

**Name of memorial:** Kelly Memorial

**Inventory No. 349**

**Place:** Sandford Church

**Address and map reference:** Sandford Church, Sandford Road, Ranelagh, Dublin 6.  
Map reference: O 168 315

**Position:** On east wall of nave, to right (south side) of door.

**Description and dimensions:** Brass (or bronze) plate on marble. Height 70cms, width 70cms.

**Recorded by:** Michael Pegum, 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2007.

**Text:**

**IN MEMORY  
OF  
SURGEON AMBROSE H. KELLY,  
OF THE QUEEN'S OWN CORPS OF GUIDES,  
WHO WAS KILLED IN THE DEFENCE OF  
THE BRITISH RESIDENCY AT KABUL,  
SEPTEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup> 1879.**

**THIS TABLET IS ERECTED AS A  
TRIBUTE OF RESPECT AND ESTEEM  
BY THE OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT.**



**Surgeon Ambrose Hamilton Kelly - Indian Medical Service**

Eldest son of William Kelly, of Dublin. He was born 30th September 1845 and studied medicine and surgery in Dublin. In 1869 he was commissioned to the Bengal Medical Service and served in the Lushai expedition. He was posted to the 1st Punjab Infantry in 1872. He was selected to join the Embassy to Kabul and was killed during the defence of the Residency.

#### **DEFENCE OF THE KABUL RESIDENCY**

In May 1879 a Treaty was signed between the British and Amir Yakub Khan of Afghanistan. Under the terms of the Treaty a British Mission was to be established in Kabul. Their safety guaranteed by the Treaty and the word of the Amir, the small Mission left for Kabul in July 1879.

The British Residency was in the Bala Hissar. On the 3rd September 1879, without warning, Afghan soldiers attacked the Residency and were joined by the civilian population (the soldiers had not been paid, and blamed the British). Urgent messages were sent to the Amir, claiming protection. The messages were ignored. 4 Britons and 69 Indian troops faced countless thousands of Afghan soldiers and civilians.

Soon Cavagnari, Jenkyns and Kelly were dead. Hamilton and his Guides fought desperately, even charging out of the Residency to bayonet the crews of artillery brought against them. During one of these attacks Lieutenant Hamilton was killed. The Residency was set on fire and the buildings started to collapse. As the sun went down that evening, the few remaining Guides were commanded by Jemadar Jewand Singh (Guides Cavalry). All day the Afghans called upon the Guides to surrender, promising them their lives. The Guides rejected this offer and after 12 hours of fighting the few remaining men fixed bayonets and charged out to their deaths. Over 600 Afghan dead bore witness to the heroic resistance of this small force.