

**RDFA/003:**  
**Corporal Henry Kavanagh Collection**  
**1894-1916**

**Donated by Mr. Cecil Kavanagh**

**Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association Archive**

Dublin City Library and Archive  
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Baile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City

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**Reference Number:** IE DCLA/RDFA/003

**Title:** Cpl. Henry Kavanagh

**Creator:** Mr. Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh.

**Dates:** 1894-1916

**Extent:** 14 items including 3 photographs and 1 death scroll and 10 handwritten letters.

**Level:** Fonds

**Administration History:** The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association, Ayrfield, Dublin 13, was established in 1996 to commemorate all Irish men and women who volunteered, served and died in the First World War 1914-1918. The Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association archive is managed by the Dublin City Library and Archive.

**Biographical History:** Henry Kavanagh was born at Merrion, Co. Dublin [b.1894]. Son of William and Emelia Kavanagh he was educated at the Diocesan School, Molesworth Street, Dublin. Henry was one of four brothers and two sisters who lived with their widowed mother Emelia at 167 Merrion Road, Dublin after their fathers' death.

Henry was a solicitor's clerk prior to joining the Royal Dublin Fusiliers in 1914. He fought in Gallipoli and then in Greece with D Company 'The Pals', 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers. D Company was reserved exclusively for recruits from an organisation known as the Irish Rugby Football Union Volunteers.

Henry was made Lance-Corporal in August 1915. He was killed in action at Salonika on 23 September 1916 and was interred at Struma Military Cemetery in Greece.

Henry's older brother Norman [b.1889] worked as a clerk in the title of deeds office and joined as a dispatch rider in 1916. He survived the war and was awarded a British war and victory medals and later married George Poulton's sister Violet.

Henry's friend George Vincent Poulton also joined the army. Unfortunately, he was very ill with dysentery, and spent a lot of time in hospital throughout the war first in Lemnos and later in Cairo before being sent home to recover. Like the Kavanagh's, his family lived on Merrion road, and their families were well acquainted.

**Archival History:** The collection was donated to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association Archive by Mr. Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Henry Kavanagh. The Royal Dublin Association Archive is managed by the Dublin City Library and Archive, which is where the collection is kept.

**Scope and Content:** Includes letters written by Henry to his brother Enoch [b.1886] and his brother Norman. Also contains letters written by Henry's mother Emelia to Enoch and Norman to Enoch. Also includes photographs and a death scroll.

**Arrangement:** The collection relates to records which were created during the First World War. The collection was arranged chronologically as this reflects most accurately the original order in which the records were created, and provides a comprehensive context for the records.

**Access:** Available to holders of DCLA reader ticket.

**Reproduction:** By permission of Dublin City Archivist.

**Language:** English

**Finding Aid:** Descriptive list

## **ALLIED MATERIALS**

**Existence and Location of Copies:** Scans have been made of some items.

### **Related Units of Description:**

RDFA/018 Gunning Brothers: Gallipoli and the Somme

RDFA Collections held at Dublin City Archives.

### **Publications**

Henry Hanna, *'The Pals of Suvla Bay': Being the Record of the 'D' Company of the 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Dublin Fusiliers*

**Date of Description:** The description list was created by Amy Walsh, Dublin City Archives Intern on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

**Rules or Conventions:** ISAD (G), second edition (2000).

### **Item Level**

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/1

**Title:** Letter from Henry Kavanagh to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 3 April 1915

**Extent:** 1 page

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Handwritten letter from Henry Kavanagh to his brother Enoch informing him that they have got new rifles, clothing and equipment but he doesn't know when they will be sent out to the front. He also describes his training routine and the weather conditions.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/2

**Title:** Letter from Henry Kavanagh to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 15 May 1915

**Extent:** 1 page

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Handwritten letter from Henry Kavanagh to his brother Enoch sent from Basingstoke, England detailing his training and expressing his delight that they were under canvas. He states that the whole Irish 10<sup>th</sup> division is there.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/3

**Title:** Letter from Henry Kavanagh to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 18 August 1915

**Extent:** 2 pages

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Letter from Henry Kavanagh to his brother from the Front Line, stating that himself and George Poulton had so far escaped any harm since they left England, and also detailing the lack of water available.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/4

**Title:** Letter from Henry Kavanagh to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 16 September 1915

**Extent:** 2 pages

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Handwritten letter from Henry Kavanagh to his brother from the front line, expressing his annoyance with the ever increasing quantity of flies. The letter also states that George Poulton is in hospital being treated for dysentery in Lemnos, one of the Greek islands.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/5

**Title:** Letter from Henry Kavanagh to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 6 November 1915

**Extent:** 3 pages

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Handwritten letter from Henry Kavanagh to his brother Enoch from the front line. He had heard news that his brother Norman was going out as a dispatch rider, and that another of his comrades was suffering from dysentery and had been sent to Cairo.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/6

**Title:** Letter from Henry Kavanagh to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 8 January 1916

**Extent:** 3 pages

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Handwritten letter from Henry Kavanagh to his brother from Salonica Field Force. He had left Gallipoli and wasn't sure what was going to happen next. He also mentions his brother Norman, and that he hasn't heard from him since he started training. The weather is improving and he hopes that winter is coming to an end.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/7

**Title:** Letter from Henry Kavanagh to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** [1916]

**Extent:** 1 page

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** A handwritten letter from Henry Kavanagh to his brother Enoch with some pages missing. He has learnt that George had been sent home to recover and wondered if he got home in time for Christmas. He has also learnt from Norman that he is getting used to Army life.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/8

**Title:** Letter from Norman to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 2 February 1916

**Extent:** 1 page

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Handwritten letter from Norman Kavanagh to his brother Enoch from Haynes Park, Bedford. He states that he has enclosed a photo of himself and his Douglas machine motor bike. He says that he has been in the army four months and likes it, and also goes on to say that Henry has had a rough time and that he hopes God spares him and brings him home safely again. Photograph reference number: RDFA/003/13

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/9

**Title:** Letter from Norman to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 4 April 1916

**Extent:** 1 page

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Letter from Norman Kavanagh to his brother Enoch from Haynes Park, Bedford. He thanks Enoch for his letter and also says he has received a letter from Henry, he tells Enoch that he is delighted he is well and alive. He had visited home a month previous and found every thing to be good back in Ireland.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/10

**Title:** Letter from Henry to Enoch Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 26 June 1916

**Extent:** 2 pages

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Handwritten letter from Henry Kavanagh to his brother Enoch from Salonica. He states that he is well but almost melted away by the heat. He says that George is still in hospital but he is expected to be discharged soon and Norman expects to go on active service. Henry tells Enoch that it might be wise to postpone his trip to Ireland due to the risks associated with the 1916 rising.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/11

**Title:** Letter from Mrs. Amelia Kavanagh to Enoch and Mabel Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 25 September 1916

**Extent:** 3 pages

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Letter from Mrs. Amelia Kavanagh to Enoch and Mabel Kavanagh in America, sent from 167 Merrion Road, Dublin. She tells Enoch he has been working too hard and must look after his health. She says that George Poulton is home in Fermoy, Co. Cork and often asks after Enoch.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/12

**Title:** Letter from the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers to Mrs. Amelia Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** 25 September 1916

**Extent:** 1 page

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Letter from the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers to Mrs. Amelia Kavanagh to inform her of her son Henry's death and to offer their condolences. Written on the back is a note from Amelia to Enoch as she sent the letter to him afterwards.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/13

**Title:** Photograph of Norman Kavanagh

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** [1914-1916]

**Extent:** 1 photograph

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Black and white photograph of Norman Kavanagh RDF in uniform and on his motorbike which is marked Douglas Machine. The photograph may have been included with a previous letter dated 2 February 1916 from Norman to his brother Enoch, sent from Haynes Park, Bedford. Letter reference: RDFA/003/8



**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/14

**Title:** Photograph of George V Poulton

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** [1914-1916]

**Extent:** 1 photograph

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Black and white photography of George Vincent Poulton in uniform, a friend and neighbour of the Kavanagh family.

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/15

**Title:** Photograph of gravestone

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** [1950-2000]

**Extent:** 1 photograph

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Colour photograph of Henry Kavanagh's grave taken by Cecil Kavanagh at Struma Military Cemetery, Kalon Kastan, Greece which reads "7/17219 Corporal H. Kavanagh Royal Dublin Fusiliers 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1916".

**Reference Number:** RDFA/003/16

**Title:** Death scroll issued by the Royal Dublin Fusiliers honouring the service of Cpl. Henry Kavanagh.

**Creator:** Cecil Kavanagh, nephew of Corporal Henry Kavanagh

**Dates:** [1916]

**Extent:** 1 page

**Level:** Item

**Scope and Content:** Death scroll issued by the Royal Dublin Fusiliers honouring the service of Cpl. Henry Kavanagh. The scroll commemorates those who sacrificed their lives for King and Country. He was killed in action at Salonika on 23 September 1916 and was interred at Struma Military Cemetery in Greece.