



remembrance ni

Voluntary ambulance driver and Naval air pilot

Thomas
Malcolmson
Greeves was born
into one of the
foremost linen
families. He was
known as 'Mac' to
the family but 'Tom'
to his friends
during the war.

He was born on
06/12/1895 to the
manager of the J
&TM Greeves
Linen Mill in Belfast

and named after his grandfather, one of the founders. Had





things been different he would have gone on to take his father's place as manager at the mill.

Thomas was the son of Alfred and Annie Frances Greeves, of "Fernbank", Strandtown, Belfast. He and two brothers attended Campbell College. Thomas entered Campbell College in 1907,

playing for the rugby 1st XV 1911-13 and the cricket 1st XI 1910-12.

The family were (Plymouth) Brethren and, in common with the Quakers who they were an offshoot from, swore not to take life so, when the war broke out, Thomas did not sign up.

Nevertheless, as with many others they felt a need to contribute and in early 1915 the family donated two vehicles (a truck and the family's Lancaster car) to the Friends' Ambulance Unit. This was a volunteer run unit providing medical support in Flanders. At that time its primarily focus was the civilian evacuees who were suffering a massive typhoid epidemic. Thomas and his cousins John and William Edward (Bill) joined the unit as drivers after a period of training at the Quaker house in Jordan's Buckinghamshire.

Among others in the unit were members of the Cadbury, Fry and Rowntree families as well as the Brooks family who founded the Portland cement company

For the first year, they were based at the Queen Alexandra Hospital in Dunkirk and moved to various stations in the Flanders area including Croxyde, Crombeke and Rexpoede as well as the hospitals at Poperinghe and De Panne.

In July 1916, they were attached to the French army and moved to Porte St Maxence serving the hospital there and in

Compiègne including the palace there which had been converted into a hospital. This was in preparation from the big push at the Somme.

In March of 1917 Thomas and a close friend, Douglas Brooks, seem to have



decided they weren't doing enough for the war effort and, now both being over 21, they could go against their families' wishes and sign up for combat.

They both chose the RNAS but there was a waiting list and Brooks, being impatient, used family influence to get a commission in the RFC instead.

Thomas carried on with the RNAS. He went to Crystal Palace for initial training then moving on to learning to fly in a Cauldron G3 at Vendome.

Back in the UK he passed out of Cranwell first in class and, after his first flight in a Camel at Manston he was posted to the pilot-pool squadron 12 RNAS at Petit-Synthe, Dunkirk.

The weather was very bad and he only had two patrol flights before on 23/12/1917, he and his flight leader took off and, after only a few minutes in the air, the Camel's notorious gyroscopic effect caused him to lose control and hit the ground.

He was alive when taken out of the plane and was sent to the Queen Alexandra where he had formerly worked and where his elder sister, Kathleen, was working as a VAD, but succumbed to his injuries later in the day.

His other, eldest, sister, Mary Florence (who he called 'Mimi') was deeply affected by his death. She kept the propeller boss from the plane, which was sent to the family by a friend, until her death in 1967.

Each of his brothers and sisters also kept a button from his dress uniform which he is shown wearing in a portrait which was one of two done on the occasion of his graduation from Cranwell.

Thomas' remains were interred at Dunkirk Town Cemetery, Nord France.

Acknowledgments - a great nephew of Thomas Greeves, Campbell College and CWGC.

On this Day – December 23

1914

In Germany the Captain of the "Yorck" is sentenced to two years detention for the loss of his ship.

1939

British form military intelligence section MI9 to aid resistance fighters, downed airmen, and POWs in Nazi-occupied countries.

First Canadian troops arrive in Britain.

1940

Anthony Eden becomes Foreign Secretary.

Churchill broadcasts to Italy: 'All because of one man'.

Lord Halifax appointed British ambassador to Washington.

Italian torpedo boat Fratelli Cairoli sinks after hitting a mine off the coast of Tripoli.

Chiang Kai-shek dissolves all Communist associations in China.

1941



Brewster Buffaloes of No. 67 Squadron destroy six bombers and four fighters of the Japanese invasion force over the Burmese capital, Rangoon. The Royal Air Force loses five Buffaloes.

Concerned about the safety of the founding documents of the United States in wartime Washington, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are removed from their display space at the National Archives and are transported in a special sealed container to temporary storage at the U.S. Gold Depository at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. On Oct. 1, 1944, with the danger to the mainland United States passed, the documents are returned to public display in Washington.

Under continuous pressure, Rommel and his Afrika Korps start to evacuate Benghazi.

The Japanese launch their first bomber attack on Rangoon. They suffer heavy losses to RAF fighters, but press home their attack, inflicting substantial damage to docks at Rangoon.

The Japanese launch another attack against Wake Island, overwhelming the small US garrison. Immediately after its capture, the Japanese rename the Island as Bird Island. Rear-Admiral Frank J. Fletcher's task force is still more than 400 miles away and so is diverted to Midway. American and Filipino troops of the North Luzon Force, begin to fall back towards the River Agno under heavy pressure from the Japanese.

British evacuate Malaya above Perak River as Japanese advance.

Off Cambodia CA, Japanese sub I-21 sinks US tanker Montebello in sight of the coast; survivors machine-gunned in lifeboats but no one is injured.

1942

Having advanced as far as the Myshkova river 30 miles southwest of Stalingrad, the three Panzer divisions of the relief force have exhausted their power and begin to withdraw towards their starting line at Kotelnikovo.

Bob Hope entertains troops in Alaska, the first of his Christmas shows. First War Loan Drive ends, raised \$13 billion (quota was \$9 billion).

1944



Two soldiers of U.S. 101st Airborne Division manning a forward post near a road near Bastogne, Belgium.

A breakthrough to the South West of Budapest is now 60-mile wide.

A German E-boat force is routed off the Scheldt Estuary.

1945

General Dwight D. Eisenhower confirms the death sentence of Private Eddie Slovik, the only American shot for desertion since the Civil War.

Germans reach maximum range of Ardennes offensive, within 3 miles of Meuse River.

In US, all horse and dog racing banned to save labor, effective 03/01/1945.

At Papago Park camp in Arizona, 25 German POWs escape, ecstatic about successes in the Battle of the Bulge.

Roll of Honour – December 23

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+YOUNG, John

Royal Irish Rifles, 15th Btn. Rifleman. 571. Died 23/12/1915. Age 31. Son of Mr. and Mrs. James Young, of Belfast; husband of Agnes Young, of 1, Valentine St., Belfast. Ste Marie Cemetery, Le Havre, France

1916

+BURROWES, John Jack

South African Horse, 4th, "A" Sqdn. Private. 663. Died 23/12/1916. Aged 33. In 1901 he was working as a drapery salesman. Son of William and Mary Burrowes, of "Hillside", Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, Ireland and the late William Burrowes. Dar es Salaam War Cemetery, Tanzania. Dungannon WM

+McLEAN, George Alexander

Royal Field Artillery. 74th Bde. Gunner. 41411. Died 23/12/1916. Allonville Communal Cemetery, France

1917

+DOONAN, John Alexander

London Regiment (London Irish Rifles), 2nd/18th Bn. Rifleman. 591978. Died 23/12/1917. Aged 25. Son of Johnston and Annie Doonan, of Dungannon; husband of Kathleen Doonan, of Scotch St., Dungannon, Co. Tyrone. Jerusalem War Cemetery, Israel. Dungannon WM. St Anne's C of I RH

+GREEVES, Thomas Malcolmson

RNAS. Flight Sub-Lieutenant. 12th Squadron, 5th Wing. Died 23/12/1917. Age 22. This Squadron was based at Petite-Synthe, just outside the seaplane base of Dunkirk, and was primarily a training squadron, but some aircraft were recorded as having seen action on the Western Front. Born 06/12/1895. Son of Alfred and Annie Frances Greeves, Fernbank, Strandtown, Belfast. Dunkirk Town Cemetery. Strandtown WM. Family memorial Belfast City Cemetery. Campbell College 971. See article above.

+MULHOLLAND, Mitchell Joseph

London Regiment (London Irish Rifles). 2nd/18th Bn. 591959. Rifleman. Died 23/12/1917. Aged 21. Youngest Son of Michael and Mary Mulholland, of 197, Baldwin Avenue, Jersey City, U.S.A. Born at Coalisland, Co. Tyrone. Educated at Halifax Secondary School, where he won the Rawson Shaw Scholarship, and St. Mary's R.C. College, Hammersmith, from which he enlisted in 1915. Also served in France and Macedonia. Jerusalem War Cemetery, Israel

+O'HARE, P

RNR. Stoker. 1879/U. HMS Drake. Died 23/12/1917.
Milltown Cemetery, Belfast

+PAYNE, Thomas

RN. Able Seaman. 234604. HMS Torrent. Died 23/12/1917.
Age 27. Born Belfast. Son of Thomas and Maria Payne;
brother of Mrs. Harriette Lutton, Franklin St., Weymouth,
Mass., USA. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 21

+RANKIN, W

Connaught Rangers. 6th Btn. Private. 7688. Died
23/12/1917. Age 30. Husband to Mrs. F. Rankin, of King St.,
Newcastle, Co. Down. Abbeville Communal Cemetery
Extension, France

1919

+McCONKEY, Matthew George

Royal Irish Rifles. 12th Btn. Lance Corporal. 16704. Died
23/12/1919 at Clifton Street Military Hospital, Belfast, from
colitis and long-standing heart failure. Enlisted Belfast
19/09/1914. Wounded twice during his service - poisoned by
gas in September 1916 and injured by a shell in April 1918.
Born Ballygowan, Ballyclare on 10/03/1887. Member of the
Order of Free Gardeners, Crimson Thorn Lodge 475. Son of
George and Margaret (nee Hill) McConkey. Husband to
Margaret Ann (nee McKernan). They married in Aghalee C
of I Parish Church on 22/01/1909. They had five children. St
Catherine's C of I Churchyard, Killlead. St Catherine's WM.
Crumlin WM. Antrim WM. Ballynure Presbyterian Church
RH

1941

+MAXWELL, John

RAFVR. Aircraftman 2nd Class.1477442. Died 23/12/1941. Aged 24. Son of James and Margaret Maxwell, of Aughnahoy, Co. Antrim. Peebles Cemetery, Peeblesshire.

1944

+CONLEY, Thomas

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Lance Corporal. 6985162. Died 23/12/1944. Age 20. Son of Elizabeth Conley, of Castlerock, Co. Londonderry; husband of Mary Conley. Santerno Valley War Cemetery, Italy

+McGLADE, Cyril Edmund Vincent

Army Dental Corps. Captain.136932.Died 23/12/1944. Age 40. Son of Patrick and Kate McGlade, of Knockloughrim, Co. Londonderry. Taukkyan War Cemetery, Rangoon, Myanmar. Castledawson WM

VETERANS

ANDERSON, Thomas

RN. 151964. Joined as a boy on 03/02/1937. Posted on completion of training to the new Tribal Class destroyer HMS Zulu. Saw action in Norway at 2nd Battle of Narvik, in the Mediterranean and was present at the sinking of Bismarck. He was wounded and taken POW at Tobruk on 14/09/42 whilst landing Royal Marines by boat. HMS Zulu was sunk by bombing that day. He was repatriated following hospitalisation. Thomas joined the Merchant Navy after the war and served until ill health forced retirement in 1980.

Father of Robert. Born 02/04/1923. Died 23/12/1996.
Circular Road, Coleraine

WALLACE, Robert

Royal Irish Rifles, 5th Btn, Ballykinlar Camp

Robert Hugh Wallace was born in English Street, Downpatrick on 14/12/1860. He was the son of William Nevin Wallace and Catherine Mary Wallace. Both his great-grandfather James Wallace and his grandfather Hugh Wallace had served as seneschal of Downpatrick. After being educated at Harrow and Brasenose College, Oxford, Robert Wallace enrolled as a solicitor in the Irish courts in 1890. He inherited Myra Castle and later served as deputy lieutenant and high sheriff of County Down. He was a high-ranking freemason and Orangeman, and a keen antiquarian researcher. He helped F J Bigger and William Fennell of the Belfast Naturalists' Field Club to reconstruct the Downpatrick High Cross in 1897, having been in possession of the cross-head.

He had strong family connections with the South Down Militia, renamed the 5th Royal Irish Rifles, joining the regiment as a second lieutenant in 1879, becoming battalion commandant in 1898 and honorary colonel in 1899. Wallace led the battalion in the 2nd Boer War in South Africa from April 1901 to June 1902. His war diary is in PRONI. While in South Africa, he composed the well-known ballad 'The South Down Militia', originally called 'The Terrors of the Land'. The 5th Royal Irish Rifles used Wallace's property, the old gaol, now Down County Museum, as their headquarters, and often drilled and trained on the Mall.

They also spent many summers training and using the rifle ranges at Ballykinlar Camp, leading up to the First World War.

Wallace was a key supporter of the Unionist Party in Ulster and a close friend of James Craig, who won the Down East seat in the 1906 general election. He was a key figure in the mass mobilisation of the Orange Order behind the anti-Home Rule campaign of Edward Carson, and initiated drill training for members of the Orange Order in East Down. He was present at Belfast City Hall on Ulster Day on 28th September 1912, when the Ulster Covenant was signed.

At the outbreak of the First World War, he was placed in command of Donard training camp near Newcastle on 11/09/1914. He found the 10th Royal Irish Rifles billets when they were flooded out of their tents at Donard camp, before they moved into newly-constructed Armstrong huts at Ballykinlar Camp. He successfully recruited and trained the 17th and 19th battalions Royal Irish Rifles before retiring in January 1918, due to declining health. His War Office file is in the British National Archives in Kew.

Robert Wallace had close connections with Down Cathedral, and attended there the day before his sudden death on 23/23/1929. He is buried in the churchyard of Down Cathedral and is commemorated in the Cathedral by a stained glass window showing Hiram King of Tyre and Solomon constructing the Temple in Jerusalem.

WILLIAMS, John Rowley

RN. FAA. Pilot. B 05/06/1925. Son of Major RD Williams, MC, Elmwood Avenue, Belfast. Born on 05/06/925. Family moved to Hollywood. He had one brother and three sisters.

He was educated at Campbell College. 2886. He and his wife Eileen married and had one daughter named Jane. After the War he went to live and work in Toronto, Canada, where he stayed for ten years. He moved to England where he studied accountancy. He lived in Toddington and worked in Bedford. His daughter married and he and his wife moved to Milton Keynes for a short time and then to the Barbican in the City of London. John joined Cripplegate Foundation, an ancient City of London parochial charity, as Accountant in the 1970's, later becoming Clerk to the Governors. He greatly enjoyed this work and was sad to retire in 1992. As well as being Clerk to the Foundation, John became interested in the affairs of the City and joined the Cripplegate Ward Club in 1977 subsequently becoming Hon. Treasurer in 1981 and took on the further responsibility of Hon. Secretary in 1987. He was also a Freeman of the City of London. In 1992 John retired from the Club when he and his wife Eileen returned to Holywood to live in the family home. Sadly Eileen died a few years later. John had always been keen on sailing and became Hon. Treasurer to the Royal Ulster Yacht Club. He also worshipped regularly at Holy Trinity Church, Glencraig, where he was a member of the choir and served on the Select Vestry. John died of bone cancer on 23/12/1997 aged 72. The funeral service was held on 29th December at Glencraig and a Memorial Service was held in London at St. Giles Church, Cripplegate in April the following year.

Every day is a Remembrance Day

We will remember them

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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 houstonmckelvey@mac.com

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