

encourage recruitment. The 8th Battalion had been raised under Army Order 352 of 11 September 1914 at Buttevant Barracks, County Cork and became part the 47th Infantry Brigade of the 16th (Irish) Division, under the command of Lieut.-General Parsons initially and then Major-General Sir William Bernard Hickie, which had been set aside for members of the Irish National Volunteers. It was composed of men that were for the most part recruited from Limerick City and County and was the only regular or service battalion of the regiment where County Limerick soldiers outnumbered those from the more populous County Cork, which was the most striking feature of the battalion. The 8th Battalion trained at Buttevant, Fermoy, Mitchelstown, Kilworth Camp and Templemore before moving to England to complete its training. It proceeded to France on 17 December 1915 and arrived at Le Havre on board the *Empress Queen* the next day.

Around the period of time that the placards were captured and to further highlight the strong connection that the battalion had with Limerick, the nuns of the Good Shepherd Convent in the city made a religious banner depicting the Sacred Heart, which was subscribed for by public donation of not more than one shilling per person. It was then sent to the battalion where Major Larry Roche, who was delighted that the people from his home county had sent the banner, wrote that 'the banner so kindly sent by the good people of Limerick was greatly admired by all that Limerick muscle and brains would yet make the Hun regret their attacks which were considered to be barbarous and furious on civilisation'. This religious banner was apparently found in later years at the home of Major Roche at Dromin and is now exhibited in the museum in Kilmallock town. The battalion also participated in the battles of Guillemont and Ginchy during the month of September the same year and was absorbed by the 1st Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers on 23 November 1916. Following the establishment of the Irish Free State the Royal Munster Fusiliers ceased to exist, being disbanded on 31 July 1922. The placards are now held in the Imperial War Museum, London.

Tadhg Moloney

A milestone on the Dock Road, Limerick

A milestone, approximately three feet in height, survives on the Dock Road, Limerick on the footpath outside the former Irish Wire Factory near the junction with Summerville Avenue. It indicates that Tarbert is 34 miles distant, and Limerick is one mile distant: however, the distances are indicated in numbers only. Milestones were generally measured to and from significant buildings, usually connected with central or local government and interestingly the former Custom House, now the Hunt Museum, on Rutland Street is exactly one mile from the stone. In the *Irish Historic Town Atlas, No. 21, Limerick*, map 27 shows, in various colours, the growth of the city in different periods of its history. The milestone is marked on this map just beside the roadway, the colour of which indicates that it was built in the period 1840-1900.

There are no buildings between the milestone and the river; it was placed on what was up to 1900 a green-field site. The stone has suffered a lot of wear and tear, but still survives, which hopefully, it will continue to do for many years.



Charlotte Murphy