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The lineage of the Tipperary Militia Regiments

by F. Glenn Thompson

The Tipperary Regiment of Militia was raised in Cahir in 1793 and was allocated the numerical prefix 28 in the order of precedence on the Irish Militia lists. In 1812 the regiment was designated the 28th Tipperary (or Duke of Clarence's Munster) Regiment of Militia.

When the Irish and British Militia were amalgamated in 1833, the number 84 was allocated to the regiment in order of precedence on the United Kingdom Militia Lists, and it was titled 84th Tipperary (or Duke of Clarence's Munster) Regiment of Militia. It was around this time that the regiment became Fusiliers, but only for a brief period. In November 1854 they became the 84th South Tipperary (or Duke of Clarence's Munster) Regiment of Militia.

In 1854 the regiment was converted to Artillery and was known as the 27th South Tipperary Artillery (or Duke of Clarence's Munster) Regiment. The number 27 was an artillery precedence, granted to artillery corps which had been raised or converted from infantry militia regiments between the years 1853 and 1908.

A forage cap of the North Tipperary Light Infantry. — This photograph, reproduced by kind permission of the National Museum of Ireland, depicts an officer's undress forage cap of the North Tipperary Light Infantry.

Although this particular pattern of forage cap had been introduced c. 1846, it would only have been in use by the regiment from 1854 onwards. The body is soft and of dark blue cloth; around the bottom is a black mohair braid band of oak leaf design, 2 inches in width. The badge is in the form of a crowned Maid of Erin harp resting on a scroll bearing the title Tipperary.



Both these motifs and the small bugle horn above the badge are worked in silver wire on black cloth bases. The interior of the Victorian crown is red. The peak is black patent leather, likewise the thin chin-strap which is held at each side by two small flat buttons, each covered in black cloth.

This type of headdress was usually worn with the shell jacket and the frock coat. Its life with the regiment may have been short, because in 1852 a new type of forage cap for officers of regular infantry had already been authorised. Commonly known as the "cheese cutter", it had a smaller crown and a straight peak and was to survive until 1881.

A shako of the North Tipperary Light Infantry. — This photograph, reproduced by kind permission of the National Museum of Ireland, depicts an officer's shako of the North Tipperary Light Infantry. By virtue of General Order 65 of June 1869 this model was the last pattern shako to be worn, prior to the introduction of the universal pattern cloth helmet in 1878.

The shako is made of cork with a slightly sunken crown and covered in dark blue cloth. Its dimensions are 4 inches high in front and 6 1/2 inches at the back. Around the top are two 1/4 inch lines of plain silver braid 1/4 inch apart, confirming that the owner held rank below that of lieutenant colonel. At the sides and back and around the base are similar lines of silver braid. The top portion carries a dark green woollen ball tuft; green tufts were a feature of light infantry regiments.

At each corner of the black patent leather peak are white metal roses, to hold or suspend the white metal chin-chain, which was often hooked from the mouth of a white metal lion's head ornament at the back. The chain is sewn on a black leather strap which has a black velvet backing. The silver shako plate is in the form of an eight-pointed rayed star, the top point displaced by a Victorian crown. A wreath of shamrocks borders a circular belt, on which is inscribed North Tipperary Militia. On the centrepiece is a Maid of Erin harp.

This shako was made by (or for) Buckmaster & Co., 55 Dawson Street, Dublin.



From 1860 the corps was titled the 37th or 1st South Tipperary Artillery (or Duke of Clarence's Munster) Regiment. This additional prefix was added so as to differentiate between the South Tipperary Artillery and the newly-raised 105th or 2nd North Tipperary Light Infantry, whose lineage is traced separately below.

On 1 April, 1882 the South Tipperary Artillery Regiment became the 5th Brigade, South Irish Division, Royal Artillery, and on 1 July 1889 they became the Tipperary Artillery (Southern Division) Royal Artillery. In 1902 they became the Tipperary Royal Garrison Artillery (Militia), and on 20 June 1908 were transferred to the Special Reserve Royal Field Artillery. On 10 November 1909 the corps was disbanded.

In January 1854 the 105th North Tipperary Light Infantry Militia were raised in Clonmel from parts of the 84th South Tipperary (or Duke of Clarence's Munster) Regiment of Militia because that corps was scheduled for conversion to artillery.

As a result of Cardwell's Territorial Organisation they became the 4th (Militia) Battalion, Royal Irish Regiment on 1 July, 1881. On 26 July, 1908 they were transferred to the Special Reserve as the 3rd Battalion, Royal Irish Regiment. The unit was disbanded on 31 July, 1922.