



remembrance ni



Four Ni men lost in HMS Matabele on Arctic convoy

On 30/08/1941 Matabele was deployed with the aircraft carrier Argus and other ships on a mission to deliver RAF equipment and personnel to North Russia to support Soviet military operations after the Soviet Union had entered the

war. The operation was completed successfully and the ships returned to Scapa Flow on 15 November. Matabele spent October to December on patrol, and screening operations off Norway.

In January 1942 she formed the screen, with Somali, for the cruiser Trinidad on Convoy PQ-8 from Iceland to Murmansk. The convoy departed on 11 January, and came under torpedo attack on 16 January.

This was the first U-boat group action against an Allied Arctic convoy.

On 17 January Matabele was hit by a torpedo from the German submarine U-454 and sank almost immediately. Only two out of her complement of 238 survived. Many who were able to leave the stricken ship succumbed in the ice-cold water before rescue was possible. The two survivors were picked up by the minesweeper Harrier.

Charles Kelly from Killyleagh, James Lynas from Magheramourne, Patrick McIlroy from Carrickfergus and Robert Warden from Newtownards were lost. They are named in today's Roll of Honour

On this Day – January 17

1940

In Paris, Polish cryptographers break Luftwaffe Enigma code.



An icon of WW2: the Avro Lancaster in all its glory

1941

During the night, the Italians evacuate Kassala and Gallabat in the Sudan.

Battle of Ko Chang : Vichy French battle Thai incursions into Indochina and defeat them in naval battle in Gulf of Siam.

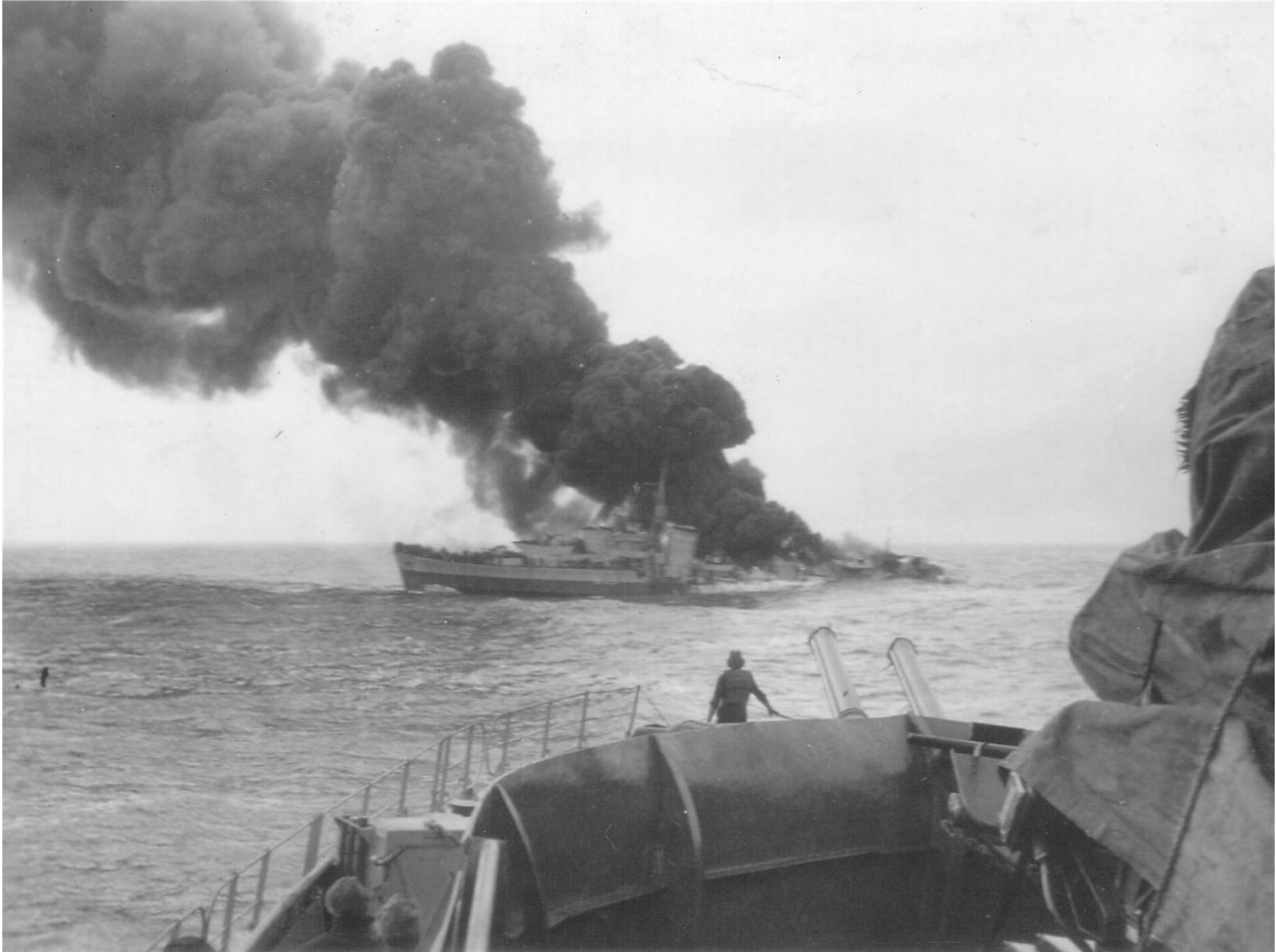
1942

The last German garrison at Halfaya in Cyrenaica surrenders, with about 5,500 prisoners taken.

Field Marshal Walther von Reichenau of German Army Group South dies of stroke.

British and South African troops take Halfaya Pass on Egyptian border and 5500 Axis POWs.

Off Murmansk, German U-boat U-454 sinks British destroyer Matabele in convoy PQ-8, first U-boat group action against an Allied Arctic convoy.



Destroyer HMS Gurkha was torpedoed by German submarine U-133 off Sidi Barrani and set ablaze. Before she sank all but 11 of her 224 crew were saved by Dutch destroyer HNLMS Isaac Sweers in a courageous rescue operation under hazardous conditions. See also - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Gurkha_\(G63\)41](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Gurkha_(G63)41)

1943

US Naval Base and Naval Air Station, Brisbane, Australia is established.

For the first time, a nurse participates in air evacuation, accompanying patients from India to Washington DC.

1944

British 10 Corps crosses lower Garigliano River in Italy.

X Corps' crossing of the Garigliano river led to the first breach of the Gustav Line, which was made by 2nd Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, the 'Lumps', of 13 Brigade in 5th Division.

X Corps was commanded by Lieutenant General Richard 'Dick' McCreery, whose family roots were in Inniskilling country – Killyclogher, County Tyrone.

Knighted in the field by King George VI later that year, Sir Richard took command of Eighth Army in October 1944 and, in April 1945, led it to its greatest victory in Op. BUCKLAND in Lombardia.

G Section of 25 HAA Battery/9th (Londonderry) HAA Regiment RA (SR) was deployed to Kassala on the border between Sudan and Eritrea, but saw no action there. Even the move from Port Sudan, where 25 HAA Battery provided the sole AA defence, was difficult, the war diary recording that it was 'terrible country and but for the winch gear the guns could not have been pulled to Kassala'. At Kassala a temperature of 151F was recorded.

At that time, 9th (Londonderry) HAA Regiment was probably both the largest and most widely spread RA regiment in the Army: RHQ, 24 and 26 HAA Btys with 20 HAA Bty and 5 HAA Bty Royal Malta Artillery under command, were in Alexandria and Aboukir with BHQ 25 HAA Battery in Port Sudan with E and H Sections while F

Section was in Aden and G in Kassala. *Courtesy of Richard Doherty*

US secures Arawe area on New Britain in the Solomons.

1945

Russians forces cross the Warthe and advance 100-miles on a 160-mile front forcing the Germans to evacuate Warsaw, which falls that same day. The German defenders encircled at Budapest withdraw to Buda on the western bank of the Danube.

The Red Army captures Czenstochova.

Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, who saved tens of thousands of Jews, is detained by the Soviets in Budapest, Hungary and disappears.

Nazis lead 66,000 prisoners from Auschwitz on a death march to Germany.



Roll of Honour – January 17

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+CORBETT, A

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Rifleman. 8939. Died 17/01/1915. Husband to M. Corbett, of 19, Lesley St., Ligoniel, Belfast. Royal Irish Rifles Graveyard, Laventie, France

1916

MARSDEN, James

Royal Irish Rifles, 9th Btn. A Coy. Rifleman. 9/13256. Died 17/01/1916. Aged 20. Son of John and Mary Jane Marsden, of Belfast. Sucrerie Military Cemetery, Colincamps, Somme, France

+WILSON, A

Royal Irish Rifles, 9th Btn. Rifleman. 16104. Died 17/01/1916. Aged 21. Only son of Edward and Susan Wilson, of 42, Mervue Street, Belfast. Forceville Communal Cemetery and Extension, Somme, France

1918

+MANSBRIDGE, Richard

Royal Fusiliers. 23rd Btn. Private. 55240. Died 17/01/1918. Age 40. Son of the late John and Mary Mansbridge, of 54, Tower St., Belfast; husband to Eleanor Mansbridge, of 16,

Lisavon St., Sydenham, Belfast. HAC Cemetery, Ecoust-St Mein, France

+YOUNG, James Hill

RFC. 35 Squadron. Lieutenant. Formerly of the 14th County of London Regiment. Died 17/01/1918. Age 30. On the 12/01/1918 James Young was observer in an Armstrong Whitworth FK 8 B283, piloted by 2Lt Thomas Alexander Urwin, and were on an Artillery Patrol mission from the aerodrome at Estrées-en-Chaussée when they were shot down by the enemy. Both men were wounded and taken prisoner by the Germans, but some days later they succumbed to their injuries. 2nd Lt Urwin died on 15/01/1918 and Lt Young, on 17/01/1918. James was the younger son of Mr. James Young, J.P., Bromley, who was born in 1845 in Londonderry, and Anna Francis, born in 1853 also in Ireland. Premont British Cemetery. Diamond War Memorial, Londonderry.

1941

+CARR, John

RNVR. Lieutenant (A) Died 17/01/1941. Age 33. HMS Goshawk. During the Second World War, Lieutenant John Carr was assigned to HMS *Goshawk* which was a Royal Naval Air Station at Piarco in Trinidad and he was killed when travelling to Piarco aboard the SS *Almeda Star*. The SS *Almeda Star* was built in 1926 by Cammell Laird and Company, Birkenhead and owned by the Blue Star Line in London. The SS *Almeda Star* was torpedoed on 17 January 1941 by the German Submarine *U-96* about 350 miles west

of the island of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides when on route from Liverpool to Buenos Aires via Trinidad.

At 0745 on 17/01/1941 the SS *Almeda Star* stopped after being hit amidships. The submarine fired two further torpedoes and then surfaced to shell the ship. Another torpedo fired at 9.55 am hit the fore section of the SS *Almeda Star* causing her to sink. The master, 136 crew members, 29 gunners and 194 passengers were lost; there were no survivors. Among the passengers were 21 officers and 121 ratings of 749, 750 and 752 Fleet Air Arm Squadrons.

John Carr was born on 16/05/1908 at 'Blythswood', 16 Deramore Drive, Belfast and he was a son of Thomas James and Mary Carr (née Workman). Thomas James Carr was a stockbroker and he and Mary Workman were married on 04/06/1907 in Fitzroy Avenue Presbyterian Church, Belfast. They had at least three children: John ; Thomas James and Samuel. John and Thomas James Carr Junior both attended Rockport School. Lee-on-Solent Naval Memorial, Panel 6. Rockport School RH. RNIYC WM

+GORDON, Daniel Regis

RAF. Corporal. 519673. Died 17/01/1941. Age 24. 55 Sqdn. Son of Daniel and Rose Gordon of Lurgan. El Alamein War Cemetery, Egypt

+JACKSON, George Balfour Sydney

RN. FAA. Leading Airman, FAA/FX 80569. Assigned to HMS Daedalus (FAA base at Lee-on-Solent). Died 17/01/1941. Age 19. He was a passenger on steam passenger ship



Minturno War Cemetery, Italy. See below - 1944 Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn

Almeda Star lost on passage to Trinidad. The ship was sunk with the loss of all crew and passengers by U-Boat 96. Son of Sydney Herbert and Marjorie Sinclair Jackson, Belfast. Lee-on-Solent Memorial, Hampshire. St Jude's Parish Church, Belfast WM

+McFAUL, Thomas

RAFVR. Leading Aircraftman. 1059208. Died 17/01/1941. Aged 21. Son of John and Emily McFaul of Kilwaughter. Kilwaughter New Cemetery

1942

HMS MATABELE

+KELLY, Charles

RN. AB. D/SSX 17785. Died 17/01/1942. HMS Matabele. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 65. Killyleagh WM

+LYNAS, James

RN. Able Seaman. D/JX 148535. Died 17/01/1942. Age: 39. HMS Matabele. James had served in the RN for three years prior to rejoining on the outbreak of war. Son of William and Sarah Lynas; husband to Mary Lynas, 'Newlands', Magheramourne. Father of three children. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 20/02/1942). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 47
[**Minturno War Cemetery, Italy.**](#)

+McILROY, Patrick

RN. Petty Officer Cook (O). D/MX 49918. Died 17/01/1942. Age: 27. HMS Matabele. Son of Richard and Mary McIlroy, Carrickfergus. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 72

+WARDEN, Robert John

RN. AB. D/SSX15810. HMS Matabele. Died 17/01/1942. Son of Robert John and Elizabeth Warden. Husband to Josephine Sarah Warden, Newtownards. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 66

1943

+McALARNEY, Joseph

Royal Scots. 2nd Btn. Lance Corporal. 3054207. Died 17/01/1943. Age 33. Son of John and Jane McAlarney, of Castlewellan, Co. Down. Yokohama War Cemetery, Japan

+McMULLAN, William Austin

RAFVR. Pilot Officer. 139489. Died 17/01/1943. Aged 23. 35 Sqn. Son of Clifford and Helen Elizabeth McMullan, of Belfast. Esbjerg (Fourfelt) Cemetery, Denmark

1944

+CAMPBELL, Patrick Joseph

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Lance Corporal. 6980607. Died 17/01/1944. Aged 22. Son of Thomas and Mary Campbell; husband to Margaret Mary Campbell, Dungannon. Minturno War Cemetery, Italy. Dungannon WM

+LAVELLE, Willam George

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Serjeant. 6977351. Died 17/01/1944. Aged 31. Son of Moses and Martha Lavelle, of Augher, Co. Tyrone. Minturno War Cemetery, Italy. Clogher WM

+LUCAS, Samuel

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Fusilier. 6980484. Died 17/01/1944. Age 30. Son of William John Lucas and Margaret Lucas of Drumbeg, Co. Down, and husband to Jean Lucas of Drumbeg, Co. Down. Minturno War Cemetery, Italy.

+MACRORY, Henry Greer

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Captain. 117338. Died 17/01/1944. Age 25. Son of Major Roland M. Macrory (Royal Engineers) and Inez D.M. Macrory of The Chalet, Limavady. Minturno War Cemetery, Italy.

+McKEE, Martin Alexander

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Fusilier. 7044431. Died 17/01/1944. Age 30. Son of James McKee and Rhoda McKee of Belfast. Minturno War Cemetery, Italy

1945

+COWAN, Kenneth

RM. Marine. CH/X 3889. Died 17/01/1945. Age 19. Son of Alexander and Isabella J. Cowan, of Belfast, Northern Ireland. Guildford (Stoke) New Cemetery.

1946

+CLARK, Neil Blake

Irish Guards. Second Lieutenant. 360119. Died 17/01/1946. Age 19. Died in an accident in training at Lingfield, Surrey. Commissioned as Second Lieutenant 30/11/1945. Shrewsbury School. Son of William Moore Wallis Clark and of Zelig Marguerite Clark (nee Lopdell), of Gortead House, Upperlands. Maghera C of I Churchyard

+PORTER, Albert

Pioneer Corps. Private. 6978287. Died 17/01/1946. Aged 27. He had served with the Royal Ulster Rifles before the Pioneer Corps. Son of John and Mary Porter, of Magherafelt and Husband to Matilda Porter, of Magherafelt. St Swithins Church of Ireland, Magherafelt.

1947

+GIBSON, James

Dorsetshire Regiment. Private. 7010237. Died 17/01/1947. Aged 38. Son of James Gibson, and of Annie Gibson of Dromore. Dromore Cathedral Churchyard

VETERANS

ERSKINE, John Thomas Morley

RN. Lieut.-Commander. (S). 1939 - 45. Lieutenant 01/09/1944. Born 17/01/1922, son of J Erskine, Greenisland, Co. Antrim. Campbell College 2681

EWART, Ivan

HMS Caroline. RNVR. Lieutenant. DSC. Sir William Ivan Cecil Ewart. Appointed to Vernon for duty with the 4th MTB Flotilla as First Lieutenant of MTB 22. Promoted Acting Sub-Lieutenant September 1939 and Lieutenant in June 1941, when appointed in command of MTB 51. January 1942 appointed in command of MTB 47. On 17/01/1942 this came under German fire and, in the ensuing explosions he lost an eye and severely injured his right arm. He was to wear an eye patch for the rest of his life. He was later captured by the Germans and sent to Colditz Castle, a camp for "incorrigible" Allied officers who had repeatedly escaped from other camps, where he spent the remainder of the war. In 1945 he was awarded the DSC. Several weeks before his death he travelled to Germany to meet with an officer who had participated in the attack upon his MTB. This was an event he had been waiting fifty years for, he held no animosity toward the enemy, regarding them as honourable adversaries. William Ivan Cecil Ewart, 6th Baronet, was born at Derryvolgie House, Lisburn.

Every day is a Remembrance Day

We will remember them

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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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