

IRA memorial by President Sean T recalled

By MARTIN BYRNES

EXACTLY 48 years ago this weekend, President Sean T O Ceallaigh unveiled the Old IRA memorial at Ballylanders, commemorating the 13 officers and men of the Galtee Battalion of the Irish Volunteers, 1916 to

1921, who had died in action.

The ceremony, on August 29, 1954, entailed two unveilings. The second, a more intimate affair, was the dedication by the President of a twelve-foot cross at the Republican Plot in the local cemetery, where many of those being commemorated lay buried.

But the big event was the unveiling of the obelisk at the Square, the

junction of the Galbally, Knocklong, Mitchelstown and Killfinane roads. An unusual combination of the secular and the religious, the limestone plinth is topped by a six-foot marble representation of the Blessed Virgin, while beneath are carved the names of the dead, and the Latin inscription: Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori, meaning: It is sweet and proper to die for one's fatherland.

The enormous crowd

which attended the Ballylanders ceremony in 1954 included many who had themselves been active in the War of Independence, a conflict which had ended just thirty years before.

A special souvenir programme was produced for the occasion and sold for a (for the time) quite considerable sum of a shilling.

From our archive, the Limerick Leader's Sean Curtin has selected some images to remember that day.



B.L. Anderson