

CAPTAIN GERALD ROBERT O'SULLIVAN, V.C.,
 OF THE
 27th ROYAL INNISKILLING FUSILIERS.



BORN at Frankfield, Douglas, Co. Cork on November 8th, 1888, Captain Gerald Robert O'Sullivan, V.C., was the son of the late Lieut-Colonel George Lidwill O'Sullivan and of Mrs O'Sullivan of The Rowan House, Dorchester.

He was educated at Wimbledon College, by private tutors, and at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst.

His early fulfilled in later gathered from extract from a of his masters

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promise so well years may be the following letter from one at Wimbledon.

here as a small in 1899, to pre- the Navy and period at Little- turned to Class, which he in 1906. He was among the boys and distinguish- by fearlessness football field brated free fight the Science tory with low, now Capt. Military Cross.”

He was gazetted to the 1st Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers on May 15th, 1909, and on September 15th of the same year left England for Tientsin, N. China, where he served with his Regiment for three years, seeing considerable fighting during the Chinese Rebellion 1910 to 1912, though the British Troops

took no part in it. Capt. O'Sullivan left China for Secunderabad, Central India, in the Autumn of 1912.

He returned to England in December, 1914, and after two months in Rugby, where his Regiment was stationed, left England on St. Patrick's day, March 17th, 1915, with, in the words of Sir Ian Hamilton, "The Incomparable 29th Division" of which his Regiment formed part. They landed in Gallipoli on April 25th, and soon after he received his Captaincy.

On May 18th, Captain O'Sullivan was wounded slightly and again in June, but did not go on sick leave until he was wounded on the night of July 1st, on which night he was also recommended for the V.C.

The story of his bravery as officially told is that on the night of July 1-2, 1915, when it was essential that a portion of a trench which had been lost should be regained, Capt. O'Sullivan, although not belonging to the troops at this point, volunteered to lead a party of bomb throwers to effect the recapture.

He advanced in the open under a very heavy fire, and, in order to throw his bombs with greater effect, got up on the parapet, where he was completely exposed to the fire of the enemy occupying the trench.

He was finally wounded, but not before his inspiring example had led on his party to make further efforts which resulted in the recapture of the trench.

Equally gallant had been his conduct on the night of June 18-19, 1915, when he saved a critical situation in the same locality by his great personal bravery and leadership.

Capt. O'Sullivan was in hospital in Alexandria until August 6th, when he returned to the Peninsula, and on the 21st was reported "missing" after the charge on Hill 70 at Suvla Bay. Conflicting accounts for some time gave rise to the hope that he was a prisoner in the hands of the Turks, but this hope had gradually to be relinquished. A private in a different Company stated:—

"The Brigade was attacking a hill in Turkish hands and the Captain came up behind my platoon leading his Company, I saw him jump into a Turkish trench and turn to the right, after which I saw him no more. As he jumped in he called out 'Follow me, A Co.' and about three men followed him, none of those four have been seen since. The Battalion was forced to retire about 5 to 10 minutes after the Captain jumped into the trench. The Turks counter-attacked very strongly, some of them got up very close, they were in British uniform. The Captain was the bravest man I've ever seen."

Another private, who was in the charge, stated that he saw Capt. O'Sullivan shot and apparently killed instantly.

"I write a few lines on behalf of the few who are left in the Regiment to offer you our united, deep and sincere sympathies in your terrible anxiety, which I can assure you is shared by us all,"

wrote Captain Reilly,

"And secondly our most hearty congratulations on the magnificent performance of your son both on June 18th and July 1st, for which he was awarded the V.C. I last saw him about 2 p.m. on August 21st, just before we started our attack that afternoon. Gerald's Company was in the first line to attack, and they had to take a trench at the top of the hill. They took the trench all right, but about half-an-hour later were driven back again by a very strong counter attack, but Gerald, or in fact any of the officers of the 'A' Company were not among those who came back, but some of his men said they saw him fall Shortly afterwards, when our men had been reinforced and re-organised, they made another charge, retaking the trench again, but no trace of Gerald could be found, so we had search parties out all over the ground over which he had been, and they continued bringing in dead and wounded all night, but still there was no sign of Gerald or his other Officers."

The tributes to Capt. O'Sullivan's courage were many, amongst others is the following:—

"I need hardly say how well your brother has done throughout this campaign and how proud we are of him and his V.C. On this occasion, as on others, he was a dashing leader and a real brave man."

Another reads:—

"No one could ever have a better friend, and I am certain that no man who has got the V.C. in this war, deserved it more than he."

Although he had been in Command of the Battalion only a week the C.O. added his testimony:—

"The battalion thrice assaulted, without flinching, a hill in the enemy's position which it was found impossible to hold men and officers upheld the reputation of the Regiment and the Division which has now gained the name of the 'Incomparable 29th Division'."

No marble cross or sculptured urn marks the grave of this gallant gentleman but his memory will live in the annals of his country's heroes, whilst his soul has joined that immortal band of men, who having much, have given much and won eternal Peace