**Rare Casement photo among war memories**

By Barry Duggan

Irish Independent

6 November 2012

A RARE photograph of Roger Casement attempting to recruit Irish volunteers at a German prisoner of war camp has been unearthed in a collection of war memorabilia.

Tony O'Brien (77) brought the image to the Hunt Museum, Limerick, yesterday for the [World War One](http://searchtopics.independent.ie/topic/World_War_I) family history roadshow.

It is believed to show Casement at the Limburg prisoner of war camp at the same time as Mr O'Brien's father Thomas P O'Brien.

He fought with the Royal [Munster](http://searchtopics.independent.ie/topic/Munster_Rugby) Fusiliers in 1914, but was captured by German soldiers and held at the Limburg camp.

At the same time, Casement was attempting to recruit an Irish brigade consisting of prisoners of war from the prison camp to fight against [Britain](http://searchtopics.independent.ie/topic/United_Kingdom).

Casement was ultimately unsuccessful and was captured on his return to Ireland and executed in 1916.

Arriving home to Limerick in 1918, Thomas O'Brien brought photographs and other memorabilia from the prison camp with him.

"We think it is Casement in the photo. He is walking freely around and is not in military dress," Mr O'Brien said.

"It looks like he has access to all the prisoners and there was 2,000 Irish prisoners at this camp. My father didn't speak much about the camp.

"The first mention of it came when I asked my mother about it. I heard Roger Casement had been in the camp and I said to her: 'Would my father have met Roger Casement?'

"She said: 'I don't think he would have had much time for Roger Casement'. So that put an end to that."

Mr O'Brien allowed his father's photographs and papers to be documented and recorded for the Europeana 1914-1918 project, which allows World War One mementos to be viewed on their website.

Arts Minister Jimmy Deenihan said the photograph, if proven to be correct, is of major importance.

"Historians will be very interested in this. It has to be verified but there does seem to be evidence that this did actually happen," he said.