



remembrance ni



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On this Day – December 24

1914



The first successful bombing attack on a target in the UK takes place. A German Friedrichshafen FF29 floatplane

dropped a single 22 pound bomb, which blew a crater 10 feet wide and 4 feet deep in the garden of a Dover resident. There were no casualties.

LONDONDERRY VOLUNTEERS ON FURLOUGH.

A special train, arriving at the G.N.R. terminus on Tuesday morning, conveyed 650 men of the 10th Service Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (Londonderry U.V.F) on a week's Christmas leave. They were met by large crowd and given a most enthusiastic reception. The Limavady and Coleraine contingent, numbering about 200, completed their journey on the Midland line in the afternoon. The balance of the battalion will be granted leave at the New Year. -
Londonderry Sentinel - Thursday 24 December 1914

1915

The French liner "Ville de la Ciotat" is torpedoed in the Mediterranean, 80 lives lost.

1917



The Christmas truce, French, German, and British soldiers exchange seasonal greetings.

Both sides go into no man's land on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and exchange food and souvenirs. Joint burial ceremonies and prisoner swaps, and several meetings ending in carol-singing.

1939

Pope Pius XII makes a Christmas appeal for peace.

1940

US refuses to admit Jewish refugees, believing it will lead to expulsion of all Jews from Europe.

Bonus Christmas ration is distributed in Germany—26 oz rice & vegetables, 1 lb sugar, coffee, and jam.

1941

Japanese troops make further landings on Luzon to the southeast of Manila in Lamon Bay. The Japanese 16th Division starts its drive north towards Manila in an attempt to link up with the North Luzon Force. General MacArthur announces his decision to withdraw his forces to Bataan. A supply base is to be setup on Corregidor with sufficient stock to carry on the fight for 6 months.

British Eighth Army takes Benghazi, Libya.

White House tree-lighting ceremony moved to south end of grounds to be easily seen, the last tree-lighting until 1945.

1942

US bomb Wake Island.

Following the suspension of 'Operation Winter Tempest', the relief of Stalingrad, the Red Army begins an offensive against Army Group Don toward Kotelnikovo, breaking through the lines of 4th Romanian Army.

Soviets take 1 of 2 airfields used in Luftwaffe supply of Stalingrad.

In Algiers, Admiral Jean-François Darlan, French commander in North Africa, is assassinated by Ferdinand Bonnier de la Chapelle, a French royalist.

1943





38 (Irish) Brigade - CQMS O'Sullivan 2 LIR at Campobasso: "E Coy were billeted in a large Franciscan convent. On the evening of Christmas Eve, the monks carried around a harmonium & sang carols. Jim Sadler turned our Christmas fare into a banquet, some of which leaked to the monks."

Commanders of the 'Second Front' are announced as Eisenhower, Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Force; Montgomery to be C in C of 21st Army Group.

Sir Henry Maitland Wilson is made Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean and Alexander is C in C Allied Armies, Italy.

The Russians commence a third winter offensive, with Vatutin's 63 divisions in the Ukraine and capture Berdichev.

Roosevelt broadcasts about the Cairo and Teheran conferences and says plans have been laid for the invasion of Europe and its post-war reconstruction.

1944

In the English Channel, U-486 (Oblt.z.S. Gerhard Meyer) sinks the allied troop carrier SS Leopoldville with the loss of 763 men of the US 66th Infantry Division. All news and information on this incident is suppressed by orders of SHAEF headquarters.

In the largest mission to date, 2034 bombers of the US Eighth Air Force bomb German targets in the Ardennes.

Brigadier General Frederick Castle, commander of 4th Combat Bombardment Wing and former commander of US 94th Bomb Group, dies in crash after giving his crew time to bail out from his damaged B-17, receives Medal of Honor

Roll of Honour – December 24

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+ATKINSON, John Broadwood

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 5th Btn. Captain. Died 24/12/1915 at 19 General Hospital, Alexandria. Age 21. He applied for a

commission on the outbreak of war and on 15/08/1914 was gazetted as a Second Lieutenant Royal Irish Fusiliers, 3rd Reserve Battalion. On 19/11/1915 he was promoted to Lieutenant in the Royal Irish Fusiliers 5th Battalion. He was a Temporary Captain serving in the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force in the Dardanelles from June 1915. On 06/08/1915 he was wounded during the landing at Sulva Bay. Son of Joseph Atkinson, D.L. and Annie Edith Atkinson, of Crowhill, Annaghmore. Alexandria (Chatby) Military and War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt. St Paul's C of I WM, Tartaraghan

+HAMILTON, George

Royal Irish Rifles, 398. transferred to Princess Victoria's (Royal Irish Fusiliers). 1st Garrison Btn. Sergeant. 330. Died. 24/12/1915 in Wellington Barracks, Dublin. Aged circa 40. Born Newtownards. Enlisted Holywood. He was described in the 1917 edition of the Newtownards Almanac as 'an ex-RIC man'. His sole legatee was his sister Margaret. Grangegorman Military Cemetery, Co. Dublin.

+MORTON, William

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 9th Btn. Private. 14468. Died 24/12/1915. Age 21. On 31/12/1915 the Armagh Guardian reported that William "was one of the best employees in the Guardian's printing works. A model in every way". It stated he had a severe cold and consumption and that a spell in a sanatorium led him to consider emigration to a warmer climate as in Australia. He ignored this advice and enlisted. He was advised to stay with the home battalion, but went to France where the wet and cold in the trenches renewed the illness in his lungs. He was sent home and his death

ensued. He was given a military funeral with most men from the barracks and two colonels attending. Son of William and Florence Morton, of Drumadd, Armagh. St Mark's C of I Churchyard, Armagh

1916

+BEATTIE, Robert

Royal Irish Rifles. 12th Btn. Rifleman. 12/53. Died 24/12/1916. Born Ballyclare 19/01/1896. Enlisted Ballyclare. Son of Andrew and Martha (nee Horner) Beattie. In 1911 Robert and his brother David were living with their grandmother Agnes on the Green Road, Ballyclare. Their grandfather Robert had died by this time. La Plus Douve Farm Cemetery, Belgium. Ballyclare WM. St John's C of I Ballyclare RH. Ballyclare Presbyterian Church RH

+CRAWFORD, John

Royal Irish Rifles. Rifleman. 7/1673. Died 24/12/1918. Age 25. Son of James Crawford of Rasharkin; husband of Margaret Crawford of Broughshane. United Kingdom Book of Remembrance

1917

+BREWER, Albert

RN. Stoker 1st Class. K15525. HMS Penshurst. Died 24/12/1917. Age 23. Killed in action with submarine off Bristol Channel. Enrolled 19/07/1912 for 12 years. War service in Pembroke II, Cyclops, Sabrina and Penshurst. Born Belfast 13/02/1894. Son of Charles and Mary Brewer,

of Belfast. Chatham Naval Memorial, Panel 23. ADM
188/898/15525

+DARRAGH, John McCromie

6th Dragoons (Inniskilling). Private.128. Died 24/12/1916.
Age 32. John McClelland Cromie Darragh was born at
Ballycraigy, Ballymena, around 1884, son of farmer Samuel
Darragh and Jane Darragh (nee Starrat).

On the outbreak of war he returned home from Canada and
on 10/11/1914 enlisted at Belfast in the 6th (Inniskilling)
Dragoons, Service Squadron (No.128). His brother Matthew
Sloan Darragh joined the squadron at the same time.

He embarked for France on 03/10/1915, three days in
advance of his squadron, one of around thirty men of the
squadron attached to the headquarters of the 36th (Ulster)
Division.

During 1916 Private Darragh was posted to the regular
regiment of the 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons. On 24 December
that year he died as a result of a self-inflicted gunshot
wound. He was aged 32.

Reports home stated that he had been killed in action. The
Ballymena Observer of 12 January 1917, for example,
reported:

“Trooper J. Darragh, Inniskilling Dragoons, who was killed in
action on Christmas Eve last, was the third son of the late
Samuel Darragh, Ballycraigy, Ballymena and Mrs. Darragh
now of Alma Terrace, Portadown. He came home from

Canada at the beginning of the war to join this popular Irish Regiment of which he always felt very proud.”

His remains were buried at Fressenville Military Cemetery, Abbeville. After the war his body was exhumed and reburied at St Riquier British Cemetery, Somme, France.

His brother, Matthew Sloan Darragh, had been killed in action in March 1917. Another brother, James Robinson Darragh, an officer in the West Riding Regiment, died of wounds on 5 July that year (Belfast News-Letter, 5 January 1917).

Third son of the late Samuel and Jane Darragh, of Ballycraigy, Ballymena and Alma Terrace, Portadown. St Riquier British Cemetery, France. The three brothers are remembered on a family memorial at the Kirkhill Cemetery, Connor, Co. Antrim

1918

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husband of Margaret Crawford of Broughshane. United Kingdom Book of Remembrance

1941

+BOWMAN, Eric Ritchie

RAFVR. Sergeant. 500548. Died 24/12/1941. Eric Bowman was born on 04/08/1916 . He was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution (RBAI) from 1929 until 1934. He entered the Civil Service and worked in the Ministry of Agriculture. He enrolled in the RAFVR before the outbreak of war and held a commission in the Reserve of Officers. He was called up on the outbreak of hostilities and in the *County Down Spectator* of 30/12/1939, it was reported that he had been seriously injured on Christmas Eve in a flying crash in Scotland. He suffered concussion and multiple injuries and then, with his parents at his bedside, he regained consciousness four days later. As a result of his injuries Eric was passed unfit for flying and, in November 1940, he resigned his commission and returned to civilian life. Then, following the Blitz on Belfast in April 1941, he applied for another medical examination and was passed fit for service. Some eight months later, Sergeant Eric Bowman was killed on Christmas Eve (exactly two years to the day after his previous crash) when the Short Stirling aircraft on which he was a crew member crashed in the Bedfordshire countryside while on training manoeuvres. He was based at RAF Waterbeach, north of Cambridge. Five other RAF personnel were also killed in the crash. His brother Geoffrey Alexander Bowman also died on service. Bangor Cemetery. 502 (Ulster) Squadron WM, St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast 1943

1942

+KIRK, William

RAFVR. Aircraftman 1st Class. 1107975. Died 24/12/1942. Age 20. 89 Sqdn. Son of William and Susan Kirk, Dundonald. Moascar War Cemetery, Egypt

1943

+GREGSON, James Casaidy

Highland Light Infantry (City of Glasgow Regiment) att'd., Royal Indian Army Service Corps. Lieutenant. 172387. Died 24/12/1943. Age 29. Son of David and Margaret J. Gregson, of Lurgan. Delhi War Cemetery, India

1944

+CORRY, James

RN. Leading Stoker. D/KX 90385. HM Submarine H 31. Died 24/12/1944. Age 30. H 31 (Lt. Frank Bridger Gibbs, RN) sailed from Falmouth and left escort on the 19/12/1941 for a Bay of Biscay patrol, 250 nautical miles north of Cape



Finisterre. She was reported overdue on 26/12/1941. The cause of her loss is unknown. Son of Hugh and Elizabeth Corry, Belfast. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 52. Family memorial, Milltown Cemetery, Belfast. BE52A

+DICKSON, Ruth Hannah

Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service. Sister. 223772. Died 24/12/1944. Age 54. Daughter of Joseph Alexander and Lydia Ann Dickson, of Eglish, Co. Tyrone. Born 15/05/1890. Ruth was the third of eight children, all born in the Benburb area. She served as a nurse in WW1. In 1923, she became a Presbyterian Missionary nurse in Manchuria, China. In September, 1941, she got caught up in the war and enlisted as a nurse. In 1943 Ruth was captured and became a Japanese prisoner of war. Late in 1944, she contracted malaria and died on Christmas Eve, 24th December 1944. Jakarta War Cemetery, Indonesia. Moy WM

1945

+IRVINE, Annie

WAAF. Leading Aircraftwoman. 2165476. Died 24/12/1945. Age 30. Daughter of Alfred Norwood Irvine and Gertrude Helen Irvine, of Belfast. Newtownards Cemetery

+McKEE, Albert James

RAFVR. Aircraftman 2nd Class. 1903009. Died 24/12/1945. Aged 34. Son of Thomas and Margaret Ann McKee; husband to Elizabeth McKee, of Castlerock, Co. Londonderry. Medjez-El-Bab War Cemetery, Tunisia

VETERANS

AGNEW, William John

RN. 200243. Born 24/12/1881. Dunsilly, Antrim

BIRNEY, Samuel Alexander

RN. AB. J58131. Boy service from 06/09/1916. Enrolled 24/12/1918 for 12 years. War service in Impregnable, Centurion and Vivid II. Born Belfast 24/12/1900. Earl Street, Belfast. Rosemary St - PCI RH. Sinclair Seaman's - PCI RH. ADM 188/763/58131

BRADSHAW, Alan Rousseau

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DOHERTY, Francis John

In London Gazette 16/02/1934, Lieutenant Indian Medical Services from 05/02/1934. DSO London Gazette 24/12/1935 "For gallant and distinguished service in action in connection with the recent Mohmand operations, North West Frontier of India 1935". He was attached to 5th. Btn (Queen Victoria's Own Corps of Guides), 12th Frontier Force Regiment, Indian Army. Medical Directory of 1974 - *DOHERTY, Francis John, D.S.O.*, retired Lt.-Col. IMS-Aberaman-Uchaf, Aberdare, Glam. (Tel. 2705)— MB BCh BAO Belf. 1931.

JACKSON, Harry Noel

RNVR. Served in the Royal Irish Rifles and RNVR. In World War II served as Major in Royal Artillery. Born 24/12/1899. Son of Henry Jackson, Invermore, Cherryvalley, Belfast. D 1966. Campbell College 1140

MAYNE, Frances Eleanor Mayne

WRAC. Major. Born 24/12/1910 High Street Newtownards. Daughter of William and Margaret Boyle Mayne. Sister to Lt Colonel Robert Blair (Paddy) Mayne 1st S.A.S. (S.R.S.) DSO (3bars).

Francie enlisted on 05/07/1940 with the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS). She served with the Royal Artillery, throughout the war years reaching the rank of Major. She reenlisted after the war and served with the newly formed Women's Royal Army Corps.

Her pre-war occupation was a kindergarten teacher and her family home was at Mount Pleasant Newtownards. After her military service, she returned to full time teaching at the Friends School Lisburn, Regent House and Stranmillis. She retired at the age of 60 and died in 2009 at the age of 89. She is featured in the War Years Remembered Museum.

PANTRIDGE, James Francis

RAMC. MC. Born in Hillsborough 03/10/1916. Friends' School, Lisburn and QUB, graduating medicine in 1939. Commissioned as a Lieutenant (128673) in RAMC 12/04/1940. He was awarded the Military Cross, "in recognition of gallant and distinguished services in Malaya in 1942". The citation read: "This officer worked unceasingly under the most adverse conditions of continuous bombing and shelling and was an inspiring example to all with whom he came into contact. He was absolutely cool under the heaviest fire". During the fall of Singapore he became a POW. He served much of his captivity as a slave labourer on the Burma Railway. When he was freed at the war's end, Pantridge was emaciated and had contracted cardiac beriberi; he suffered from ill-health related to the disease for the rest of his life. After Pantridge's liberation he worked as a lecturer in the pathology department at Queen's University, and then won a scholarship to the University of

Michigan, where he studied under Dr. F.N. Wilson, a cardiologist and authority on electrocardiography.

He returned to Northern Ireland in 1950, and was appointed as cardiac consultant to the RVH, Belfast and professor at QUB, where he remained until his retirement in 1982. There he established a specialist cardiology unit whose work became known around the world.

By 1957 Pantridge and his colleague, Dr John Geddes, had introduced the modern system of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for the early treatment of cardiac arrest. Further study led Frank Pantridge to the realization that many deaths resulted from ventricular fibrillation which needed to be treated before the patient was admitted to hospital. This led to his introduction of the mobile coronary care unit (MCCU), an ambulance with specialist equipment and staff to provide pre-hospital care.

To extend the usefulness of early treatment, Pantridge went on to develop the portable defibrillator, and in 1965 installed his first version in a Belfast ambulance. Frank Pantridge died aged 88 on 24/12/2004 He was unmarried.

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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