

WHEN CAPT. STARR FELL

One of the men who was on the bleak hillside of Shraharla, near Kilfinane, Co. Limerick, when Captain Pat Starr of Connolly St., Nenagh, was shot by Crown forces in 1920* was Richard Power, Ballingad, Ballyneety, Co. Limerick. And at considerable personal inconvenience, Richard travelled to Tyone cemetery on Sunday week last for the unveiling of the memorial to Capt. Starr. And all because he "liked the young man."

Fresh for his years, the grey-haired veteran of the fight for freedom still has a clear account of what happened on the fateful May day in 1920* and recounted the moments for me when I talked to him shortly after the unveiling of the memorial.

"Captain Starr had left Nenagh because there was nothing doing around here at that time. He joined the Limerick Brigade and was stationed with us for only three weeks before he was shot. We were stationed near Kilfinane and we were on our

way over the hill to ambush a cycling patrol in Galbally."

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"They were doing the devil around there at that time. I was a few yards in front of Pat Starr going over the hill at the time we were spotted by a military lorry going to Kilworth. Paddy Lacken and Tom McGrath were there too when they opened fire on us. We had no cover and Pat Starr was the first to fall. Jim Horan and Tim Hennessey were badly injured and Paddy Casey of Ballybricken was taken into captivity and shot next day."

Richard would describe Captain Starr, who was only 21 years at the time, as a courageous young man who wanted to be where there was work to be done. He was a young man he had grown to like, though they had been together but for three weeks. It was mainly because of his wish for the young patriot that he travelled to Tyone for the unveiling after he had read about it in the papers.

The marble memorial has been erected by a special committee at a cost of about £150. It stands over his quiet grave in a shaded corner of the cemetery at Tyone where his remains were re-interred in 1921 after resting in a Fermoy cemetery from May of the previous year.

* [Every other source gives Shraharla date as May 1921]

Chairman of the Committee was Jack Tierney and treasurer Tom McGee. Michael McMahon, secretary, attended the local C.B.S. with the late Captain Starr. Among the attendance at the unveiling were members of the various Brigades of the Old I.R.A. and many of his schoolmates and relatives. ©INA



Richard Power looks down on the grave of a friend, Capt. Pat Starr