



remembrance ni

## The TA officer and MP mostly responsible for Caubeens

*Portrait of Bala  
Bredin.*



**In the 1935 General Election, John Robert Jermain Macnamara was elected Member of Parliament for Chelmsford.**

Macnamara was educated at Haileybury where he was a member of the Officer Training Corps. On 11 January 1924, he joined the Territorial Army and was commissioned as a



**Col JRJ Macnamara, MP for Chelmsford, 1 London Irish Rifles former CO, was killed when visiting them. He was caught in a mortar bombardment while he was with C Coy. Lt Prosser MC was also killed and Maj**

**Boswell was wounded. 2nd Lieutenant in the 3rd (City of London) Battalion, London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers).**

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2nd Lieutenant in the 3rd (City of London) Battalion, London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers).

During WW2 he commanded the 1st Battalion, London Irish Rifles, another Territorial battalion, which was affiliated to the Royal Ulster Rifles. He was subsequently promoted to the rank of colonel.

The battalion was initially assigned to 168th (London) Infantry Brigade, part of the 56th (London) Infantry Division,



nicknamed "The Black Cats" and fought in the Italian theatre of war.



**Buglers sound the Last Post at the funeral of Colonel JRJ Macnamara, who was killed while visiting his old regiment, the London Rifles. The service was conducted by the Rev. R Wallace.**

In December 1944, Col. Macnamara was visiting Italy and was with 1st London Irish who were moving into the Senio line to relieve a Gurkha battalion. He was watching men of the battalion move up to the line in company with Major M. V. S. Boswell when a sudden German mortar bombardment fell on the area. Macnamara and Lieutenant J. Prosser MC

were killed and Boswell was wounded. Jack Macnamara was laid to rest in Forli War Cemetery.

## **A Caubeen history**

Up to 1937, it would appear that only bandsmen of various Irish regiments wore a caubeen. Along with saffron kilts, it distinguished the Irish from Scottish regiments. The Irish Guards established a pipe band in 1916. The pipers' uniform was a mix of standard service dress and bandsman dress, and also included a khaki bonnet, saffron-coloured kilts, and green hose. The khaki bonnet was named "caubeen" by the Guards pipers, and was similar to an oversized beret.

In 1937, the London Irish Rifles extended the caubeen's wear to the entire regiment.

In World War II, they were the only soldiers to wear the caubeen until 1944, when the 2nd Battalion of the London Irish were serving with the Irish Brigade in Italy. The 2nd Battalion of the Inniskilling Regiment started wearing caubeens made from Italian soldiers' greatcoats in January 1944, and the 6th Battalion of their regiment soon copied them.

The Royal Irish web site account states "When the 2nd Battalion The London Irish Rifles, during the Second World War, fought alongside their fellow Irish battalions in 38(Irish) Brigade, the 1st Battalion The Royal Irish Fusiliers and the 6th Battalion The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, through North Africa, Sicily and Italy, there was every reason to expect an envious eye being cast in order to establish an Irish identity. What could be more appropriate than headdress that was distinctive at distances greater than the easy identification of

a cap badge? Commanding Officers and others were cross-posted within the Irish Brigade as the grim reaper of war took its toll on those caught in the heaviest engagements. Bala Bredin, as a beret-wearing Royal Ulster Rifleman, appears quite at ease wearing his caubeen when he was CO of 2 LIR (left). It was in Italy, when the then Brigadier Pat Scott was commanding the Irish Brigade, that its popularity spread. “

In 1947, the wearing of the caubeen was later extended to all of the infantry regiments in the post-war North Irish Brigade, with the Royal Ulster Rifles receiving a black hackle. The Irish Regiment of the Canadian army and the South African Irish Regiment also wore caubeens. Both are reserve units.

Another angle on the caubeen -

The London Irish Rifles were 'affiliated' to the Royal Irish Rifles and retained that affiliation when the Rifles were renamed in 1921. However, in 1937 the London Irish became part of the Corps of The Royal Ulster Rifles as a TA battalion. Thus the Rifles became the only one of the three Irish line regiments with a TA battalion. That increased to two TA battalions when 2nd Bn London Irish was raised in 1939. The full title of the LIR was London Irish Rifles Royal Ulster Rifles.

The word 'caubeen' doesn't mean 'old hat' in Irish, even though the OED now includes that inaccurate definition. Caubeen, or caibin, means 'small cape' as it derives from the Irish caba or cape.

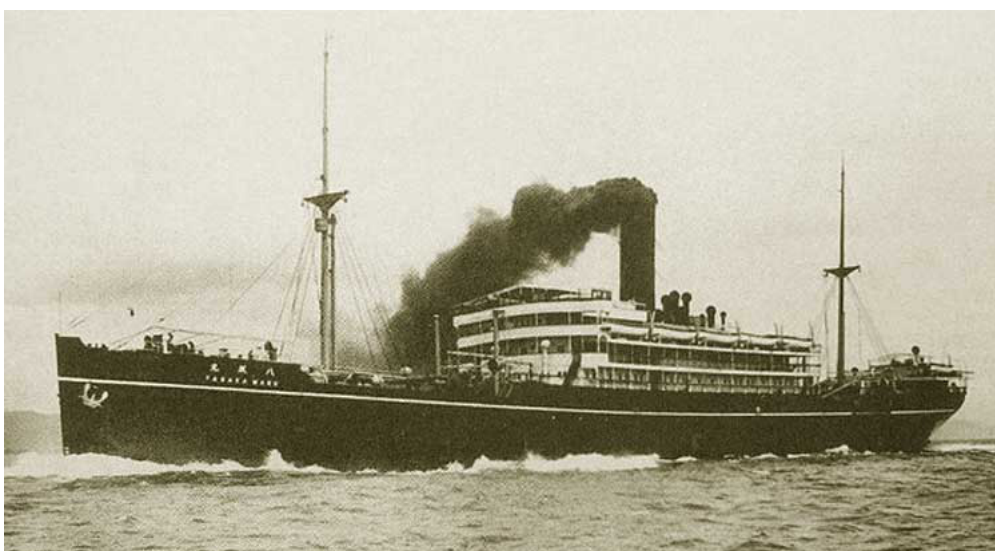
The Irish for 'old hat' is 'sean hata'. However, a modern Irish dictionary translates caibin as 'old hat', a case of the editors

following popular misconception; translating 'old hat' from English using the same dictionary produces 'sean hata'.

A full account of the origins of the caubeen is to be found in 'The Bulletin of the Military Historical Society', Volume 71. No. 281 (August 2020), pages 42-50. A shorter account may be found in the 2020 edition of 'The Inniskillinger'.

## On this Day – December 22

**1915**



Yasaka Maru, on a voyage from Tees via London to Yokohama, was sunk by the German submarine U-38 (Max Valentiner), 60 miles from Port Said. The ship sank in forty-nine minutes. All the passengers and crew were saved and picked up by a French gunboat.

**1917**

The Germans drive in British advanced posts on the Ypres-Staden railway sector.

Three Royal Navy destroyers sunk off the Dutch coast. 13 officers and 180 men lost.

## **1939**

Finns overrun Soviets at Ägläjärvi, Finland.

## **1940**

David Margesson appointed to replace Anthony Eden as British Secretary of State for War.

The Battle of Himara ended in Greek victory.

The heaviest raids of the Manchester Blitz began. Over the next two days a total of 654 people were killed and over 2,000 injured.

## **1941**

Prime Minister Churchill arrives at the White House as the guest of President Roosevelt for the Washington Conference.

The Arcadia Conference begins in Washington: Britain and US agree to “Germany First” plan.

The Japanese begin their invasion of the Philippines by landing 43,000 troops of General Homma’s 14th Army in Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, 150 miles north of Manila. Filipino troops here failed to prevent the beachhead from being established and their scouts, which had been sent forward in order to secure the defiles barring the way south were also unsuccessful.

First American troops arrive in Australia.

US expands draft: all men 18-65 must register, all men 20-44 liable for conscription.

Allied troops reached Beda Fomm but were halted by 30 German tanks. Axis forces began evacuating Benghazi by sea.

The Battle of Sjenica was fought in the Italian governorate of Montenegro. The Yugoslav Partisans were defeated.

German submarine U-380 was commissioned.

## **1942**

Convoy JW-51B (14 merchants) leaves Loch Ewe escorted by 6 destroyers and a minesweeper.

The Soviets drive German troops back 15 miles at the Don River.

The Soviets retake Morozovsk.

German submarine U-200 was commissioned.

Chifley is appointed as Minister of Post-War Reconstruction in Australia.

## **1943**

38 (Irish) Brigade. 2 London Irish at Campobasso: Btn prepares for Christmas. Officers joined:- Capt DHM Davies Lt N Mosley Lt JR Bruckmann Lt H Culverhouse Lt JD Searles Lt KVH Wessels Lt HND Seymour MC Capt J St Maur Shiel Lt AS Hunter Lt D Aitkenhead Lt F Ebing Lt C Cramb Lt M Hawkins



The allies announce that Tito is to be the allied commander in Yugoslavia as his partisans now estimated at 250,000 men.



Hitler issued a “Führer Order” (Führerbefehl) creating the “National Socialist Leading Officers”, charged with disseminating propaganda for “getting soldiers to believe in final victory” in the war “even if they did not know how it was going to be achieved”.

The German government ordered that all boys aged 16 and older would be required to register for military duty in January.

The Second Battle of Kiev ends in Soviet victory.

The German light cruiser Niobe was sunk by British motor torpedo boats three days after running aground off Silba, Yugoslavia.

**1944**

The allies report that the Germans have penetrated up to 40 miles in the Ardennes. The Germans demand surrender of surrounded Bastogne, Belgium—The artillery commander of the 101st ABN, US Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe replies, “Nuts!”

Rundstedt’s suggestion of a withdrawal is refused by Hitler.

The U.S. 3rd Army begins an offensive to relieve Bastogne.

UK announces a call-up of 250,000 troops ‘to sustain and nourish our armies in the line’.

Patton begins to turn his army 90 degrees to the north to relieve Bastogne as he had promised Ike Dec. 19 – 250,000 troops 75 mi. The US 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne, Belgium, is surrounded.

The U.S. First Army withdraws from St. Vith

## **1945**

Britain and the U.S.A formally recognize Tito’s Yugoslavia.

President Truman issues “Truman Directive,” authorizing immigration of increased numbers of displaced persons.

## **1948**

Former Japanese prime minister Hideki Tojo is executed for war crimes. Tojo tried to commit suicide before his trial but survived to face the executioner.



# Roll of Honour – December 22

*Representing their comrades who died on this day*

**1915**

## **+BAIRD, James**

Royal Irish Rifles, 15th Btn. Rifleman.15/11886. Died 22/12/1915. Age 19. Son of James and Elizabeth Baird, of 23, Arlington St., Belfast. Sucrerie Military Cemetery, Colincamps, France

## **+CAULFIELD, Hugh**

Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Private. 21986. Died 22/12/1915. Age 32. Son of John and Bridget Caulfield, of Cran, Fivemiletown, Co. Tyrone. The family lived in Cross, County Fermanagh. Hugh Caulfield enlisted in Fivemiletown, County Tyrone. Hugh Caulfield served with the Connaught Rangers, Service Number 2664. He was serving with the 1st Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers when he was wounded at Gallipoli. Lancashire Landing Cemetery, Turkey, including Gallipoli. Fivemiletown WM.

## **+GRAHAM, Hedley William Brownrigg**

Royal Irish Rifles, 10<sup>th</sup> Btn. Rifleman.14729. Died 22/12/1915. Age 22. Son of Wesley Graham, of 66, Melrose St., Belfast. Mailly-Maillet Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France

**+McREYNOLDS, John Archibald**

Royal Irish Rifles. 10th Btn. Sergeant. 15468. Died 22/12/1915. From Tartaraghan. Son of John and Mary Jane McReynolds of 2, Chlorine Gardens, Belfast. Sucre Military Cemetery, Colincamps, Somme, France.

**+NICHOLL, Archibald**

Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 1<sup>st</sup> Btn. Private. 22112. Died 22/12/1915. According to military records, the evacuation of the 1st Dublin Fusiliers took place on 20/12/1915, two days before Private Archie Nicholl was killed. One report states: "Sunday, 19 December 1915 Gallipoli The firing line of trenches from Karakol Dag, north of Suvla to Lone Pine Plateau, South of Anzac Cove, was held by picked Riflemen, one every seven yards. These were known as the 'Last Ditchers'. Their job was to hold off the enemy until the evacuation was complete." Private Archie Nicholl survived for two days after the withdrawal, ensuring his fellow soldier's safe evacuation. Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery, Gallipoli, Turkey. Mosside Presbyterian Church, Ballymoney

**1916**

**+BAIRD, Joseph**

Royal Garrison Artillery. Gunner. 16872. Died 22/12/1916. He enlisted in 1903 and served in Malta the following year. In October 1914 he was posted to France. He became ill in November 1914 and was evacuated to England and medically discharged because of tuberculosis on 20/01/1915. Born 01/04/1880 at Bessbrook. Son of Robert Baird and Mary Baird Vaughan. Husband to Maggie nee



Patterson from Newry. They married 20/07/1909 and had a daughter. Bessbrook WM. Bessbrook Presbyterian Church RH

**+LAVERTY, Alexander Private**

38th Canadian Infantry (Eastern Ontario Regt.) 410343. Died of wounds 22/12/1916. Son of Arthur Laverty of Hillmount, Culybackey. Buried St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen. Cuninghame Memorial, Pres. Church WM.

**+PEACOCK, Walter Peacock**

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 9th Btn. A Coy. Second Lieutenant. Died 22/12/1916. Age 20. Son of George Henry and Annie Peacock, of 17, Dromore St., Cregagh, Belfast. Ration Farm (La Plus Douve) Annexe, Belgium.

**1917**

**+FERGUSON, James McKee,**

RAMC Captain. Died 22/12/1917. Age 31. Ballymena Academy, QUB MB March 1914. MO Union Infirmary, Belfast. Lieutenant RAMC 18/12/1914, Captain 18/12/1915. With BEF in France and Flanders from Oct 1915. Attached Medical Officer to 9th Battalion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers and later Connaught Rangers. It was whilst serving with the latter that he was killed near St Quentin, Somme. The Chaplain sent a letter to the family stating, 'It was my privilege to live in the mess with him, and, like all the others there, the more I got to know of him the more I liked him. Much as we admire his well-stocked mind, we admired and loved still more his clean, honourable personality. No one of the many - too many- from here, whom we have known and

lost, has left a sweeter memory behind him." Born 1886, Neillsbrook, Randalstown. Son of Rev James and Mrs Rachel (nee Glover) Ferguson, Neillsbrook. Three other brothers served in the forces. Hugh Reynolds McKay Ferguson, born 03/11/1880, was also a doctor in the Royal Army Medical Corps. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland Roll of Honour 1914-1919 entry for 1st Randalstown Presbyterian Church states he was serving in West Africa. Charles George Ferguson, born 08/02/1892, and John Hastings Glover Ferguson, born 04/01/1882, served in Canadian units (CEF). Ronssoy Communal Cemetery, Somme. QUB WM, Ballymena Academy RH, First Randalstown PCI RH

## 1918

### **+McDONALD, John**

Army Cyclist Corps. Lance Serjeant. 744. Died 22/12/1918 of wounds. Age 37. Husband of Martha Amelia McDonald, of 13, Lismain St., Ravenhill Avenue, Belfast. Dundonald Cemetery, Belfast. Dungannon WM. Second Dungannon PCI RH

### **+FERGUSON, James McKee**

Royal Army Medical Corps. Captain. Died 22/12/1917. Age 31. James was educated at Ballymena Academy, and Queens University, Belfast, where he graduated M.B., B.Ch., and B.A.O. in March 1914. He was then appointed Medical Officer in the Union Infirmary, Belfast. He took a temporary commission as lieutenant in the RAMC on 18/12/1914, and was promoted to temporary captain after one years service. He went to France in October 1915, and

was appointed Medical Officer to the 9th Btn. The Royal Dublin Fusiliers. He was then transferred to become Medical Officer of the 6th Btn. Connaught Rangers, and was serving with them when he was killed near St Quentin. The Chaplain wrote to his family: It was my privilege to live in the mess with him, and, like all the others there, the more I got to know of him the more I liked him. Much as we admire his well-stocked mind, we admired and loved still more his clean, honourable personality. No one of the many - too many - from here, whom we have known and lost, has left a sweeter memory behind him. James was the son of the Rev. James E Ferguson, B.A. (Presbyterian Minister) and Rachel Ferguson (daughter of James Glover) of Niellsbrook, Randalstown. Ronssoy Communal Cemetery, France

### **+STEELE, Samuel**

Highland Light Infantry. 2nd Btn. Private. 8025. Died 22/12/1918 of influenza. Born Parkhall, Antrim on 04/12/1893. Son of Robert and Margaret Steele. In February 1916 his mother was living in Parkgate, Templepatrick. St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, France

**1941**

### **+TWEED, William James**

RN. Ordinary Seaman. D/JX 253909. Died 22/12/1941. HMS Audacity. Age 23. Member of the Orange Order. Son of David John and Agnes Mary Tweed, Ballymoney and Newtownards. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 30/01/1942). See account OTD yesterday, December 21, on this site. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 49. Newtownards WM

**1943**

**+CALLAGHAN, Charles**

RNVR. Leading Seaman. P/UD/X 1359. HM Boom Vessel 42. Died 22/12/1943. Age 25. Son of Michael and Ellen Callaghan, Monkstown. Joint grave 806. Edinburgh Seafield Cemetery

**VETERANS**

**BALL, Campbell**

RAFVR. Flight Lieutenant. QUB, BSc Med 1944. Born 18/01/1924. Leaving school, RBAI, during the Second World War, he took a degree in engineering in Queen's University, Belfast before joining the Royal Air Force as a commissioned officer and was posted to the Far East. Later, using the opportunities available to ex-service people, he returned to Queen's to study medicine. He qualified in 1953, and undertook postgraduate training in medicine, obtaining his doctorate in 1958 and his MRCP (Edinburgh) in 1962. He was elected FRCP(Edinburgh) in 1971. He decided on a career in geriatric medicine and in 1964 was appointed a consultant in the Belfast City Hospital, also having beds in Musgrave Park Hospital, Belfast and Lagan Valley Hospital, Lisburn. During his time in Musgrave Park, he was able to replace Nissen hutted wards with a purpose built unit, and in Lagan Valley he also opened a new unit, replacing a Victorian hospital. In the clinical system that operated then, he was responsible for the care of older patients, including home assessment visits, in a catchment area which covered West Belfast and which included some of the most troubled parts of Northern Ireland. He was a careful and conscientious physician and also undertook medical management duties as both Chairman of the



Division of Medicine and Chairman of the Medical Executive Committee of the Belfast City Hospital. He gave valuable support to the new University Department of Geriatric Medicine and regularly taught students in his wards. He retired in 1984. Campbell Ball died on 22/12/2008. He was survived by his wife, Hilda, his sons Barnaby and Jonathan and his grandson Christopher.

### **STEPHENSON, George Vaughan**

RNVR. Surgeon Commander. Served 11/39 - 04/46. 30/11/1939 RN Hospital Chatham, 06/1943 in charge of RN Auxiliary Hospital Columbo, 19/07/1945 in charge of RN Auxiliary Hospital Knowle. Born Dromore 22/12/1901. Son of Rev G A Stephenson and Gertie A Paddon of Belfast. Brother of Henry William Vaughan Stephenson who served in RN in WW1. Married May Fraser, daughter of JC Fraser 1933. Played rugby for QUB and London Hospitals. Between 1920 and 1930 was capped 42 times for Ireland which he captained 13 times. Consultant psychiatrist, Hill End Hospital, St Albans. QUB 1924

**Every day is a Remembrance  
Day**

***We will remember them***

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## remembrance ni

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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 [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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