



remembrance ni



## Tyne Cot Cemetery

**Located 9 Kms north-east of Ypres and contains 11,968 WW1 burials. The Memorial commemorates those whose who died in the Ypres Salient after 16 August 1917 and whose graves are not known. Total 35,001.**

# On this Day – December 26

**1916**

General Joffre is created a Marshal of France.

**1939**

The first squadron of Australian airmen arrives in Britain.

**1940**



Walter Edmenson, a Naval Reserve officer from HMS Caroline, who was a member of Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club, and a well known Belfast shipping company, was lost when his craft hit a mine on Boxing Day 1940. See today's Roll of Honour.

## **1941**

Japanese troops cross the river Perak. The Japanese commander General Yamashita senses that British resistance is weakening in Malaya and is determined to push home his advantage and not allow the British any time to reorganize themselves. This he does by forcing the British troops back down the coast roads until he reaches a defensive position and then outflanks it through the jungle.

The Philippine capital of Manila is declared an open city by General Douglas MacArthur

Winston Churchill addresses Joint Session of Congress and receives a rousing ovation, but says allied offensive must wait until 1943.

The Russians land on the Kerch Peninsula in an attempt to relieve the siege of Sevastopol.

## **1942**

The Russians continue their advance on the southern front and claim 56,000 prisoners taken in middle Don region

The French authorities execute Admiral Darlan's assassin.

## **1943**

Royal Navy ships sink German battlecruiser Scharnhorst in the Battle of North Cape off Norway. It was the last capital ship big gun engagement between the Royal Navy and Germany where Admiral Bruce Fraser with HMS Belfast, Duke of York, Jamaica and Norfolk. took on and sank the Scharnhorst. Only 36 of 1,968 crew were rescued. Scharnhorst had been ordered to sail to the Barents Sea



and destroy the allied convoy JW-55B bound for the Soviet port of Murmansk.



US Marines land at Cape Gloucester, New Britain in the Solomons; they encounter little opposition due to heavy bombing.

**1944**



38 (Irish Brigade) in Italy December 1944 - CQMS  
O'Sullivan 2 London Irish noted "I arrived back at E Coy on Boxing Day. They were in the line near Monte Grande. The terrain was a mixture of mud, snow, and ice. I was told it was worse earlier as the mules drowned in mud but I was better off than the men on the bleak mountainside."

Eight French Gestapo leaders are executed in Paris.

Bastogne is relieved by the U.S. 4th Armored Division.

US Third Army's 4th Armored Division under Patton open a corridor to Bastogne, relieving the defenders. German

Ardennes Offensive grinds to a halt due to supply problems caused by Allied bombing.

In Italy, Germans launch counterattack against US Fifth Army in Serchio Valley, retaking territory.

## **They served in HMS Duke of York**

**On the anniversary of the sinking of the Scharnhorst in which HMS Duke of York took part, we remember those from Northern Ireland who served in the ship.**

### **ANDREWS, Andrew**

RN. Killyleagh. Enlisted April 1942. HMS Pink. Took part in the Battle of the Atlantic, widely regarded as the longest continuous military campaign of World War Two, running from 1939 to the defeat of Germany in 1945. In HMS Pink on convoys between Londonderry and St. John's Newfoundland. Depth charged and fired torpedoes at German U-boats, many of which were sunk. In HMS Pink for D Day landings. Pink anchored off Normandy to provide aerial cover for the soldiers storming the beaches but had to contend with German bombers flying overhead, Speaking to a local newspaper, the Down Recorder, on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D Day he said, "What I witnessed will never leave me. I was one of the lucky ones. I lived to tell the tale, but what I witnessed is not something you talk about often. The sights, sounds and smells of what I witnessed 70 years ago have never left me. They never will. I witnessed things no man should ever see. It was the true horror of war." It was during the D-Day landings when HMS Pink took the full force of a German torpedo. Andrew recalled, "I was in my

hammock when there was a massive explosion that rocked the ship to its core. I went up on deck and looked towards the back of the ship but all I could see was water. The ship had literally split in two, but she never sunk. However, it was clear the vessel was in trouble and I and many others jumped into the sea where we were rescued by an American torpedo boat before we were eventually taken back to England.” He was transferred to the HMS Duke of York, ending up in Tokyo at the end of the war. New Line, Killinchy. Former President of Killyleagh and Killinchy RBL

### **BINGHAM, Edward W**

RN. Surgeon Captain. He was one of the most experienced arctic explorers. Seconded to the Ministry of Supply, he drew on his experiences to forge through improvements in the gear issued to those on the arctic convoys.

Edward W Bingham was born 02/01/1901 in Dungannon, the son of a well-respected headmaster of the Royal School. He graduated in medicine at TCD in 1926.

He wanted to travel and explore, and soon after joining the Royal Navy he volunteered to go as a medical officer in the British Arctic Air Route Expedition 1930 - 31. He spent almost a third of his professional career in the polar regions, participating in three important expeditions. In 1932 he was appointed to HMS Challenger, which was to carry out hydrographic surveys off the coast of Labrador. When Challenger returned at the end of the summer of 1933, Bingham stayed for the winter to help Captain Baker with the coast-line survey. This involved in getting to know Labrador huskies and a different method of sledging.

Whilst in north Labrador, Bingham received an offer to join John Rymill, who had been in Greenland with Watkiin's expedition, on an Antarctic expedition. The Admiralty having approved his appointment, he sledged from Nain to south Labrador, from where he reached Britain in time to join the British Graham Land Expedition (BGL) which sailed for Port Stanley in the autumn of 1934. Bingham became an expert in the training and welfare of dogs, and became a very experienced dog driver, a skill which was invaluable to him when he was appointed to command the newly created Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey in 1945. He was the only one within extensive polar experience. His new companions were former commissioned ranks used to exercising leadership. However, in 18 months, Bingham completed his task admirably, and in 1947 was appointed OBE and given a third clasp to his Polar Medal. He also was awarded the Murchiston Grant of the Royal Geographical Society.

During the war he served in HMS Duke of York in the Home Fleet, on Russian convoys, and in the Ministry of Supply where he met manufacturers and enabled the development of better clothing for convoys. The cold weather clothing produced were simple, strangely reminiscent of the garments used by the Inuit of East Greenland, with peaked hoods and simple drawstrings. One tribute said "For those of us who served in the far north, and who offered thanks to the person who thought up these strange garments, Ted Bingham's work was a miracle that only took three months..."

From 1948 - 52 he was principal medical officer at RNAS Eglinton, and promoted Captain in 1951. He then served as



fleet medical officer in HMS Vanguard, Mountbatten's flag ship in the Mediterranean command. His final appointment was as principal medical officer at RNAS Lee-on-Solent. He retired from the Navy in 1957. He died aged 92 on 01/09/1993. At the time of his death he was the last surviving holder of the Polar Medal with three clasps.

A book "Of Dogs and Men - Fifty Years in the Antarctic" with a foreword by HRH The Prince of Wales was published as, "a tribute to the late Ted Bingham whose skip and enthusiasm for dog driving became a tradition and feature of the British Antarctic Survey for 50 years..."

### **DUNNE Edward Charles Lennox**

RN, Special Entry, 1943. HMS Nigeria, King George V, and Duke of York. Resigned Naval Commission, August, 1948. TCD 1948 - 53. Ordained Deacon in Cork Cathedral, 22/03/1953. B 05/03/1925. Son of R. Dunne, Ormiston Drive, Belfast. Campbell College 2850. St. Columba's Parish Church, Knock RH

### **JARVIS, William**

RN. From the Fountain area of Londonderry, he enrolled after the declaration of war. His first ship was HMS York in which he served in the Mediterranean where, after a number of encounters with the Italian Navy, the cruiser was ordered to Suda Bay in Crete at the time of the German invasion. In Suda Bay HMS York was struck and damaged severely by an Italian attack boat. The ship settled on the bottom and was immobile. Most of the crew were sent ashore including Billy He was sent to help an anti-aircraft battery and was amazed to discover that some of its soldiers were from his home city. He was evacuated from Crete after a trek over

the mountains to the south of the island. Following his arrival in Egypt he was posted to HMS Cricket, a coastal gunboat which was one of the many vessels that made the regular trip to Tobruk which was then under siege and could be supplied only by sea. HMS Cricket also landed Australian troops along the Libyan coast to carry out commando raids on the coast road, which was the only road linking the Italo-German main supply bases of Tripoli and Benghazi with the troops surrounding Tobruk. While travelling off the coast in daylight hours, escorting ships from Mersa Matruh to Tobruk, HMS Cricket was attacked by German and Italian aircraft, including Junkers Ju87 dive-bombers. At one point the little vessel was lifted out of the water by the explosion of a bomb but its crew managed to return to Alexandria. However, it was the last trip the boat ever made as it had been damaged beyond repair. Londonderry

## Roll of Honour – December 26

*Representing their comrades who died on this day*

**1916**

**+CARPENTER, Robert**

Royal Irish Rifles. 11<sup>th</sup> Btn. Rifleman. 18/1766. Died of wounds 26/12/1916. Aged 26. Born on 16/07/1890 in Ballywalter. Baptised in Ballywalter C of I Parish Church (Holy Trinity). A son of Edward and Alice (nee Bell) Carpenter who were married on 07/01/884 in Newtownards

C of I Parish Church (St Mark's). Edward Carpenter was from Ballywalter and Alice Bell from Russell Place, Newtownards. They had at least six children. Their mother Alice died of puerperal convulsions on 16/12/1893 (Aged 38). Robert Carpenter worked as an agricultural labourer and he was a member of the Ballywalter contingent of the Ulster Volunteer Force. Robert Carpenter and Jane Keenan were married on 20/04/1910 in St Anne's C of I Cathedral Belfast. Robert Carpenter was from 15 Mervue Street, Belfast. Jane Keenan, was an embroiderer from 5 Carlow Street, Belfast. They had five children who were baptised in Ballywalter C of I Parish Church (Holy Trinity). Robert Carpenter enlisted on 09/11/1915. He was wounded in action on 18/12/1917 and he died eight days later. His brother Edward also served in the Great War and he survived. Edward Carpenter died on 05/11/1986. Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension (Nord), France. Ballywalter and District WM. Ballywalter C of I Parish Church (Holy Trinity) RH.

## **1918**

### **+SHORTT, Fanny**

Voluntary Aid Detachment. Nurse. Died 26/12/1918. Aged 32. UK Book of Remembrance, Berkshire. Dundonald cemetery.

## **1940**

### **+EDMENSON, Walter Alexander**

HMS Caroline. RNVR. Sub-Lieutenant. Mentioned in despatches. B Com, QUB1938. On the outbreak of war his appointment as a Midshipman was to St Angelo for MTB 191. In 1940 he was promoted Sub-Lieutenant, and in

August 1940 was recommended for further promotion to Lieutenant. His Commanding Officer in recommending him for promotion commented, "this officer's report shows the real fighting spirit, and I am confident that his audacity during three separate attacks, assisted the minesweeping trawlers considerably." Edmenson was then in command of MAC5 operating out of Harwich and took a lively part in the rescue of RAF officers and men shot down during the Battle of Britain. RS Allison in his history of HMS Caroline records, "It was with deep regret that all who knew this gallant young officer received the news that at about 10 o'clock on the morning of 26th. December, 1940, about ten miles to the south eastward of Harwich, Sub-Lieutenant Edmenson, while proceeding in his coastal motorboat was blown up by a mine, all that was noted being the heavy explosion which occurred and the absence of any survivors." Died 26/12/1940. Born 23/07/ 1919, son of W A Edmenson, Castlehill Road, Knock, Belfast. WA Edmenson was the Managing Director of Messrs G Heyn & Sons Ltd and of the Ulster Steamship Company. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 04/01/1941). Campbell College 2468. RNIYC WM. QUB WM.

## **1944**

### **+MURPHY, Henry**

AB. C/JX363276. His mother received notification that he had been killed 26/12/1944

## **VETERANS**



### **ALLISON, George Frederick**

RAMC. Brigadier. CBE, MC. MiD. Med 1905. Later KBE Lt Colonel 26/12/1934. Acting Brigadier 14/12/1941. Deputy Director Medical Services India Northern Command 1935 - 1938. Senior hospital appointments in France, Suez Canal and England until 1946. Retired.

### **DRAFFIN, David Alexander**

RAMC. Captain. MB, BCh, BAO 1939 QUB. DLO Eng 1948. Commissioned RAMC 26/12/1939. Served with BEF in France and Belgium. Captured 17/05/1940. In German captivity at Oflag IV-C, Colditz, Sachsen 18/08/1943 - 01/09/1944. Consultant ENT Surgeon, Hospital of St Cross, Rugby, Manor Hospital, Nuneaton & George Elliot Hospital, Nuneaton. Member, British Medical Association. Senior Registrar ENT South East Kent Hospital Group. Clinical Assistant Instructor Laryngology & Otolaryngology. Published several medical articles in Journal of Laryngology & Otolaryngology. Son (with five brothers and four sisters) of Alexander Draffin (1862-1951), and Sarah Ann McBurney (1880-1965), Castleblayney, Monaghan, Ireland. He and Margaret R. Lyle married (12.07.1948), Jesmond Parish Church, Newcastle upon Tyne district

### **JOHNSON, William Henry**

RN. During the war, he served on board HMS Springdale. This ship was a degaussing or deperming ship that helped to change the magnetic polarity of ships. This made the vessels less susceptible to magnetic mines. After trials in the River Thames, London, England, HMS Springdale deployed to Singapore arriving in November 1941. William was born in Belfast, Co. Antrim on 29/11/1925. A son of

George and Mary Johnston (née Leaden) of Belfast. His father, George died when William was 5 or 6 years old. William had three elder siblings; Margaret born in 1912, Matthew born in 1914, and George born in 1922. George died at sea off Cromer, Norfolk during WW2 on 15/03/1942. He also had two younger brothers; Stanley and Joseph. William died on 26/12/1984 aged 59.

### **McCARTHY, Thomas**

8th Kings Royal Irish Hussars. Private. 4150. Born 29/02/1880, 34 Steam Mill Lane, Belfast. Boer War, Medals, The Queen's South Africa medal, with clasps: Cape Colony, Orange Free State and Transvaal. Also served in WW1. Mentioned in Despatches for saving children in a school in France. Died 26/12/1943 in Belfast, knocked down and killed age 63. Milltown Cemetery, Belfast

### **McCULLAGH, James Desmond Reynolds**

HMS Caroline. RNVR. Lieutenant Commander. VRD. Midshipman 1937. Served 1939-46. In 09/1939 appointed to HMS Revenge. Engaged in North Atlantic escort duty and took part in a bombardment of the French coast after German occupation. In 11/1941 appointed to HMS Cairo, AA cruiser, and continued in this ship until 08/1942 on North Atlantic escort convoy duties, including trip to Murmansk to convoy Russian VIP's. To Mediterranean in the spring of 1942, again on convoy duties from Gibraltar to Malta ('the club run'). Many air and submarine attacks until Cairo was finally sunk by torpedo in 08/1942. He was carried overboard when serving as quarters officer 'Y' turret when the stern was blown off, being one of the only two survivors out of the gun's crew of eighteen. He sustained fractured skull and leg injuries. Sick leave 08/1942- 11/1942, after

which appointed to shore duties at Brighton. 06/1943 to 11/1943 appointed HMS Slinger, an aircraft carrier employed on North Atlantic escort duty. Between 11/1943 and 06/1944 served as staff officer in the operations room at HMS Boscawen, Portland. 11/1944 appointed to HMS Jewel and was engaged in minesweeping in the North Sea. Served in the Ulster Division post-war. B 24/11/1917. Son of JA McCullagh, Northern Bank House, Ballycastle. D 26/12/1983. Campbell College 2272

### **TODD, John**

Royal Irish Rifles. 13th (S) Btn. B Coy. Rifleman. 18837. Born 19/01/1894 in Comber - Son of Henry Todd and Margaret Todd (nee Mawhinney). Enlisted 17/09/1914 Comber. Wounded Somme 01/07/1916. Wounded Passchendaele 16/08/1917. Wounded 15/04/1918. Discharged 23/09/1918. Husband to Christina Barry. They emigrated to USA. Died 26/12/1943. Funeral 29/12/1970 in Grove City Cemetery, Blackfoot, Idaho, USA.

# Every day is a Remembrance Day

***We will remember them***

**To return to Home Page - click on Remembrance NI  
masthead.**

**Information about individuals who served - please forward to remembrance ni at email below**

**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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**Please forward** - information about those who served - names, regiment, ship or unit, date of death to [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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