

PRESS RELEASE

Monday, 27th June 2016

National Library of Ireland to commemorate Battle of the Somme with series of events

The [National Library of Ireland](#) (NLI) has today (27.06.16) announced that it will host a series of free events to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme throughout the month of July.

The programme will be headlined by 'Words and Music from the War', an evening of readings and music relating to World War I. The British Ambassador to Ireland, Dominick Chilcott, will participate in the readings, and will be joined by Kevin Boushel, Niall Ó Sioradáin and actor Cathy Belton to present a selection of poems and letters from the NLI's collections. This event will take place at 8pm on Wednesday, 6th July. Admission is free but booking is required at learning@nli.ie.

Further events include public tours, film screenings and a panel discussion with History Ireland editor, Tommy Graham:

- **'A regular hell: World War Ireland and the Battle of the Somme'**: On Friday, 1st July – the first day of the Battle of the Somme exactly 100 years ago – the NLI will offer a guided lunchtime tour of its exhibition 'World War Ireland: Exploring the Irish Experience'. The themed tour will explore the uniquely Irish experience of the First World War with a special focus on the centenary event of the Battle of the Somme. The tour will commence at 1pm. Admission is free.
- **Film screenings 'The Battle of the Somme'**: In association with the Imperial War Museum, London, the NLI will screen the documentary film 'The Battle of the Somme' a number of times between Monday 11th and Friday 22nd July in the NLI's lecture theatre. The film was released in 1916 during the Somme Campaign, and seen at the time by over 20 million people. Screen times are available at www.nli.ie. Admission is free and booking is not required.
- **'WWI Ireland: Exploring the Irish Experience'**: Public tour of the exhibition 'WWI Ireland: Exploring the Irish Experience'. The tour will showcase material from the NLI's collections and will focus on the Irish experience of WWI. The guided tour will take place at 2pm on Thursday, 14th July. Admission is free and booking is not required. Group tours may be booked at learning@nli.ie.
- **History Ireland Hedge School on the Battle of the Somme**: A panel discussion with History Ireland editor, Tommy Graham, and guests as they mark the anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, will take place at 7pm on Tuesday, 19th July. Admission is free and booking is not required.

Speaking about the series of events to mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme, Katherine McSharry, Head of Outreach at the NLI, said: "The Battle of the Somme was the largest battle of World War I on the Western Front, with more than one million men wounded or killed. Among the dead were over 3,500 Irish soldiers, with many more wounded.

"The National Library of Ireland's exhibition 'World War Ireland: Exploring the Irish Experience' shines a light on Irish involvement in this war that changed the world forever. To remember those impacted by the Battle of the Somme, we are hosting a series of events a century later. As part of the programme, we are very pleased to welcome British Ambassador to Ireland, Dominick Chilcott, to the headline event 'Words and Music from the War' on 6th July."

For more information, visit www.nli.ie.

ENDS

Contact: Louise Archbold / Sebastian Enke, DHR Communications, Tel: 01-4200480 / 087-2601145 / 087-3239496

Note to Editors

Photo Captions:

- **JPG1:** A ration party of the Royal Irish Rifles in a trench during the Battle of the Somme, July 1916.
- **JPG2:** A roll call on the afternoon of the 1st July.

About the Library: The mission of the National Library of Ireland (NLI) is to collect, preserve, promote and make accessible the documentary and intellectual record of the life of Ireland and to contribute to the provision of access to the larger universe of recorded knowledge. It is open, free of charge, to all those who wish to consult the collections. The Office of the Chief Herald in Kildare Street and the National Photographic Archive in Temple Bar are both part of the National Library. Further information is available at www.nli.ie. Follow the NLI on Twitter [@NLIreland](https://twitter.com/NLIreland), Facebook [National Library of Ireland](https://www.facebook.com/NationalLibraryofIreland), [Flickr on the Commons](https://www.flickr.com/photos/nli/) and [Vimeo](https://www.vimeo.com/nli).