

## UPDATE TO 2014 CROKER PRIZE ENTRY EDWARD DANIEL MCILLREE (1854–??): THE ELUSIVE DESERTER

Since sending the Society of Australian Genealogists an entry, *Edward Daniel McIllree (1854–??): the Elusive Deserter*, for the 2014 Croker Prize, further information has come to light about Edward McIllree.

The second name 'Daniel', referred to in the entry for the Croker Prize, was taken from a number of official records such as the 1881 England and 1901 Scotland Censuses. From birth dates, birth years and place of birth provided on other records it can be confirmed that Edward 'Daniel' McIllree and Edward 'Darah', 'Darrah' or 'Warrah' McIllree are one in the same.

Some time after the entry was submitted for the Croker Prize, a descendant of Edward McIllree's father, Dr John Drope McIllree, sent the author a copy of a handwritten list [undated] of Dr and Anne McIllree's children, compiled by one of their daughters, Alice McIllree, that included Edward and his birth date of 24 September 1854. On that list his second name is written as 'Darrah'. As this list was compiled by one of Edward's sisters, it is more likely to be correct than the Census records that were compiled by strangers. Spelt 'Darah' on his baptism record as Edward's second name, this may be a family name from his mother Anne's family tree. Further research needs to be done to confirm this.

Since the entry was submitted for the Croker Prize, the National Archives, Kew, London have sent copies of records relating to Edward Darrah McIllree (WO 400/132 C169845). On 7 September 1874, the Horse Guards, War Office wrote to the Officer Commanding of the 2nd Life Guards at Regents Park Barracks in relation to Trooper Edward Darrah McIllree confirming that he 'be allowed to reckon former service in the 100th Regiment' towards 264 days' good conduct pay.

On 25 January 1876 a regimental board of the 2nd Life Guards decided to discharge Edward Darrah McIllree because it 'appeared' that 'his conduct has been bad' and that the regiment no longer had need of his services. According to the discharge papers, 'He was [*sic*] been addicted to absence without leave and drunkenness. He is not in possession of a good conduct badge. His name appears seven times in the Regimental Defaulter's Book and he [has] been twice tried by Court Martial.'

A Detailed Statement of Service for 821 Trooper Edward Darrah McIllree included with the papers from the National Archives, Kew shows that he held a 'Class School Certificate' and enlisted in the 100th of Foot as a private on 13 September 1873. He was discharged 'by purchase' from the 100th of Foot on 5 June 1874 at the age of 20 years and 8 months.

McIllree attested as a Trooper with the 2nd Life Guards and re-enlisted at London on 15 August 1874. After a number of periods of Absence without Leave and imprisonment, he was tried and imprisoned again on 25 January 1876. His discharge record confirms that Edward Darrah McIllree was born at Claybrook, Lutterworth, Leicestershire and was 22 years and four months of age on his discharge on 25 January 1876, was healthy, stood a little over 5' 11" tall, had grey eyes and brown hair. Edward's age on discharge tallies with a birth in September 1854.

Another Army service record for an 'Edward Warrah McIllree' has been discovered on FindMyPast. This is a transcription from British Army Service Records 1914–1920 WO 363, from The National Archives, Kew, London, which includes an entry as follows:

<b>First name(s)</b>	Edward Warrah
<b>Last name</b>	Mcillree
<b>Service number</b>	310
<b>Regiment</b>	Royal West Kent Regiment
<b>Unit / Battalion</b>	46th Brigade
<b>Event year</b>	1876
<b>Age</b>	21
<b>Birth year</b>	1855
<b>Birth town</b>	Mouswald
<b>Birth county</b>	Dumfriesshire
<b>Birth country</b>	Scotland
<b>Residence town</b>	-
<b>Residence county</b>	-
<b>Series</b>	WO 363
<b>Record set</b>	British Army Service Records 1914-1920
<b>Category</b>	Armed forces & conflict
<b>Subcategory</b>	First World War
<b>Collections from</b>	United Kingdom

This is most likely not a record relating to 1914–1920 as the “Event Year” is 1876, Edward McIllree’s age is given as 21, i.e. he was born c. 1855. As mentioned above, Edward Darrah, Darah or (Daniel) McIllree was born at Claybrooke Magna, near Lutterworth in Leicestershire, England on 24 September 1854. He was baptised there on 14 October 1854. This transcript of another Army service record gives Edward McIllree’s birth town as ‘Mouswald’, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. However, this is the area where the Mid-Locharwoods Labour Colony was situated. Edward McIllree lived there at least from 1901 (Scotland Census) for an unknown period. It is hoped that the original of the above record of Edward’s service with the Royal West Kent Regiment, 46th Brigade can be viewed as there are obviously some discrepancies.

Further research is being undertaken into the life and Army service of Edward Darrah (Daniel) McIllree. Could you please ensure this update is included with my original entry in the 2014 Croker Prize.

Jane Morrison  
17 September 2015