

Former soldiers honour those who died as POWs

By MIKE DWANE

WHEN people take the time out each November to remember fallen soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice, the image that most often springs to mind is of trench warfare and of men sent over the top to their doom by incompetent officers.

But outside of the battles proper, there are plenty of Limerick soldiers who met their ends in less "glorious" circumstances.

This month, Tadhg Moloney, Royal Munster Fusiliers Association, has visited Germany and France, where memorials stand commemorating those whose military careers ended differently—they languished in POW camps and were executed by firing squads selected from their comrades-in-arms.

Mr Moloney, Gouldavoher, and Dubliner Peter Mulvany are members of

the Irish Shot at Dawn campaign whose lobbying helped to achieve a pardon for 28 Irish soldiers, including two Limerick men, this time last year.

They have just returned from Mazingarbe, outside Lens, in Northern France, where a plaque to Pte James Graham, one of 11 men executed in an abattoir, was unveiled.

"The French decided to honour the Irish in particular," said Mr Moloney. "It's the only plaque where these men are remembered as being shot at dawn, and the only plaque we're aware of that mentions they were pardoned."

After France, Mr Moloney and Tony O'Brien, Janesboro, made a more personal pilgrimage, this time to Limburg, Germany, where Irish prisoners-of-war were kept during the Great War.

It was at Limburg, where up to 20,000 prisoners could be kept at a time, that Roger Casement, with little success, tried to recruit Irish POWs to take the fight to the British back home.

Mr O'Brien and Mr



Peter Mulvany, Dublin, and Tadhg Moloney, Gouldavoher, of the Irish Shot at Dawn campaign, at the unveiling of the memorial in Mazingarbe, France, to Irish soldiers executed during the Great War

Moloney have relations who were held as POWs in Germany. They returned this month to Limburg, exactly a year after they made a donation of €10,000 for the restoration of a Celtic Cross that commemorates the members the Irish soldiers who died there.

Half the money collected by the Friends of the

Limburg Celtic Cross was donated by the Government, the remainder from military associations and private donors.

"There were 45 Irish with different regiments who died in captivity there. The cross was erected at the instigation of the Catholic chaplain there, Fr Crotty.

"It cost around 7,000 marks, or about £350,

when it was put up in 1917. It was the only memorial that was actually erected during the war itself, and it was something special for the German authorities to give it the go-ahead," Mr Moloney said.

Over the years, the 10-tonne cross got weather-beaten and the names inscribed there obscured. A rededication ceremony

was held last week at Limburg, attended by the two Limerick men, Adrian Farrell of the Irish Embassy in Berlin, and William Barlow, an Englishman whose father died at Limburg.

Two of the Limerick soldiers who died as POWs at Limburg were Patrick Kerins of Ballybricken, and David Madden of Newcastle West.

Judge threatens he may strike out cell phone case

A JUDGE has threatened to strike out the case of a convicted drugs mule, who is accused of having a mobile phone while serving a lengthy sentence at Limerick Prison, writes David Hurley.

Earlier this year Denis Kelly, 20, who is originally from north Cork received a six-year sentence after he was caught with heroin worth almost €500,000 at Goog, Castleconnell, in August 2006.

Last month, Mr Kelly became the first inmate to

be charged with having a mobile phone inside Limerick Prison. He was before Limerick Court on October 16 after he was arrested by gardai and charged with having the phone last April 20 without the permission of the prison governor.

When Mr Kelly was in court again on Tuesday, Insp Pat Connolly said directions were not available from the DPP.

In response solicitor John Devane said: "Surely it should be easy enough to

get directions given the fact that this case first came before the court over a month ago."

Judge Tom O'Donnell said: "I now think we are getting into nonsense territory," and said he would strike out the charges if the directions were not available by December 12.

According to the 2007 Prisons Act any prisoner convicted of possession of a mobile phone faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison and/or a fine of up to €5,000.

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Court detains 'out of control teen' for trying to steal bike

By KATHRYN HAYES

THE father of an "out of control" teenager, who told a judge that he would not accompany his son to court anymore, has apologised for his remarks.

Last week at the Children's Court in Limerick Judge Tom O'Donnell warned the man that he could be arrested if he didn't show up for his son's court case.

In a direct address to the court, the man said he had been attending

Despite his threat the man did appear in court yesterday for his son's hearing after which he apologised to Judge O'Donnell for the remarks he made last week.

Judge O'Donnell said he appreciated the fact that the man had come to court but said "enough is enough" and sentenced the 17-year-old to six months' detention after he admitted trying to steal a bike from a Garda station.

"The reality is this young man is out of control," said Judge O'Donnell.

The 17-year-old, who has 22 previous convictions, pleaded guilty to trying to steal a quad bike from Roxboro Garda Station in Limerick on November 6 last.

Defence solicitor Andrew Darcy described the offence as one of "complete and utter stupidity" and said his client was under the influence of drugs at the time.

because he "needed a few quid".

Judge O'Donnell said the teenager had not engaged with the probation or health services according to a report carried out by the HSE and that he had been found at home asleep on the couch intoxicated.

He added that despite receiving previous sentences earlier this year the youth still walked "brazenly" into Roxboro Garda station and tried to steal a bike.

