



remembrance ni



Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux

Australia Day remembrance

On this Australia Day we remember, as we do every day, the 62,000 Australian personnel who died during the

First World War and over 40,000 in the Second World War.

More than 400 of those are commemorated at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Adelaide Cemetery, Villers-Bretonneux – where the Unknown Australian Soldier was exhumed from in 1993 before being buried in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

The Australian National Memorial, located behind the Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery honours the Australian soldiers who fought in France and Belgium, and who lie under the battlefields. The Memorial consists of a central tower, with spectacular views of the surrounding countryside, flanked by wing walls commemorating the 10,719 Australian casualties who died in France and who have no known grave.

During the Second World War the Memorial was used as an observation post by the French and was extensively damaged by German aircraft and ground fire. Although repairs were carried out, some scarring was retained and can still be seen on parts of the Memorial.

Villers-Bretonneux became famous on 23 April 1918, when the German advance on Amiens ended in the capture of the village by their tanks and infantry. On the following day, the 4th and 5th Australian Divisions, with units of the 8th and 18th British Divisions, recaptured the village, and some say turned the tide on the First World War. On 8 August 1918, the 2nd and 5th Australian Divisions advanced from its eastern outskirts in the Battle of Amiens.

The Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery was established after the Armistice when graves were brought in from other burial grounds in the area and from the battlefields.

There are more than 2,100 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery, of whom more than 600 remain unidentified. A significant number of men from Northern Ireland who had emigrated served in Australian forces in WW1 As is testified by the names on many war memorials in NI.

Edward Workman MC only son of founder of Workman Clark, Shipbuilders

On this day in 1916 Lieutenant Edward Workman died in the Duchess of Westminster hospital, Le Touquet, France where he was being treated for wounds received exactly one week before in a raid on German trenches; it initially was thought that his wounds were not serious.

Edward (Ted) Workman was born at 32 College Gardens, Belfast on 4th August 1886 into a family of substantial means – the only son of Frank Workman, one of the founders of Workman Clark, Shipbuilders, Belfast and Sara (nee McCausland). He had a younger sister – Florence “Sis” and was educated initially at private school in Walmer, Kent and then went on to Charterhouse and Trinity College, Cambridge.

By his early twenties, Ted was a Director of Workman Clark, managing the South Yard of the family’s shipbuilding

business and as such was clearly destined for greater things. At the time of the “Home Rule” crisis he was a well-regarded Company Commander in the 6th Battalion, East Belfast Regiment of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) which he had joined from the outset.

At the very outbreak of the Great War Ted volunteered to fight for his country and was gazetted

Second Lieutenant, 5th Battalion, The Royal Irish Rifles (Royal South Downs) on 15th August 1914 initially serving at Victoria Barracks, Belfast before posting to the British Expeditionary Force, attached initially, to The York and Lancaster Regiment. He arrived in Rouen, France on 7th May 1915 and was promoted to Lieutenant on 22nd May 1915, attached to the 2nd Battalion RIR.

Ted’s first real action was in Belgium at Hooze which is just outside Ypres and close to the perhaps better known Passchendaele. The action in this theatre was brutal in the extreme and resulted in very high casualties on both sides,



many of these inflicted in terrible hand-to-hand fighting in mud and water-filled trenches where men even struggled to pass each other.

As an illustration of how terrible the fighting was, Ted was only one of three officers who came out of one of the earlier large raids unscathed (one of these was later killed); for his actions he was Mentioned in Despatches by Sir John French.

At this time, Ted was five feet seven and three quarters inches tall, weighed only 9 stones 13 pounds and the life expectancy of a young front-line officer was known to be measured in days.

In mid-January 1916 an order was issued to conduct a substantial raid on the enemy trenches to capture prisoners and gather information on the enemy's strength and positions.

On 19th January 1916 whilst commanding B Company of the 2nd RIR, he was tasked with leading part of the raid on the enemy trenches at the River Lys near Armentiers. Under heavy rifle, machine gun and artillery fire Ted and his men made it into the German trench and captured a number of prisoners. Whilst holding these prisoners at pistol point and still in the German trenches, he was struck on the head by a rifle butt and was knocked to the ground but recovered sufficiently well to be able to lead his men and prisoners back to their own trenches.

Following treatment at the First Aid Station he was evacuated to the Duchess of Westminster's Hospital at Le Touquet, Sadly, and despite the best efforts of the surgeons, he developed a severe infection which was to lead to his death from meningitis exactly one week after receiving his injury.

Perhaps uniquely, his Father, Mother, Sister and her husband had travelled to France in time to see the seriously ill Ted. He was laid to rest in a simple military ceremony in the Camiers Road Military Cemetery at Etaples in France and in recognition of his significant part in the action and for his courage under fire he was awarded (posthumously) the Military Cross.

Frank and Sara paid tribute to their beloved son by erecting a memorial commemorating Ted and 135 Workman Clark employees who died in that war. They commissioned Sophia Rosamund Praeger to carve three relief panels and a silhouette of Ted, the latter forming the centrepiece of the memorial.

The remaining portions of the original memorial – the carved silhouette of Edward Workman, the panel detailing Ted's civil and military accomplishments, and the panels listing the names of the shipyard fatalities are embedded in the outer wall of the Pumphouse building at the Thompson Dock in Belfast's Titanic Quarter.

As her own tribute to her beloved son, Sara compiled a substantial archive which contains a mixture of family photographs and articles chronicling Ted's short life.

Included in this are many of his letters from the Front including a barely legible scribbled note from him written from the hospital only a few days before he died. This important archive is a treasured family possession.

On this Day – January 26

1940

US-Japan Trade Treaty of 1911 lapses—US refuses to negotiate while Japanese troops are in China.

Brooms in Britain to be made with square handles to save timber.

1941

The Italians evacuate Mechilid during the night.

1942



On this day in 1942, American soldiers arrive in Northern Ireland. Convoy AT-10 carrying the 34th Infantry Division arrives in Belfast. They are the first US troops deployed to Europe in WW2.

The US-Filipino withdrawal to the Bagac-Orion line is successfully completed. The Japanese quickly followed up the withdrawal and made several penetrations in to the defensive new line, although these were all contained and thrown back.

1943

The Stalingrad pocket is split in two. Voronezh is captured. The Eighth Army takes Zaula in Libya, less than 100 miles from Tunisian frontier.

1944

The British launch their main attack on the Japanese 'Golden Fortress' in the Arakan, Burma.

Landing ship LST- 422 damaged by a mine off Anzio; of 700 aboard, 454 US soldiers and 29 British sailors killed. Allied ships are ordered to withdraw from the Anzio beachhead to reduce risk from air raid.

Argentina severs relations with Germany and Japan after a vast Axis spy ring is uncovered in the country.

1945

Himmler is put in command of Army Group Vistula by Hitler. The Russians isolate three German armies in East Prussia. The Red Army captures Kattowitz in Upper Silesia.

Auschwitz concentration camp is captured by the Russians, but they find fewer than 3,000 survivors as the SS has moved most of the remaining prisoners to camps inside Germany.

Soviets reach the Prussian coast at Elbing, cutting East Prussia off from Germany.

Sandakan Death March begins: Japanese march 470 Indonesian civilians and Australian POWs across North Borneo, only 6 will survive war.

Lt. Audie Murphy is awarded the Medal of Honor



The Battle Honour GAZA is emblazoned on the Queen's Colours of The Royal Irish Regiment.

GAZA was granted for actions over the period 26 March -7 November 1917. One such action was the battle for Beersheba on 31 October 1917. The reserve brigade in the 10th (Irish) Division for the initial attacks was 31 Brigade.* As part of the final phase, 31 Brigade had the task of attacking the Turks over the Wadi esh Sheria to cut their defensive line across the Gaza-Beersheba road. The Turks held a well-defended stretch of high ground called the Hureira Redoubt. The 2nd Battalion The Royal

Irish Fusiliers (2nd Faughs), together with two companies of the 5/6th Faughs, was ordered to capture the redoubt while the 6th Battalion The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers was given a subsidiary role on the right flank.

The attack was hurriedly staged and began at 0700 hours on 7 November. There was insufficient time to prepare artillery support in any detail but, in the absence of the artillery's horses being watered elsewhere, the pack mules of the 5/6th Faughs galloped forward towing a supporting battery of howitzers.

Enemy machine guns caused many casualties among the troops advancing across the open ground, but when the Faughs were within 300 yards of the enemy, the attack faltered. When the Inniskillings on the right and a Faugh company on the left simultaneously outflanked the Turkish position, the Turkish fire slackened. The Faughs rose and charged the hill and overran the Turkish defenders who had not abandoned their positions. The fighting had lasted three hours and the Faughs casualties were 29 killed and 137 wounded.

General Allenby's Egyptian Expeditionary Force broke through the enemy positions at Beersheba and Gaza, and went on to pursue both the retreating Ottoman Seventh and the Eighth Army before capturing [Jerusalem](<https://www.royal-irish.com/events/battle-honour-jerusalem>) on 9 December 1917 and then advancing into Syria.

The 31 Brigade infantry included:

5th Battalion The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers

6th Battalion The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers

2nd Battalion The Royal Irish Fusiliers
5th/6th Battalion The Royal Irish Fusiliers
The 6th Battalion The Royal Irish Rifles were in 10th (Irish)
Division's 29 Brigade.
Courtesy The Royal Irish Regiment

Roll of Honour – January 26

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+DUNLOP, William J

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 9th Btn. Private. 13625. From Donemana, Co.Londonderry. Antrim New Cemetery.

1916

+TOHILL, John Patrick

Army Service Corps, attd. 179th Tunnelling Coy. Royal Engineers. Private. M1/08974. Died 26/01/1916. Aged 40. Eldest son of George and Jane Tohill. Born 01/06/1875 in Belfast. He was the eldest of at least six children. By 1881, the family had moved to Cookstown where John grew up. In January 1906, John was married. He and Henrietta had two children. He was in business with his brother-in-law in the motor and cycle trade. At the outbreak of war he offered his services as a despatch rider but was not accepted. John then volunteered for motor transport work with the Royal

Army Service Corps. Husband to Henrietta M. Tohill, of 67, Hollybank Rd., Drumcondra, Dublin. Albert Communal Cemetery Extension, Somme, France. Cookstown WM



The Ploegsteert Memorial commemorates many men who died in the Battle of Lys.

+WORKMAN, Edward

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Lieutenant. Military Cross; Mentioned in Despatches. Died 26/01/1916 of wounds received in action. Charterhouse School. Admitted as pensioner at Trinity College, Cambridge. June 26, 1905. BA 1908. After leaving Trinity he joined his father's shipbuilding company, managed the South Yard and became a Director. He was a Company Commander in the 6th Btn, East Belfast

Regiment of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). On 15/08/1914 Edward Workman received a commission in the 5th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles and served under Lieutenant Colonel T.V.P. McCammon at Victoria Barracks Belfast and Palace Barracks Holywood. He went to the Front on 01/05/1915. On 22/05/1915 he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, attached to the 2nd Battalion and in September 1915 was mentioned in despatches at Hooze. Later he was fatally wounded in the head during a raid on the German trenches. He was struck on the head by a rifle butt during hand to hand fighting and the wound developed septic poisoning. He was taken to the Duchess of Westminster's War Hospital at Le Touquet where his parents, sister and brother-in-law visited him. He subsequently died there of meningitis. Born 04/12/1887, at 32 College Gardens, Belfast. Only son of Frank and Sara Workman, of 'The Moat', Strandtown, Co. Down. Etaples Military Cemetery, France. Workman Memorial, Belfast City Cemetery. Workman Family and Shipyard Memorial (Originally sited at the gates of the North Yard and unveiled by Sir Edward Carson on 08/08/1919; subsequently re-sited in the Pump House);. Charterhouse School Memorial Chapel. Trinity College Cambridge RH. County Antrim Yacht Club Whitehead. Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club Cultra. Royal Ulster Yacht Club, Bangor. Ulster Club Belfast. North of Ireland Cricket Club Memorial Plaque (includes those members of the Club who played Rugby Football). Royal County Down Golf Club, Newcastle. See article above

1942

+ANDERSON, William

RAF. Sergeant. 509519. Died 26/01/1942. Aged 33. He served as an instrument maker with No. 151 Maintenance

Unit, RAF, based at Java. He died from natural causes and was reported buried in Singapore Cemetery. All burial records were lost during the Japanese invasion and because it was impossible to identify his grave, he is commemorated on Singapore Memorial. Son of Samuel Reid and Elizabeth Ann Anderson. Singapore Memorial, Kranji, Johor Bahru, Column 414

+GOODWIN, Samuel Busby

RAF. Aircraftman 1st Class. 618214. Died 26/01/1942. Aged 20. 34 Sqdn. Son of William T. and Gertrude Goodwin, of Belfast. Singapore Memorial, Column 418

+MILEY, Frederick James

RAFVR. Leading Aircraftman. 1056802. Died 26/01/1942. Aged 28 He contracted an illness while serving in the Middle East with the RAF. He was born in Athy, Co. Kildare but grew up in Bangor, Co. Down. Both he and his younger brother were students at Bangor Grammar School. Before enlisting, he was a junior representative in Belfast of Messrs RS Hudson Ltd. He was an active member of Bangor Parish Church, teaching in the Sunday School and singing in the choir. He was also a popular sportsman in the Bangor area. Frederick, son of Robert and Margaret Mansfield Miley died at home at "Risdale", Donaghadee Road, Bangor. Bangor New Cemetery. Bangor Parish WM

1945

+IRVINE, Robert Stanley

RN. AB. D/JX 303814. Died 28/01/1945. Age 21. HMS Quilliam. Died as a result of an accident at sea. Former member of the 80th Company, Boys' Brigade (Donegall

Pass Presbyterian Church). Son of Mr and Mrs R Irvine and grandson of Mr R Rolleston, both of Rutland St., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 06//04/1945). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 941947

1947

+TAYLOR, Frank Walter

RAFVR. Flight Lieutenant. 175222. Died 26/01/1947. Age 26. Son of William Thompson Taylor and Margaret Ann Taylor, of Belfast..

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

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