



remembrance ni



**Tommy Jess survived when HMS Lapwing was torpedoed a day's sail from the Russian port of Murmansk**

**Thomas Jess was an RN Gunner on Arctic convoys. On HMS Lapwing, he was blown 10 yards across the deck**

**when a torpedo struck the destroyer on a bitterly cold morning in the final few months of the war.**

"The explosion just lifted me off my feet, skinning all my knuckles," says Jess, one of several sailors from Northern Ireland on board the Lapwing. "But I was lucky as I always wore my lifebelt, which was my best friend at sea. Other fellows were more careless. There was one poor man who tried to make his way below for his lifebelt but he never got back up on deck."

After the torpedo ripped through the ship's hull, he stayed at his post until the abandon ship order was given.



**HMS Lapwing survivors photographed in Greenock - Tommy Jess is back row second from right.**

Then he jumped into the freezing sea and was lucky enough to be pulled onto a raft that had been thrown overboard by

the crew.

"There were about 16 of us on the raft when we set off and then one by one they fell off in the cold. I fell unconscious while we drifted for at least two hours...There were just six of us pulled onboard HMS Savage when we were rescued . . . And one of them died on the deck of HMS Savage. I'll always remember that man," He was one of 61 survivors. 58 sailors died on 20/03/1945, on board the HMS Lapwing, which was just a day's sail from the Russian port of Murmansk when it was torpedoed without warning by the German submarine U-968. Thomas Jess (1923 - 2015) lived in Lisburn.

## On this Day – March 20

### 1913

Maria Schenker was born in Cracow. She was a Polish Jew, a clerk. She was deported to Auschwitz on 27/04/1942 and registered as prisoner 6842. She died in the camp on 19 August 1942.

### 1914

The Curragh incident took place. 57 out of 70 British officers in Curragh, Co. Kildare refused to obey orders which would have meant quashing a possible rebellion from Ulster.

57 out of 70 British officers in Curragh, Co. Kildare refused



to obey orders which would have meant quashing a possible rebellion from Ulster Volunteers opposed to Home Rule. The officers chose to resign.

## 1917

Capt Frank Hubert McNamara of No 1 Squadron, [Australian] Flying Corps, was awarded the VC and became the only Australianairman to be so decorated in WW1. He rescued a downed fellow pilot after a bombing attack on a railway across Wadi Hesse in Palestine

## 1940

The British Royal Air Force conducts an all-night air raid on the Nazi airbase at Sylt, Germany.

French Prime Minister Edouard Daladier resigns after vote of no confidence from Parliament.

## 1941

Four Yugoslav ministers resign rather than accept German terms.

The Berbera force and elements of the 11th African Division meet at Hargeisa inside British Somaliland.

Luftwaffe bombs Plymouth right after a visit by King George and Queen Elizabeth.

## 1942

Kesselring launches an intensified air offensive against Malta, which by the end of March had racked up 4,927 sorties for the Luftwaffe, as opposed to 2,497 during February.



**Destroyer HMS Heythrop** was torpedoed off Libya by German submarine U-652 and sank with no casualties.



The Red Army offensive at Kerch in the Crimea is defeated with heavy losses to the Russians.

About 1,000 schoolteachers are arrested in Norway.

In what was to become known as the 2nd Battle of Sirte, 4 freighters, escorted by 3 cruisers, 1 anti-aircraft cruiser and 17 destroyers leave Alexandria bound for Malta. This force would later be strengthened by the cruiser Penelope and a destroyer from Force K.

Japanese troops, reinforced by the 18th and 56th Division which had arrived by sea at Rangoon a few days earlier, attack the 6th Chinese Army near Toungoo in Burma.

## **1943**

The Eighth Army continues its attacks against the Mareth line in southern Tunisia.

## **1944**

HMS Stonehenge (P232) a S-class submarine. Underway.

HMS Stonehenge was built by Cammell Laird and launched on 23 March 1943.

She served in the Pacific, where she sank the Japanese merchant vessel Koryo Maru No.2 and the Japanese auxiliary minelayer Choko Maru.

She left Trincomalee to patrol in the northern part of the Malacca Straits on 25 February 1944.

She was reported missing after failing to arrive at Ceylon on 20 March as expected.

It is not known for sure what caused her sinking, but a mine was considered to be the most likely explanation.

Today is Dame Vera Lynn's birthday. During WW2 she joined ENSA (Entertainments National Service Association) and visited and performed for Allied troops in the UK and Far East. In 1944 she performed for troops at Shamshernagar before the Battle of Kohima. In 1941 she married Harry Lewis (a musician in Ambrose's Orchestra). He along with eight others joined the RAF and formed the Squadronaires (RAF Dance Band Orchestra). They toured all over the world entertaining troops. The Russians recapture Vinnitsa in the Ukraine, the site of Hitler's Headquarters during in 1943.



Destroyer escort USS Mason commissioned at the Boston Navy Yard, the first US Navy ship with a predominately African-American enlisted crew.

## 1945

HMS Lapwing sunk on convoy to Murmansk - See Roll of Honour this site today

German troops of Army Group Weichsel evacuate their bridgehead across the Oder at Stettin. The Russians capture Braunsberg, 40 miles South of Konigsberg.

The U.S. Seventh Army takes Saarbrücken.

On Luzon, a force of Filipinos takes San Fernando, led by US Col. Russell Volckmann, who refused to surrender to the Japanese in 1942

The British 19th Indian Division completes the capture of Mandalay.

## Roll of Honour – March 20

*Representing their comrades who died on this day*

**1915**

**+BUCHANAN, Richard Brendan**

Royal Scots Fusiliers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 20/06/1915. Age 21. Richard Buchanan received his early education at Foyle College and subsequently at Bedford School, where he was a member of the Officers' Training Corps. He entered Edinburgh University Medical School in October 1911, and had passed all his examinations, except the final, with first class honours, gaining the bronze medals in zoology, practical anatomy, and surgery. On the day after the Great War was declared he applied for a commission, and, having some time previously obtained certificates A and B of the Officers' Training Corps, Medical Unit, was gazetted to a lieutenancy in the Royal Army Medical Corps,



Special Reserve, on August 16, 1914. Finding a few weeks later that he could not be sent on active service until he had received his full medical qualifications, he applied for transfer to the Royal Scots Fusiliers, and was in due course gazetted second-lieutenant, and went into training at Cambusbarron, Stirlingshire. About the middle of May 1915, he proceeded with his battalion to the Dardanelles, and landing on May 30, went almost at once into the trenches. Son of Robert Eccles and Ethel Maud Buchanan (nee Williams) of Chiswick Lodge, Templemore Park, Londonderry. Lancashire Landing Cemetery, Gallipoli, Turkey. Diamond War Memorial, St Columb's (C of I) Cathedral Memorial to the men connected to that cathedral who died during the 1914-18 War.

Preaching from the text, 'I reckon the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us' (Romans viii. 18), the then Anglican Dean of Derry said day by day fresh news came of those who had given their lives for their country, and one family after another was called upon to feel at what cost the world's peace was to be gained. During the previous week this had been once more brought close to them by the bereavement of two families belonging to the Cathedral congregation. Two young lives of great promise had been sacrificed on the field of battle for the cause of King and country. They mourned them both – Captain E. G. Harvey and Lieutenant R. B. Buchanan.

Richard Brendan Buchanan was the nephew of Lieutenant Colonel Sir Walter J. Buchanan, C.I.E., I.M.S., Knight Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, an old Foyle College boy. After graduating in Trinity College, Dublin, where he was University Travelling

Prizeman in Medicine in 1887, Walter Buchanan entered the Indian service in the same year, and was appointed Inspector General of Prisons for Bengal in 1901. Author of several works officially adopted by the Indian Government, he was a recognised authority on travel in Northern Bengal, and in 1916 published 'Tours in Darjeeling and Sikkim,' a vade-mecum for the Indian tourist.

Sir Walter Buchanan's only son, Captain M. B. Buchanan, Royal Scots Fusiliers, held the Mons Star of 1914, was wounded at Ypres in October 1914, and at the Somme in July 1916, and was twice mentioned in despatches. Records show that Richard Buchanan's mother was the daughter of Thomas Richard (T. R.) Williams, forerunner of the press photographer, official photographer to Queen Victoria and lifelong obsession of legendary Queen guitarist Brian May.

Ethel Maud Williams arrived in Derry with her brother Herbert in the 1880's. On April 1, 1891, at St Mary's, West Kensington, Ethel Maud was married to Robert Eccles Buchanan, a civil engineer, of Fintona, County Tyrone. Richard Buchanan was born on May 6, 1894 when his parents lived at number 12, Harding Street, Londonderry. Robert Eccles Buchanan died at Buck House, Iwer Village, Buckinghamshire, on February 12, 1947. Ethel Maud died on June 11, 1949, in an English nursing home. Her brother, Herbert, died at Laurel Canyon, near Hollywood, California, on April 7, 1934.

Lt Richard Buchanan's Grandfather, T. R. Williams, was born in England in 1825 and the first professional record of him comes from 1850 when he set up a photographic

business in London.

In 1854, while working for Phillip Henry Delamotte, Williams made his celebrated stereograph Daguerreotypes of the Crystal Palace, some three years after its opening at the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Some commentators consider him to be one of the first photographers to record events as they happened, making him a predecessor of the press photographer.

By the mid-1850's T. R. Williams turned his attention to portrait photography and later on to still lifes, where he achieved the greatest artistic success. However, much of T. R.'s personal history remains elusive. In the course of my research into Lt. Buchanan, I discovered that T. R. Williams was an obsession held by one of the musical world's best known figures, Brian May. Brian has spent decades researching the life and work of Williams and on a website devoted to the photographic pioneer wrote: 'Williams succeeded on his reputation by word of mouth. His portraits of Royalty, including Queen Victoria and her daughter Princess "Vicky" were evidently highly prized by the Queen herself, who ordered duplicate copies in case they should fade.'

Yet, such was the precision and technique of Williams that the prints have never faded and are in existence to this day.

When I discovered that Brian May was interested in T. R. Williams I emailed the legendary Queen guitarist to tell him. In response from Brian I received the following: 'Many thanks Trevor. There is a current branch of the family in

Ireland, so this would make sense.' At the end of the 1860's, T. R. Williams' health deteriorated. He took on a partner, William Mayland, to ensure the continuity of the business, and died shortly afterwards, on April 5, 1871 at his home, Sellers Hall, Finchley. His son Arthur Richard continued the partnership with Mayland for a few years, until its dissolution in 1876.

Through his work, Williams is now widely recognised as pivotal in the history of stereoscopic photography, since his stereo cards were the first examples of photographic art for its own sake ever to achieve wide commercial success. However, as fascinating as his career is the link through his family to Derry and his grandson Richard who died in the heat of battle in 1915. As late as the 1970s, the Londonderry Sentinel was still referring to the Buchanans and their military connections. On September 19, 1979 the newspaper carried an obituary on Richard Buchanan's brother, Brigadier Edgar James Bernard Buchanan DSO, born at 12 Harding Street on May 6, 1892. It read: 'The death took place at Halesmere, Surrey, of Brigadier E. J. B. Buchanan, a native of Londonderry, who was the elder son of Robert Eccles Buchanan, a well known civil engineer in the city.'

## **+MAGINNIS, J**

Royal Irish Rifles. Rifleman. 802. Died 20/03/1915. Age 23. Son of the late John and Mary Jane Maginnis; husband of Annie Maginnis, of Woodgrange, Ballydugan, Co. Down. Hollymount C of I Churchyard

**1916**

## **+CASSELLS, S**

Royal Irish Rifles, 8th Btn. Rifleman. 17/1032. Died 20/03/1916. Age 20. Son of William and Mary Jane Cassells, of Belfast. Bertrancourt Military Cemetery, France.

## **+CAUGHLEY, P**

Royal Engineers, 121st Field Coy. Sapper. 64075. Died 20/03/1916. Age 23. Born in Richhill, Co. Armagh. In 1911 he was working as an apprentice plumber whilst living with his parents James and Sarah Caughley, of Victoria Terrace, Limestone Road, Belfast. Forceville Communal Cemetery, France

## **+KEATING, John Alexander Strain**

Royal Irish Rifles. 13th Btn. A Coy. Rifleman. Died 20/03/1916. Aged 20. Born on 16/07/1895. Son of William Thomas and Jane Keating (nee Strain) who were married on 10/09/1890 in Ballycopeland Presbyterian Church. The Keating family lived in the townlands of Herdstown and Cottown, Donaghadee before they moved to Newtownards. They had at least seven children. These children were all baptised in Shore Street Presbyterian Church Donaghadee. John Alexander Strain Keating worked first as an agricultural labourer and then as a platelayer on the railway. A report in the *County Down Spectator* after his death stated: 'He was deservedly popular, he had a quiet disposition, always cheerful and obliging and he kept himself free from the frivolities which usually accompany young manhood'. He was a member of the Cottown Company of the Ulster Volunteer Force and, along with other young men from the District, he enlisted in Bangor and served with the 13th Btn. Royal Irish Rifles. He went to the Western Front in October



1915. After John Keating died the Rev Gibson, Presbyterian Chaplain, wrote to John's father to express his condolences and he described the circumstances of John's death – John was in the trenches and 'a shell came through and killed him instantaneously'. John's father, William Thomas Keating, died on 27/10/1938 (aged 77) and was buried in Bangor Abbey Graveyard. Mesnil Ridge Cemetery, France. Bangor WM. Royal British Legion (Bangor Branch) Memorial Plaque. Ballygrainey Presbyterian Church RH

### **+McCALLION, Robert**

Royal Irish Rifles, 12th Btn. Rifleman. 18/785. Died 20/03/1916. Age 27. Son of Robert and Mary Anne McCallion, of Ballygally, Cairncastle, Co. Antrim. Ste Marie Cemetery, Le Havre, France

### **+WALSH, William**

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 9266. Died 20/03/1916. Age 28. Son of David and Jane Walsh, of 21, Hill St., Lisburn. Rue du Bois Military Cemetery, Fleurbaix, France

## **1917**

### **+DARRAGH, Matthew Sloan**

Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment, 6th Btn. 2nd Lieutenant. Died 20/03/1917 while leading a patrol. Born 25/07/1892, the youngest son of Samuel Darragh, a farmer, and Jane nee Sterrat, Ballycraigy, Ballymena. Mrs. Darragh later resided at Alma Terrace, Portadown. Matthew attended Ballymena Academy and then served an apprenticeship as a grocer with Mr T McKeown, Wellington Street, Ballymena. He emigrated to Canada to follow his trade in Eaton's store,

Toronto. He returned to Ireland at the start of the war and enlisted with his older brother John McClelland Cromie Darragh (No.128) in the 6th Dragoon Guards (Inniskillings). He applied for a commission in 1915. He trained at No.4 Officer Cadet Battalion, Oxford, was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant on 14/07/1916 and subsequently posted to the 6th Battalion Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment, though he was later attached to the regiment's 5th Battalion. On 20/03/1917 he was killed in action near Richebourg l'Avoue, just south of Neuve Chapelle. According to the battalion diary, as reported by Philip Tardif, (author of The North Irish Horse in the Great War, Pen and Sword Books) - A patrol consisting of 2/Lt. Darragh and 6 other ranks of No.3 Company went out ... to reconnoitre the German Wire on the Northern side of the Boars Head ... at 7.pm. They apparently lost their direction in the maze of shell holes and old trenches and stumbled into a German Post held by 6 or 8 men. They were fired on by rifles and bombs. 2/Lt Darragh was killed and 2 other ranks were Missing believed killed. The bodies were not recovered although two search patrols were sent out during the night. His brother John was killed on 24/12/1916. Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. 1st Ballymena Presbyterian Church. (Belfast News Letter, 28 March 1917)

### **+GAILEY, Laura**

Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD). Nurse. Died on March 20/03/1917, from pneumonia, following an attack of influenza.

Laura Gailey was born and brought up in Derry. During the First World War she was a nurse with the Voluntary Aid

Detachment (VAD) and was based in Liverpool. While treating soldiers wounded on battlefields throughout Europe, Laura caught pneumonia and died in March 1917.

She was buried with full military honours and after a campaign by her family in Derry her name was added to the city's war memorial at the Diamond. Laura is the only woman to have her name on the local war memorial.

When Mountjoy Women's Orange Lodge found out that Laura's grave in Liverpool did not have a headstone, the members raised the money needed to buy a headstone which was erected in March 2017. Prior to that, her grave was only recognisable by the number 1433. The new headstone was dedicated during a ceremony which was organised to mark the 100th anniversary of Laura's death. Members of the Mountjoy lodge travelled to Liverpool for the ceremony.

To mark the unveiling ceremony, the vice chairman of Merseyside Royal British Legion, Bill Sergeant, assisted with organising a memorial service which was attended by six Standard Bearers from the branch. (Based on a Derry Now report).

### **+KERR, John**

Australian Infantry AIF, 21st Battalion. Private. 3849. Died 20/03/1917. Born Belfast, Ireland. Enlisted 10/07/1915, Melbourne, Victoria. Son of Frank and Isabella Kerr. Villers-Bretonneux Memorial, France.

## **1918**

### **+FERGUSON, John**

Royal Irish Fusiliers. 9th Btn. Private. 18607. Died 20/03/1918 during the retreat from St Quentin. From Antrim. Lived in Tandragee. In 1901 John aged 10 was living with his parents William and Margaret, and siblings at 10 White's Row, Tandragee. Poziers Memorial, France

### **+McKINLEY, John**

Royal Irish Rifles. 2nd. Btn. Rifleman. 9147. Died of wounds in a German Prison Camp 20/03/1918. Son of William and Christina McKinley, of Raholp, Downpatrick. A contemporary newspaper report - "Mr. William McKinley, of Loughmoney, and his wife are to be sympathised with in their losses in the war. Of four sons in the Army, only one, now in India, survives. James a lance-corporal in the City of London Fusiliers, was killed in September, 1917; Samuel, a corporal in the Royal Field Artillery, in October 1918; and John, a Rifleman in the Royal Irish Rifles, missing since 24th March 1918, is believed to have died of wounds in a German Prison camp." Grand-Seraucourt British Cemetery, Aisne, France

### **+MORROW, William Breeze**

Royal Engineers. Lance Corporal. 64081. Died 20/03/1919. Age 28. Born in Belfast. Son of John Morrow; husband of Margaret Morrow (nee Fisher), of Belfast. Dundonald Cemetery, Belfast

### **+ROBINSON, Samuel**

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 5th Btn. Private. 5/12397. Distinguished Conduct Medal. Died 20/03/1918. Age 27. Son of John and Lucinda Robinson, of Railway St., Keady.

Brother-in-law of Sarah M. Quillan, of Brook Place,  
Coleraine. Jerusalem War Cemetery, Israel and Palestine  
(including Gaza)

## 1941

### **+BARNHILL, David**

Royal Artillery. 8th (Belfast) HAA Regiment. 22 Bty.  
Gunner.1426106. Died 20/03/1941. Aged 38. He was  
originally a member of 9th (Londonderry) HAA Regiment but  
was ill when the Regiment was posted overseas in  
November 1939 and thus was transferred to 8th (Belfast)  
HAA Regiment. His brother Joseph was a regular gunner  
and survived the war. Son of William and Ruth Barnhill of  
Waterside, Londonderry; Husband to Ellen Margery Barnhill  
of Waterside. Glendermot Church of Ireland Churchyard and  
New Cemetery

## 1942

### **+FOX, Samuel Pritchard**

Royal Artillery, 120th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, 381st  
Battery. Gunner. 7009770. Died 20/05/1942 at the UVF  
Hospital at Craigavon House, Belfast. Age 37. Born on  
12/06/1905, he was the son of William Fox and Isabella Fox  
(née Courtney) of 27 Roseland Place, Belfast; husband to  
Harriet Fox of 169 Matilda Street, Belfast. Samuel and  
Matilda had 3 children, Joe Fox, Reta Fox, and Ann Fox.  
Samuel was a member of Donegall Road Temperance Loyal  
Orange Lodge 731. His father served as a Sapper in the  
Royal Engineers in World War One. Glenalina Extension,  
Belfast City Cemetery

## 1943



**+McBRIDE, John**

Royal Army Service Corps. Private. T/129996. Died 18/03/1943. Age 37 years old. Son of Thomas and Isabella Jane McBride, of 49 Garden City, Londonderry; husband to Gwendoline McBride, of 49 Garden City, Londonderry. Londonderry City Cemetery

**1944**

**+PHILLIPS, John Edwards**

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Fusilier. 7015503. Died 20/03/1944. Age 33. Husband of Elizabeth Phillips, of Lisburn. Beach Head War Cemetery, Anzio, Italy

**1942**

**+FOX, Samuel Pritchard**

Royal Artillery. 120th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regt. 381 Battery. Gunner. 7009770. Died 20/03/1942 at the UVF Hospital at Craigavon House, Belfast. Aged 37. A member of Donegall Road Temperance Loyal Orange Lodge 731. Son of William and Isabel Fox of 27 Roseland Place, Belfast; Husband to Harriett Fox of 169 Matilda Street, Belfast. His father served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers in WW1. Belfast City Cemetery, Glenalina

**1945**

**HMS LAPWING**

**+BICKERSTAFF, James**

RN. Able Seaman. D/JX 650391. HMS Lapwing. Arctic convoy. Sunk by U968. Died 20/03/1945. Age 20. Son of

George and Margaret Bickerstaff, Castlereagh. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 93

**+CLOSE, Edward**

RN. AB. D/JX140143. HMS Lapwing. Died 20/03/1945. Age 26. Arctic convoy. Joined RN in 1933, aged 13. Son of Hugh Henry and Anne Close, Golf Terrace, Huntly Rd., Banbridge. Husband to Lillian Close, Liverpool. Report Banbridge Chronicle 21/04/1945. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 93. Seapatricks Parish Church, Banbridge, WM

**+GORDON, Henry**

RN. Able Seaman. D/JX 651185. Date of Death: 20/03/1945. Age: 19. HMS Lapwing. Arctic convoy. Sunk by U968. Son of William and Rachel Gordon, Belfast. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 94

**1945**

**+YOUNG, Maurice Edward**

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. Lieutenant. 296607. Died 20/03/1945. Age 24. Maurice Young grew up in Bangor and at school proved himself an outstanding sportsman. He excelled in athletics and tennis and played in the rugby First XV and cricket First XI for four successive years and winning inter provincial honours in his final year.

In 1939, he entered Magee College to study for the Presbyterian ministry but in his third year felt impelled to volunteer for service and enlisted in the Royal Artillery as a gunner. He subsequently served with his battery in England and after being recommended for and obtaining his commission he transferred to the infantry and was posted to

Italy in 1944.

On 30/11/1944, he joined B Company 2 Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, who were dug in on the banks of the River Senio near Bologna. The battalion War Diary records the almost continuous action in which it was involved during those last months of the war. The Germans were close by on the opposite bank and both sides shelled, mortared and fired on the other on a daily basis.

The opening entry for 20/03/1945 records that a fighting patrol from B Coy, supported by armour, moving out after first light to destroy a new enemy position. It was led by Lieut Young but, as they crested the far embankment, they were engaged by the enemy who had moved down to the river overnight and concealed themselves in anticipation of an allied probe. In the short firefight which followed, Maurice Young was killed and one man wounded. Son of Edward Anderson Young and Matilda Elizabeth Young, of Bangor. Faenza War Cemetery, Italy.

## **VETERANS**

### **BOYD, John**

Twin brother of Rifleman William Boyd (7025) who died on 16/12/1915. John Boyd enlisted on 17 /09/1914 at Clandeboye Camp. A labourer aged 28, he was born in Whitehaven, Cumberland and he served with the 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Irish Rifles. It was noted in his attestation papers that he was 5 feet 2½ inches tall with a fresh complexion, brown eyes and brown hair. He cited his mother Mary Jane Boyd of 1 Talbot Street, Newtownards as

his next-of-kin. Rifleman John Boyd (17306) was discharged from the Army on 20/03/1915 after 185 days.

There is also on record a Short Service (For the Duration of the War) Attestation for ex-Rifleman John Boyd (17306) who re-enlisted on 23/09/1915 in Newtownards. A labourer aged 29, he cited his mother Mary Jane Boyd of 1 Talbot Street, Newtownards as his next-of-kin. This time it was noted that he was 5 feet 2 inches tall and he was appointed to the 12<sup>th</sup> Reserve Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (No. 12/26389).

He went to France on 21/07/1916 and returned to the Home Front on 14/08/1917. On 26 August 1918 he was posted to the 30<sup>th</sup> Battalion London Regiment (No. 802394 and No. 643979). Private John Boyd (No. 643979) was discharged as no longer physically fit for war service on 11/10/1918 after 3 years 19 days service. He was given War Badge and Certificate Number B.32056. After the war John Boyd lived at 5 Upper Cargill Street Belfast.

## **GUNNING, George Cecil**

Born in 1892, he was the son of Sinclair Gunning and Kathleen Gunning. In 1901, the family were living in 1, Toneystick, Alexandra Terrace, Enniskillen.

Cecil Gunning joined the Belfast Banking Company around 1909. By 1911, he has moved to Belfast and is boarding in house 30, Eia Street, Clifton Ward (Belfast). He is described as a Bank Official Clerk and is one of four Bank Officials boarding there.

The parents and their three other boys and a daughter are living in 21 Willoughby Place, Enniskillen.

On 28th September 1912, Gunning signed the Ulster Covenant at Enniskillen. He served as a Private, 14771, with the 7th Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

In 1938 he was Manager in Tandragee branch before ending up as Manager of Portadown branch. He was a past captain of Tandragee Golf Club (1940). Retirement came in 1953 and he died on 20/03/1974.

The Gunning family were well known in Enniskillen. Their father was the Distributor of Stamps in Enniskillen from 1877 to 1910. He died in 1916.

During the Great War, John (Jack) Sinclair (20 in 1911) worked for the Ulster Bank, George Cecil (19 in 1911) worked for the Belfast Banking Company and Frank Douglas (16 in 1911) worked for the Bank of Ireland. Jack joined the Royal Navy, Cecil and Douglas joined the Army and Willie (13 in 1911) joined the Royal Naval Reserve. Douglas was reported as killed in action on 01/07/1916.

## **JESS, Thomas**

Tommy Jess 1923 - 2015 RN. Gunner. Arctic convoys. In HMS Lapwing. See above

## **MONTGOMERY, Thomas**

Pte. Thomas Montgomery, 672 North Irish Horse and 41234 9th (North Irish Horse Battalion) Princess Victoria's (Royal Irish Fusiliers). Born at Ballymena in 1896, Thomas was the youngest child of Alexander and Mary Montgomery, nee Kennoway. He enlisted in the North Irish Horse in February



1912 when he was 15. He embarked for the Western Front with F Squadron in November 1915 and was compulsorily transferred to the Infantry with the majority of 2nd North Irish Horse, joining 9th Royal Irish Fusiliers in September 1917. He was wounded in an attack near Wulverghem, Belgium on 4 September 1918 and was demobilised on 20/03/1919.

### **MONTGOMERY, Jean**

Thomas' elder sister Jean also served in the Great War. Originally a Ulster Volunteer Force Nurse, she served with the Voluntary Aid Detachment and Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps.

# 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**

[houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

# remembrance ni

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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](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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