box tumbled off its shelf and two bombs split out and shed their pins. An explosion would rip through the trench in a matter of seconds. In an outstanding act of bravery and sacrifice, Billy threw himself on the ground, sheltering the rest of the men from the blast.

He was killed instantly, but his comrades were saved from death or serious injury, except for one man who eventually was to lose a leg as a result of his wounds. Billy's mutilated remains were placed on a stretcher and as they were being taken away, his fellow soldiers instinctively removed their helmets, despite the ongoing bombardment and the flying shrapnel; many were in tears.

For his sacrifice Billy McFadzean would receive the Victoria Cross, the first awarded to a soldier in the Somme campaign. Billy McFadzean's home was at Rubicon on the Cregagh Road in Belfast, while the family originally had connections with Lurgan, County Armagh.

JOHN DODDS

Rifleman John Dodds was a member of LOL No. 594 and an employee in the Gas Department of Lisburn Urban Council prior to the war. He served with the Royal Irish Rifles (South Antrim Volunteers) and was awarded the Ulster Division Parchment Certificate for "Devotion to duty while attending the wounded in Thiepval Wood on 1st July under heavy fire."



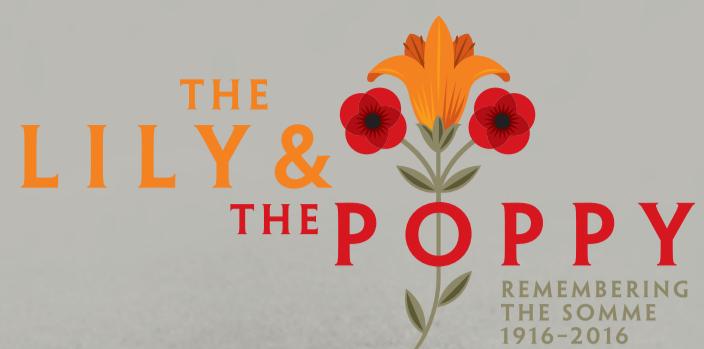
Rifleman John Dodds was a member of Hilden True Blues LOL No. 594 and RBP No. 13.



A report from The Orange Standard, May 1917. Samuel Kelly served with the 9th Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (County Tyrone Volunteers). He famously crossed No Man's Land on 1 July wearing an Orange sash and led his men in the charge at Thiepval. He was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous bravery in the field on 1 July 1916.

Gallant Belfast Orangeman. Crossed "No Man's Land" Wearing an Orange Sash.

At the Main Barracks, Enniskillen, on 27th ult., Sergeant Samuel Kelly, 9th Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (County Tyrone Volunteers) was decorated with the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous bravery in the field on 1st July, 1916. The ceremony was performed on parade by Captain H. C. Gordon, who congratulated the recipient. Sergeant Kelly had served in the South African war in the 1st Inniskillings. He is a son of Mr. William Kelly, Madrid Street, Belfast, and on 1st July crossed "No Man's Land" wearing an Orange sash, and gallantly and coolly led his men in that terrible charge before Thiepval.



LEGACY

As with so many engagements, the Battle of the Somme would prove a victory and a defeat for World Orangeism. A victory, in that so many Orangemen were prepared to lay down their lives in the defence of freedom; and a defeat, in that the flower of a generation was lost amidst the mud and the blood of the battlefield.

The 141 days of carnage along the Somme remain seared into the very fibre of the Orange Institution, especially in Ulster. What was achieved there cannot be underestimated. The initial devastation of the first few days provided a bitter lesson for commanders. Over the next four months tactics changed, resulting in a British and French victory by November.

In 1916 Kilhead District in Co. Antrim set the tone for how many lodges and families would remember the sacrifice at the Somme.

"In the Combined action of the British Army on all its Fronts and in which the 36th Ulster Division so greatly distinguished itself at Thiepval and the valley of the Somme; on that ground stained with Blood of so many Ulster Orangemen, our W. District Master Br. John Henry Bell, and Co. Sgt. Major 'D' Company 11th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, fell in action."

In 1919 the Grand Orange Lodge of England alluded to how the war had witnessed Orangemen meeting in some unusual places. Meetings had been held

"... in the trenches in France, Belgium, Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, the Balkans, East Africa, South West Africa. They met too in Convents, Monasteries, Jesuit Colleges, on the deeps of the North Sea, and many other waters during the long silent watch kept by our matchless Royal Navy, and in more than one war vessel Orange Lodges went down to the bottom of the ocean with the Union Jack flying over them ... It may be truly said that the Orange Order is now so world-wide that on it the sun never sets."



The World War I Memorial Plaque, commonly known as the 'Dead Man's Penny', was issued to the families of servicemen and women killed during World War I. This one was issued to the family of David Hutchinson of Ashfield, Co. Cavan, an Orangeman who served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

No matter how far they travelled or how difficult the circumstance there was always a yearning for home:

*I have marched through the fields of Flanders,
I have walked knee deep through the mud.
I have walked over shell-battered trenches,
And marched through the debris and blood.
And though I am proud of my going,
To-day I must just give a sigh,
To think that I can't be in Toronto
To "Walk" on the 12th of July."*

A Canadian Orangeman

The annual commemoration on 1 July at the Ulster Tower, Thiepval. The Ulster Tower is Northern Ireland's National War Memorial and commemorates the men of the 36th (Ulster) Division and all those from Ulster who served in the First World War. Courtesy Roger Bradley.

