

FIRST & SECOND WORLD WARS

Captured thirty
of the enemy

SLIGO MAN AWARDED VC

PRIVATE Martin
Moffatt, 2nd Battalion
Leinster Regiment, son of
Mr. and Mrs. Martin
Moffatt, Knappagh Road,
Sligo, was awarded the
Victoria Cross in
1918—one of only three
to beawed the
honour in Ireland.

The citation read: "For most
conspicuous bravery and
devotion to duty on October

14, 1918, near Lechhem
when, advancing with five
party suddenly came under
heavy rifle fire at close range
from a strongly held house.
Running towards the house
through a hall of bullets,
Private Moffatt threw bombs,
and then, working to the back
of the house, rolled the door
and made a hole through which
capturing thirty of the enemy.

He displayed the greatest
valour and initiative."

After being presented with
the V.C. by King George V, at
Buckingham Palace, Private
Moffatt arrived home to a
reception in his honour. He
was met by a huge crowd at
Sligo Station. A guard of
honour drawn from military
stationed in Sligo and a
guard of honour escorted him
to Sligo Courthouse where a
presentation was made. Flags
were hung from houses and a
huge banner was strung across
Wine Street. The presentation

was made on the Courthouse
steps by Major General
Sir Edward Mallon, for the war
hero had been organised in
Sligo which amounted to £134.
Contributions were received
from all over the county. Moffatt was presented
with a £100 War Bond, £30 in
cash, an inscribed gold watch
from the 2nd Leinster, a silver
cigarette case bearing the
Regiment's crest, and a gold-
centred silver medal by Mr.
and Mrs. McHugh, George's
parents.



Private Moffatt receiving a presentation at Sligo Courthouse.

Martin Moffatt awarded the Victoria Cross



War medals

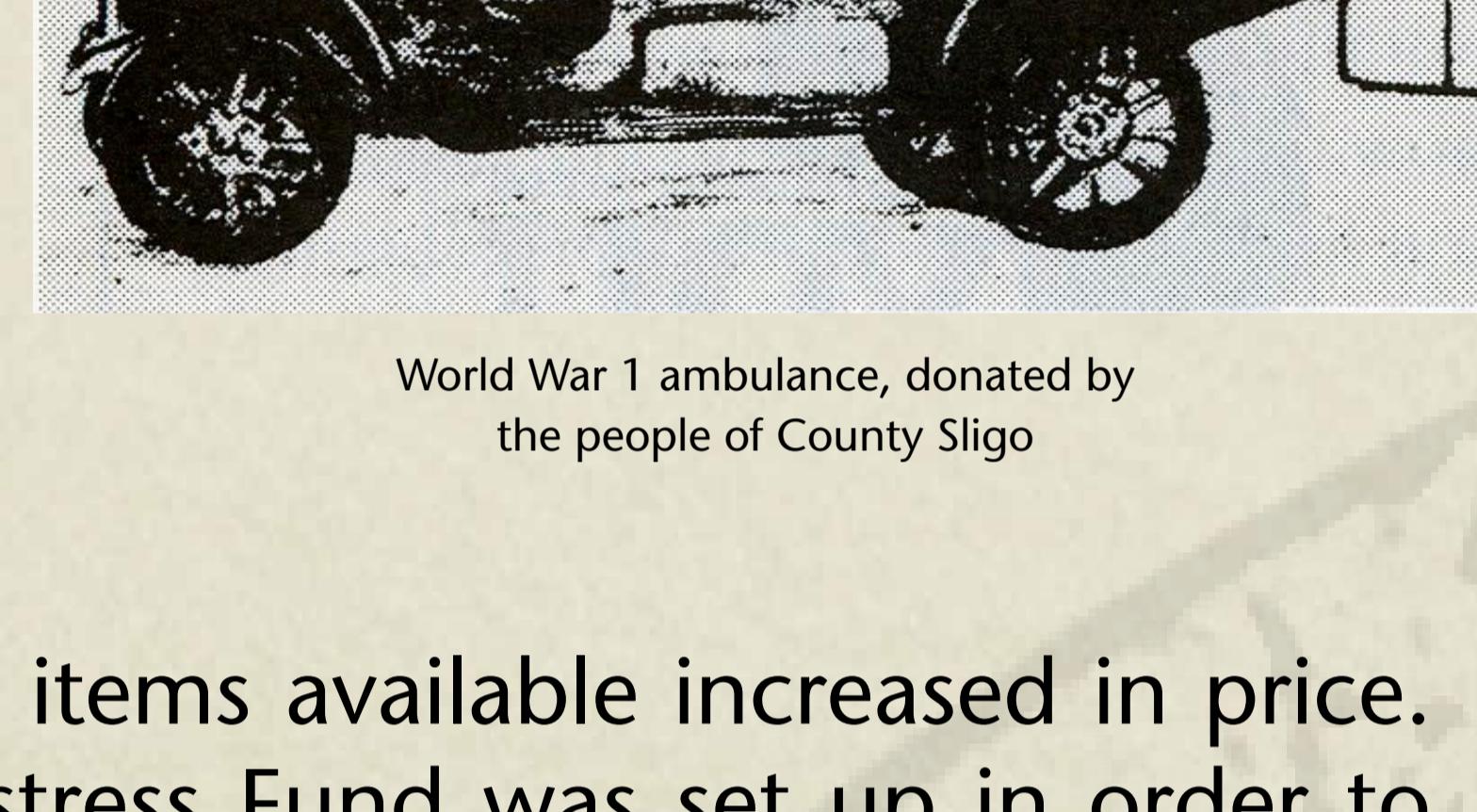


1914

On 24th August 1914 Joe Leydon from Collooney became the first Sligo casualty when he was killed.

Seven Conlon brothers from Sligo town went to the war.

It took only two weeks to collect £420.00 in Sligo to provide an ambulance at the front. The inscription on the ambulance read as follows: "Presented by The Town and County of Sligo, Ireland."



World War I ambulance, donated by the people of County Sligo

There were shortages of basic foodstuffs in Sligo as a result of the war and the items available increased in price. In order to help, a War Distress Fund was set up in order to alleviate the hardship.

In November five families of Belgian refugees arrived in Sligo, a total of twenty four people.

Patrick Jinks, the eldest son of the Mayor of Sligo, John Jinks, enlisted and went to the front.

1915

Two members of the Wood Martin family were killed in the war. Captain F.W. in February and Captain James in March.

1916

Private P. Keely and Corporal McSharry, both members of Sligo Corporation, serving at the front, were allowed home on leave to vote for John Jinks in the Mayoral contest. Jinks won the contest by two votes.

In March 1916 it was estimated that there were approximately 1,300 Sligo men serving at the front.

Between the 15th October 1916 and the 15th January 1917, only 30 men joined up.

1917

Between January and July 1917, only 44 men from the county volunteered for service.

World War I Death Plaque ('Dead Man's Penny') struck in memory of the fallen. Michael O'Connor, Sapper Royal Engineers, killed in France on 2nd July 1917.

1918

Between January and June only 31 men from the county were recruited.

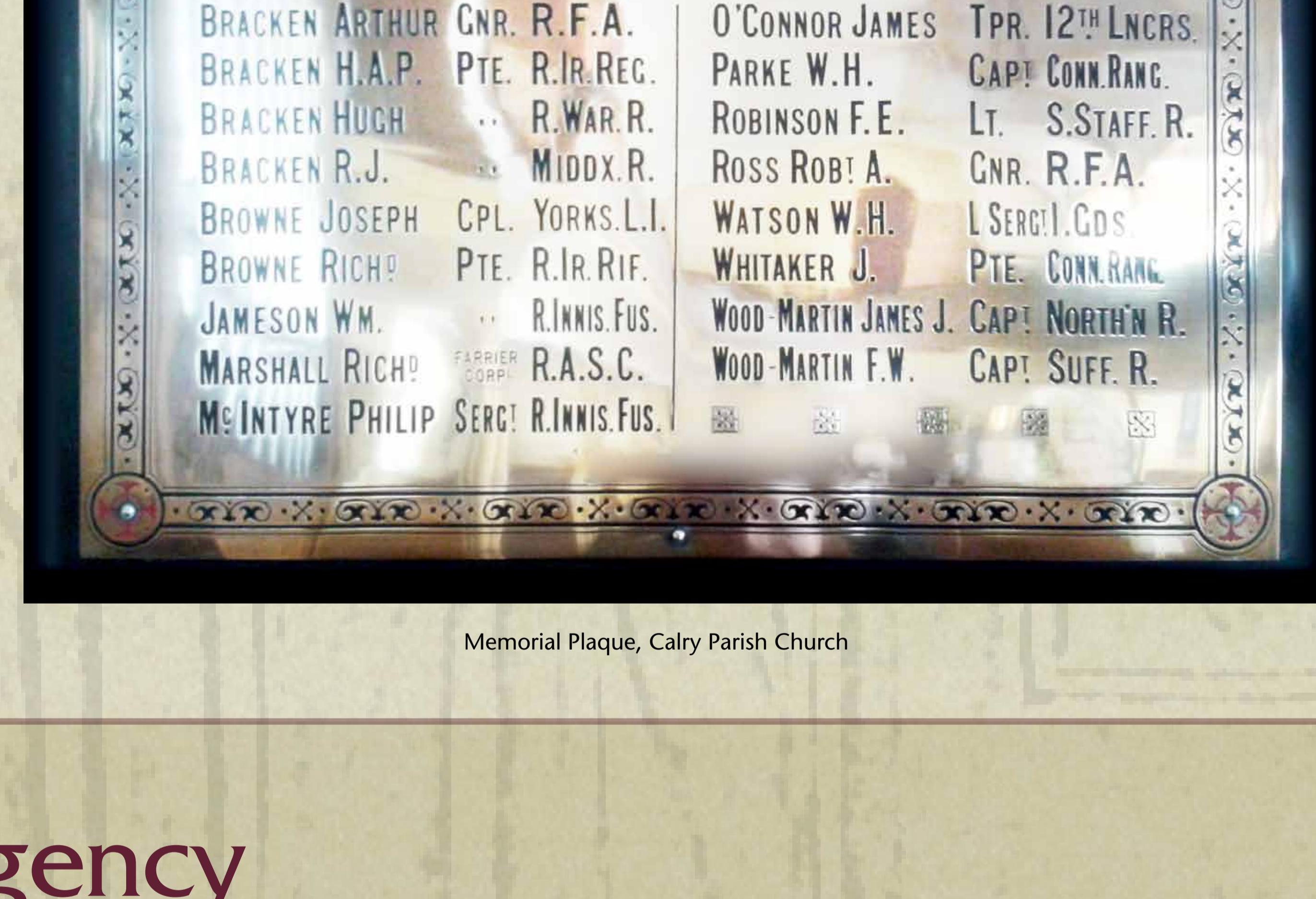
The Red Cross collection in Co. Sligo quadrupled. In 1917 the collection reached £308.00 but in 1918 it jumped to £1,224.00.

In October 1918 Martin Moffatt from Sligo won the Victoria Cross whilst fighting in France.

A total of 64 prisoners from Sligo town and county were listed as prisoners of war in Germany and Turkey during the war.

James Cunnane from Sligo was killed the day after the war ended.

About 1,000 from Sligo town and 500 from Co. Sligo served in the First World War. Over 400 were killed.



Memorial Plaque, Calry Parish Church

World War Two – The Emergency

About 1,000 men from Co. Sligo served in the British armed forces during the Second World War while thousands more left for Britain to work in factories producing war material.

Among those at Dunkirk were 2nd Lt. J.W. Lyons from Thornhill, G. Mitchell of Holborn St. (wounded) and Guardsman D. Smyllie from Knappagh Road (missing) all hailing from Sligo.

Sligo port was very badly affected by the Emergency and fewer vessels entered the port.

In April 1941 anti-invasion exercises carried out in Sligo-Leitrim. That same month saw the arrival of bombed out refugees from Belfast, that city having suffered Luftwaffe air attacks.

In March 1941 a Catalina Flying Boat from 240 Squadron, Castle Archdale crashed into the side of the mountain near Glenade, Co. Leitrim, nine bodies were later recovered from wreckage.

On 5th December 1942 a Flying Fortress was forced to land on Mullaghmore beach. The crew and aircraft later returned to Northern Ireland.

In December 1943 a Flying Fortress B-24 bomber crashed into the side of Truskmore Mountain near Ballintrillick, Co. Sligo. Three men died in the crash. However, local people and the Local Defence Force saved seven injured survivors.

