



remembrance ni



The Ulster Memorial Tower at the Somme

On this Day – March 6

16th BATTALION R.I.R. (PIONEERS).

In consequence of the closing down by the military authorities of one public-house in Lurgan, a section of the licensed vintners, at a meeting held on 3rd inst., passed and forwarded to the commanding officer of the 16th Battalion R.I.R. (Major Leader), for approval, a resolution to the effect that in future they would decline to serve soldiers in uniform with liquor. To this Major Leader has replied that he considers such a measure would be too drastic, and he suggests instead that no soldier should be served after 7 p.m.

It has been decided by the authorities that the 16th having been constituted a Pioneer Battalion of the Ulster Division, extra duty pay, at the rate of 2d per diem, will be allowed the men, the increase to be retrospective.

6th March 1915 Belfast Newsletter.

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The image shows a circular war memorial for the Ulster Division. In the center is a hand with the palm facing forward. The hand is surrounded by a wreath of leaves. A banner at the bottom of the wreath reads 'ULSTER DIV'. Above the hand, a banner reads 'THIEPVAL'. To the left of the hand, a banner reads 'CAMBRAI'. To the right, a banner reads 'RIVER LYS'. Further up, on the left, a banner reads 'YPRES'. On the right, a banner reads 'KENDAL'. At the top, a banner reads 'LESQUINES'. The entire memorial is topped with a crown.

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of the
Gallant
Ulster Division.

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1917

The British line extends south of the Somme to the neighbourhood of Reims. The line is twice the length that it was a year earlier.

1940

Hitler changes his plans for the invasion of the west. At a military conference in Berlin, he decides to adopt the plan

put forward by Gerd von Rundstedt and his former chief of staff, Erich von Manstein, for the Ardennes option. Code-named 'Fall Sichelschnitt', it called for the attack against the Low Countries to go ahead, but with slightly fewer forces, in order to draw the allies forward, while the decisive thrust would be mounted through the Ardennes. Holding attacks would be made against the Maginot line.

1941

German aircraft mine the Suez canal, blocking it for 3 weeks.

1942

Having received permission from Hitler, the Battleship Tirpitz and 3 destroyers set sail from Trondheim to intercept convoy PQ-12, but is spotted by a British submarine which relays the information onto the British Admiralty.

However, bad weather means that the Tirpitz is unable to locate PQ-12 and so heads back to base. Enroute to Trondheim the Tirpitz is spotted and attacked by aircraft from HMS Victorious, but is not damaged.

Japanese cut all roads north of Rangoon, trapping the British at Pegu.

Japanese occupy Batavia in Java.



1944

Machine gun maintenance instruction for Sherman tank crews of the 31st Indian Armoured Division in Iraq,

1944.

Bomber Command begins a large-scale offensive over northern France in preparation for D-Day.

The USAAF send 730 bombers and 796 fighters to Berlin, during which 69 bombers and 11 escorts are shot down.

Another 'Chindit' stronghold is established South of the Irrawaddy

U.S. Marines land at Talasea in New Britain.

1945

The U.S. Third Army reaches the Rhine Northwest of Koblenz, as Cologne falls to U.S. First Army.

The US 8th Air Force launches a heavy attack against Chemnitz in Saxony.

The new Chinese First Army takes Lashio in north-eastern Burma.

Nazi Germany launches its last major offensive of the Second World War. Operation Spring Awakening targets Hungary's oil fields, and it is crushed by the Soviets in just 10 days. The 2nd Panzer and 6th SS Panzer Armies launch a major counter-attack from Lake Balaton towards Budapest.

Roll of Honour – March 6

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1916

+FAULKNER, R

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 7th Btn. Private. 26920. Died 06/03/1916. Age 20 years old. (served as Criglington). Son of Mrs. M. Faulkner, of 61, Fraser St., Belfast. Lapugnoy Military Cemetery, France



La Vallée-Mulâtre Communal Cemetery Extension is a village about 11 kilometres south of Le Cateau. The cemetery contains 51 WW1 burials including Major Henry Wyndham Francis Blackburne Farrer, M. C. and two bars who was killed on 30th October 1918.

+FINNEGAN, John

Leinster Regiment, 2nd Btn. Private. 5017. Died 06/03/1916. Menin Road South Military Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Dungannon WM

+McCREA, W

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. Corporal. 8408. Died 06/03/1919. Age 28. Son of Elizabeth McCrea, of Mount View, Waterside, Londonderry, and the late Joseph McCrea.

Glendermot C of I Churchyard and New Cemetery,
Londonderry

+McNALLY, James

Royal Munster Fusiliers. Private. 5175. Died 06/03/1916.
James McNally was the oldest son of James and Catherine McNally. He was born on 28th March 1894 in Draperstown. It is believed both parents died when the children were still young. James McNally enlisted in Omagh. James initially served with the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (Service No. 17954). Private James McNally was serving with the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Munster Fusiliers when he was killed in action on 6th March 1916. Information from local web site. Unable to find CWGC entry. Maroc British Cemetery, Grenay, Pas de Calais, France

+MULHOLLAND, W J

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 7th Btn. Serjeant. 13419. Died 06/03/1916. Husband to M. Gillespie (formerly Mulholland), of 18, Castlereagh Rd., Belfast. Philosophe British Cemetery, Mazingarbe, France

1917

+BROWN, Gordon

Royal Irish Rifles, 12th Battalion (C.A.V.), D Coy. Rifleman. 17324. Died 06/03/1917. Age 28. Ballymoney Free Press and Northern Counties Advertiser (22/03/1917) commented - "Another Local Hero's Sacrifice - Deep regret was felt by everyone in and around Portballintrae and Bushmills when they learnt that Mrs and Mrs Brown of "the Port" had received the sad intelligence that their son, Private Gordon Brown, 12th Batt. Royal Irish Rifles, had fallen on

the 6th inst, whilst fighting for King and Country on the Western Front. This brave young soldier prior to joining the Rifles belonged to the Bushmills company of the U.V.F. , and was held in much esteem by his comrades and friends. Captain Beale, Officer Commanding D Company, writing to the grief stricken parents states – “It is with deep regret I have to inform you of the death of your son, No 17324 Rifleman Gordon Brown. He was killed in the front-line trenches by a shell bursting in the trench about six feet away from him; a bit of the shell hit him right in the head and he died less than a minute afterwards. I am glad to tell you that I feel sure he suffered no pain. I and my officers and all the old hands of the Company feel his loss very much. He was a quiet soldier and steady and trustworthy in the highest degree. He was buried yesterday with some of his comrades and his grave will be properly registered and cared for. His personal property will reach you in a few days. Again please accept my deepest sympathy in the loss of your brave son, who was a good soldier and one who always did his work conscientiously.” He was the son of James and Mary Brown (nee Cochrane). St Quentin Cabaret Military Cemetery, Belgium. Bushmills WM. Dunluce Presbyterian Church RH

+HAMILTON, James Hope

RN. AB. 239262. HMS Sandhurst. Died 06/03/1917. Boy service from 21/08/1907. Enrolled 27/11/09 for 12 years. War service in Suffolk, Vivid II, Sandhurst (Pheasant). Born Belfast 27/11/1891. ADM 188/425/239262

+HAYES, Andrew

Royal Irish Regiment. Quartermaster Serjeant. 9067. Died 06/03/1917. Age 41. Husband of Elizabeth Hayes, of 63, Manor St., Cliftonville, Belfast. Milltown Roman Catholic Cemetery, Belfast

+McSPARRON, John

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 40837. Died 06/03/1917. Age 24. Son of William James and Fanny McSparron, of The Cluster, Derrychrier, Londonderry. Fins New British Cemetery, Sorel-le-Grand, France

+NIXON, William

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 40906. Died 06/03/1917. Age 19. Son of John and Emily Nixon, of Derryinch, Belnaleck, Enniskillen. Fins New British Cemetery, Sorel-le-Grand, France

+SCOTT, J

Royal Irish Rifles. Rifleman. 6096. Died 06/03/1917. Aged 18. Son of Margaret Taylor (formerly Scott), of Drumnascamph, Rathfriland, Co. Down, and the late Joseph Scott. Fins New British Cemetery, Sorel-le-Grand, Somme, France

1919

+ALLEN, James

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and later North Irish Horse. Private. 7648. Died 06/03/1919. Age 34. Born on 23/06/1884 in Brook Street, Coleraine, the second of nine children of plumber James Allen and his wife Ellen (née McKay). Soon after, the family moved to Limavady, and

around 1892, to Belfast. In August 1897 his mother died of typhoid fever and his father, having remarried, died of nephritis in June 1903. By 1909 James had also lost three of his sisters and his two half-siblings.

James Allen worked as a labourer until 24/04/1903, when he enlisted at Belfast in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (No.7648). Posted to the 1st Battalion, he was rarely out of trouble, being disciplined six times in 1903 and 1904 for offences ranging from absence, losing articles of clothing, making an improper reply to an NCO, being drunk in barracks, resisting an escort, damaging a rifle, and 'using party expressions'.

On 24/09/1904 Allen was posted to the 2nd Btn. and embarked for Egypt. While serving at Cairo his poor disciplinary record continued, including being drunk and improperly dressed, creating a disturbance, and 'committing a nuisance on the company veranda'. He returned home on 15/03/1906 and the following month was transferred to the Army Reserve.

On 22/12/1906 he and Lena Swan married at the Belmont Presbyterian Church, Holywood, County Down. The couple's two children were born over the next three years. At the time of the 1911 Census they were living at 89 Mount Street, Belfast, James working as a motorman.

He was mobilised on the declaration of war at the beginning of August 1914, reporting for duty with the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers at Omagh. He soon fell ill, however, a medical board Londonderry on 25 August finding he was suffering from tuberculosis of the lung.

“Thin, more or less emaciated ... Man had been when in civil life exposed to cold & wet and contracted lung trouble. Does not appear to have been caused in any way by military service”.

On 21/09/1914 he was discharged, being medically unfit for war service (paragraph 392(xvi), King's Regulations). He was not granted a disability pension, as the illness was considered to be unrelated to his military service.

Less than a fortnight later, on 03/10/1914, Allen enlisted in the North Irish Horse at Belfast (No.1259). He gave his address as 79 Rathmore Street, Belfast, and his place of birth as Willowfield, Belfast. Understating his age by a year, he made no reference to his previous military service. The record of his physical description noted that he had a number of tattoos, including 'King William III 1690'.

Allen embarked for France on 01/02/1915 with a reinforcement draft for A and C Squadrons – he was probably posted to the latter, which soon after was attached as divisional cavalry to the 3rd Division. In June 1916 C Squadron combined with F Squadron and the 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons Service Squadron to form the 2nd North Irish Horse Regiment, serving as corps cavalry to X Corps.

In October 1916 Allen fell ill and was evacuated to England, where he was admitted to the Dudley Road Hospital in Birmingham. His health improved and on 24/04/1917 he re-embarked for France, though not before he had again been disciplined for being absent without leave.

Soon after, however, he fell ill due to the tuberculosis. Admitted to No.32 Stationary Hospital at Wimereux on 13 May, a week later he was evacuated to the UK and admitted to a military hospital in York, where he remained under treatment. On 4 August he was awarded 21 days' detention and ordered to forfeit 22 days' pay for being absent without leave from 9 to 30 July.

On 30 August Allen was transferred to the Royal Irish Rifles (No.20220) and posted to the 3rd (Reserve) Battalion. His health, however, continued to deteriorate. On 13/12/1917 a medical board reported that the disease had originated in December 1916 at St Omer:

He was sent home but sent back to France the following April. He [became] ill again in June 1917 was sent home and has been in hospital ever since.

The board recommended that he be discharged as permanently unfit, the result of 'exposure on active service'.

Allen was discharged on 04/01/1918, being 'no longer physically fit for war service' (paragraph 392(xvi), King's Regulations). His military character was recorded as 'good'. As his illness was now attributed to his military service, Allen was awarded a pension, his level of disability assessed at 50 per cent. By the end of the year, however, this had increased to 100 per cent.

Allen died at his home at Rathmore Street on 06/03/1919. Because his death was attributed to his military service he was recognised as a casualty of the war, but with his regiment, incongruously, the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, rather than the North Irish Horse or Royal Irish Rifles. Knockbreda Cemetery, Belfast.

+GORMAN, Francis

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. Regimental Serjeant Major. 12794. Died 06/03/1919. Age 43. 22 years' service. Son of the late John Gorman; husband of Isabella Gorman, of 6, Simpson's Lane, Waterside, Londonderry. 22 years' service. Omagh (Dublin Road) Cemetery

1940

+DOUGLAS, Shane

RAF. Leading Aircraftman. 510876. Died 06/03/1940. No family details recorded on CWGC. Ardmore Roman Catholic Cemetery

1942

+SHEALS, Hubert Stanley

RAF. Flying Officer. 61116. Died 06/03/1942 during the evacuation of Tjilatjap (now Cilacap), Java, Indonesia. Aged 37. He was the eldest son of Hugh Townley Sheals and Frances Sheals (née Timbey) of Belfast. Brother of Ashley Timbey Sheals and Francis Eric Sheals.

For a time, they lived with a windowed grandmother Eliza Timbey in Ballyfinaghy, Belfast. They later lived at 'Arden', Balmoral, Belfast. Hubert and his brother attended Royal Belfast Academical Institution, Belfast, Co. Antrim. He also worked for a time at Harland and Wolff Shipyard Ltd. Hubert was already serving in the RAF when he and Ethel Winifred Milliken married at Helen's Bay Presbyterian Church on 17/04/1941. The couple lived at "Roseville", Craigavad, Holywood.

Sheals was a member of Malone Golf Club and was a +1 golfer. He represented Ireland and Ulster in tournament play. The Belfast Telegraph on 21/01/1942 refers to Hubert as a “golfer of international status”. On 27/03/1942, the Ballymena Weekly Telegraph published an article on sports stars at war. It mentioned Sheals as an “Ulster and international golfer”.

Flying Officer Sheals enlisted in the RAF in late 1940. He served in Singapore and fled to Indonesia after the fall of Singapore in February 1942. He died during the evacuation of Tjilatjap (now Cilacap), Java, Indonesia. His cause of death is unknown. Several events including the ambush of a train, the blowing up of a bridge, and the Japanese massacre of wounded airmen all took place at this time.

The Belfast Telegraph published on 02/01/1946, contains an article where Aircraftman 1st Class Wesley Waugh talks of the evacuation of Singapore. He states that he survived an ambush in which Flying Officer Sheals died. Intimation from the RAF of the Co. Down airman's death came on 01/10/1945.

Hubert Stanley Sheals has no known grave. Singapore Memorial, Column 413, Singapore, Ballygilbert Presbyterian Church WM, Helen's Bay Presbyterian Church, and the Royal Belfast Academical Institution WM. Hubert's brother Francis Eric Sheals (1486508) died on 04/01/1942 while serving in North Africa.

1944



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+IRWIN, Joseph Alexander

RAFVR. Flying Officer. 124167. Died 06/03/1944. Aged 25. 174 Sqdn. M.Sc. Queen's University, Belfast. Son of William Wilson Irwin and Annie Craig Irwin of Coleraine. Coleraine Cemetery. QUB WM

+KELLY, William

Royal Scots Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Fusilier. 3129096. Died 06/03/1944. Aged 33. Born 03/07/1910. William Kelly worked as a farm labourer prior to enlisting in the army on 14/12/1933. He served in Egypt, Palestine and India.

Fusilier Kelly was serving with the 1st Battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers when he was killed in action in Burma. Son of Mary Kelly, Factory Square, Cookstown. Taukkyan War Cemetery, Myanmar

VETERANS

CULLENAN, John

RAMC. Lt. Colonel. QUB MB 1916. Lieutenant RAMC SR 04/06/1914. Served Mesopotamia 1916 - 18. Post war service in India and Aden. Served throughout WW2. Born 12/11/1889 Lurgan. Died 06/03/1947.

McCURDY, James (junior)

Trooper, North Irish Horse. He volunteered for active service in the winter of 1915 (aged about 21 years). He was in hospital for some time in 1917 suffering from severe frostbite. Before the war he was employed as a shoemaker. His parents, Mr. John (shoemaker) and Mrs. Lizzie McCurdy, lived at Coleraine Road, Portstewart. His wife was Annie. James died on 06/03/1942 and was buried in Agherton Cemetery. He is commemorated on Portstewart Presbyterian Church's Roll of Honour and the Roll of Honour of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

WEST, John Weir

RAMC. Major General. CBE. CB. CMG. MiD five times. Colonel Commandant RAMC. John was educated at RBAI (Inst), and received his medical education at the Queen's College, Belfast, qualifying M.B., B.Ch., B.O.A. in 1899.

He joined the Medical Services at the rank of Lieutenant on 29/11/1900, and then saw active service in South Africa from 1901 to 1906, gaining the Queen's South African Medal with 4 clasps. On 29/11/1903 he gained promotion to

Captain, and became a Specialist in Operative Surgery in 1908. In 1910 he completed a diploma in public health (D.P.H.), then served from 1910 to 1914 in India, where he was stationed when war was declared. During this time he gained promotion to the rank of Major on 29/11/1911.

Returning to the UK, John became the Commanding Officer of the 3rd Cavalry Field Ambulance, entering the war in France, with the unit, on 17/08/1914. He served with them until 1916, when he became the Officer in Charge of the Surgical Division of No 13 General Hospital. On 24/02/1916 he was awarded the French Legion of Honour, Croix de Chevalier by the French Republic in recognition of his service in the field. In 1917, he qualified as a master of surgery (M.Ch.). He left the British Expeditionary Force in France and went on to serve in Italy as Commanding Officer for No 11 General Hospital, up until 1918, when he transferred to No 62 General Hospital from 1918 to 1919. During this time, he served under the rank of acting Lieutenant Colonel from 3rd -13th February 1917, and 24th November - 25th December 1917.

The next day, on 26th December, he was granted the full rank of Lieutenant Colonel. John became of Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George on 1st January 1919. Also in 1919 he served as Surgeon Specialist at the Queen Alexander Military Hospital, Millbank and as Assistant Professor of Military Surgery at the Royal Army Medical College - becoming Professor of Military Surgery from 1920 to 1927. On 29th October 1920 he received the Italian Silver Medal della Salute Publica.

From 1922 to 1926 John was a Consultant Surgeon to Army. He gained the rank of Brevet Colonel on 15/04/1922, as well as becoming King's Honorary Surgeon the same day. From 1927 to 1931 he served in Burma as the Assistant Director of Medical Services (ADMS) at Headquarters Burma District. During which time he served under the rank of temporary Colonel from 01/05/1924 to 02/11/1927, gaining the full rank of Colonel on 26/12/1927. On 26/12/1931 he reverted to half pay, but was restored to full pay on 01/03/1932. From 1932 to 1935 he served as Professor of Military Surgery and Consultant Surgeon to the Army. On 25/06/1932 he gained promotion to the rank of Major General, and on 20th December, the same year, received the C.B.E. (Commander Order of the British Empire). On 03/06/1935 he became a Commander of the Order of the Bath. He retired with pay on 27/08/1935, became Colonel Commandant in 1942, then ceased being on the Roll of Officers on 27th August 1942.

In 1937 Queen's University conferred an honorary doctorate on John West. He was born 17/08/1875, the son of the Rev Dr Thomas and Mrs Helen West. Dr West was Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in 1917. John West died 06/03/1949. RCSI RH

**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

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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