

November 5, 2018



## **Enniskillen bells rang celebrating end of war before rest of the UK knew**

**November 5, 2018**

It may be on the western edge of Europe, but Enniskillen claims to have been the first place in the UK to celebrate the Armistice.

The news reportedly broke in the Co Fermanagh town before it did in London, Edinburgh, Manchester or Dublin on November 11, 1918 thanks to a local wireless operator.

The message had been sent from Paris by the Armed Forces Commander in Chief, Marshal Ferdinand Foch, announcing the time for the cessation of hostilities.

It read: “Hostilities will cease on the whole front from November 11, at 11 o’clock.

“The Allied troops will not, until further orders, go beyond the line reached on that day and at that hour.”

Historian Selwyn Johnston said there had been an “element of luck” that a radio operator at an army barracks in Enniskillen had picked up the message so quickly.

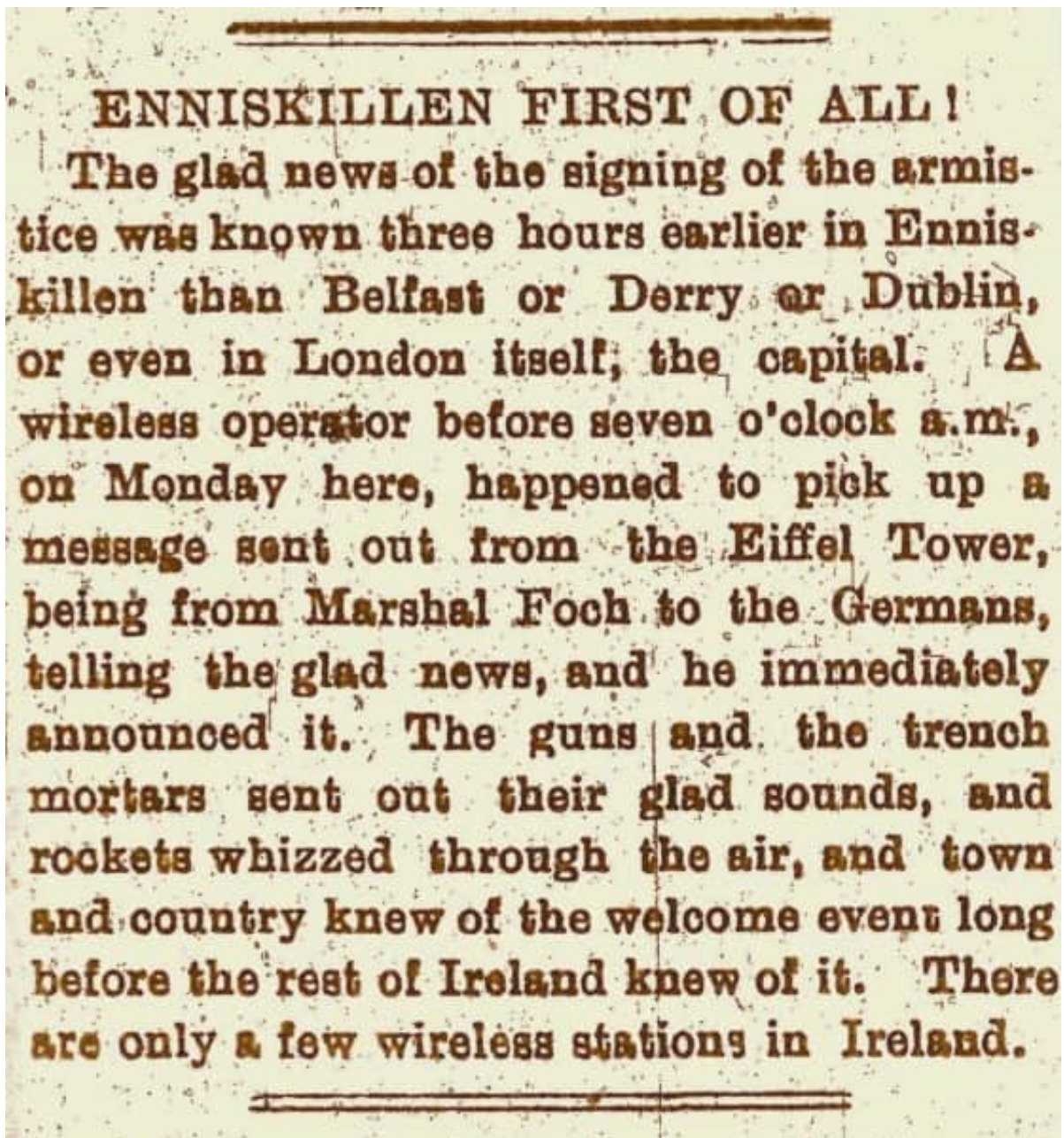
“The radio operator was on standby, sensing that news was imminent,” he told the Press Association.

“The conditions permitted that the message was strong enough to be picked up in Enniskillen.

“He was able to translate the message from French to English.

“He immediately reacted to the news and fired skyrocket into the air and ran to the parish church, through the back





**A newspaper clipping from The Impartial Reporter claiming that Enniskillen in Co Fermanagh was the first place in the UK to celebrate the Armistice.**

streets which had been come to be known as the Dardanelles, to ring the bells.

“The bells rang before 7am and proclaimed the Armistice, three hours before Dublin, Belfast, London or Edinburgh.

November 5, 2018

“In fact many of the other radio operators from the towns and cities contacted Enniskillen to confirm what they had heard, because they had not picked up the message.

“Services of thanksgiving were quickly held that morning, even before other towns and cities were aware of the news.”

The local newspapers at the time reported that the news “spread like wildfire”, and was accompanied by the firing of guns, the launch of rockets from the military barracks and the pealing of church bells.

The streets were bedecked with flags, the pupils of Portora Royal School lit a bonfire on the hill at the school and formed a torchlight procession.

Mr Johnston said that Enniskillen had been first with the news was well known in 1918, but over the decades had slipped out of general knowledge.

“During my research when I examined the newspapers of the time I was amazed to find that Enniskillen was the first town in the UK to proclaim the armistice,” he said.

Mr Johnston said the bells had not been rung in the churches since the start of the First World War, so their ringing caused huge excitement.

“Unfortunately the armistice was too late for some, and the newspaper records one woman, amidst the rejoicing on hearing the good news, sharing that she had just received a telegram that morning to say that her son had been killed.

**November 5, 2018**

“How sad to lose your life in the final days and hours before the Armistice,” he said. “It’s hard to imagine a time with no mobile phones, televisions or computers when morse code messages, skyrocketers, bells and posters were the only means of communicating.”

This year Enniskillen will mark Armistice Day with a series of events starting at 6am at the castle, when 1,000 pipers will play When the Battle’s O’er, a traditional tune played after battle.

The Inniskillings Museum curator-manager Neil Armstrong said: “Armistice morning before sunrise at the iconic Enniskillen Castle will be an evocative start to our community commemorations.”

A lasting legacy of the event will be the lighting of the cathedral clock (for the first time) which will remain a beacon of hope for future generations. Report courtesy the News Letter

## **Moderator’s tour of East Belfast Presbytery is underway**

Visits to schools, community groups, the police service, Army, hospital services, local congregations their ministers and pastoral staff have all been included in this week’s Presbytery tour of East Belfast, which the Moderator began yesterday.

“I am very much looking forward to visiting the Presbytery of East Belfast,” Dr McMullen said. “On my visit to the [Templepatrick Presbytery last month](#), I became very aware of so many good news stories in the wider



November 5, 2018

community, where many of our Presbyterian members are making such a positive difference for good. I have no doubt that I will find that same sense of commitment to people and the outworking of the love of Christ and his gospel in East Belfast.



“The visit will give me an opportunity to come alongside congregations and experience at first hand a wide range of innovative ministries that seek to advance Christ’s Kingdom. Barbara and I are always keen, if at all possible, to pray for manse families and to encourage them. We will also be meeting students, licentiates, pastoral workers, ministers in specialised areas and those who are retired.

A major focus for the tour will be to meet local ministers, pastoral staff and church members, seeing their work on the ground and some of the services the denomination

**November 5, 2018**

provides centrally. This includes a visit to Aaron House in Dundonald, the church's residential care home for people with a profound learning disability.

“As the church's principal public representative I am also looking forward to interacting with the wider community, bringing greetings and offering support wherever possible. I am particularly excited at the prospect of visiting the East Belfast Network, the schools and engaging with the sixth formers, visiting the Ulster Hospital, Palace Barracks and the Police Service. It will be a busy week, but an enjoyable one and I am looking forward to it,” Dr McMullen said.

Each Moderator undertakes pastoral tours of the [\*\*denomination's 19 presbyteries during their year in office\*\*](#), principally to encourage the local church and see first hand their work in the community. The tour of the Presbytery of East Belfast is the second of 4 such tours and opened when he preached in Belmont Presbyterian Church.

The Presbytery of East Belfast contains 23 churches, which includes just over 14,000 members. Covering a swathe of the city east of the River Lagan to the Castlereagh Hills then out to Dundonald and on to Holywood, it doubles back down Belfast Lough and across to the Ravenhill Road.

The Clerk of Presbytery, Rev Albin Rankin, minister of Stormont Presbyterian Church, explained that the Presbytery was predominantly urban and socially and economically diverse. “We are very much looking forward to the visit and have structured it around meeting local Presbyterians serving the community, engaged in Christ's mission and ministry within Presbytery,” he said.

**November 5, 2018**

“We will also be reaching out to some of the key public services within our area with visits to PSNI Strandtown, the Ulster Hospital where Dr McMullen will meet with staff and our chaplaincy team. He will visit a number of schools which will include Gilnahirk Primary School and Our Lady of St Patrick’s College, where he will take both assemblies, and a visit to Campbell College.

“He will also visit the East Belfast Network, which will allow him to meet a range of community groups active within Inner East Belfast. It will also provide an opportunity to share in a significant and poignant act of remembrance in the run up to the 100th anniversary of the ending of the First World War. The visit to Campbell College is also linked to the theme of remembrance. The Moderator will receive a warm welcome when he comes to this part of the city,” Mr Rankin said. Traditionally each Presbytery Tour concludes with the Moderator speaking at the morning and evening services of two local congregations on the last Sunday of the tour. Given Dr McMullen’s involvement in Remembrance Sunday commemorations, which also mark the centenary of the Armistice, on this occasion it hasn’t been possible.

## **Reconciliation focus of ‘The Fallen’**

“We must never, ever give up on praying and searching for reconciliation.” This was the message of the Dean of St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin, at the launch of a temporary installation ‘The Fallen’ which commemorates the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I.

‘The Fallen’ was launched in the cathedral on the evening of November 1 and continues until December 1. The moving and visually stunning installation is made up of



November 5, 2018



**The Fallen volunteers who threaded 36,000 leaves - Celia Kenny, Monica Baird, Annette Byrne, Ciara Ní Cheallachán (artist), Joan Sugrue, Nuala Cannon, Susan Nasstrom, Gabrielle Gilligan, Tracie White and Meriel Reeves.**

36,000 leaves suspended on wires from the ceiling. Each leaf represents a life lost in the First World War.

The initiative was spearheaded by the cathedral's education department and supported by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Four years ago a Tree of Remembrance was erected in St Patrick's marking the centenary of the start of the war. People were invited to leave a message, written on a leaf, in memory of someone who had died as a result of conflict. A total of 220,000 messages were placed on or at the tree –

**November 5, 2018**

the same number as the number of Irish people who participated in World War I. Of these, 36,000 were randomly selected and a group, led by artist Ciara Ní Cheallachán who came up with the concept, threaded them onto wires.

“These messages were written by people from the four corners of the earth and that for me expresses solidarity from nation to nation among all right thinking people that conflict must be overcome and that peace must be established even in the most unlikely of situations,” Dean William Morton said.

“The sheer visual impact of 36,000 leaves, each representing a life and behind each life there was a family, relatives, friends, communities in mourning. There were hopes, dreams and aspirations for the future that were never realised. In addition there was the heartache of hearing the news that their loved one had been killed. A life lost for every leaf – can we comprehend the horror of such a loss,” he added.

“This installation galvanises our resolve that we must never, ever give up on praying and searching for reconciliation even when it is against the odds. It has also drawn our attention to the catastrophic loss of life and the futility of war.”

The launch event was compared by RTE’s Bryan Dobson. Acclaimed writer, Jennifer Johnston, who wrote the first message on the Tree of Remembrance when it was launched, read a letter written by her uncle from the front at Gallipoli, where he was killed.

**November 5, 2018**

Historian Turtle Bunbury gave a reflection on the Irish experience of World War I and many of the personalities involved. He mentioned that 31 men from nearby Bride Street were killed in the war.

Poets Jane Clarke and Jessica Traynor read from their work. Music came from one of the cathedral's choristers and organist David Leigh.

'The Fallen' can be seen throughout November during normal cathedral opening hours. Normal cathedral admission applies.

## **Diocese of Salisbury becomes first Eco Diocese**

In a first for the Church of England, the Diocese of Salisbury has been granted Eco Diocese Status, marking their green efforts.

Salisbury Cathedral Spire was lit in green on Saturday night to celebrate the award, which has been given by the Christian environmental group A Rocha UK.

To award the status of an eco diocese, a diocese or parish's green credentials are looked at in five areas: worship, teaching, buildings, land, community engagement and lifestyle.

Andy Atkins, CEO of A Rocha UK said: "When we launched Eco Church in 2016 we had high hopes and expectations. To have reached this far so quickly is humbling, exciting



November 5, 2018



and such a huge encouragement that so many churches in a diocese are working together to care for God's earth should be an encouragement to us all".

The Eco Diocese award is part of the wider Eco Church scheme. To achieve an Eco Diocese Bronze Award, 10% of Salisbury diocese's 500 local worshipping communities, which are spread across Dorset and Wiltshire, engaged with Eco Church and 5% obtained an Eco Church Award.

In addition, the whole diocese met Eco Church Bronze Award standards for its management of buildings and land. There was also a requirement for ethical investment of diocesan funds and for the inclusion of care for creation in training for ministry.

The Bishop of Salisbury, Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam said: "I am delighted and very encouraged that the Diocese of Salisbury is the first to win this award. As the lead bishop on the environment for the Church of England I am delighted my own diocese is first and I also hope that others will be close behind us,

**November 5, 2018**

"The recent IPCC report on climate change and the WWF report on the destruction of biodiversity means the care of God's earth is urgent. I hope that becoming an Eco Diocese will encourage us to do more and better. "

"Our target to become an Eco Diocese was to have 50 churches registered and now we have 70 and we have Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. And we have more churches still working towards getting their own award.

"It shows that as a Diocese we recognise that the care for God's creation is at the heart of ministry and mission".

David Morgan, Chair of the Diocesan Environmental Group said: "It is exciting and encouraging to see caring for creation come up the agenda of many parishes in the diocese. Some of our churches have been on this journey for many years; for others, it is a new understanding of our responsibilities which they have embraced and acted upon.

"This proves that even with a listed church building, it is very possible to achieve an award."

Announcing the award, Colin Brady, Social Justice Programme Manager for the Diocese of Salisbury said: "Last week we received news of two more churches gaining their Bronze Eco Church award, and notification that our offices in Salisbury had met the criteria for its own Bronze award, and suddenly we were there. And we are confident that more local awards will follow."

**November 5, 2018**

"Many of our congregations have had lots of fun building bug hotels in their churchyards, adding a few more points towards their Eco Church awards with a clear message that Christians care for the environment."

The quest for Eco Diocese status was helped by some good news early in the process, with Hilfield Friary near Dorchester gaining the first Gold award in the country.

## **United Nations extends Anglican Communion accreditation to boost environmental campaign**

The United Nations Environment Programme has formally recognised the Anglican Consultative Council and granted accreditation to the UN Environment Assembly. The move extends the Anglican Communion's existing status at the UN. The Communion enjoys Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council – this gives it access to a number of UN bodies, including the Human Rights Council. The UN Environment Programme operated a separate recognition process and this confirmed the new status for the Anglican Communion.

The Anglican Communion's permanent representative to the UN, Jack Palmer-White, said that he was "delighted" by the move, saying: "As Anglicans, we are called to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth. With opportunities like this, it becomes easier for Anglican voices to be heard and included in global decision making."



November 5, 2018



**The Anglican Communion will now be able to participate in future meetings of the UN Environment Assembly, such as this one, in Nairobi, Kenya, in December 2017.**

“I look forward to working with colleagues around the Anglican Communion to ensure that the real, grassroots experiences of – and responses to – environmental issues are taken seriously at the UN level.”

Accreditation to UN Environment grants observer status to the Environment Assembly and its subsidiary bodies and “is the main entry point for major groups and stakeholders into policy dialogue at UN Environment”, the UN said.

**November 5, 2018**

As an accredited observer, the Anglican Communion is now able to participate in regional consultation meetings and to contribute in the preparation of regional civil society statements towards UN Environment and the Assembly. It can also distribute written contributions to unedited working documents as part of the drafting process; and circulate written statements to Governments.

The Anglican Communion has offices at the UN in New York and Geneva. The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby is a member of UN Secretary General António Guterres' High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation and recently became the first ever Archbishop of Canterbury to address a meeting of the UN Security Council.

## **News briefs**

### **No more shaving for Stradbally's stubbly clerics**

In a week when Stradbally woman Elizabeth O'Kelly donated €6 million to the Irish Cancer Society, spiritual residents of the famous Laois town are organising another fundraiser for the charity.

It's an ecumenical attempt involving two members of the local clergy in the town that hosts the Electric Picnic.

Stradbally's Parish Priest Fr Gerard Breen and Church of Ireland Rector Rev. Alec Purser have agreed to go unshaven for the month of November to raise public awareness about the fight against cancer and to raise funds for Society. "Please do support us with this very worthy cause," said the clerics in a note to their parishioners.

**November 5, 2018**

Sponsorship cards are available in the Parish Office, in the Rectory and in local shops.

It remains to be seen if Fr Gerard and Rev Alec can hit the mark Mrs O'Kelly donated to the charity. It emerged this week that the Irish Cancer Society was one of five charities to benefit from €30 million left by the Laois resident in her will.

The Irish Heart Foundation, the RNLI, Irish Autism Society and Irish Kidney Association received an equal portion.

Mrs O'Kelly died aged 93 in December 2016. Prior to her death, she was a shareholder in Clylim Properties but also earned €30 million from the sale of the Leinster Leader Ltd in 2005 to the Johnston Press Group. She was a major shareholder in the Leinster Express.

### **Heritage tours of Groomsport church**

Groomsport Parish Church, which was originally built as a Chapel of Ease, will open for heritage tours following completion of a major refurbishment project. The church has a wealth of unique features and sits overlooking the sea on the Main Street of the pretty coastal village. When refurbishment is complete the church building will be open every day from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm.

*Lanyon*

The Chapel of Ease as it was when erected in 1841, was one of sixteen churches built with funds supplied by the Church Accommodation Society, started by Bishop Richard Mant.

The site in Groomsport was a gift from Mr John Waring Maxwell of Finnebrogue, near Downpatrick and the



**November 5, 2018**

architect was none other than the famous Belfast designer Sir Charles Lanyon. Lanyon designed the then Queen's College (which later became Queen's University), and gave his services free to the Society.

### *Heritage tours*

As part of the Groomsport Parish Church Refurbishment Project (supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund) the parish is offering free guided tours of the church and environs from 3 December 2018. Tours will be conducted by a trained guide and led by a qualified Blue Badge Tour Guide. Tours may be provided on request, but require at least 2 weeks notice and confirmation 24 hours beforehand. For more information and to arrange a tour, please contact Colin Crozier: Tel: 07772080796, email: [colincrozier1@gmail.com](mailto:colincrozier1@gmail.com)

### **Film series at Christ Church cathedral**

The fifth candle-lit film series at Christ Church cathedral, Dublin will take place on four Mondays in November at 6.30 pm in the Music Room. As always, the screenings are free of charge and all are welcome. Doors open at 6.15pm and no booking is required. The series is entitled 'The Heavens'; a selection of four thought-provoking films exploring astronomy and the universe, introduced by a selection of interesting speakers and begins next Monday with *Galileo* (1975) introduced by Prof Luke Drury, Emeritus Professor of Astrophysics.

### **Enniskillen's Royal tradition of education marked**

A Service of Choral Evensong in St Macartin's cathedral, Enniskillen, yesterday marked the 400th anniversary of the

**November 5, 2018**

opening of the Free School of Fermanagh at Castle Balfour, Lisnaskea. The school moved 30 years later to a site near the Cathedral and became Enniskillen Royal School and, after another 100 years, moved to Portora Hill. The Portora Board helped found Enniskillen Royal School for Girls which later became the Collegiate Grammar School. The service celebrated the royal tradition of education in Fermanagh and the potential for Enniskillen Royal Grammar School to carry forward this strand, enriched by the traditions of both Portora and the Collegiate. The Rt Revd David Chillingworth, former Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church and a former pupil of Portora Royal School, was the preacher.

### **Archbishops' engagements**

The Archbishop of Armagh presided at the Armagh Diocesan Synod on Saturday in the Alexander Synod Hall, and yesterday afternoon he was the preacher at the annual Service of Remembrance of the Royal Irish Regiment in St Anne's cathedral, Belfast. Today the Archbishop of Dublin will attend the synod of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem & the Middle East, at the invitation of Archbishop Suheil. The synod continues until Wednesday.

