

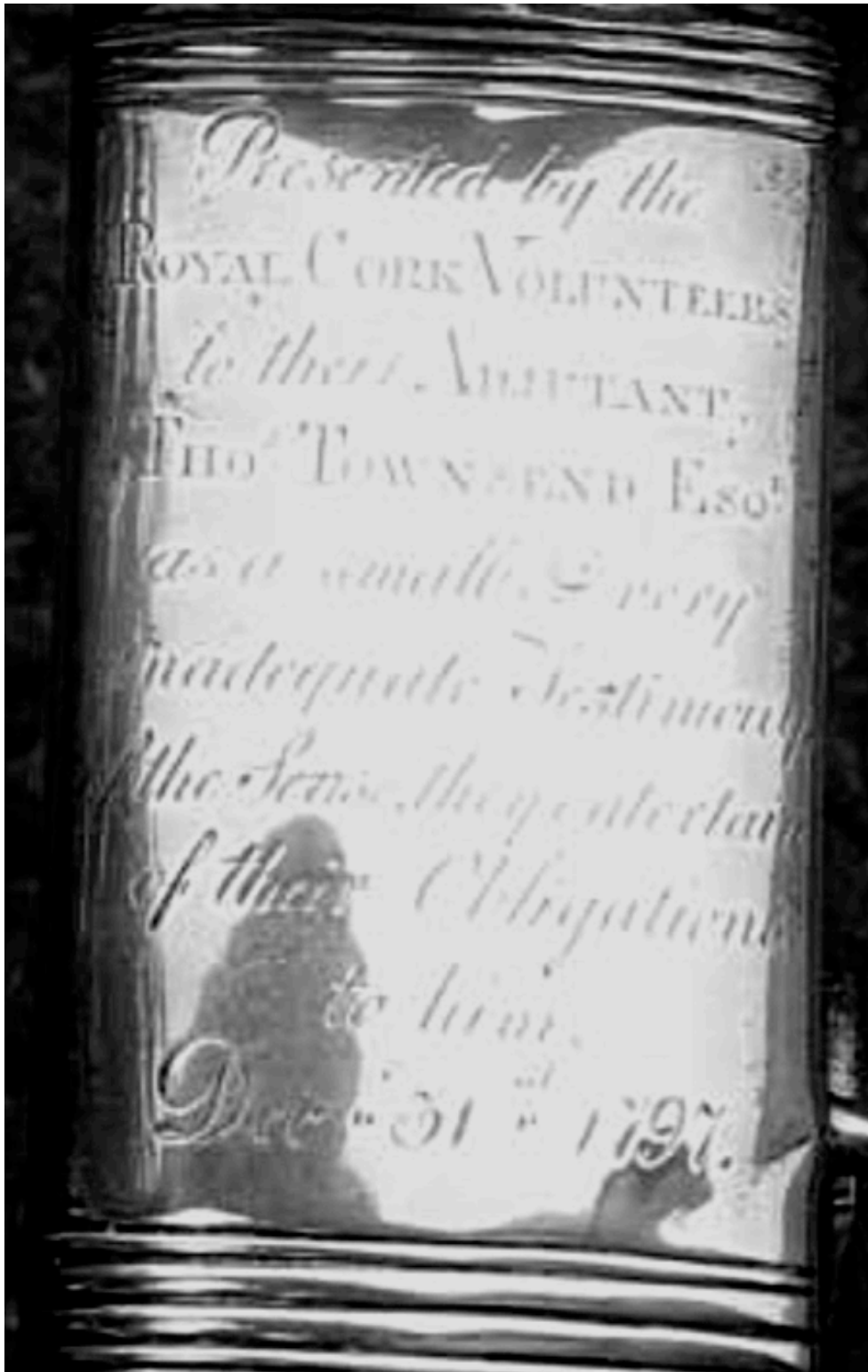
Thomas Townsend [603]
Royal Cork Volunteers Sword



The sword belongs to Mr Tim Somerset Webb and has been in his family for many generations.

The inscription reads:

“Presented by the Royal Cork Volunteers to the Adjutant Thos Townsend Esq as a small and very inadequate sentiment of the sense they entertain of their obligations to him. Dec 31st 1797”.





There are thirty-two Townsends with the name of Thomas, though not necessarily as their first name. Of these only three can conceivably meet the criteria:

- Thomas Hungerford Townsend [502] Born 1737. Died 1799. Would have been 60 in 1797 but with a substantial military background.
- Thomas Townsend [509] Born 1770. Died 1847. Would have been 27 in 1797. A possibility before he moved to Dublin.

- Thomas Townsend [603] Born before 1759. Would have been 38 in 1797. In the Munster Volunteer Registry of 1782 his brother (Edward Synge [601]) is shown as the Chaplain of the Muskerry Volunteers; the Adjutant is shown as John Butler. Fifteen years later it could have changed.

Royal Cork Volunteers

The Royal Cork Volunteers are something of a mystery and there is no mention of the unit in the Munster Volunteer Registry 1782. There are a number of references to the unit on the internet of which the three listed below are the most common.

In "Popular Songs of Ireland" collected by Thomas Crofton Croker there is, at the top of page 91, the sentence. On the breaking out of the Rebellion in 1798, Mr. Millikin zealously joined the Royal Cork Volunteers, and soon became a conspicuous member of that corps.

‘The Cork Hibernian’, April 19th 1798 records

‘Timothy McCarthy otherwise Sowney, was sent off under an escort of the Royal Cork Volunteers, to be executed this day at Dunmanway, for attacking the house of John Gillan Esq., near that town. Any person now detected breaking into a house can expect no mercy from this example.’

The ‘Cork Advertiser, or Commercial Register,’ of Thursday 7th November 1799 describes a dinner hosted by the Royal Cork Volunteers at the King's Arms Tavern on the 5th November 1799 for General Myers, commanding the district, and for other public characters in the city. “The most perfect unanimity and good order prevailed and the banquet must have commenced early and ended late, as the toasts numbered no less than twenty-one, and would have taken a considerable time to get through.” The Royal Cork Volunteers were given the name ‘Raspers’ by their Commander, Michael Westropp, a City of Cork wine merchant.

The Swete Cup and the Royal Cork Volunteers





Extract (2008) from eBay.

“A Rare George III Sterling Silver Irish/Cork Cup

This rare George III cup has a circular bell shaped form onto a circular swept plain pedestal foot. The cup is fitted to either side with C scroll handles which have gadroon decoration and chased oval terminals. The border also has gadroon decoration.

One side of the cup is engraved with the inscription: *'Presented by the non commissioned officers and privates of the Sixth Company of Royal Cork Volunteers to their much respected Captain John Swete Esq. as a small testimonial of the high sense they entertain of his zeal and unremitting exertions as an officer and of their esteem for his private character marked on every occasion by the most polite attention and friendly regard to them individually June 4th 1808'*.

To the other side of the cup there is a bright cut decorated coat of arms.

This rare and historical cup was made in 1807 by Gordon Terry & Jane Williams of Cork, Ireland. The cup is an extremely good gauge of silver, a good colour and in excellent condition. The hallmarks are very clear.

Dimensions: Height to the top of the handle 26.4cm/10.4", diameter of top 15cm/5.8", diameter of base 11.5cm/4.5", spread across handles 27cm/10.6" Weight: 30.5 troy ounces/950g. Price £6,950.

The Swete family pedigree records a John Swete who was born in 1759, lived in Ballintemple, was High Sheriff of Cork and died in 1836.