

BATTLE OF
MONS AND ÉTREUX

CATH MONS
AGUS ÉTREUX

MONS & ÉTREUX



Soldiers resting in the city of Mons, one day before the German attack
Saighdiúirí ar sos i gcathair Mons, lá roimh ionsaí na Gearmáine

The German Army invaded neutral Belgium on 4th August, planning to defeat France as quickly as possible before moving the war east to Russia. They advanced towards Paris through Mons and Étreux.

However, time was against the advancing German Forces and they were stopped at the Battle of the Marne just outside Paris.

Rinne Arm na Gearmáine ionradh ar an mBeilg neodrach an 4 Lúnasa, ag súil leis an Fhrainc a chur faoi chois a luaithe ab fhéidir sula gcasfaí ar an oirthear agus ar an Rúis. Rinne siad a mbealach go Páras trí Mons agus Étreux.

Ach níor thráth moille é d'fhórsaí na Gearmáine agus cuireadh stad leo ag Cath Marne, díreach lasmuigh de Pháras.

First Shots

The first shots of the British Army were fired on 22nd August outside of Mons, Belgium, by the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards. The Irish Regiments were eventually forced to retreat due to the overwhelming numbers and firepower of the Germans during the Battle of Mons.

Though they were highly trained, this was a very different kind of fighting than colonial warfare, and these regular soldiers suffered heavy casualties as they learned its new rules.

Na Chéad Philéir

Ba iad Ceathrú Garda Dragúin Ríoga na hÉireann a scaoil na chéad philéir Arm na Breataine an 22 Lúnasa lasmuigh de Mons, an Bheilg. Ar deireadh, b'éigean do na Reisimintí Éireannacha teitheadh roimh an líon mór Gearmánach agus armlóin a bhí os a gcomhair ag Mons.

Bhí ardoiliúint ar na reisimintí Éireannacha ach níorbh ionann an chogaíocht seo agus an chogaíocht sna coilínigh. Maraíodh na mílte díobh agus iad ag iarraidh dul i dtaithí ar shaghas nua cogaíochta.



Early in the war, soldiers fought in the open
Throid na saighdiúirí amuigh faoin aer ag tús an chogaidh



Map of the Western Front, showing German advance, Mons, Étreux and Marne.
Léarscáil den Fhronta Thiar, a thaispeánann ruathar na Gearmáine, Mons, Étreux agus Marne.

Battle of Étreux

The 2nd Battalion of Royal Munster Fusiliers was in England during the summer of 1914, and left there for the France at the outbreak of war. During the retreat from the town of Mons they fought the German advance in Étreux, gaining valuable time for the rest of the Army to escape.

Surrounded for 12 hours by 3,000 German soldiers, they lost 9 officers and 118 soldiers and only surrendered when they had run out of ammunition. The remainder became prisoners of war.

Cath Étreux

Bhí an 2ú Cathlán d'Fhiúsailéirí Ríoga na Mumhan i Sasana i samhradh 1914 agus chuaighsiad as sin chun na Fraince ar fhógairt an chogaidh. Sa chúlú ó bhaile Mons, throid siad in aghaidh chéad línte na nGearmánach ag Étreux, rud a thug deis éalaithe don chuid eile den Arm.

Chaith siad 12 uair an chloig, agus iad timpeallaithe ag 3,000 saighdiúir Gearmánach. Le linn an ama sin chaill siad 9 n-oifigeach agus 118 saighdiúir. Níor ghéill siad nó go raibh gach lón cogaidh caite. Gabhadh an chuid eile ina bpríosúnaigh chogaidh.



William Foley

captive for years

In 1914, soldier William Foley of Cork was 33 years old, with a wife and two small sons. When war broke out his battalion of the Royal Munster Fusiliers (then stationed in England) was sent to France.

William was captured at Étreux in the first month of the war. As a result, he would not see his wife and boys for almost four and half years.

Discharged from the British Army, in 1922 he enlisted in the Irish Army.

1. World War 1 medals of William Foley of Cork, Royal Munster Fusiliers. Loan Adrian Foley

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Nuair a scaoileadh leis ó Arm na Breataine i 1922, liostáil sé in Arm na hÉireann.

1. Boinn ón gCéad Chogadh Dombanda de chuid William Foley, Fíuailéirí Ríoga na Mumhan. Iasacht Adrian Foley



Michael Costello

undocumented bravery

These medals belonged to a brave Irishman, but the details of his story, like those of many others, are now lost. They were awarded to Michael Costello, who served as a driver with the Royal Field Artillery, delivering ammunition and food to the gunners, and bringing injured men back to hospital.

The Military Medal (on the far left) was awarded ‘for bravery in the field’, but unlike awards to officers, awards to enlisted men were not usually documented.

2. World War 1 medals & Bravery in the Field medal of Michael Costello. HA:2012.31

Michael Costello

crógacht neamhthuairiscithe

Baineann na boinn seo le hÉireannach cróga, ach níl sonraí a scéil, mar is amhlaidh i gcás mórchuid scéalta eile dá shórt, againn níos mó. Ar Michael Costello a bronnadh iad, fear a bhí ina thiománaí leis an Airtléire Ríoga Machaire, ag dáileadh armlóin agus bia ar ghunnadóirí, agus ag tabhairt fir ghonta ar ais go dtí an t-ospidéal.

Bronnadh an Bonn Míleata (i bhfad ar chlé) air as ‘crógacht sa mhachaire’, ach murab ionann agus gradaim na n-oifigeach, níor ghnách na gradaim a bronnadh ar fhir liostáilte a dhoiciméadú.

2. Boinn ón gCéad Chogadh Dombanda agus bonn as Crógacht sa Mhachaire, a bronnadh ar Michael Costello. HA:2012.31



Michael Crean

recalled to life

The letter inscribed in brass tells a poignant story of loss and renewal. Lance Corporal Crean of the Royal Munster Fusiliers was reported missing and presumed killed in October 1914. However a few weeks later his mother, living in Bandon, Co. Cork, received a letter from Michael. Her son was a prisoner of war in Germany, having been captured at Étreux. His letter was reproduced in brass to commemorate his survival. Michael returned to Ireland in 1919.

3. Framed set of World War 1 medals, badges, ribbons and reproduced letter of Michael Crean of Bandon, Co. Cork, Royal Munster Fusiliers. Loan Francis O'Connor

Michael Crean

athghairm chun na beatha

Scéal truamhéalach caillteanais agus athnuachana atá sa litir seo atá inscríofa i bprás. Tuairiscíodh go raibh an leascheannaire Crean as Fíúsailéirí Ríoga na Mumhan ar iarraidh i nDeireadh Fómhair 1914 agus ba dhócha go raibh sé marbh. Ach cúpla seachtain níos déanaí, fuair a mháthair, a chónaigh i nDroichead na Bandan, Co. Chorcaigh, litir ó Michael. Príosúnach cogaidh ab é sa Ghearmáin; gabhadh é ag Étreux. Atáirgeadh a litir i bprás mar chomóradh ar a theacht slán. D’fhill Michael ar Éirinn i 1919.

3. Foireann frámaithe de bhoinn, suaitheantais, ribíní agus litir atáirgthe ón gCéad Chogadh Dombanda, de chuid Michael Crean ó Dhroichead na Bandan, Co. Chorcaí, Fíuailéirí Ríoga na Mumhan. Iasacht Francis O'Connor

COLOURED WAR FOOTAGE, 1914

PÍOSA SCANNÁIN COGAIDH DATHACH, 1914



William Egan

army doctor

33-year-old William Egan of Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, was an experienced British army doctor in 1914. He was captured during the initial battles around Mons, and spent time in a German prisoner of war camp, as can be seen by the inscription on his suitcase.

As a non-combatant, William was released in a prisoner exchange in June 1915. He continued his active service for another three years, treating wounded soldiers in Malta, Gallipoli, and on the Western Front.

4. Personal objects of William Egan; binoculars in leather case, suitcase, inkpot, glasses case and service book. HA:2005.75

William Egan

dochtúir airm

Dochtúir cleachtach in Arm na Breataine ab ea William Egan, as Dún Garbháin, Co. Phort Láirge, i 1914. Bhí sé 33 bliain d’aois. Gabhadh é le linn na gcéad chathanna i gceantar Mons, agus chaith sé seal i gcampa Gearmánach do phríosúnaigh chogaidh, mar a fheicfear ón inscríbhinn ar a chás.

Toisc nár throdaí é, scaoileadh William saor i malartú príosúnach i Meitheamh 1915. Bhí sé ar fiannas go ceann trí bliana eile, ag cur cóir leighis ar shaighdiúirí gonta i Málta, Gallipoli agus ar an bhFronta Thiar.

4. Rudaí pearsanta de chuid William Egan; deábhailigh i gcás leathbair, cás, pota dúiligh, cás spéaclaí agus leabhar seirbhíse. HA:2005.75



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