

## 18th Royal Irish Regiment in New Zealand

St John's Anglican Church, Drury

On Wednesday, 6 June 2012 in St. John's Churchyard at Drury, South Auckland, New Zealand, a Memorial was uncovered to recognise a small number of soldiers who died during the New Zealand Wars, close to 150 years ago.

These men did not fall in battle but died of other causes and until now their names had not been recorded on a memorial to honour their service in this Country.

This Memorial Headstone, erected by the New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, names six men from the 18th Royal Irish Regiment, two from the 65th Regiment and one from the 1st Waikato Regiment.



These men of the 18th Royal Irish Regiment died between September & November 1863.

According to official documentation their places of birth are as follows:

John O'NEILL born in Longford, a labourer, enlisted on the 23 August 1858

Patrick KENNEDY born in Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, a labourer, enlisted 5 March 1862

Daniel CARROLL born in Dublin, a tailor, enlisted 5 March 1859

John MORAN born in Wicklow, a labourer, enlisted 22 July 1859

James MURRAY born in Dublin, a labourer, enlisted 23 August 1858

John O'MEALLY born in Borrisokane, Co. Tipperary, a servant, enlisted 2 December 1859

The 18th Royal Irish Regiment 2nd Battalion, nicknamed Paddy's Blackguards, came to New Zealand on two ships; the *Elizabeth Ann Bright* which arrived at Port of Auckland on the 2 July 1863 with 28 Officers and 688 Rank and File soldiers while the remainder of this Regiment arrived at Auckland on the *Norwood* 2 August 1863. They were formed mainly of Volunteers from the Irish Militia and were soon involved in skirmishes in Drury and surrounding areas of the North Waikato.

This Memorial Headstone was unveiled by the Honorary Consul General for Ireland in New Zealand, Rodney Walshe, and the dedication was conducted jointly by Father Peter Murphy of St. Mary's Catholic Parish and the Reverend Dion Blundell from the Papakura Anglican Parish.



To help make this special day more realistic two Soldiers from the 65th Re-enactment Unit dressed in 19th century uniform and are seen here with the Honorary Consul General for Ireland in New Zealand, Rodney Walshe.



The New Zealand Army was represented by Soldiers from the 3rd Auckland North Battalion and members of the Papakura RSA also attended the short but moving ceremony.

Many local Genealogists and Historians were also on hand to witness the final act in a long struggle to have these Soldiers' names recorded on a Memorial.

Details of this ceremony and photos provided by Donald McFadzean June 2012

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