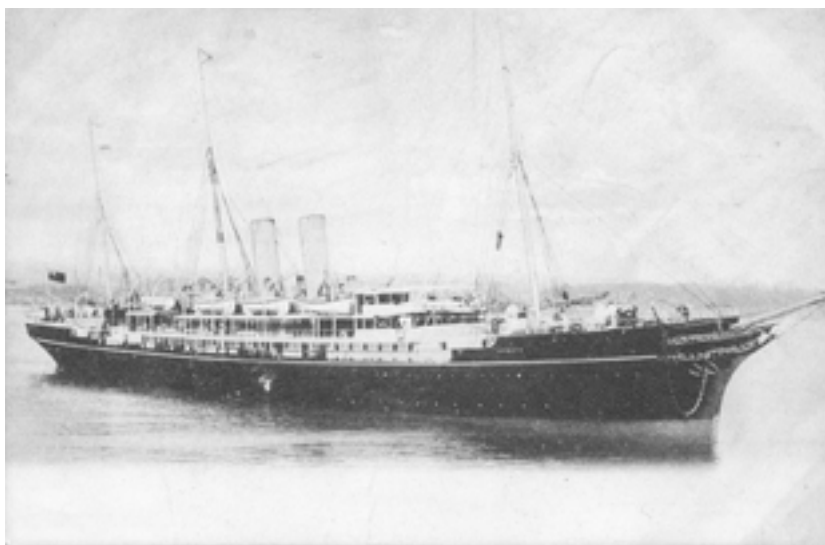




remembrance ni

**HMS Viknor
captured major
German spy and
perished with him**



HMS Viknor formerly SS Atrato

In January 1915 the crew of the armed merchant cruiser HMS Viknor made a major contribution to the war by capturing the leading German spy-master after a search and chase operation. Unfortunately they and their captives were lost within hours, sunk in a storm or by a mine or a combination of both.

The ship's Commanding Officer, E O Ballantyne, had been informed by Lord Fisher that he was to search for and apprehend the SS Bergensfjord - a Norwegian owned and neutral ship. Information had been received from British intelligence sources that persons taken aboard the ship in New York under the guise of being neutral citizens were in fact German reservists.



*Funeral with
military
honours of
Commander
Ernest
Orfod
Ballantyne
in Dalkeith*

This was quite a challenge to present to what in reality was a makeshift warship. Viknor was a civilian ship hastily prepared for war, and manned mainly by members of the Royal Naval Reserve, including twenty-five seamen of the Newfoundland Division of the RNR. In their search and apprehend action the ship's company proved that they were fit for role.

The Viknor which was only able to do seventeen knots had headed out to the North Sea as Admiral Jellicoe wanted it to strengthen the blockade of Germany by the northern patrol. On Friday 8th December the message was flashed to the fleet that SS Bergensfjord should be captured at all costs. British intelligence suspected, quite rightly, that German reservists had joined her in New York and were believed to be carrying fake passports provided by the German Embassy.



Unknown Sailors of HMS Viknor and HMS Racoon. The plot is marked by a granite Celtic Cross erected by the people of at Ballycastle. Bonamargy Friary Cemetery.

The Bergensfjord was deemed to be a prize capture and the merchant cruisers were ordered to intercept. Early on the misty morning of Monday 11th January

the Viknor's 'man in the barrel' (crow's nest) sighted a ship to the north east of the Faroe Islands. Viknor altered course and hoisted a red flag 'stop engines' signal. Nothing happened. Viknor fired a rocket across the bows of the white vessel. A live shell was next. The Viknor's guns were trained. The rocket did the trick. Viknor beat to the windward side and lowered a boat with boarding party.

They found that the ship was the Bergenfjord and radioed fellow cruisers who converged at full speed at 0100 hours. The Norwegian captain tried to bluff it out answering the questions of the revolver carrying boarding party.



***The graves of
some of the men
in HMS Viknor in
St Thomas' Parish
Churchyard,
Rathlin Island***

After a thorough search two stowaways and six German passengers were found. One of these

passengers according to the ship's list was a Mexican named Rosato Spiro. He admitted after close examination to be Baron H A Wedell, a notorious arch-spy of the German secret service. Another passenger was listed as a Norwegian citizen, Dr Rasmus Bjornstad, who was also suspect. They were removed to Viknor and a prize-crew was put aboard the Norwegian vessel which headed for Kirkwall.

Viknor radioed the good news and headed southwards towards Liverpool. There were celebrations aboard Viknor. The Commander-in-Chief sent a "well done" message.

The ship was low on coal and in need of repair. At 1600 hrs on 13/01/1915 she called up giving a position of 56 deg 18'N, 9 deg W, off Tory Island saying she was steering for the North Channel and home. That was the last that was ever heard from the Viknor. On the night of January 13, the ship disappeared off Tory Island. She sank in heavy weather without any distress call. No one knows what happened. It was generally assumed she was sunk by a storm or by a

mine in a field laid by the Germans, or by a combination of both.

The War Graves of Ballintoy and Rathlin Island

None of the 295 crew - 22 officers and 273 men mostly of the Royal Naval Reserve - were saved. The fact that some of the crew had time to put on lifebelts indicated that the ship took time to go down. Many of the bodies were washed ashore in the days afterwards and are buried in Ballintoy and Rathlin Island. Most of the crew have no known grave.



HMS Viknor was an armed merchant cruiser of 10th Cruiser Squadron. She had been a ship of the Blue Star Line before being requisitioned and modified by the Royal Navy.



Built by Robert Napier in 1888 as the Atrato for the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, and registered at 5,347 tons, she was 421 feet long with a 50 foot beam.

The Atrato could carry 279 passengers and was used for the routes between England and the West Indies. In 1912 she was renamed The Viking for her new owners, the Viking Cruising Co. With the outbreak of World War 1 most passenger liners were requisitioned by the Admiralty for war service and so was The Viking. In 1914 she was converted into an armed merchant cruiser and renamed HMS Viknor. The Viknor was assigned to the 10th cruiser squadron and was used to patrol the waters between Scotland and Iceland.

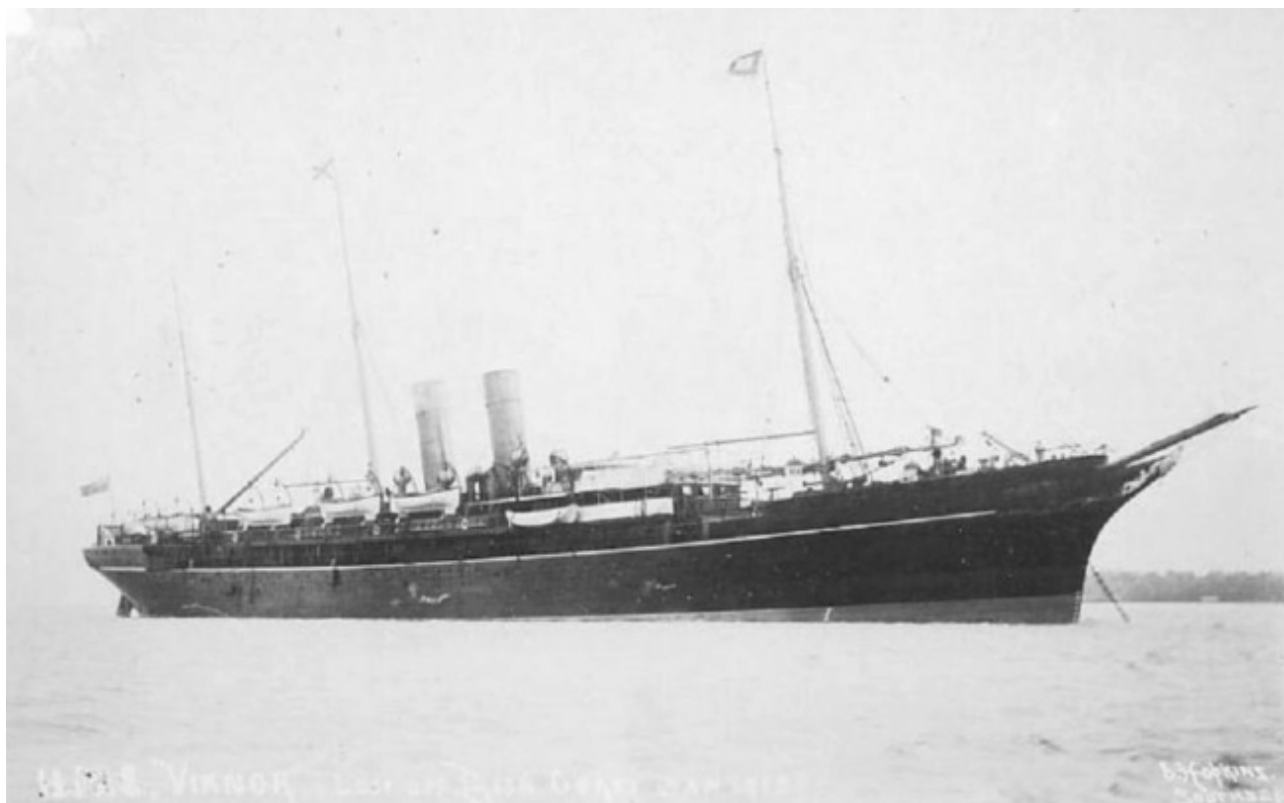
Twenty-five seamen who were lost were of the Newfoundland Division of the Royal Naval Reserve. 24 are commemorated on the Beaumont Hamel Memorial in France. One body was washed ashore and is buried in Colonsay.

Portglenone and Annalong

There were five from Northern Ireland lost on Viknor. Samuel Mooney Gourley, a RN Volunteer Reservist from Portglenone had been called up at the outbreak of war. The Ballymena Observer had previously reported his service with the Royal Naval Division in an ill-fated attempt to defend Antwerp. The report stated, "Samuel M Gourley, Portglenone, son of Mr. James Gourley, senior Postmaster in Portglenone, was with the Royal Naval Volunteers in the trenches at Antwerp. He returned to Portglenone on a few days furlough on Thursday October 15 and he left Ballymena on Sunday last to report himself at Dublin on Monday morning.

"Before going he received a presentation of a beautiful Bible from Miss Young, Portglenone House, and a presentation of cigarettes and money from several of his companions in Portglenone.

"The Naval Marine was one of a party of the defenders (of Antwerp) who, mud-stained, dirty and unshaven, returned to Dover from Ostend. Only a week previously he had left Dover and with his comrades embarked for a port unknown. They landed and were sent direct to the trenches where they were under fire at once.



HMS Viknor.

“Several chaps around him were struck but he escaped. On the retreat he experienced many thrilling adventures. At one time they were almost led into the German lines but through the intervention of a Belgian officer they were put on the right track and the treacherous guide was shot. Most of them got back to England safely after about eight days but some strayed into Holland and were interned there and a few, alas, were left lifeless in the trenches.”

Leading Seaman Hugh Pue from Annalong also died in HMS Viknor. Eighteen months later his brother James was lost in HMS Eden on 17/06/1916. They were the sons of Arthur and Elizabeth Pue, of Moneydorraghmore, Annalong, Kilkeel. Hugh was husband to Sarah Pue, Annalong.

In 2006 the survey ship Celtic Explorer located the wreck of HMS Viknor. It was later reported that the wreck is located on the outer edge of a minefield laid by SMS Berlin which lends some credibility to the theory that she could have hit a mine, but as yet there is still no definitive answer as to the cause of the loss. The first U-boat appeared in the Irish sea on 30th January, 1915 and there is no evidence of activity north-west of Ireland before that. Mine-laying by submarines, later in the war accounted for the Laurentic and two ships off Rathlin Island, HMS Brisk and the Lugano.

Viknor was one of three Armed Merchant Cruisers of the 10th. Cruiser Squadron lost in January, February, and March of 1915.

SS Arabic III was an auxiliary cruiser in the German Navy. In October 1914 it laid a minefield between Northern Ireland and Scotland. HMS Audacious was sunk by a mine in the same area. About ten bodies of her crew were washed ashore or recovered. Those that were able to be identified (only 2 or 3) were brought back to their home towns or buried close to where they came ashore on Rathlin Island.

On this Day – January 13

1913

The Ulster Volunteer Force was established, with the purpose of resisting the implementation of Home Rule. Dublin-born barrister and MP Edward Carson donated £10,000 to its formation, and the poet Rudyard Kipling donated £50,000.

1918

The Canadians raid north of Lens

1940

Belgium orders military mobilization.

Netherlands cancels all Army leaves.

FBI arrests 17 members of pro-Nazi “Christian Front” for plotting to kill congressmen; later acquitted.

1941

Hitler demands that Bulgaria joins the Tripartite pact, but the Bulgarians play for time.

The Luftwaffe launches a heavy attack against Plymouth.

Author James Joyce dies at age 58 in Zürich, Switzerland.

1942

A Japanese attack just to the east of Mount Natib, begins to pose a threat to the left flank of the US-Filipino 2nd Corps.

The allied conference in London pledges to punish axis war criminals after victory.

First use of an ejector seat - by German test pilot Helmut Schenk in He 280 jet.

The Arnold-Portal agreement specifies the number of aircraft the US will provide to Britain, while building the US Army Air Forces to a goal of 115 groups.

1943

The call-up for single girls in Britain is lowered to 19.

Students at the University of Munich riot after Nazi speaker says Stalingrad situation is due to student malingerers.

US Thirteenth Air Force formed in South Pacific under Brig. Gen. Nathan Twining, based in Espiritu Santo, New Caledonia.

In “Sleepy Lagoon” case in Los Angeles, 17 Mexican-Americans are wrongly convicted of murder; convictions overturned 2 years later.

1944

The Chinese strengthen their position in the Hukawng Valley in northern Burma.

1945

The British make further gains in central Burma and are now only 30 miles from Mandalay.

The U.S. First Army attacks the Germans between Stavelot and Malmady.

German forces of Army Group E complete their withdrawal from Greece and Albania.

Zhukov’s 1st Belorussian Front begins an offensive toward Pillkallen in East Prussia, against which there is stiff resistance from the 3rd Panzer Army.

The Jarstad Bridge is blown up by the Norwegian resistance, killing 70 Germans.

2018

Surgeon Capt. Rick Jolly RN died aged 71. Rick was the only servicemen to be decorated by the British and

Argentine Governments for his medical care of soldiers from both sides. He campaigned for recognition of PTSD and co-founded South Atlantic Medal Assoc.

Roll of Honour – January 13

Representing their comrades who died on this day



1915 HMS Vicknor

+BLOCKLEY, John Alfred

RN. Petty Officer. 1st Cl. 132052. HMS Viknor. Died 13/01/1915. Aged 45 years. Born Hinckley, Leicestershire 14/02/1870. Bangor Cemetery

+BOYD, James

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Rifleman. 5221. Died 13/01/1915. Age 42. Son of Mary Boyd, of 15, Malcolm St., Belfast. Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, France

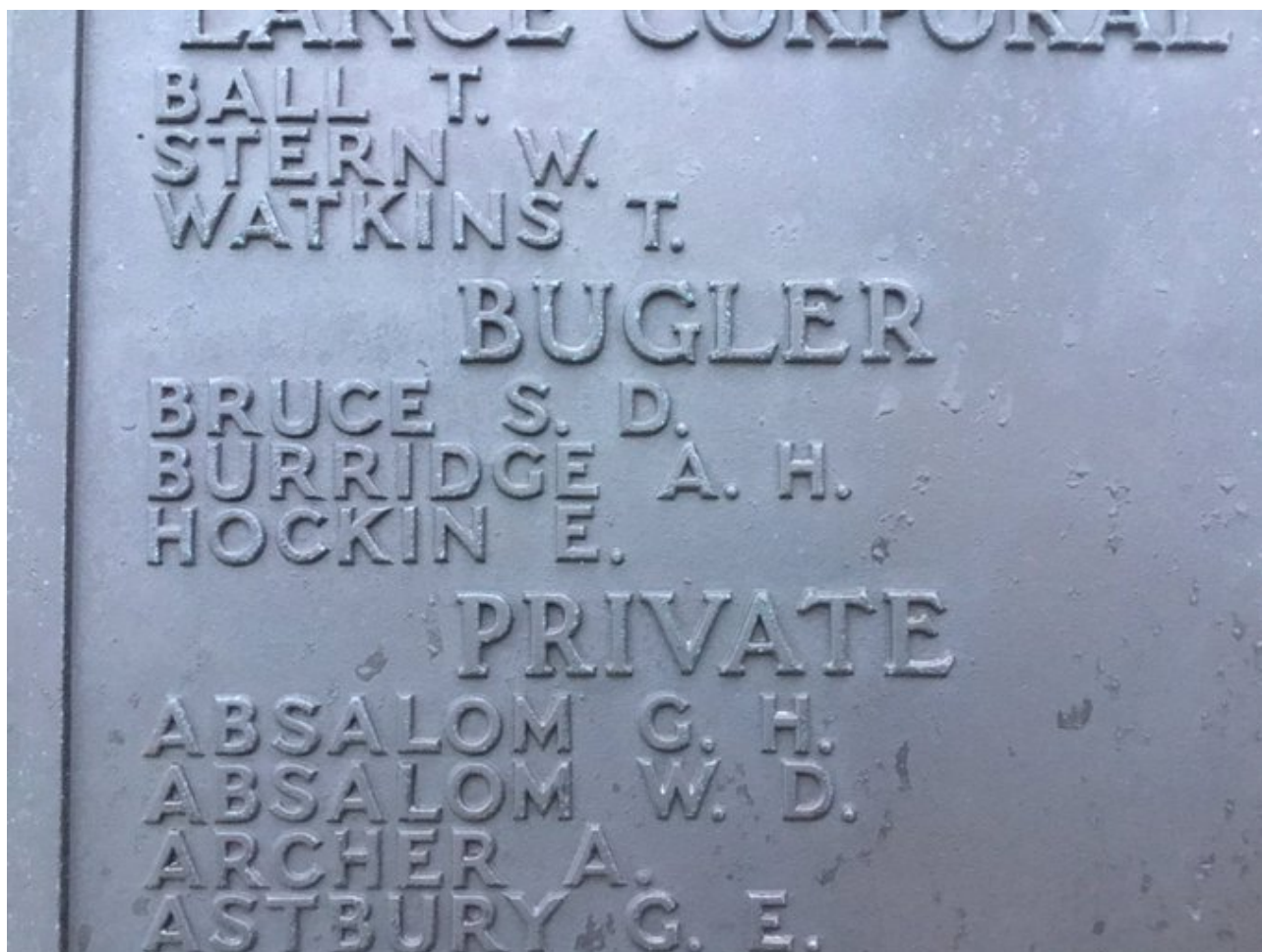
+GALBRAITH, Francis

RN. Boy 1st Class. J/28128. HMS Viknor. Died 13/01/1915. Aged: 17. Born Londonderry 25/08/1897. Son of John and Martha Galbraith, Londonderry. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 8. Londonderry, The Diamond WM. Great James Street - PCI RH. ADM 188/703/28128

+GOURLEY, Samuel Mooney

RNVR. AB. Clyde 3/2177. HMS Viknor. Died 13/01/1915. Aged 21. "HMS Viknor was an armed merchant cruiser of 10th Cruiser Squadron and was under the command of E O Ballantyne. She had been a ship of the Blue Star Line before being requisitioned and modified by the Royal Navy. Her crew, 22 Officers and 273 Men, were all lost when she struck a mine off Tory Island. 25 men, of whom Gourley was probably one, came from the Newfoundland Division of RNR. All crew were lost and, though some bodies did wash ashore and are buried in Ballintoy and Rathlin most crew have no known grave. He was called up at the outbreak of war and took part in the defence of Antwerp, and was amongst those who made their escape towards Ostend." - Ballymena Observer. Previously the newspaper had reported, "Samuel M Gourley, Portglenone, son of Mr. James Gourley, senior Postmaster in Portglenone, was with the Royal Naval Volunteers in the trenches at Antwerp. He returned to Portglenone on a few days furlough on Thursday October 15 and he left Ballymena on Sunday last to report himself at Dublin on Monday morning.

"Before going he received a presentation of a beautiful Bible from Miss Young, Portglenone House and a presentation of cigarettes and money from several of his companions in Portglenone. The Naval Marine was one of a party of the



The Officers and Men of HMS Viknor who died on this day in 1915 are commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial, including a number of very young casualties of war. Bugler E Hockin RMLI was 15 years old.

defenders (of Antwerp) who, mud-stained, dirty and unshaven, returned to Dover from Ostend. Only a week previously he had left Dover and with his comrades embarked for a port unknown. They landed and were sent direct to the trenches where they were under fire at once.

“Several chaps around him were struck but he escaped. On the retreat he experienced many thrilling adventures. At one time they were almost led into the German lines but through

the intervention of a Belgian officer they were put on the right track and the treacherous guide was shot. Most of them got back to England safely after about eight days but some strayed into Holland and were interned there and a few, alas, were left lifeless in the trenches.” Son of James Gourley, Portglenone. Portsmouth Naval Memorial

+GREER, James A

RNR. Assistant Engineer. HMS Viknor. Died 13/01/1915. Son of James Greer, Woodstock Rd., Belfast. Married, his wife was a daughter of William Coulter, Evelyn Ave., Bloomfield. They were residing in Birkenhead where he was in the service of Camel, Laird & Co., having worked in Belfast with Messrs Musgrave & Co. An ‘Ulster and The War’ column in Belfast News Letter, 28/01/1915, adds, “A number of bodies from the Viknor have been washed ashore at various parts of the Antrim coast during the past few days.” It also tells of a man from Dundee who has come to search for his brother’s body. Photo of James Greer in Belfast Evening Telegraph. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 10

+PUE, Hugh

RN. Leading Seaman. 192413. HMS Viknor. Died 13/01/1915. Age 34. Born Kilkeel. Son of Arthur and Elizabeth Pue, of Moneydorraghmore, Annalong, Kilkeel; husband to Sarah Pue, Annalong. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 7

**HMS VIKNOR WAR GRAVES
IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

+GRIFFIN, J

RMLI. PO. 7084. Bonamargy Friary Cemetery, Ballycastle

+HEWITT, ER

RN. First Class Boy. J/27300. Ballintoy Churchyard.

+WALTON, JJ

RN. Petty Officer 2nd Class. 130152. Rathlin (St Thomas)
Church of Ireland Graveyard

Bonamargy Friary Cemetery, Ballycastle

Four Unknown Sailors HMS Viknor. The plot is marked by a
granite Celtic Cross erected by the people of Ballycastle.

Rathlin (St Thomas) Church of Ireland Graveyard
Nine Unknown Sailors HMS Viknor

1915

+BOYD, James

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Rifleman. 5221. Died 13/01/1915.
Age 42. Son of Mary Boyd, of 15, Malcolm St., Belfast.
Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, France

1943

+HADDEN, William Alvin

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 6th Btn. Lance Serjeant.
6984636. Died 13/01/1943. Aged 22. L/Sgt Hadden was
killed in the first attack on Two Tree Hill. Son of Mr. and Mrs.
David Hadden, of Aughnacloy. Medjez-el-Bab Memorial,
Tunisia

+HIGGINS, William Francis

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 6th Btn. Fusilier. 7045064. Died 13/01/1943. Aged 29. Fusilier Higgins was killed in the first attack on Two Tree Hill. Son of Henry and Harriet Higgins; husband to Elizabeth Higgins, of Belfast. Massicault War Cemetery, Tunisia

+McATEER, Daniel

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 6th Btn. Corporal. 6982565. Died 13/01/1943. Aged 22. Corporal McAteer was killed in the first attack on Two Tree Hill. Son of John and Hessie McAteer, of Ballymena. Medjez-el-Bab Memorial, Tunisia. High Kirk Presbyterian Church RH

1945

+NICHOLSON, Robert Fisher

RM. No. 41 R.M. Commando. PO/X 100815. Died 13/01/1945 of wounds received in action. Held the Africa Star. Five year's service. Brother serving as CPO in RN. Father served in WW1. Son of Richard Fisher Nicholson and Hannah Nicholson, Blenheim Dr., Belfast. Ballycairn Presbyterian Churchyard, Co. Down. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 26/01/1945).

+OLIVER, John

RNPS. AB. LT/JX 286375. Died 13/01/1945. Age 31. HM Trawler Cotillion. Son of John and Annie Oliver, Belfast. Belfast City Cemetery

+TURNPENNEY, Derek Vernon

RAFVR. Flying Officer. 172929. Died 13/01/1945. Aged 26. Son of Ralph and Ruby Turnpenney; husband to Patricia Hamilton Turnpenny, of Dunmurry. Runnymede Memorial, Panel 268.

VETERANS

FERGUSON, George

RND. Leading Seaman. PO/2853/A. Collingwood Battalion 16/09/1914. Volunteered for the landing expedition to Antwerp 1914. PoW for rest of war. Health suffered from confinement. After a rest following release he joined merchant navy. Took ill in New Zealand. Repatriated to Greenwich Naval Hospital. Died 13/01/1922. Age 35. Son of John (Master mariner) and Jenny Ferguson, Islandmagee, and Marsden Gds., Belfast. Shooters Hill Cemetery. ADM339

FORDE, Theophilus James Elliott

North Irish Horse and Machine Gun Corps. Lieutenant.

Elliott was born on 19/05/1890 in Hilltown, Co. Down the son of Rev. Robert Forde and Elizabeth Jane Forde nee Elliott. In 1901 Elliott (as per census form) lived in house 91, Dundrum, Co. Down with his parents and 2 siblings; Muriel and Robert. In the house there was also Clarice Hayden (governess), Agnes Stevenson (servant), Patrick O'Hare (servant), and Charlotte Teggart (visitor).

Educated at Campbell College (852), brother of Robert Geoffrey Alexander Forde (970) who was born 04/07/1906

and served in the Army Service Corps and the Royal Field Artillery in WW1.

An advertisement in the Belfast News Letter of 08/08/1908 advised that Elliott Forde had won a clerkship to Northern Bank. In 1911, Elliott was boarding in house 8, Woodville, Sandford, Rathmines & Rathgar East, Dublin. He is described as a Bank Clerk.

On 24/12/1915, aged 25, Forde volunteered and enlisted into the Inns of Court Officer Training Corps (OTC) as a Private. He was gazetted as a 2nd Lieutenant with the Reserve Regiment of Hussars in May 1917, transferred as a 2nd Lieutenant into the North Irish Horse, served with the British Expeditionary Force and seconded into the Machine-Gun Corps before re-transferring into the North Irish Horse. He saw action in the Allied Retreat 1918 and the Allied Advance 1918 before being demobilised in March 1919.

Forde was awarded the British Victory Medal and the British War Medal. His address on the Medal Index Card is recorded as c/o Northern Banking Company, Coleraine, N. Ireland.

On 23/01/1919 the Belfast News Letter reported that T J E Forde ceases to be employed with the Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) from 18/12/1918 (North Irish Horse, Special Reserve).

Following demobilisation, Elliott re-joined the Northern Bank at Ball'sbridge Branch. Further transfers followed to Grafton Street – Donnybrook sub-office (1919), Coleraine (1921), Grafton Street (1925) and Donegall Square (1928).

In 1930 J Elliot Forde was a member of the Select Vestry of St. Thomas's Church. The Rev. Robert Forde (aged 78) died at his son's residence, 34 Wellington Park, Belfast on 11/07/1935.

Elliott was appointed as a Director of Northern Bank on 01/02/1943.

He was awarded the Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the New Years Honours list of 1956. His wife, Elizabeth Forde died on 06/02/1959. In 1961 J Elliott Forde was made a Deputy Lieutenant (DL) of Belfast. Elliott was later to be appointed Chairman of the bank. He retired on 17/01/1964. His death was announced in the Belfast Telegraph on 13/01/1977.

GORDON, Robert Wilson

The Royal Ulster Rifles, 1st Btn. F Coy. Captain. 96687.
Military Cross, Mentioned in Despatches

Robert Wilson "Bobby" Gordon was born at Hilden House, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, Ireland, on 03/03/1915, and was educated at Harrow.

In May 1940, Lieutenant Gordon was with the 2nd Battalion The Royal Ulster Rifles in France, where he was Mentioned in Despatches, probably for his skill in navigating a route for the Battalion in darkness as the British Expeditionary Force began to withdraw. Promoted to Captain in 1941, he transferred to the 1st Battalion and became Second-in-Command of "F" Company, containing the Anti-Tank and Medium Machine Gun platoons. He was awarded the

Military Cross for his conduct in Normandy, and for his later service as Brigade Major of the 3rd Parachute Brigade in the Ardennes and Germany, where, jumping with Battalion Headquarters of the 8th Parachute Battalion on the Rhine Crossing, 24th March 1945, he was amongst the very first British airborne troops to land in Germany. His citation reads:

Major Gordon landed by glider in Normandy on D Day and was in charge of the Royal Ulster Rifles 6-pounder Anti-tank guns, who were responsible for the anti-tank defence of Longueval. During the early days the village was repeatedly attacked by strong armoured forces from 21st Panzer Division. These attacks were driven off and several enemy tanks knocked out. His inspiring leadership and courage during these battles contributed to a great extent to the successes achieved by his Battalion.

In early August 1944 Major Gordon assumed the appointment of Brigade Major, 3rd Parachute Brigade, and carried out his duties with outstanding success during the battles in the Bois de Bavent and the Brigade's advance to the Seine which concluded in September 1944.

He was with the Brigade throughout the battles in the Ardennes in the Winter of 1944-45.

After playing a leading part in the Brigade planning for the Rhine offensive, he dropped with them over the Rhine on the 24th March 1945. His complete disregard for danger and imperturbable disposition contributed in no small way to the great successes achieved by the Brigade immediately on their re-organisation at the conclusion of their drop.

After the breakout from the Rhine bridgehead until the Brigade reached Wismar on the Baltic, Major Gordon's outstanding staff work, calm judgment and advice contributed largely to the success of the Brigade's operation.

Throughout the campaign in France and Germany from 6th June 1944 to 10th May 1945 Major Gordon's great devotion to duty and complete disregard of danger have proved an inspiring example to all ranks in the Brigade.

He first married Joan Kenchington in 1946, and Dianna Evelyn Venice Tyrwhitt-Drake in 1967, and had a daughter, Sarah. He passed away in London on the 13th January 1993.



McILROY, William

RAF. Squadron Leader

“Mac” McIlroy was shot down during the Second World War, and later became a signals expert during a long career in the RAF.

McIlroy was the wireless operator of a 408 Squadron Halifax bomber that took off from Leeming in North Yorkshire on the night of April 14 1943. It was his 28th operation. After successfully attacking Stuttgart, the bomber was shot down over Reims by a German night fighter. Seven of the eight-man crew baled out, one evaded capture and the others, including McIlroy, became PoWs.

The pilot, Pilot Officer Mackenzie RAAF, remained at the controls to avoid crashing into houses in the village of La Neuville. The villagers later erected a memorial in his memory of his sacrifice.

McIlroy was severely injured on landing and remained in a German-run hospital in Reims for nine months before being transferred to Stalag Luft III, scene of the “Great Escape”.

On the night of January 27 1945, the prisoners were given a few hours to evacuate the camp as the Russians approached from the east. The long column of PoWs headed west with minimum food and belongings during the harshest winter for many years – it became known as “The Long March”, and many prisoners perished. Those who survived eventually reached an overcrowded camp at Luckenwalde.

As the Russians approached, McIlroy and two colleagues escaped and walked westwards for three days. They finally reached the River Elbe, where they met US troops. Within days, they were flown back to Britain.

William Alexander McIlroy, always known as “Mac”, was born on his parents’ farm in Ireland on September 17 1921 and educated at Lisburn Technical School. He joined Post Office Telecommunications as a trainee engineer before joining the RAF in January 1939.

He qualified as a wireless operator and was posted to the flying staff of No 2 School of Air Navigation training navigators. After two years he started a conversion course on bombers.

On the night of May 30/31 1942, Bomber Command launched the first of three “Thousand Bomber Raids”. To achieve the necessary number of aircraft, it was necessary to use some from the bomber-training units. Flying in a twin-engine Hampden, McIlroy flew on all three of the raids, the first to Cologne.

He joined 408 Squadron and completed a further 11 missions on the Hampden before the squadron converted to the four-engine Halifax. On April 3, he and his crew attacked Essen. On return to Leeming, the undercarriage failed to lower and the bomber crash-landed and was destroyed. McIlroy escaped uninjured. Eleven days later he was shot down.

After recuperating on his return from Germany, McIlroy joined 24 (VIP) Squadron as an air signaller. He and his crew were posted to Vienna as the personal crew for General Sir Richard McCreery, GOC of the British Forces of Occupation in Austria. His crew took senior officers, politicians and others to various peace conferences in Europe. Among his passengers was General Sir Bernard Montgomery.

McIlroy's flying career continued until 1953 and he served on 49 Squadron, initially flying Lancasters and then the Lincoln bomber from Upwood in Huntingdonshire.

McIlroy transferred to the RAF's engineering branch and specialised in signals and electronics, much of it highly secret. He worked on guided-missile systems, including the ill-fated Blue Streak, and later on strategic communications, which included service in Cyprus.

His final five years in uniform were at the Joint Air Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre at Brampton. On retirement in 1976 he spent a further five years as a specialist with the unit before moving to the engineering department at Cambridge University, where he carried out research and tutored PhD students.

Mac McIlroy's wife Marjorie died in 2003, and their son and two daughters survived him.

"Mac" McIlroy, born April 14 1921, died January 13 2021

Acknowledgment - 408 Squadron Association, The Daily Telegraph

McMASTER, William

Curator of The Ulster Memorial Tower. William McMaster from Lambeg, arrived with his second wife Sarah to take over the post in March 1922. He had been a corporal in the 10th Royal Irish Rifles, 107 Brigade. William was described by many as 'a veritable encyclopaedia concerning the battlefield and the history of the 36th (Ulster) Division.'

He was caretaker for the 'Great British Legion Pilgrimage' in August 1928 and right up to the start of the Second World War, when William McMaster and his wife Sarah returned to Northern Ireland.

They spent their last days at Ballymacash, Lisburn. William died on 13th January, 1963 and his wife Sarah on 22nd April 1966. Their family grave is at Lambeg Parish Church.

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

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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Please forward - information about those who served - names, regiment, ship or unit, date of death to houstonmckelvey@mac.com

