

February 2



remembrance ni



## Royal Air Force Regiment formed

In 1917 William Wilson an army doctor from Bushmills died whilst attached to the Nepal Carabiniers. Another doctor, Hugh Given from Cullybackey died in India serving with the RAF in 1943. He had been married just four months previously. RAF man James Macready from Bushmills, rests in Bari War Cemetery, Italy. This week in 1942 the Royal Air Force Regiment was formed by Royal Warrant. Per Ardua - Through adversity.

# On this Day – February 2

## 1867

The Royal Navy introduced the rate of Writer. Writers are the RNs administrators, looking after: pay, leave, admin, legal, cash, terms of service and travel as well as front line roles in all ships and submarines.

## 1939

Hungary breaks relations with the Soviet Union.

## 1940

Big Russian offensive continues on the Karelia front. Italian Jews banned from serving as engineers, professors, or journalists, and from serving Gentiles as doctors or lawyers.

In the morning a flotilla of ships was minesweeping in the Moray Firth, when HMS Sphinx was hit by a bomb from a German aircraft which crippled the ship. She was taken under tow but in rough seas she capsized and more than half the crew were lost.

A crewman on a rescue ship remembers the gallant efforts of men, in conditions as bad as could be imagined, going over the side on bowlines to fasten ropes to the men in the

February 2



sea. He recalls a terrifying night of horror as those who could not be rescued drifted away into the night. For days the bodies of these sailors were found washed up on the shore.

## 1941

5th Indian Division captures Barentu, forcing the Italians to withdraw towards the mountain fortress at Keren.

Indian & British forces take Italian fortifications at Barentu, Eritrea, and take 8000 POWs.

In East Africa, aircraft from HMS Formidable attack the harbour installations at Mogadishu.

February 2

Fairey Swordfish aircraft (above) flying from HMS Ark Royal attacked the Santa Chiara d'Ula hydro-electric dam on the Tirso river in Sardinia as part of Operation Picket.

## 1942

**The formation of the RAF Regiment** - The RAF Regiment was established by Royal Warrant on 1st Feb 1942. Since it began the RAF Regiment has played a vital role in major operations across the world and continues to do so today.

Japanese invade Java in the Dutch East Indies.

The Japanese launched their 1st air raid on Port Moresby in New Guinea.

The commander of the British XIII Corps, Godwin-Austen, resigns as a result of Lieutenant General Ritchie bypassing him and dealing direct with his divisional commanders.

A supply convoy bound for Malta sets sail from Alexandria. It consisted of 3 fast freighters, 2 cruisers, 8 destroyers and an anti-aircraft ship. However, the Luftwaffe still managed to sink all three merchantmen before they reached Malta.

Congress appropriates \$26.5 billion for the U.S. Navy, bringing total U.S. war costs since June of 1940 to more than \$115 billion.

US 808th Engineer Aviation Battalion arrives in Melbourne to build airfields near Darwin, Australia.

Allied ships begin withdrawal from Singapore to East Indies.

## 1943

Stalingrad is back in Soviet hands as the last pockets of

February 2

German resistance in the city are snuffed out. The Axis suffered more than 800,000 casualties in five-months of fighting there; Red Army losses are even heavier: an est. 1 million killed, wounded or missing.

The remnants of 6th Army under General Strecker in the northern pocket cease fighting and surrender to the Red Army. In all, over 96,000 survivors of the once 300,000-strong Army are captured, of which, only about 5,000 will live to return to Germany after the war. At Moscow, the victory over the Germans is celebrated with a salute of several hundred guns.

## **1944**

The Germans stop an Allied attack at Anzio, Italy. 2nd-4th February 1944, 168 Brigade at Anzio: 1 LIR had an uneventful voyage from Pozzuoli. The CO received orders to take them at once into the line in the area of Aprilia (the "Factory") on the road near Carroceto. Over 5 weeks at Anzio, they would suffer 580 casualties.

The 1st Ukrainian Front captures Luzk and Rovno. Stalin agrees to USAAF using Russian bases.

U.S. Marines complete the capture of Roi and Namur in the Marshall Islands.

## **1945**

British commando raiders are executed at Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Before the execution, Lt John Godwin snatched the firing squad commanders pistol, killing him before being gunned down himself.

Ecuador declares war on Germany.

The 1st Belorussian Front reaches the Oder River near

February 2

Frankfurt-an-der-Oder.  
French troops occupy Colmar.

# Roll of Honour – February 2

*Representing their comrades who died on this day*

**1915**

**MAWHINNEY, James**

(served as  
McWhinney, James).  
Black Watch (Royal  
Highlanders). 6th Btn.  
Private. 2699. Died  
02/02/1915. He was 19  
when he died of  
pneumonia in Hawick  
Cottage Hospital,  
Scotland, some six  
weeks after he enlisted  
in Perth. Born  
20/07/1894 in High  
Street, Holywood. Son  
of James and Margaret  
Mawhinney (nee  
Savage) who were married on 26/04/1886 in Ballygilbert  
Presbyterian Church. They had nine children. Like his father  
before him, James Mawhinney Junior worked as a



February 2

carpenter. Hollywood Cemetery, Hollywood, Co. Down. St Philip & St James C of I Parish Church, Hollywood

**+McCONNELL, William John**

RN. Stoker First Class. 228579. HMS Ardent. Died 02/02/1915. Found drowned at Stranraer. Enrolled 02/07/1904 for 12 years. War service in Attentive, Victory II, and Hecla (Ardent 28/02/1914 - 02/02/1915). Born 02/07/1886. Son of James and Maggie McConnell. The family lived at Matlock Street in 1901, Connsbrook Avenue in 1911 and Crimea Street, Belfast. Stranraer (Glebe) Cemetery. Eglinton Street - PCI RH. ADM 188/404/228579

**1916**

**+ABRAHAM, Sydney Herbert**

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Corporal. 16803. Died 07/02/1916. Age 20. Son of Charlotte Browne (formerly Abraham), of 4, Zetland St., Belfast. Native of Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. Rue-de-Bois Military Cemetery, Fleurbax, France

**+McCLUSKEY, Thomas**

Connaught Rangers, 6th Btn. Private. 2730. Died 03/02/1916. Aged 25. Pre-war he worked as a spinner in a mill. He enlisted in Omagh. Son of Thomas and Catherine McCluskey, of Tullyvar, Ballygawley, Co. Tyrone. Loos Memorial. Pas de Calais, France

**1917**

**+WILSON, William Oliver**

RAMC. Captain. Attached Natal Carabiniers. Died 20/02/1917. Age 31. B.A., 1907; M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., 1912.



Brother of John Hugh Wilson who served and died shortly after the war. Sons of Mr and Mrs John Wilson. Family headstone, Dunluce Presbyterian Churchyard, Bushmills.

**1920**

**+HOURIHANE,  
Thomas Cormac**

25th Punjabis. 1st  
Btn. attd. 4th Btn. 39th  
Garhwal Rifles.  
Lieutenant. Died  
02/02/1920. Age 21.

Born in England. In 1911 living with family in Clarendon St., Londonderry. Son of John Hourihane, of 3, Melbourne Terrace, Armagh, and the late Mary Teresa Hourihane. Jandola cemetery. Delhi Memorial (India Gate), India

**1940**

**+CRAWFORD, Samuel Sloan**

RNVR. Ordinary Seaman. P/UD/X1273. HMS Victory, the main Royal Navy base in Portsmouth. Died 02/02/1940. Aged 27. Died in Haslar RN Hospital, Portsmouth. His cause of death was accidental "inhalation of carbon dioxide substituted in error for nitrous oxide cylinder". Son of William Crawford and Margaret Crawford (née Ritchie) of Whiteabbey, Belfast. Husband to Isabella (née Crawford) of Templepatrick The couple set up home at Concrete Row,

February 2

Whiteabbey, and had a daughter named Margaret Crawford.  
Carnmoney cemetery

**1941**

**+HAWTHORNE, James Thomas**

RAFVR. Sergeant. 973032. Died 01/02/1941. Aged 27. 144  
Sqn. Son of Mary Hawthorne of Belfast. Dundonald  
Cemetery

**1942**

**+VAUX, Robert Norman**

RAFVR. Leading Aircraftman . 970332. Died 15/02/1942.  
243 Sqn. Son of Harold and Mary Vaux, Belfast. Singapore  
Memorial, Singapore

**+WILSON, Richard**

Royal Ulster Rifles. 1st (Airborne) Btn. Rifleman. 7013415.  
Died 25/02/1942. Aged 27. Died as a result of shock  
following injuries caused by a bomb explosion. Son of  
Elizabeth Hogg, of Belfast. Belfast City Cemetery, Glenalina  
Extn.

**1943**

**+GIVEN, Hugh Maclvor**

RAF. Flight Lieutenant. 112706. Died 08/02/1943. Aged 28.  
27 Sqn. Ballymena Academy. MB, B.Ch. BAO. QUB 1940.  
Before the outbreak of war, he practised in Belfast, Omagh,  
Dungiven, and on the Ards Peninsula. Hugh joined RAF 27  
Squadron in 1941. This new RAF 27 Squadron formed in  
India on 19/09/1942. They flew Bristol Beaufighters on  
ground-attack sorties over Burma and on anti-shipping  
strikes. While home on leave, he married Margaret Helen

February 2

Thompson of The Warrens, Broughshane, Co. Antrim in 1942. Known as Helen, she hailed from Yorkshire but lived in Broughshane and taught at Downpatrick High School. Hugh died only four months after their wedding. Born September 1914. Youngest son of Robert Given JP and Kathleen Given of Markstown, Cullybackey; husband to Margaret Helen Given, of 'The Warrens', Broughshane, formerly of Cantley, Yorkshire. Ranchi War Cemetery, India. Ballymena WM. QUB WM

**1944**

**+MACREADY, James**

RAFVR. Sergeant (Wireless Op./Air Gunner).1037956. Died 02/02/1944. Aged 21. 221 Sqdn. Son of James and Violet Macready, of Bushmills, Co. Antrim. Bari War Cemetery, Italy

**+O'MALLEY, Francis Gerald**

RAF. Flight Sergeant. 517173. Died 01/02/1944. Aged 28. Family memorial, Milltown Roman Catholic Cemetery

**1945**

**+HARRIS, James Carnegie**

RAF. Pilot Officer. 186470. MiD. Died 02/02/1945. Aged 27. 428 (RCAF ) Sqdn. Son of Major George Arthur Harris, C.B.E., D.S.O., and Evelyn Harris, Belfast. Durnbach War Cemetery, Germany

**+McAFEE, John**

RAFVR. 419 (Royal Canadian Air Force) Sqdn. Sergeant Flight Engineer. 1037806. On the night of 2nd / 3rd February 1945 John was aboard Avro Lancaster KB750 VR-N which

February 2

took off from R.A.F. Middleton-St.George in County Durham on a mission to Wiesbaden, Germany. Having dropped its bombs the Lancaster was hit by FLAK and the Pilot gave the order to bail out however only the Tail Gunner was able to escape before the aircraft crashed near the village of Wolf. Although alive Flight Sergeant W.J. McTaggart was injured and spent the rest of the War in Hospital as a P.O.W. John was the son of Verner and May McAfee from Lisburn. He was 21 years old. Rheinberg Cemetery, Germany.

### **+NIMMONS, Bertie**

Royal Corps of Signals. Driver.116782. Died 23/02/1945. Aged 35. Son of Mr and Mrs Robert Nimmons, Tullygiven, Eglisk, Dungannon. Schoonselhof Cemetery, Antwerp, Belgium

### **+WILSON, William John**

RAFVR. Sergeant. 1796601. Died 02/02/1945. 44 Sqdn. Son of Robert H. Wilson and Mary J. Wilson, Banbridge. Durnbach War Cemetery, Germany

## **VETERANS**

### **CARR, Hamilton**

The funeral on Monday 02/02/1920, of Hamilton Carr, Johnstreet, Downpatrick, a discharged soldier, whose health had broken down in the war, was accorded military honours. In 1915 Hamilton Carr enlisted in the 6th Btn Royal Irish Rifles, and subsequently transferred to the Machine Gun Corps. His brother, James, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, fell at the

February 2

Marne in 1914, and another brother, Thomas, of the 5th Royal Irish Rifles, was killed in the South African War.

# Every day is a Remembrance Day

***We will remember them***

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**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

February 2

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)

