

Tribute to two Patriots

ON to-morrow at 12 noon the President of Ireland, Mr. Eamonn de Valera, will unveil a plaque at 15 Barrington Street to the memory of two of Limerick's greatest patriots—John Daly, the Fenian, and Edward Daly, the 1916 Leader. The plaque will mark the house where John Daly lived for many years and where such prominent figures in Irish history as Tom Clarke, Padraic Pearse, Sean Mac Diarmada and Roger Casement found hospitality.

The project is sponsored by the Thomond Archaeological Society to mark the 50th Anniversary of the 1916 Rising, and the President will be introduced by the Chairman of the Daly Memorial Committee, Mr. Robert Cussen, LL.D. Previous to the unveiling ceremony there will be Mass in St. Joseph's Church at 11.15 a.m.

For the story of these 2 great Irishmen, John Daly and his nephew, Edward, we are indebted to Mr. Eamon Dore, who himself played a prominent part in the fight for Irish independence. Mr. Dore, who fought in the G.P.O., Dublin, during Easter Week, 1916, is married to Commandant Edward Daly's youngest sister. Other sisters are Mrs. Kathleen Clarke, widow of Tom Clarke, and Miss Madge Daly of Limerick. Mr. Dore belonged to B. Company, First Battalion, Dublin Brigade, Irish Volunteers. He was a close friend of Sean MacDiarmada and was entrusted by him with several confidential messages.

The Dalys were a Galway family who settled in Limerick early in the last century, and took an increasingly important part in the business life of the city. John Daly was born here in 1845, and received his education at the Christian Brothers' Schools.

John Daly

About 1863, with his brother, Edward, he joined the I.R.B., and was promoted to the Arsenal Committee of the organisation two years later. In October, 1866, John and his brother were arrested for making arms, and were charged with treason felony in February, 1867. They were released on bail, and took part in the abortive Fenian Rising in the spring of that year.

For a time John was "on the run." He made his way to Liverpool and London, and eventually to New York, where he remained until the general amnesty of 1869. He lost no time in returning to Ireland, and was appointed captain of the I.R.B. in County Limerick. So ably and fearlessly did he fulfil his perilsous duties that the Limerick Fenians presented him with a gold ring for his services.

In 1871, John Daly was appointed Organiser for the North. He was elected representative of Uster, on the

Supreme Council about 1872 and in the following year made Organiser for the whole country. In the course of his work he helped to elect John Mitchell as a Member of Parliament for Tipperary, and he enlisted Tom Clarke and other prominent figures to the ranks of the I.R.B.

Ill-health compelled him to resign as National Organiser in 1882, but he continued to remain a member of the Supreme Council. In the same year he delivered the oration over Kickham's grave.

After a period in America, where he spoke at meetings with Devoy, he returned to England in 1883. Though he was a known opponent to the dynamite campaign, he was, with Jim Egan, the victim of a police plan. On the bogus charge, Egan got 20 years and Daly penal servitude for life.

About 1883 Egan was released on ticket of leave and immediately joined in the agitation in favour of amnesty for the other prisoners. While still imprisoned, John Daly was elected M.P. for Limerick in 1895, but the election was, however, annulled. Daly now decided to go on hunger strike and this was probably the first instance of such an action by an Irish Republican. When in danger of death, he was released, in 1896. He received a tumultuous welcome in Dublin and Limerick, and travelled Ireland, Scotland and England speaking at many meetings. Devoy also arranged a tour for him in the United States.

Mayor

In 1896 John Daly was elected National Labour Mayor of Limerick and the event is commemorated on the Mayoral Chain with a link which carries military symbols and an Irish inscription. During his three consecutive terms of office he introduced electricity to Limerick and built houses for the workers. And when he was refused admittance to the Shannon Rowing Club, the workmen of Limerick presented him with a boat.

In 1899 John Daly opened a bakery in William Street, and in Sarsfield Street in 1912. In 1908 his health gave cause for grave anxiety, and some time afterwards he lost the use of his limbs.

Between Tom Clarke and John Daly there was a constant contact and Daly, when Mayor, made Clarke a Freeman of Limerick. Clarke brought him one of the Howth rifles, and this weapon is now on exhibit in the National Museum.

Not only did John Daly help with the founding of the Fianna in Limerick, but he built a hall for them at the rear of Barrington Street. The end came on June 30, 1916, and John Daly died an unrepentant Fenian. He was a man of fearless character and powerful resolution, and there is little doubt that history will mark him as one of Limerick's most indomitable sons.

John Daly's brother, Edward, died in 1890 at the age of 42. At the early age of 17 he knew the rigours of prison life, and it left a permanent mark on his constitution. His only son, Edward (he had eight daughters), was born at Frederick Street (now O'Curry Street) on February 25, 1891, some months after his father's death.

Ned Daly

As a young boy, Edward attended the Presentation Convent School in Sexton Street. He commenced his studies at the Christian Brothers School, Sexton Street, at the age of 7, and, when he was 15, went to Leamy's School for a commercial training to fit him for his uncle's business. After a year in a technical school in Glasgow he returned home in 1908, but as the state of his health would not permit of his working in the heated atmosphere of a bakery, he went to Spaight's, timber merchants, as a clerk. After two years he left to help his uncle in his very extensive business.

There he worked for twelve months before going to Dublin in 1912. In the office of Brooks Thomas, building contractors, he filled a position for three months and left for a better post at May Roberts, wholesale chemists of Westmoreland St. He remained there until a few weeks before Easter 1916, when left under orders from Sean MacDiarmada to help in the military preparations for the Rising.

"A Soldier"

At the inception of the Irish Volunteers in November, 1913, Ned was one of the first to be enrolled. Writing in the Gaelic American in 1922 (from which this account is condensed), Mr. Eamonn Dore says that Ned was then living with his (Ned's) sister, Mrs. Thomas J. Clarke. On arriving home on the night of his enrolment he said to her: "I was at last what I always wanted to be." She asked: "What?" And in reply got the word which summed up the man: "A Soldier." Early in the year 1914 he was appointed Captain of B Company, 1st Battalion, Dublin Brigade, which he organised. His C Company, which financially was the poorest in the city, was at all times a model for discipline and vigorous attention to all duties, no matter how arduous. Mr. Dore was then attached to this, the pioneer Company in the Metropole and speaks with full knowledge of the men and their youthful Captain: "He was younger by years than the majority of the privates, yet I never knew an officer so beloved of his men. His Company was by far larger than full strength at its inception year, numbering in all 100 men. This speaks better than anything I can say of the ability of the leader."

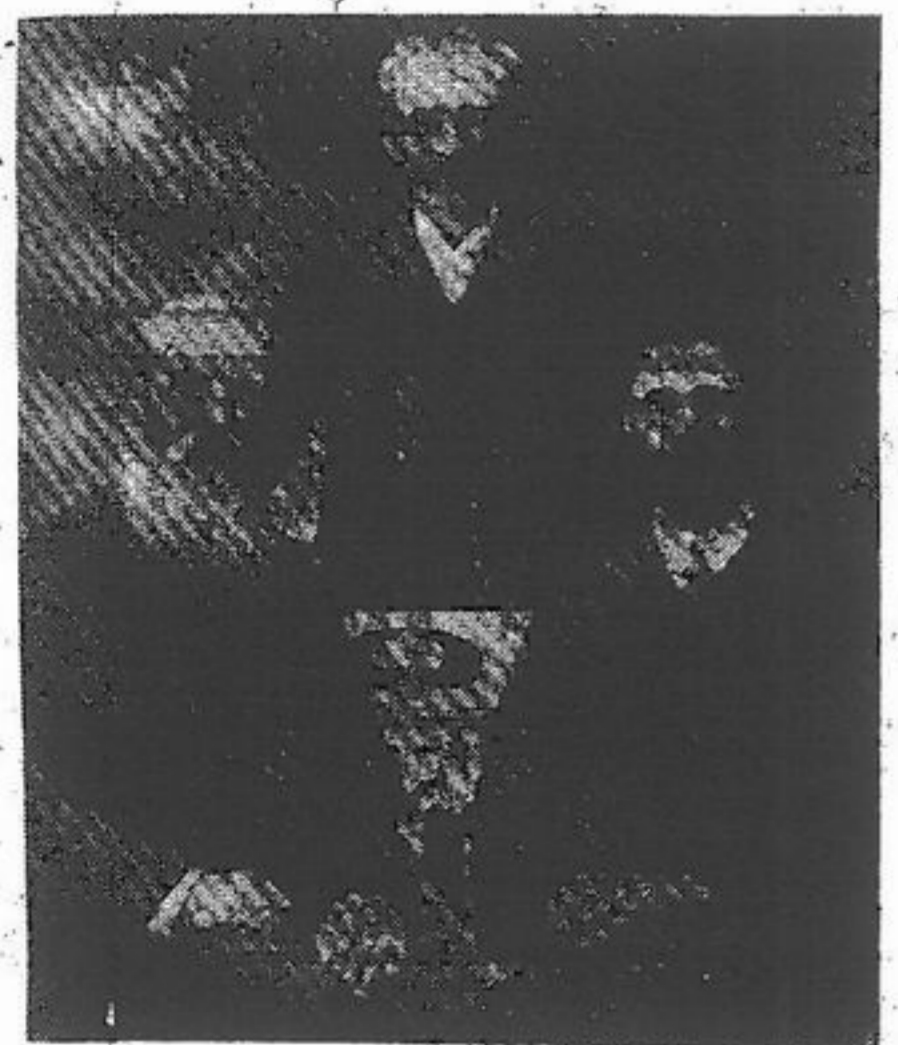
Masterful

At the Howth gun running on July 26, 1914, Captain Daly's handling of his men was characterised as cool and masterful. At the O'Donovan Rossa funeral in the summer of 1915 he was in supreme command of the Dublin Brigade. His sterling qualities of character, his courage and remarkable ability in military affairs had brought him well deserved promotion, and considering the resources of the enemy the fight raged during Easter Week, 1916, under this youthful Commander compares favourably with the battles of history.

He made numerous incursions into enemy territory with great success. He attacked, captured and demolished by fire the Limerick Barracks, a very extensive building, well garrisoned. After charge and counter-charge he drove the British military out of the Bridewell, a building abutting on his headquarters at the Law Courts. The most intensive fighting during Easter Week took place in Commandant Daly's area. Bayonet charges were of daily occurrence, and every inch of ground was contested to the last man.

Commandant Daly capitulated with the survivors of his heroic Battalion on Saturday evening, April 29, 1916. He was tried by Courtmartial on May 3, 1916, and sentenced to death. The sentence was carried out at dawn on the following day. In his final interview with his sisters he said: "Did I not think it was an honourable surrender? I for one, would never have surrendered." In concluding his sketch of Commandant Daly's career, Mr. Eamonn Dore says: "He met his death, according to the Chaplain and others, as a soldier, knowing he had fought in a just cause and firmly believing that out of what he considered his poor sacrifice Ireland would regain her national soul and rise, Phoenix-like, to smother her old oppressor and hold against all nations her long-sought freedom."

John Daly, the Fenian, pictured with Tom Clarke and Sean McDermott.



The Fenian leader, John Daly, fought in the Rising of 1867 and gave a lifetime of service to the cause of Irish freedom up to his death in June, 1916.

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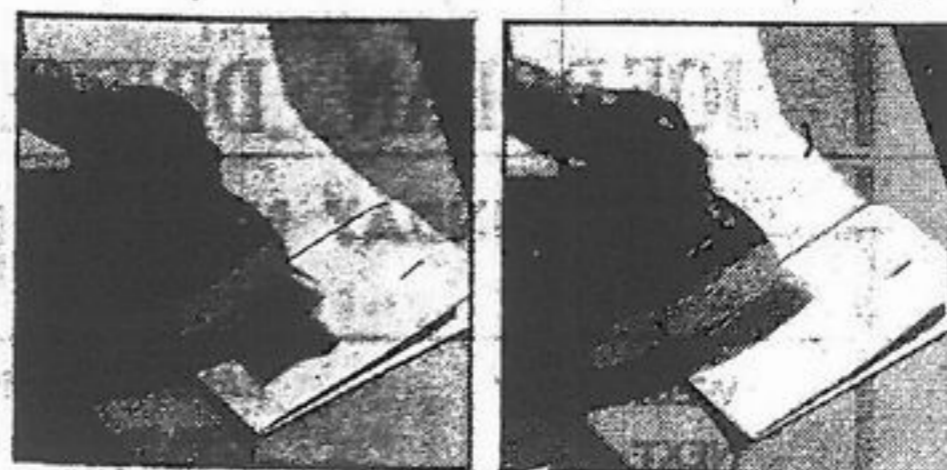
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