



remembrance ni



Tired rays of winter sun blink through clouds over the now quiet killing fields of the Somme at Courcelette



On this Day – March 12

1915

Ulster Division Rank & File Fatality, Military Funeral in Tandragee - Northern Whig

The funeral of Private William Totten, 16th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, stationed at Brownlow House, Lurgan, who died on Monday, took place from his late residence, Market Street, Tandragee, on Wednesday afternoon. The funeral was accorded full military honours, an escort and firing party attending from the battalion in Lurgan.

Remni note - Rifleman William Totten, Service No. 77, 16th (Pioneer) Battalion Royal Irish, died 08/03/1915, of Brain Disease, Husband of Elizabeth Jane Totten nee Clayton of Market Street, Tandragee, Portadown, County Armagh. Deceased was approximately 59 years of age and is buried in Tandragee (St. Mark's) Church of Ireland Churchyard, County Armagh. Rifleman Totten is also commemorated on the Tandragee War Memorial.

1917

Q-ship HMS Privet avenged the sinking of California. Posing as an unarmed merchant vessel, the crew of Privet lured

U-85 to the surface after sustaining heavy damage in an unprovoked attack by the submarine. As Privet's highly trained crew...feigned abandoning ship, they uncovered the ship's hidden guns and opened fire on the submarine at close range. U-85 was sunk by gunfire, and Kapitanleutenant Petz and his crew of 37 men were killed.

1918

With the kaiserschlacht just over a week away, the **36th (Ulster) Division Pioneer battalion**, 16th Royal Irish Rifles were still constructing defences at two of the Division's front line positions, Jeanne D'Arc and Boadicea Redoubts.

German Zeppelin raid bombing Hull in Yorkshire. One woman reported killed.

1938

German troops enter Austria without firing a shot, forming the anschluss (union) of Austria and Germany. They face no local resistance; international reaction is subdued.

1940

A peace treaty is concluded between Finland and Russia, which formally ends the "Winter War". The terms of this treaty are harsh for Finland, who is forced to cede the entire Karelia Isthmus, and the city of Viipuri, which is renamed Vyborg. They also lose parts of eastern Karelia, Lake Ladoga, the Rybachiy Peninsula and the Petsamo area. They also have to grant the Russian a 30 year lease of the Hang Peninsula. However, the ever 'generous' Russians drop their recognition of the Kuusinen puppet government in

Moscow.

The British finalize their plans for the invasion of Norway. Landings are to be made at Narvik and Trondheim in order to secure the rail line to Sweden and the large iron-ore fields.

1941

Churchill thanks America for 'a new Magna Carta'. Luftwaffe bombs Clydebank, Scotland, leaving 75% of the population homeless.

1942

Convoy PQ-12 arrives unscathed at Murmansk, earning the distinction of being the last PQ convoy to sail without losses. The British evacuate their garrison from the Andaman Islands, just off the Burmese coast south of Rangoon. US troops occupy New Caledonia.

1943

Fight for the city of Kharkov, Ukraine. It is considered as the last great victory of German arms on the Eastern Front. The offensive cost the Red Army an estimated 90,000 casualties, German losses around 11,000.

German troops evacuate Vyazma.

In North Africa, the US 802nd Medical Air Evacuation Transport Squadron flies first medical air evacuation flight with flight nurses.

George Patton promoted to Lieutenant general.

The first labor strike in a totalitarian regime: 50,000 Italian workers strike against Mussolini and delay war production.

1944

The Swedes announce an investigation of the 'mysterious object which crashed out of the sky' (a 'flying torpedo' V1) from a German research station, 40 miles away.

1945

RAF Bomber Command sets another new record for single target, when 4,851 tons are dropped on Dortmund.

Anne Frank dies in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp of typhus, age 15.

Roll of Honour – March 12

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+CARLISLE, David

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 6043. Died 12/03/1915. Age 35. Husband to Ellen Jane Carlisle, of 21, Bristol St., Belfast. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

+DAVISON, Thomas

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st. Btn. Rifleman. 16812. Died

12/03/1915. Aged 29. G.P.O. employee for 13 years. Brother of Private Hugh Davison, Canadian Infantry, died 14/06/1916, and of Private S Davison, Royal Irish Fusiliers, died 29/09/1916. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Davison, of 5, Spamount St., Belfast; husband to Jane Davison, of 13, Ohio St., Belfast. Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

+FISHER, James

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Rifleman. 7191. Died 12/03/1915. Born in Shuttlefield, Newtownards on 23/08/1890. Son of William and Margaret Fisher (nee McCalpin, sometimes McAlpin) who were married on 22/07/1865 in First Newtownards Presbyterian Church. Jim Fisher enlisted in Newtownards on 24/08/1914 and joined the Royal North Downs. He went to France on 26/12/1915 and was attached to D Company of the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles. In early April 1915 unofficial news reached Newtownards that Rifleman James Fisher of the 4th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles attached to the 1st Battalion had died of wounds. The first intimation came in a letter from Jim's comrade, Hugh McConnell, also from Newtownards. Jim Fisher had been a regular letter writer and, significantly, his letters stopped coming. His family feared that Jim had died during the Battle of Neuve Chapelle which commenced on 10/03/1915 with the objective of recapturing the town and also the overlooking Aubers Ridge. In another letter home Hugh McConnell described the charge to the German trenches as 'terrible' and he imparted the news that Jim had been shot in the stomach. 'Very few live after getting injured there', Hugh had added in his letter. During April and May 1915 Jim's wife and the Rev W L T Whatham both tried without success to get definitive information from the War Office as to Jim's whereabouts. Then, in a letter to Jim's mother, Rifleman T

Jeancourt Communal Cemetery extension, France

Stitt (another of Jim's comrades) informed her that when Jim was wounded he had been too close to the German lines for the stretcher bearers to get to him under sustained enemy fire and Jim had died on the battlefield. In late May 1915 Rifleman James Fisher was reported as wounded and missing in action and it was not until March 1916 that it was officially confirmed he must be presumed to have been killed in action on 12/03/1915 during an attack on the enemy trenches. That day more than 50 men of the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles died. Le Touret Memorial, France. Newtownards WM. Newtownards C of I Parish Church (St Mark's) RH. Regent Street Methodist Church RH, Newtownards

+JOHNSON, William

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Rifleman. 9812. Died 12/03/1915. Age 21. Born at Dublin. Son of Daniel and Mary Johnson, of 16, Taylor St., Belfast. Born at Dublin. Estaires Communal Cemetery and Extension, France

+LAURIE, George Brenton

Royal Irish Rifles. 1 Btn. Lt Colonel. Died 12/03/1915. During the third day of continuous heavy fighting at Neuve Chapelle, he was shot and killed at 1720 hours. As he rose to lead a charge, revolver in hand, his last words were 'Follow me, I will lead you!' A bullet struck him to the right of his nose and killed him instantaneously.

Son of Lt. Gen. Laurie and Mrs. Laurie, of Halifax, Nova Scotia; husband of Florence C. V. Vere-Laurie, of Carlton Hall, Newark, Notts. Pont du Hem Military Cemetery, La Gorgue, France



+McCAW, James Joseph

North Staffordshire Regiment. 1st Btn. Sergeant. 7699. Died 12/03/1915. Age 41. Joseph was born 19/02/1874 in Glasgow. He initially enlisted with the Corps of Hussars (for 12 years) in 1898 in Warrington, England, under an alias of William Gooden. His trade at that time was recorded as Cabinet Maker. He fought in the 2nd Boer War (1899 – 1902). He returned from South Africa, having transferred to the Army Reserve, to live at 25 Venice Street, in Belfast. On 18/01/1905 he married Mary Canning of Halcombe Street (Woodstock Road) at Ballymacarrett Presbyterian Church, Belfast. They had 2 daughters – Mary (born/died March 1906) and Evelyn (born 20/03/1908). Evelyn was baptised

by Rev. David Stewart, at Cregagh Presbyterian Church, in April 1908. By 1911, Joseph had joined the North Staffordshire Regiment. When war broke out he was transferred for service in the Western Front. A War Gratuity of £8 was paid to Joseph's widow as a result of his death. Joseph's widow and daughter remained members of Cregagh – they lived at 48 Tildarg Street. Evelyn was married to a local Machinist on 27/01/1942 at Cregagh Presbyterian Church, by Rev. D. Stewart. Ploegsteert Memorial, Belgium. Cregagh Presbyterian Church RH

+McROBERTS, Daniel W

Black Watch (Royal Highlanders), 2nd Btn. Private. 3/2749. Died 12/03/1915. Age 27. Son of John McRoberts, of 62, Bank Rd., Larne. Le Touret Memorial, France. Larne W

+REED, Talbot

Indian Army 67th Punjabis. Captain. Attd. 59th Bn. Schinde Rifles. Died 12/03/1915. Aged 28. Son of Talbot Baines Reed and Elizabeth Jane reed of Loxley Cottage, Dunsford, Surrey. Nephew of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Greer who lived in Ballymoney with a holiday home in Ballycastle. Grandson of the late Sir Charles Reed and Samuel McCurdy Greer of Springvale, Co. Londonderry

+SHIELDS, John

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 9033. Died 12/03/1915 at Neuve Chapelle. Age 26. Born on 02/04/1888 at 37 Hamill Square, Belfast. Enlisted in Belfast and was with the regiment prior to WW1. His brother-in-law, Henry McIlroy also died on war service. Son of James and Margaret Shields, of 5, Barbour St., Greencastle, Belfast. Le Touret Memorial, France

Jeancourt Communal Cemetery Extension is situated in the Aisne region of France and contains 660 WW1 burials. Jeancourt was a German hospital centre, a substantial German plot remains in the north-western part.



+STURGEON, William

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. B Coy. Rifleman. 8827. Died 12/03/1915. Age 25. Son of Mrs. Mary Thompson, of 37, Montreal St., Belfast. Le Touret Memorial, France

+WADE, William James

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 6949. Died 12/03/1915. Age 23. Son of Thomas and Margaret Wade, of 57, Brownlow St., Belfast. Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, France

1916

+GAVIN, Neil Murphy

RAMC. 6th Field Amb. Lieutenant. Died 12/03/1916. Aged 42. Son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Gavin; husband to Maud Muriel Gavin, of Morton Hall Rd., Edinburgh. A medical missionary with the Irish Presbyterian Church in Western India. Lapugnoy Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

+McGINLEY, David

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Private. G/336. Died 12/03/1916. Aged 48. Son of Mr. and Mrs. James McGinley, of Londonderry; husband to Rose A. McGinley, of Cochranes Row, Duke St., Waterside, Londonderry. Kirkee 1914 - 18 Memorial, India

+McREYNOLDS, Hamilton Patterson

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 9th Btn. Private. 23188. Died 12/03/1916. Aged 19. Prior to enlistment Hamilton was employed at Sessiagh, Stewartstown. He enlisted with the Inniskillings on 15/05/1915 and went to France with the Ulster Division. He was severely wounded by shrapnel from enemy shell fire on 09/03/1916. Born at Donaghey, Sherrygrove on 10/03/1897. Youngest son of Hugh and Jean McReynolds, of Killymoon St., Cookstown. Douellens Communal Cemetery, Douellens, Somme. Stewartstown WM. Donaghendry C of I Parish RH

+STEWART, Thomas

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 9th Btn. Private. 18066. Died 12/03/1916 struck by shrapnel. Age 25. Disembarked France 04/10/1915. Son of William and Jane Stewart, of

Darkley, Keady; husband of Mary Jane Stewart, of Darkley, Keady, Co. Armagh. Ste Marie Cemetery, Le Havre, France

1917

+STEELE, Robert George

RNR. Lieutenant. In command of SS Polandia. Died 12/03/1917. Age 43. Sunk by mine or enemy action on voyage from Birkenhead to Cherbourg. Son of Samuel and Anna Steele, Hillhead, Mullaghdubh, Islandmagee, and Belfast. Husband to Lilian Smith (formerly Steele). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 23. Islandmagee WM

1919

+GRACEY, Thomas

5th (Royal Irish) Lancers. Private. L/12518. Died 12/03/1919. Age 20. Son of William John and Mary Ellen Gracey, of 124, Tennent St., Belfast. Theux Communal Cemetery, Belgium

+McLUSKEY, Charles

Canadian Field Artillery, 8th Park Sect. Private. 810. Died 12/03/1919 in a road accident. Age 28. Charles, aged 20, was working as a postman and living with his family at Coolmillish, Market Hill. He emigrated to Canada. Son of Thomas and Mary McLuskey, of Markethill, Co. Armagh. Abbeville Communal Cemetery Extension, France. Mullaghbrack C of I Parish Church RH, Markethill

+TELFORD, Thomas Samuel

Machine Gun Corps (Motors). Serjeant. 79840. Died 12/03/1919. Age 19. Son of Thomas and Mary E. Telford, of

88, University Avenue, Belfast. Belfast City Cemetery

1942

+HEAP, William James Sydney Jones

RAFVR. Aircraftman 2nd Class. 1123746. Died 12/03/1942. Aged 26. He was a Wireless Operator onboard Blackburn Botha L6314 from No.3 School of General Reconnaissance at Squire's Gate, Blackpool, Lancashire. It crashed in bad

visibility on the cliffs at Burro Meanagh between Cronk ny Arrey Laa and Port Erin on the Isle of Man. William had lived at 40 Glendower Street, Belfast. He was husband to Margaret Campbell Heap of Hendon, Middlesex. Dundonald Cemetery.

+LUTTON, Frederick David

RNVR. Acting Sub-Lieutenant (E). Died 12/03/1942. Age 26. HMS St Briac. The vessel had broken down and drifted towards a British minefield, 20 miles off Arbroath. HMS St Briac hit a mine and sank, leaving a total of 47 dead. He had been rescued from HMS Dunvegan Castle when it was torpedoed earlier in the war. Born 25/10/1915 in the Benburb/Moy area. Son of Joshua and Mary Elizabeth Lutton, Drumgold, Dungannon. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 10/07/1942). Liverpool Naval Memorial, Panel 4. Moy WM

1943

+SHAW, Eric

RAFVR. Sergeant. 1074934. Died 12/03/1943. Aged 22. 101 Sqd. Son of John and Margretta Shaw, of Knock, Belfast. Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany



Jeancourt Communal Cemetery Extension

1944

+KYLE, Hubert

Royal Artillery. 5 Heavy Anti Aircraft Regiment, 7 Bty.
Gunner. 833155. Died 14/03/1944. Aged 33. Son of Robert
and Jennie Kyle, of Clogher, Co. Tyrone. Yokohama War
Cemetery, Japan. Clogher WM

+McKENNA, Charles Cecil

RAFVR. Sergeant, A.G.1795560. Died 12/04/1944. Aged
20. 50 Sqdn. Son of Charles K. and Jessie McKenna, of
Belfast. Runnymede Memorial, Panel 233. Knockbreda
Parish WM

1947

+BLEAKLEY, Edward

Royal Artillery. 71 Heavy Anti Aircraft Regiment.

Gunner. 1536513. Died 12/03/1947. Aged 40. Son of Samuel and Susan Bleakley; Husband of Bessie Bleakley of Tullynacross, Lambeg. Lambeg Church of Ireland Churchyard

VETERANS

BOYD, William

RAMC. 3rd F Ambulance, 46th Division. Captain. Campbell College. QUB, MB BCh, BAO, 1911. Lieutenant 12/07/1917. In France from 01/03/1915 - 09/1915. Post war, Medical Officer tea estates, Assam. Born 14/11/1885. Son of William C and Lizzie Boyd, Hazelbank Villa, Ravenscroft Rd., Belfast. Died 12/03/1950.

CESAR, Norman

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. Norman Cesar was born on 30/05/1896 at Portallo Street and was a labourer when he enlisted in Belfast with 4th (Reserve) Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers on 7th August 1914. His religious denomination was recorded as "Presbyterian".

He joined the 1st Battalion on the Gallipoli Peninsula on 18/07/1915. The battalion was withdrawn from Gallipoli in January 1916 and transferred to the Western Front in March 1916.

He sustained gunshot wounds to the side on 01/07/1916 and to the right leg on 27/01/1917. The latter necessitated

evacuation to the UK and, when fully recovered, he was posted to the 7th Battalion in May 1917. He sustained gunshot wounds to the head on 11/08/1917 which necessitated evacuation to UK. He was subsequently posted to the 6th Battalion in November 1917. Norman Cesar was transferred to the Class Z Army Reserve on 12/03/1919.

He was one of three sons of Robert Cesar, a lithographic printer, and Mary nee Callwell of Tildarg Street, Belfast, who served in the Great War. The family was recorded as “Presbyterian” in the 1901 Census and the 1911 Census.

EWART, Francis

RN. Surg - Lieutenant. OBE. Born 12/03/1892, son of Wm. Ewart, Ganaway, Millisle. Medical practitioner. Campbell College 952. Ballywalter Masonic Lodge RH. Carrowdore - PCI RH

**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

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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