



remembrance ni



**WW1
Battle of
Messines
had
biggest
bomb
before
the
atom
bomb**

Today is the anniversary of one of the most apocalyptic Allied attacks on the German lines during WWI - the Battle of Messines Ridge in West Flanders, Belgium. The 16th (Irish) Division and the 36th (Ulster) Division

took part. Protestant and Catholic, Unionist and Nationalist fought side by side.

It is one of the few successful stand-alone battles of the Great War and it was a vital preparation for the major advance planned to commence on 31/07/1917.

The 16th (Irish) Division and the 36th (Ulster) Division were both part of IX Corps in General Plumer's Second Army - the 16th Division held the centre, with the 36th Division on its right flank and the 19th (Western) Division on its left flank. The 25th Division held the ground on the Ulster Division's right flank.

The following statistics are based on CWGC records, supplemented with information from other databases, e.g. Soldier Died in the Great War and Register of Soldiers' Effects.

383 men from Irish infantry regiments died during the period of the battle and are buried or memorialised in Belgium (others died in the weeks that followed and some men wounded during the battle died of wounds in France) and 37% were born outside Ireland.

This figure of 383 fatalities is broken down as follows:

144 fatalities with 16th (Irish) Division - 39% born outside Ireland

186 fatalities with 36th (Ulster) Division - 45% born outside Ulster

53 fatalities with 24th and 25th divisions - 30% born outside Ireland

On the 7th June 1917, the 16th (Irish) Division suffered 141 fatalities (five being buried in France).

On the 7th June 1917, the 36th (Ulster) Division suffered 194 fatalities (18 being buried in France)

On the 7th June 1917, Irish infantry regiments suffered 344 fatalities (22 being buried in France)

16th Division - 132 fatalities

36th Division - 191 fatalities

24th and 25th divisions - 21 fatalities



Spanbroekmolen Crater is the site of the largest Messines mine explosion. Now filled with water, it is preserved as a memorial called the 'Pool of Peace'. The site has been owned by Toc H in Poperinge since the 1920s

Synchronised detonation of 19 unprecedentedly huge mines

The synchronised detonation of 19 unprecedentedly huge mines buried by the Allies deep under enemy trenches brought instant death to many thousands of German

soldiers, and the ensuing week-long battle bestowed a relentlessly burgeoning tally of casualties on both sides.

The battle has immense historic and symbolic significance for the UK and Ireland as it was the first time that the 36th (Ulster) and 16th (Irish) Divisions fought alongside each other during WWI.

On the centenary of the battle in **The Island of Ireland Peace Park** at Messines (photo on front page) there was a special memorial event where vast mine-craters still punctuate the landscape, one of them the serene, water-filled Spanbroekmolen crater known as **The Pool of Peace** or the **Lone Tree Crater**, the site of the largest of the mines detonated at the start of the battle.

The centenary commemorations were jointly led by the Governments of Ireland and the UK, in partnership with the Mayor of Messines.

The Peace Park proceedings took place in the shadow of a traditional Irish Round Tower and a large standing-stone gilded with a peace pledge appealing for the people of Ireland to build a peaceful and tolerant society and to remember “the solidarity and trust that developed between Protestant and Catholic soldiers when they served together in these trenches.”

The Allies started tunnelling towards the German lines at Messines Ridge early in 1916.

In the face of German counter-mining, thousands of feet of deep tunnels were constructed.

Sometimes the British tunnellers encountered their German counterparts resulting in fierce, underground, hand-to-hand

fighting. Above ground, for weeks before 7 June 1917, thousands of heavy Allied guns and howitzers bombarded the German trenches with countless pounds of explosives. On the morning of the fateful first day at 3.10 am 19 underground Allied mines were detonated in an unprecedented collective blast that peaked on far-away seismographs and was heard in London and Dublin.

Estimates of the number of Germans killed during and after the eruption have been as high as 25,000, with up to 10,000 dying instantly. Hundreds of the Allied soldiers waiting to go over the top were severely shocked, deafened and concussed. Private Jack Christie from the Shankill area of Belfast, who had been a member of the UVF, was a stretcher bearer with the Ulster Division.

Referring to his comrades in the 16th Division Private Christie said later “we should not allow politics to blind us to the truth about things - bravery and loyalty is not all on one side. We had the greatest respect for the 16th.”

Another stretcher-bearer from the Ulster Division demonstrated that political allegiance had no place on the battlefield. Private John Meeke of the 11th Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers was awarded the Military Medal for rescuing Major Willie Redmond of the 16th Division. Redmond was the Nationalist MP for East Clare, a member of the Irish Volunteers and the brother of John Redmond, the leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

Private Meeke, who enlisted in March 1916, was searching the battlefield for wounded comrades when he happened to see Major Redmond fall. Despite heavy machine-gun and artillery fire, Meeke made his way to Redmond's position to



Messines British Cemetery, with the New Zealand Memorial to the Missing, surmounted by the Cross of Sacrifice

render assistance, taking shelter in shell holes and any other meagre cover he could find in the desolate, pock-marked landscape. He arrived at the Major without injury and found him seriously wounded in the left knee and right arm at the elbow and weak from loss of blood. Meeke dressed one of the wounds and was working on another when shrapnel struck him on the left side, inflicting serious wounds. He was hit a second time but this did not deter him from his work, which he completed despite his injury.

Meeke disobeyed a direct order from Major Redmond to abandon him and struggled across the battlefield with his charge until he met up with Lieutenant Charles Paul and a party from the 11th Royal Irish Rifles who were escorting

German prisoners to the rear. Together they got Major Redmond to the casualty clearing station located in the Catholic Hospice at Locre. Major Redmond died later that afternoon.

Many hundreds of soldiers from Ireland perished side by side at Messines Ridge, protestant and catholic, unionist and nationalist, and they're commemorated on standing stones in the Island of Ireland Peace Park along with the WWI total of 32,186 killed, wounded or missing from the 36th (Ulster) Division; 9,363 from the 10th and 28,398 from the 16th Irish Divisions respectively.

Island of Ireland Peace Park

Mesen (Messines) is a small town with a touch of Irish charm. On the hills surrounding Mesen, soldiers from both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, protestants and catholic alike, died during the First World War. The Peace Park was created by young people from both sides of the border.

The Peace Park houses a round tower. This monument to honour all the fallen from the entire island of Ireland transcends religious and political differences. The tower was built as a symbol of reconciliation for the past, the present and the future. Commemoration ceremonies are held on 7 June and 11 November.

The Tower houses bronze cubicles containing record books listing the known dead, which are publicly accessible copies of the originals belonging to the National War Memorial, Islandbridge, Dublin.



The project was initiated by a member of the Irish Parliament (Dail Eireann), Paddy Harte TD, who, together with a community activist, Glen Barr from Northern Ireland, established 'A Journey of Reconciliation Trust'. The Trust was a broad-based, cross-border, organisation with offices in Dublin. The Trust was made up of representatives of the main churches in Ireland and professional political and representatives and community leaders from both parts of Ireland under the leadership of Paddy Harte and Glenn Barr.

The Irish government became involved in part funding the project together with the Northern Ireland Office. Statutory and private bodies rolled in behind the project and within two years of the initiation of the JRT the Island of Ireland Peace Park and Celtic Round tower was complete.

It was formally opened by the Irish President Mary McAleese who in the presence of Queen Elizabeth and King Albert of Belgium led the wreath laying ceremony in the afternoon of 11th of November 1998. It was the first time an Irish State officially acknowledged the soldiers from Ireland who died in WW1. This was also a seminal moment in Irish history when an Irish Head of State and a British Monarch met publicly in a joint ceremony.

The Park is maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission on behalf of the Office of Public Works in Ireland. Prior to the Island of Ireland Peace Park, no Irish government dignitary had ever attended any WW1 Remembrance Service either in Ireland or at the Menin Gate. At an official ceremony on 11th November 1998 the Irish President apologised on behalf of the Republic of Ireland to the families of the fallen for what she called the 'national amnesia' in remembering the soldiers of WW1 from the Island of Ireland.

Roll of Honour - June 07

Representing their comrades who died on this day
1917

+CAMPBELL, J

Royal Irish Rifles. 14th Btn. Rifleman, 6712. Died 07/06/1917. Age 28. Husband of Norah Lilian Campbell, of 331, William St., Newtownards. Dundonald cemetery

+DOWNEY, Sydney James Livingstone

Royal Irish Rifles. 14th Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 07/06/1917. Age 21. Educated at the Methodist College,

Belfast. Member of the Training Corps 1915 - 16. He was commissioned in January 1916. The 14th (Young Citizens) Battalion, RIR, was raised in Belfast in September 1914 from the Belfast Volunteers. They moved to Bundoran in December 1914, and to Randalstown in January 1915 and joined 108 Brigade, the 36th (Ulster) Division. He was an employee of The Northern Assurance Company Ltd in Belfast, a company now owned by Aviva and his name appears in the Roll of Honour on the company website. He was the second son of James Livingston Downey JP and his wife Marion Louisa Downey, Hampden Terrace, Rugby St., Belfast. He was the grandson of the Rev George Cron. Spanbroekmolen British Cemetery

+DAWSON, Frederick

Royal Irish Rifles, 9th Btn. Rifleman. 19/533. Died 07/06/1917. Aged 32. Frederick worked as a dairy manager. Son of James and Mary Dawson, of Caledon, Co. Tyrone; husband to Anna Helen Dawson (nee Hughey), of 93, Cavehill Rd., Belfast. Spanbroekmolen British Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium

+GLASS, David

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 9th Btn. Private. 23206. Died 07/06/1917. Aged 19. Brother of Wilson Glass, of Park Rd., Dungannon. Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, France. Dungannon WM, St Anne's Church, C of I, Dungannon WM

+FLEMING, R

Royal Irish Rifles, 14th Btn. Lance Corporal. 19489. Died 07/06/1917. Aged 22. Son of Jane Fleming and the late

Arthur Fleming, of 64, Townparks, Antrim. Spanbroekmolen British Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. All Saints church, C of I, WM

+GREER, James

Royal Irish Rifles.12th Btn. Rifleman. 18/960, Died 07/06/1917. Aged 19. Son of James and Elizabeth Greer, of 206, Blythe St., Belfast. Lone Tree Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium

+KENNEDY, W

Royal Irish Rifles.14th Btn. Rifleman.14/16657. Died 07/06/1917. Son of The Rev. S. G. Kennedy, of Cromwell House, Cromwell Road, Belfast. His brother J Kennedy also fell. Spanbroekmolen British Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

+DOWNEY, Sydney James Livingston

Royal Irish Rifles.14th Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 07/06/1917. Aged 21. Son of James Livingston Downey and Marion Louisa Downey, of 7, Hampden Terrace, Rugby St., Belfast. Spanbroekmolen British Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

+McBRIDE, Moses

New Zealand Expeditionary Force, 2nd Otago Infantry Regiment. Private.29802. Died 07/06/1917. He had embarked on the vessel *Willochra* on 16/10/1916 with the 18th Reinforcement Otago Infantry Battalion, D Company. He was the labourer son of John McBride and Sarah Paul, later of Coreen, Broughshane, Co. Antrim. John from Connor and Sarah from Lisbreen, had married in West Church, Ballymena on the 22/01/1883. Wulverghem-

Lindenhoek Road Military Cemetery, Belgium. 1st
Broughshane PCI RH.

+ROSS, Robert Campbell

Royal Irish Rifles, 14th Btn. Rifleman. 14/15878. Died
07/06/1917. Aged 19. Son of Robert John and Caroline
Ross, of 6, Cameron St., Belfast. Spanbroekmolen British
Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium.

+SPENCE, Hugh

Royal Irish Rifles. 12th Bn. Corporal. 6849. Died
07/06/1917. Son of Hugh and Eliza Spence, Culkenny,
Ballycastle. Lone Tree Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen,
Belgium. Ballycastle Presbyterian Church RH. Ballycastle
WM

+TALBOT, James

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. Fusilier. 40667. Previously North
Irish Horse. 2208. Died 07/06/1917. Battle of Messines.
Born (named William James) on 27 March 1894 at
Drumgarkin, Cootehill, Monaghan, son of farmer William
Talbot and his wife Ellen nee Coulson. He grew up at his
family's farm at Corbeagh, Ashfield, County Cavan. He
enlisted in the North Irish Horse at Armagh in June or July
1916. At the end of December 1916 he was one of forty
North Irish Horsemen who transferred to the Royal
Inniskilling Fusiliers. They embarked for France on
09/01/1917 and were posted to the 10th Battalion, joining it
at Ploegsteert Wood on the Ypres front. Menim Gate, Panel
22.

1918

+BLACKMORE, Herbert

Royal Irish Rifles. 12th Bn. Corporal. MM. Died 07/06/1918. Son of George and Ina Blackmore, Ballymacarrett. Lived at Chatham, Armoy. Haringhe Military Cemetery, Poperinghe. Ballycastle WM

+COURTNEY, W

Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (Eastern Ontario Regiment). Private. 769901. Died 07/06/1918. Age 41. Son of William and Jane Courtney, of Dundonald, Belfast; husband to Elizabeth Courtney, of 189, Rhodes Avenue, Toronto. Dundonald cemetery

1940

+LEWIS, Cecil Thomas

RAF. Sergeant (Wireless Op./Air Gunner). 550668. Died 07/06/1940. Aged 21. 88 Sqdn. Son of Samuel and Margaret J. Lewis, of Larne, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland. Moisy Communal Cemetery, Loir-et-Cher, France

1941

+KNOX, Francis Samuel Burnside

RAFVR. Sergeant. 948920. Died 07/06/1941. Aged 20. 107 Sqdn. Son of William Macafee Knox and Anna Pinkerton Knox, of Ballymoney. Runnymede Memorial, Panel 46

1942

+LENNON, Dermot Henry

RAFVR. Sergeant. 1138701. Died 07/06/1942. Aged 20. Son of Michael and Margaret Lennon, Belfast. Canada Truro (Immaculate Conception) Roman Catholic Cemetery, Canada

1944

+BLACK, Robert

Royal Armoured Corps.Reconnaissance Corps, 61st Regt. B Sqn., Corporal. 500623. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 26. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Black; husband of Mary Jeannie Black, of Coleraine.Bayeux War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+CRAWFORD, George

RAFVR. Squadron Leader. 72986. DFC, AFC. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 29. 53 Sqdn. Husband to Leslie Crawford, of Marino, Co. Down. Runnymede Memorial, Panel 200

+HANNA, James

RAFVR. Sergeant (Air Gunner). 1796357. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 21. 630 Sqdn. Son of William John and Elizabeth Hanna, of Larne. Bayeux War Cemetery, Calvados, France



D-DAY 1944

Irishmen abroad



Evening 6 June 1944.

Riflemen of 1st Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles,
6th Airlanding Brigade, 6th Airborne Division,
arrive at Landing Zone 'N' aboard a Airspeed Horsa glider
and head south to capture the villages of
Longueval and Sainte-Honorine-de-Chardonnette.

Operation 'Mallard'



Colour by BSCD



ROYAL ULSTER RIFLES FIRST (AIRBORNE) BATTALION

+COYLE, John,

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Sergeant. 7010276. Died
07/06/1944. Aged 34. Served in A Company and landed on
DZ N at Ranville at 2100 hrs on 06/06/1944. Believed killed
at Ste Honorine the following morning. From Ballyscullion,

County Londonderry. Husband to Greta, Belfast. Ranville Cemetery

+GLASS, Samuel

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 70200302. Died 07/06/1944. A former member of the Young Soldiers Battalion (Devonport). Served in A Company and landed on DZ N at Ranville at 2100 hrs on 06/06/1944. Killed in action, shot by a sniper, the following day. Son of John and Agnes Glass of Belfast; husband to Sarah of Grimsby, Lincolnshire. Ranville Cemetery

+HALVEY, Joseph Patrick

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 14409065. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 19. Foster-son of James and Margaret O'Connor, of Kentish Town, London. Ayeux War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+JEFFERSON, NORMAN

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Corporal. 7013019. Died 07/06/1944
Aged 26. Son of Thomas and Sarah Jefferson, of Lisburn, Co. Down, Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+McCAYNA, George

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Corporal. 7015140. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 24. Son of Martin Joseph and Elizabeth McCayna, of Bethnal Green, London. Bayeux Memorial, Calvados, France

+McFARLAND, Norman

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 6983599. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 21. Son of Robert and Letitia McFarland of Culvahullion, Gortin, County Tyrone; husband to Doreen Edith McFarland of Ilfracombe, Devon. Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+McQUILLAN, Robert Harper, 7 June 1944*

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 6985348. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 21. Born in County Antrim. Bayeux War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+MORGAN, Reginald Norman

1st (Airborne) Bn. Royal Ulster Rifles. Captain. 176458. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 31. Son of Richard and Emily Morgan, of Belfast. Bayeux War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+MORGAN, Reginald Norman 'Reggie'

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Captain. 176458. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 31. Commissioned 01/03/1941, War Substantive Lieutenant 01/09/1942, Temporary Captain 15/03/1943, Listed as missing in action as of 07/06/1944. He was last seen leaving Ste Honorine with his platoon after the withdrawal had been ordered. Body found on 11 July when the Battalion re-entered the town. Son of Richard and Emily Morgan of Belfast, brother of Harry R. Bayeux War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+NELSON, John Henry

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 6985185. Aged 22. Died 07/06/1944. Born in Londonderry. Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+O'CONNOR, Patrick Joseph

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 6409738. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 24. Son of John Joseph and Pruedentia Mary O'Connor, of Drimnagh, Dublin, Irish Republic. Bayeux War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+O'REILLY, Michael

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 7047510. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 21. Son of John and Mary O'Reilly, of Dublin, Irish Republic. Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+OLIVER, John Chapman

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 7012565. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 38. He had served for almost twelve years in the regiment, seeing duty in India and China. His father had served for twenty one years in the Royal Navy. Son of Henry and Sarah Oliver of Church Street, Bangor, County Down; husband to Francis Nest Oliver, of Abergwili, Carmarthenshire. Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+REILLY, James Joseph Victor

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 7012816. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 27. Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+STEVENSON, Robert James

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 7019933. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 23. He had four years' service. Before the War he had worked for W.A. Ross & Sons, mineral water manufacturers. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Stevenson, of Church Road, Carnmoney. Bayeux Memorial, Calvados, France

+TESTRO, Leslie George

Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st (Airborne) Bn. Rifleman. 14672347. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 18. Son of William Testro, and of Lily Testro, of Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire. Ranville War Cemetery, Calvados, France

**ROYAL ULSTER RIFLES
SECOND BATTALION**

+KANE, William Henry

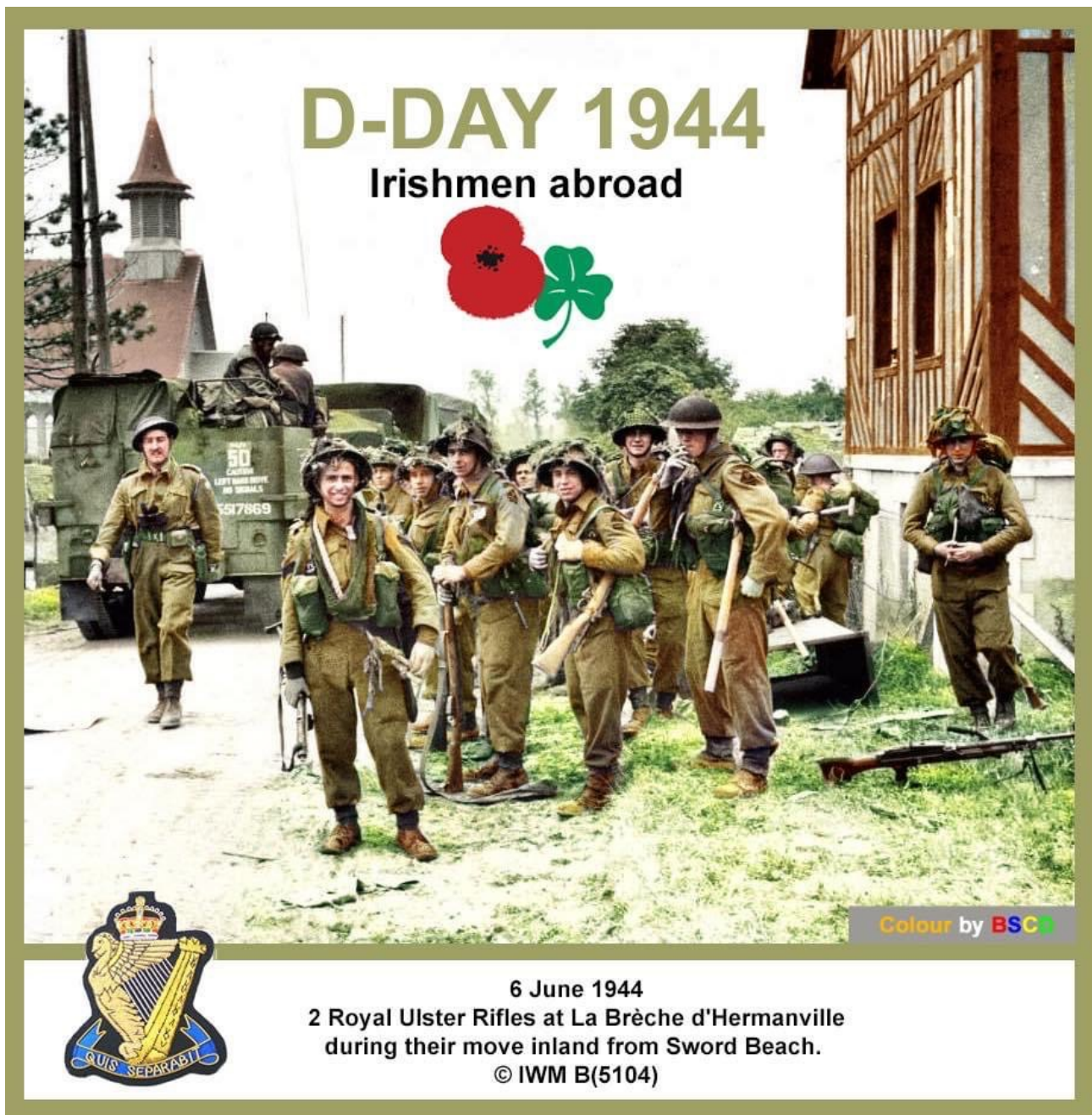
Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 7018769. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 22. Son of Alexander and Isabella Kane, of Belfast. Cambes-en-Plaine War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+KANE, Thomas

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. D Coy. Lance Corporal. 7011474. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 29. Son of Mr. and Mrs. James Kane of Belfast; husband to Olive Hope Kane, of Newport, Isle of Wight. La Deliverande War Cemetery, Douvres, Calvados, France

+McALLISTER, George

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. D Coy. Rifleman. 7009594. Died 07/06/1944 in Cambes Wood. Aged 37. Son of George and Elizabeth McAllister, of 61 Berlin Street, Belfast, Northern Ireland; husband to Mary McAllister, of Donegall Pass, Belfast. George Senior died as a result of wounds sustained in World War One in August 1916. La



Deliverande War Cemetery, Douvres, Calvados, France.
Fitzroy Presbyterian Church, Belfast, WM

+McALLISTER, Ronald

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. D Coy. Rifleman. 7015463.
Died 07/06/1944. Two brothers were killed and two severely
wounded in the war. His father was disabled in WW1.
Husband to Mrs. B. McAllister, Strathroy Pk., Belfast.
Cambes-en-Plaine War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+MILLAR, Hugh Henry

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. Corporal. 7014297. Died 07/06/1944 with a fatal gunshot to the head at "Wood Gazelle", Cambes Wood, Normandy. Aged 23. Son of John and Isabella Millar, of 6 Abetta Parade, Belfast. Hugh's father John served with the Royal Irish Rifles in WW1. Hugh's brothers Robert Millar and Thomas Millar also served in the Royal Ulster Rifles. Robert was wounded during WW2. La Deliverande War Cemetery, Douvres, Calvados, France

+O'BRIEN Charles

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. Lance Corporal. 5125850. Died 07/06/1944. Born in Eire and resided in Belfast, he was initially listed in the local press as missing in action in Normandy in June 1944. No known grave. Bayeux Memorial, panel 17, column 3.

+ROONEY, Henry

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. Lance Serjeant. 7013785. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 23. Born Belfast, resided Armagh. La Deliverande War Cemetery, Douvres, Calvados, France

+ROWLEY, Owen

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. D Coy. Lance Corporal. 7021446. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 40. Born in Belfast. Son of Owen and Hannah Rowley of Sussex; husband to Sarah Rowley. Cambes-en-Plaine War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+SMITH, Herbert Corville

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 14203182. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 20. Son of Tom and Eva Smith. Ambes-en-Plaine War Cemetery, Son of Tom and Eva Smith. Cambes-en-Plaine, Calvados, France

+WILLIAMSON, James Campbell

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 7018176. Died 07/06/1944. Aged 23. Son of William J. and Annie Williamson, of Belfast, Northern Ireland; husband to Ruth Williamson, of Belfast. La Deliverande War Cemetery, Douvres, Calvados, France

1946

+GALLAGHER, Patrick Joseph

Royal Artillery. Gunner. 1427296. Died 01/06/1946. Aged 23. 332 Battery, 106 Heavy Anti Aircraft Regiment. Son of Nellie Gallagher of Strabane. Strabane Cemetery

1947

+GORDON, David Shaw

Royal Army Medical Corps. Lieutenant Colonel. 246219. Died 07/06/1947. Aged 46. M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O. (Queen's University). Son of Robert David and Jeanette Gordon; husband to Margaret Catherine Gordon, of Bootham, York. Fulford Cemetery, Yorkshire. QUB WM

VETERAN

CAMPBELL, Joseph McFall

Royal Signals Linesman Joseph McFall Campbell was originally from the Cregagh area. He was born on 27/11/1919, joined the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in 1935 approx and served during the Second World War. Having been captured in Singapore Joseph became a P.O.W. under the Japanese. He survived the war and having married set up a family home in Dundonald. Joseph passed away on 07/06/1982.

On this day - June 07

1916

At the Battle of Verdun the Germans take Vaux Fort.

1917

The Battle of Messines commences in Flanders. Allied forces detonate 19 enormous mines beneath the German lines at Messines, Belgium killing thousands. The sound of the blasts can reportedly be heard in London, while seismologists as far away as Dublin record the tremors. A front of nine miles stormed. The British capture 6,400 German prisoners.

The men of the 16th Irish Division & 36th Ulster Division fight side by side at the Battle of Messines. They took their objective: the village of Wytschaete. In 1914, these two

groups of men were poised to fight each other over Home Rule.

1929

Vatican City becomes a sovereign state

1940

Allied troops fall back on Bresles front, 60 miles north of Paris.

French bomb Berlin.

King Haakon of Norway, his family and government, evacuate from Norway to Britain as Germans advance.

1941

The first of five heavy night raids by the RAF begins on Brest as Prinz Eugen shelters there.

First US Lend-Lease planes flown to Maine and shoved over border into Canada, because neutrality laws forbid landing in Canada.

1942

General Erich von Manstein hurls his troops in the grand assault on the besieged port of Sevastopol in a two-pronged assault. The Soviets resist fanatically in excellent fortifications. The Germans gain ground but take heavy casualties, and have to bring in reinforcements to take the city. However, the continuous German attacks wear down the defenders ammunition supplies, which must be brought in by sea through a tight German blockade maintained by the Luftwaffe, E-boats, and Italian midget submarines.

All Jews over six are forced to wear the 'Star of David' in Occupied France.

The Japanese make landings on Attu and Kiska Islands in the Aleutian Islands.

In the Battle of Midway, carrier USS Yorktown sinks due to damage by Japanese submarine I-168 the previous day, but the US is victorious in the major turning point of the Pacific War; from now on, the Japanese will be on the defensive.

Maj. Gen. Clarence Tinker, commander of US Seventh Air Force, is killed when his plane is lost off Midway, the first Native American to reach rank of major general and the first US general killed in WWII.

1944

D Day insight -

Around 20.30hrs the skies over Sword Beach darkened with 500 planes and gliders and the battle below all but stopped, either in shock or awe. 250 gliders landed almost unmolested... carrying the 1st Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles.

A soldier of the sister 2nd Battalion RUR, who had landed by sea that morning, was famously heard to remark, “I suppose that’s what the 1st Bn regard as an Effin route march!”.

D Day +1

British troops liberate Bayeux, five miles inland from the Normandy coast. Bayeux was the first major French town to be liberated after D-Day (on the morning of June 7). Each year OTD the cathedral flies the flags of the allied nations from its spire.

All beachheads are reported as established.

The British 2nd Division is now only 55 miles from Imphal.

Mokmer airfield on Biak is captured by U.S. troops.

The Americans take Civitavecchia on the western coast of Italy.

1945

King Haakon VII returns to Norway, on the fifth anniversary of his leaving the country.

The first allied cargo ship for three years enters Wewak Harbour, in New Guinea.

US Marines cut off Oroku Peninsula on Okinawa.

remembrance ni

The **remembrance ni** programme is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD who served as Chaplain to 102 and 105 Regiments Royal Artillery (TA), as Hon. Chaplain to RNR and as Chaplain to the RBL NI area and the Burma Star Association NI. Dr McKelvey is a Past President of Queen's University Services Club. He may be contacted at houston.mckelvey@btinternet.com

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