



remembrance ni

Captain Sir Norman Stronge

**Captain The Right
Honourable Sir
Norman Stronge Bt
PC MC HML,
Military Cross and
the Belgian Croix de
Guerre.**



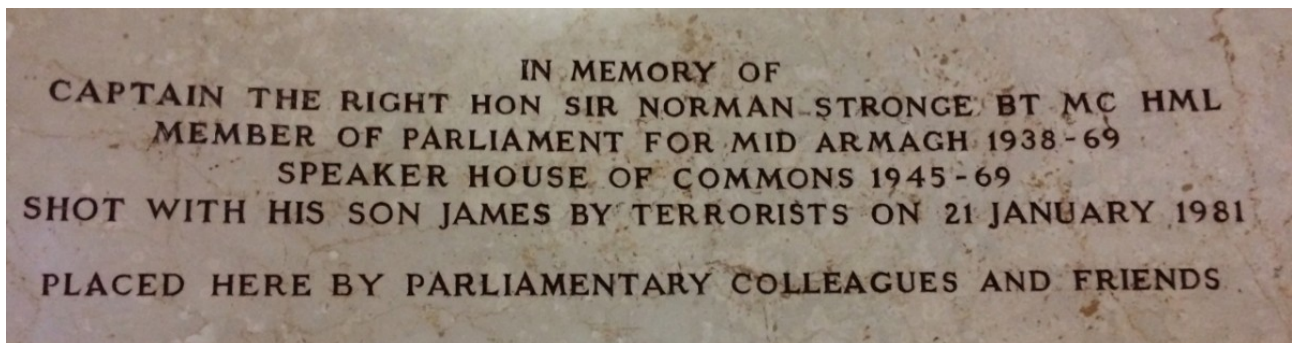
Aged 86, he was shot and murdered by the Provisional IRA, along with his only son James, whilst they sat watching Television in the Gothic library of their home Tynan Abbey on Wednesday 21 January 1981. Tynan Abbey was then burnt to the ground while the 8 gunmen fled.

He was commissioned into The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and posted to the 10th Battalion in September 1914 and took part in the Battle of the Somme.

He survived the first day of the Battle of the Somme in July 1916 and was the first soldier after the start of the battle to be mentioned in despatches by General Sir Douglas Haig , commander of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) on the Western Front.

In April 1918, he was appointed adjutant of the 15th (Service) Battalion (North Belfast), Royal Irish Rifles, and was wounded at the Battle of Courtaul on 20 October 1918. He relinquished his commission on 19 August 1919 and was permitted to retain the rank of captain.

He was decorated with the Military Cross and the Belgian Croix de Guerre.



He was elected as the MP for Mid Armagh in 1938, a seat which he held until 1969, and then succeeded his father as the 8th Baronet in 1939.

On the outbreak of the Second World War, he was commissioned into the North Irish Horse but was invalided out following a serious operation in 1940. In 1950 he was

appointed as Honorary Colonel of the 5th Battalion The Royal Irish Fusiliers. He was Speaker of the Northern Ireland House of Commons, from 1945 - 69.

A memorial stone (above) is to be found in the circular ante-chamber before entering the former parliament chamber, later the Northern Ireland Assembly's chamber.

Gerry Adams, Leader of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Provisional IRA, stated at the time of their death: "The only complaint I have heard from nationalists or anti-unionists is that he was not shot 40 years ago."

Norman Stronge also was a man of great faith, every Sunday he read the Scriptures in Tynan Parish church and also was a member of Derryshaw Boyne Defenders Orange Lodge. Norman Stronge had a sincere love for the Loyal Orders, he particularly cherished the Royal Black Institution, holding the office of Sovereign Grand Master for many years.

On this Day – January 21

1917

German attacks north of the Bois des Caurieres (Verdun) are repulsed.

1918 HMS Louvain was torpedoed by the Imperial German Navy submarine SM UC-22 in the Aegean Sea with the loss of seven officers and 217 men. (In 1915 SS Dresden was taken over by the admiralty as an armed boarding steamer and renamed HMS Louvain)

1940 Destroyer HMS Exmouth was torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U-22 in the Moray Firth while on convoy escort duty. There were no survivors: 190 men went down with her. Admiralty announce sinking of the Grenville, 8 dead, 73 missing, presumed dead.

The Russian 8th Army launches an attack against the Finnish forces of Group Talvela, without success. The Finnish 9th Division is transferred from Suomussalmi to Kuhmo.

1941

Communist newspaper, The Daily Worker is suppressed in Britain.

The US informs the Soviet Union that the “moral embargo” imposed on it after its 1939 attack on Finland no longer applies. British and Australian forces breach the defenses at Tobruk.

1942

The Luftwaffe, with 400 aircraft available, begins a series of raids against London and ports in southern England.

Without consulting higher authority, Rommel launches a counter-offensive against the 8th Army. The 21st Panzer Division quickly seizes Mersa Brega, while the 15th Panzer Division advances to Wadi Faregh and swings north towards Agedabia, brushing aside the attempts by the 1st Armoured Division to stop them.

General Joseph W. Stillwell is appointed as Chief of Staff to Chiang Kai-shek. First Japanese bombing of New Guinea.

1943

Irish Brigade - 20th/21st Brigadier Russell in Tunisia:

"The 3rd Battle of Bou Arada, a bloody battle, in which the London Irish so greatly distinguished themselves, but at almost crippling cost, while guarding our Line of Communication, a lateral road from Bou Arada to Grandstand.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff issue the Casablanca Directive. Its principal aim was to weld RAF and USAAF strategic bomber forces into one mighty air arm able to crush the German industrial, military and economic system. It was also decided that to defer the cross-channel invasion until 1944.

The Russians claim the capture of the Caucasian railway town of Voroshilovskiy and say that 500,000 Germans have been killed and 200,000 captured in the last two months of fighting.

1944

The largest Luftwaffe raid on Britain for some time, with 90 planes being spotted over Southeast England during the 'Little Blitz'. Mosquito night-fighters equipped with radar account for 129 of the 329 aircraft shot down during the 5 month Little Blitz. The RAF sends 648 bombers to Magdeburg, but loses 55 for just 4 Luftwaffe fighters.

1945

Tannenburg is taken by Red Army, but only after the Germans blow up the memorial. British forces enter Monywa, 60 miles to the West of Mandalay.



Roll of Honour – January 21

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+LAGAN, T

Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), 2nd Btn. Private. 11249.
Died 21/01/1915. Born in Draperstown. Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

1916

+JOHNSTON, Thomas

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 9th Btn. 4th Coy. Private. 11249.
Died 21/01/1916 in a railway accident. Age 42. Pre-enlistment in Omagh, he worked in Herdmans Mill in Sion Mills where he was resident. Lt Colonel Ricardo DSO wrote to his relatives paying tribute to his qualities (Mid Ulster Mail 05/02/1916). Son of James and Sarah Johnston, who lived for a time in Castledawson (Their home location given in the CWGC record does not exist); husband to Eliza Jane Johnston, of "Urbleriaigh," Victoria Bridge, Co. Tyrone. Beauval Communal Cemetery, France

+LAUDER, Ernest

Hampshire Regiment. 1st/7th Btn. att'd. 4th Btn. Private. 305624. Died 21/01/1916. Age 21. Born at Bedford. Son of Henry and Miriam Lauder, of 6, Castleton Gardens, Belfast. Basra Memorial, Iraq

+THOMPSON, Moses

Royal Irish Rifles. 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 5242. Died 21/01/1916. Son of Moses and Ellen Jane Thompson, of 8, Arthur Street, Hillsborough, Co. Down. Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord France. Hillsborough WM

1918

+ANDERSON, Andrew

Royal Irish Rifles, 15th Btn. Rifleman. 47202. Formerly Army Service Corps. 031349. He worked in Ferguson's Weaving factory in Banbridge and in the Durham Street factory in Belfast. He enlisted December 1914. Died 21/01/1918. Aged 31. Son of William John and Sarah (nee Carson) Anderson of Reilly Street, Banbridge. Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France

+BELL, George Reilly

Irish Guards, 2nd Btn. Private. 6270. Died 21/01/1918. Age 27 years old. Born at Castledawson 25/09/1889. George worked on the family farm in Castledawson for some years. He went on to become a Royal Irish Constabulary Constable stationed at Lisburn. He and four other constables (Christopher Coldwell, William Cunningham, P. Shields and William Stewart) left Lisburn on the 29/12/1914 to enlist in the Irish Guards. Local newspaper reported

“Large crowds” had assembled to see them off, and each was presented with a box of cigarettes before they left. Marching from Smithfield barracks, they were escorted by a guard of honour made up of men in 11 RIR. He enlisted at Dublin. Private Bell was severely wounded by shrapnel at Hohenzollern Redoubt, but he returned to the front. Of the five constables who left Lisburn that afternoon late in December 1914, at least three, Bell, Coldwell and Cunningham, were to die before the war was over. Son of Joseph and Elizabeth Bell. Brown’s Copse Cemetery, Roeux, Pas-de-Calais, France. Castledawson WM

+COOKE, Felix

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 7th/8th Btn. Private. 13179. Died 21/01/1918. Age 30 years old. Son of James and Mary Cooke, of 2 Chapel Lane, Armagh; husband of the late Catherine Cooke (nee Boylan). They had one son, William James, who served as a Sergeant Air Gunner in the RAF, and was killed on 23/04/1942. Epehy Wood Farm Cemetery, Epehy, France

1943

+HENDERSON, Hubert

London Irish Rifles, 2nd Battalion, Royal Ulster Rifles. Captain. 137933. Died 21/01/1943. Aged 34. Hubert Henderson was born on 20 /10/ 1908 in Blyth, Northumberland and his birth was registered in Tynemouth. He was a son of Ephraim McMurtrie Henderson (born in Ayr) and Sarah Henderson (née Steel) who were married on 31/01/1907 in St. Leonard’s Church of Scotland, Ayr. Sarah was a daughter of Gilbert Steel who worked as a horse trainer. Hubert was less than five months old when his father

died. Ephraim Henderson was a medical practitioner and he died on 18/03/1909 (aged 35) at Newsham, Northumberland. Dr Ephraim Henderson was buried in Alloway Parish Church Graveyard in Ayr.

Sarah Henderson subsequently married Robert James Adams, a linen manufacturer, and they lived at Moyola, 21 Adelaide Park, Belfast. Hubert Henderson attended Rockport and, after he left school, worked as a linen salesman. Between 1930 and 1932 he travelled regularly in that capacity between Belfast and New York, USA.

Hubert Henderson's marriage to Eila P. Bryce was registered in the second quarter of 1934 in Kensington, London and they lived at 49 Godfrey Street, Chelsea. During the Second World War, Captain Hubert Henderson served with the London Irish Rifles, Royal Ulster Rifles. In November 1942 the London Irish Rifles left Glasgow en route for North Africa.

When they entered Tunisia, heavy rain had turned the ground into a quagmire and conditions were atrocious. Tanks got stuck in the mud and 'H' Company was involved in the task of retrieving them. Subsequently 'H' Company was ordered forward to take Hill 286 and Captain Hubert Henderson was second in command of 'H' Company when he was killed during the fighting on Hill 286. Medjez-el-Bab Memorial, Tunisia; on his father's headstone in Alloway Parish Church Graveyard, Ayr and in Rockport School.

1944

+GRACEY, Herbert

RAFVR. Pilot Officer (Air Bomber). 155208. Died 21/01/1944. Aged 22. On this date, bombers of RAF 10 Squadron including Handley-Page Halifax HX165 took off for a raid on Magdeburg, Germany. The raid was unsuccessful and the loss rate, particularly of Halifax's was high. HX165 came down at Schoningen, south-by-southeast of Uslar, Germany. Gracey's crew had an earlier intense encounter from which they emerged. At 1800hrs on 02/10/1943, they took off from RAF Melbourne, Yorkshire. While on a mine-laying sortie, they came under attack from a Junkers JU88 and a Messerschmitt ME109. Cannon shell holes perforated the Halifax's starboard rudder. The RAF crew returned fire and claimed the Junkers JU88. The crew returned their damaged plane to RAF Melbourne, at 0113hrs on 04/10/1943. Son of John Gracey and Mary Jane Gracey (née Armstrong) of Belfast. Hanover War Cemetery, Niedersachsen, Germany

+GOWDY, William John

RAFVR. Sergeant. 1512471. Died 21/01/1944. Aged 22. Died on a Bomber Command mission over Magdeburg, Germany. 21 bombers of RAF 35 Squadron including Handley-Page Halifax LV787 took off for a raid on Magdeburg, Germany. There was no communication from the plane after take off. The next of kin of all seven men received a telegram and a letter from the Squadron's Commanding Officer. Only son of William A. and Mary Gowdy, of Larne. Runnymede Memorial, Panel 230.

+RUSSELL, Thomas

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Fusilier. 6983747. Died 21/01/1944. Aged 23. He died in the aftermath of the Battle

of Garigliano. The 2nd Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers landed at Reggio, Italy on 03/09/1943 and met little opposition. They advanced 240 miles in the next 15 days, taking the heavily defended town of Isernia. Fighting in the Garigliano Valley along the Gustav Line began on 17/01/1944. 2nd Battalion Inniskilling Fusiliers launched a silent attack as part of the 5th Division. Heavy opposition ensured the Division did not achieve their objective until 19/01/1944. Third son of Samuel Russell and Emily Russell (née Balmer) of Garfield Place, Ballymena; husband to Agnes Russell (née Gibson), Belfast. Minturno War Cemetery, Italy. Named on the Garigliano Memorial at the Inniskilling Museum, Enniskillen

1945

+HORNE, Robert Arthur

RAFVR. Flying Officer. 175215. Died 21/01/1945 on a reconnaissance flight near the Po Valley, Italy. Aged 32. 55 Sqdn. Promoted to Flight Sergeant on 24/10/1943 and to Flying Officer on 24/04/1944. He was in the crew of a Douglas A-20 Havoc medium bomber on reconnaissance patrols over Italy with RAF 55 Squadron. Squadron Leader RH Stringer and crew took off in Boston BZ592 on an armed reconnaissance at 1826hrs on 21/01/1945. The target was road movement in the area between 55 Northing and the Po River, and between Ferrar M1286 and eastwards to the coast. The moon was at first quarter, there was no cloud. Crews operating in the same area reported excellent visibility and very good weather conditions. No signals were received from Squadron Leader String's aircraft, which failed to return from this operation. Son of the late William

J.F. Horne of Howth, Dublin, and B.G. Horne, 14
Cooldarragh Park, Belfast. Argenta Gap War Cemetery, Italy

VETERANS

MONTGOMERY, Eldred Merwin

Royal Irish Fusiliers and Indian Army Guides. Lieutenant. In his book 'Blacker's Boys', Nick Metcalfe writes:

"Born on 21 January 1888 at Kells, County Antrim. A bank clerk with Ulster Bank, he joined the Queen's University, Belfast, Officer Training Corps on 5 June 1916 and then 7th Officer Cadet Battalion on 5 October 1916. Commissioned into Princess Victoria's (Royal Irish Fusiliers) on 1 March 1917.

"He joined the 9th Royal Irish Fusiliers on 26 June 1917 and was posted to 'D' Company. Attached to the 12th (Service) Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles (Central Antrim) in 108th Brigade on 3 July 1917.

"Soon after, he applied to transfer to the Indian Army Reserve of Officers and was accepted. He left for England on 28 October 1917 and sailed for India on 28 January 1918. Second Lieutenant (on probation) Indian Army Reserve of Officers [on] 28 February 1918.

"He resigned his commission in the Indian Army Reserve of Officers [on] 1st May 1922. (WO 339/73124)"

Eldred's brother, Verus Calvin Montgomery MB, also fought in the war. Ballynure PCI RH

STRONGE, Norman

Captain The Right Honourable Sir Norman Stronge Bt PC MC HML, Military Cross and the Belgian Croix de Guerre. Aged 86, he was shot and murdered by the Provisional IRA, along with his only son James, in the Gothic library of their home Tynan Abbey on Wednesday 21 January 1981. (See article above).

Every day is a Remembrance Day

We will remember them

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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

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