

# Unveiling Of Ballylanders Memorial

**T**HE work of freeing Ireland is not yet completed. This is a point emphasised by President O'Kelly at Ballylanders on Sunday last when he unveiled a memorial erected there to the memory of thirteen officers and men of the Galtee Battalion of the Irish Volunteers who fell in the War of Independence.

## MEMORIAL BLESSED.

The memorial, which was erected at the request of the Ballylanders Old I.R.A. Memorial Committee, by Messrs. J. McGuire and Sons, Sculptors, Tipperary, and designed by Mr. Patrick J. Sheahan, F.R.I.A.I., Limerick, stands in the Square, where the Galbally, Knocklong, Mitchelstown and Kilfinane roads meet, and quite adjacent to the old R.I.C. barracks where some of the men commemorated took part in the attack, and captured the barracks in April, 1921.

Near the Square, in the local cemetery, is the Republican Plot, where a 12 foot Cross, of unique design, was also erected by the Memorial Committee.

The Memorial in the Square is of cut limestone, on a concrete foundation, and mounted with a six foot marble statue of our Blessed Lady, which is a worthy memorial to the glorious dead. The Virgin faces the Galtee mountains, where so many of her sons, who fought for Irish freedom were bred and reared, and who shed their young life's blood to enrich the purple heather of those stately hills.

## BIG AND REPRESENTATIVE ATTENDANCE.

The attendance for the unveiling ceremony was estimated at between seven and ten thousand. It was representative of all Munster.

The President was met in Limerick by Mr. T. Crowley, T.D., Mr. J. J. Collins T.D., Chairman of the Council, and other members of the Committee. A parade of I.R.A. veterans escorted him from about a mile outside the village of Ballylanders to the site of the Memorial.

The village echoed and re-echoed to cheers as the President, escorted by four bands and detachments of veterans of the I.R.A., entered the Square and began to inspect a guard of honour of East Limerick F.C.A.

The cheering was renewed when Mr. O'Kelly went on the platform and an illuminated address of welcome in Irish from Limerick Co. Council was read to him by Mr. D. F. Donovan, secretary.

An t-Uachtaran was introduced by Mr. T. Crowley, T.D. who presided, and who read an address of welcome from the Memorial Committee.

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

In his address, the President said that the men to whom the memorial had been erected all lost their lives in the fight for independence, in the last phase of that fight, perhaps, he should say, that phase which finally won complete independence for the greater part of our national territory.

"The young men whose names are engraved on this memorial sacrificed their lives in the fight to establish the Republic of Ireland. They envisaged a Republic for all Ireland.

All the men of the movement for the winning of Irish Independence, that great movement that existed from 1913—the date of the foundation of the Irish Volunteers—up to December, 1921, before any division came into their ranks, worked for the ideal of a Gaelic Ireland.

## RESTORATION OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

"We have, therefore, to bear in mind that if we wish to be true to the ideals of the men of that period, living and dead, we must strive to realise the objectives for which they worked and sacrificed, and in many cases offered up their lives. We must work at all times for the restoration of the Irish language as the spoken language of our people.

"It is no easy work to endeavour to revive the Irish language, but if Ireland is to exist as a nation worthy of its ancient past it must not allow the Irish language to disappear. Therefore, I stress again the urgency of the work to save the language and make it live again as a spoken tongue among our people."

After the President had unveiled the memorial it was blessed by Rev. P. Kiely, now on the English Mission, a native of Anglesborough, Co. Limerick, a nephew of Michael Scanlon, one of the men commemorated.

Father Kiely also recited a decade of the Rosary in Irish.

Mr. P. McGuire Vice-Chairman, Co. Council, the Mayor of Limerick (Ald. Russell) and Mr. D. P. Quish, Co. C., also spoke.

Earlier a Celtic Cross, over the Republican Plot in Ballylanders Cemetery, where three of the men — Thomas Murphy, David Tobin and Thomas Howard — were buried, was unveiled.

Contingents came from the old Limerick, Tipperary, Kerry, and Cork I.R.A. Brigades.

## ON THE PLATFORM.

On the platform were relatives of the deceased men, the Mayor of Limerick, Ald. G. E. Russell; Rev. T. Slattery, C.C., Ballinvreena, Kilfinane, who earlier had unveiled a Memorial Cross in the Republican Plot in the local cemetery.

Rev. P. Crowley, P.P., Martins-town, Rev. Fr. Timothy, O.F.M., Cap. Kilkenny, Mr. W. J. Crawford, Secretary of the Memorial Committee, Mr. P. Maguire, Chairman of the Co. Committee of Agriculture, and Vice-Chairman of Limerick Co. Council; Mr. D. P. Quish, M.C.C., an old member of the Flying Column.

Also on the platform was Miss Babs O'Sullivan, of Knockavilla, who, during the War of Independence, nursed the wounded of the Flying Column. She herself, a trained nurse, was a member of Cumann na mBan.

In special seats were the members of the Limerick Corporation, in their robes, accompanied by mace bearers and members of Limerick Co. Council.

## ARMY NO 2 BAND.

The Army No 2 Band, who played the Presidential Salute, and brought the ceremony to a close with the playing of the National Anthem, was conducted by Capt. R. B. Kealy.

The F.C.A. was under Capt. J. Fitzgerald, Lt. J. South and Lt. W. Cregan, and the Gardaí were under Inspector T. Griffin, Limerick.

Marshals were the old Captain of the Flying Column, Bill Sampson, and the Secretary of the Memorial Committee, Mr. Thomas Crawford.

Mr. Joseph McMahon, Staff Officer of Limerick Corporation, represented the City Manager, Mr. M. Macken who is away on holidays.

## MEN WHOM MEMORIAL COMMEMORATES.

The men whom the memorial commemorates were — Thomas Murphy, Ballylanders, David Tobin, Glenbrohane, Knocklong (shot on a hillside overlooking the memorial), Thomas Howard, Glenbrohane, and Sean Riordan, Thomastown, Kilfinane (killed in rearguard actions); William Riordan Cullane, Ballylanders (died of battle wounds); Michael Scanlan, Galbally (shot dead while trying to escape from prison); Edmond Crawford, Glenlary, Knocklong (killed in a surprise attack); Liam Scully, Glenbeigh, Co. Kerry (fatally wounded in attack on Kilmallock Barracks). Sean A. Lynch, Kilmallock and Thomas Hogan, Tankardstown, Kilmallock (shot in "Bloody Sunday" reprisals), Edmond Foley, Duntryleague, Galbally, and Patrick Maher, Glenlary (hanged after being found guilty of taking part in the rescue of Sean Hogan at Knocklong Station).