



remembrance ni



Prémont British Cemetery (Aisne) contains the graves of 534 Commonwealth casualties of the First World War, eight of which are unidentified. There are also 36 German casualties buried here, two of which are unidentified.

Coleraine Gunner's romance in Brussels

Today is the wedding anniversary of a Coleraine Gunner who married in Brussels on 09/03/1946.

Harry Stockman from Tobermore was a Sergeant in the Coleraine Battery of 9 Heavy Anti Aircraft Regiment, a Supplementary Reserve unit. He was one of two members of the battery who met their wives in Brussels.

9 HAA known popularly as "The Derry Boys" was raised in January 1939. It had its HQ and two Batteries in Londonderry. 6 LAA Battery in Coleraine and 25 Battery in Ballymena.

The Regiment had short term deployments in several locations in the UK however, its service was principally in Egypt, the Western Desert, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany.

Harry first met Annie a few days after the liberation of the capital city. He was stationed at Brussels airport where Annie worked and close to where she lived. Annie who was almost 18 years of age spoke English and she was chosen to speak to the soldiers invited to a street party in her neighbourhood.

Then Harry and Bob McClintock came from the base to recall the soldiers because the Germans had advanced in the Ardennes. Harry was introduced to Annie.

It was four months before they saw each other again. Romance blossomed and despite her father's concern about her future, Annie and Harry married in the Anglican military church in Brussels on 09/03/1946.

Annie found the mid-Ulster dialect difficult to understand and, to the amusement of her neighbours in Tobermore, she often resorted to using a dictionary. She later commented, “I’ve lived here for over 60 years and when some people hear my accent they still ask me if I am over here on holiday.”

Annie found the people of Tobermore to be very kind and she lived there since 1946. She said, “I have been very happy in Tobermore. I never regretted coming to Tobermore. The people here have always been very friendly.”

Harry died in 2000 and Annie lived on in Tobermore surrounded by the many friends and relatives of the Battery veterans from the neighbourhood.

- Adapted from “The Coleraine Battery” by Ronnie Gamble



On this Day – March 9



1914

British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith suggested counties in Ulster could opt out of Home Rule for a temporary period of six years.

Edward Carson rejected it: “We do not want sentence of death, with a stay of execution for six years.”

1918

Russian Bolshevik Party becomes the Communist Party

1936

The German press warns that all Jews who vote in the upcoming elections will be arrested.

1939

Czech President Emil Hacha ousts pro-German Joseph Tiso as the Premier of Slovakia in order to preserve Czech unity.

1940

Italian-Anglo agreement on coal, Britain to release Italian collier ships, Italy to import no more German coal.

1941

The Italians launch another offensive against the Greek 1st Army in Albania, but it makes very little progress.

1942

The RAF returns to bomb Essen once more, but again are unable to inflict much damage due to the constant industrial haze over the city and the lack of landmarks, which made the city notoriously difficult to find.

US General Stilwell becomes Chiang Kai-shek's Chief of Staff.

The Government of the Dutch East Indies reaches Adelaide

in Australia as all resistance on Java ceases and the island surrenders to the Japanese.

1943

North Irish Horse Reports

Tanks remain in defensive positions. 1415 – 5 tanks of C Sqn with two platoons of Para made recce in force under orders of Corps Commander...

27 POW taken and useful info obtained. Heavy mortar fire during whole operation. Days casualties – 5 ORs missing* and 2 tanks knocked out.

Note: *Corrected to a total of 6 missing. Sgt Hewitt and Trooper Currie were killed. Troopers McKerrow and Smith were later found wounded. Troopers Harrison and Johnston were taken prisoner.

North Irish Horse War Diary – 9th March 1943

The battle report covers the events in more detail. An excerpt regarding Sergeant Norman Hewitt is printed below. On 8th March about 1200 hours, one Troop of C Squadron under Lieut. J. E. Williams, with Capt. Sidebottom in support in a close support tank moved up the road Djebel Abiod-Sedjenane to support 1st Parachute Brigade in driving out the enemy who had infiltrated into our positions in the area round Sidi Moh Belkassen...

The number of enemy killed could not be ascertained but they were thrown into considerable confusion and 157 prisoners were taken, including five officers. The co-operation between infantry and tanks was excellent. On 9th March the corps commander ordered a

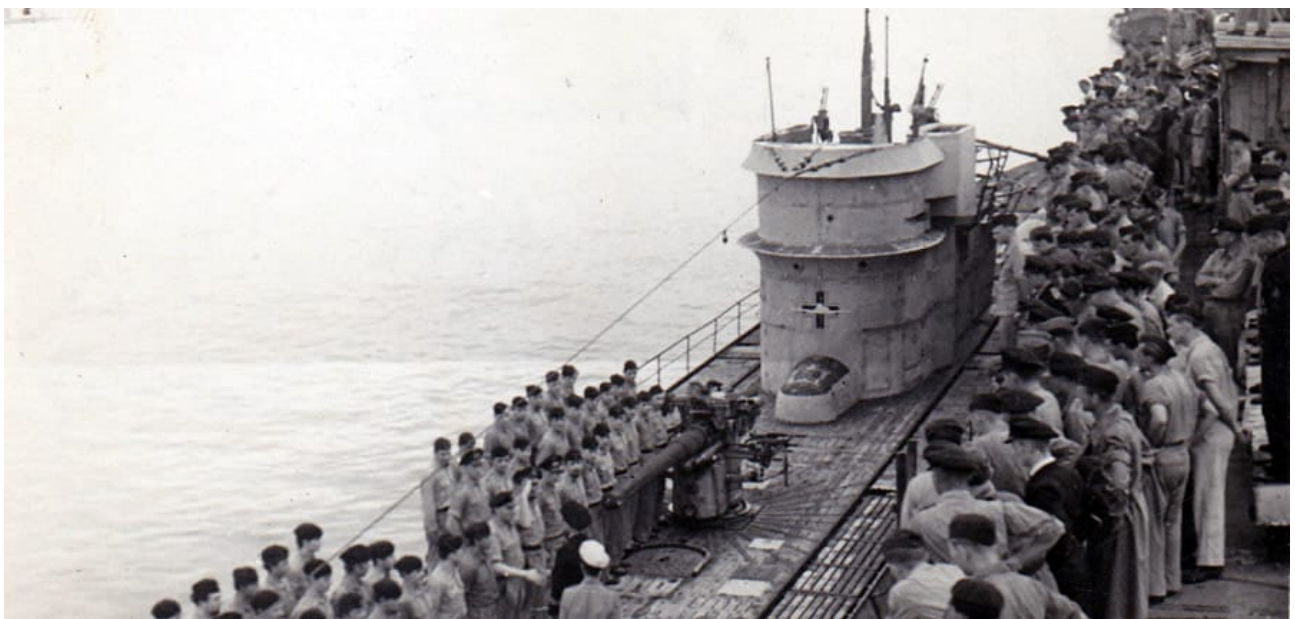
reconnaissance in force and himself detailed the force to consist of two platoons of infantry and six tanks...

The In-reserve tank then withdrew and picked up Lieut.

Williams and crew en route. Approximately 27 prisoners were taken and some useful information was obtained.

Throughout the day the road was under very heavy mortar and artillery fire. Casualties suffered while the Regiment was under fire: Killed: Sgt Hewitt, Tpr Currie. Wounded: Tpr McKerrow, Tpr Smith. Taken prisoner: Tpr Harrison, Tpr J

1943



Von Arnim replaces Field Marshal Rommel as C-in-C of the Axis forces in Tunisia and Rommel is ordered by Hitler to leave Africa, never to return. U-510 torpedoes eight ships in three hours off the coast of Brazil, in what is the most successful single U-boat action of the war.

1945



[A 5.5 inch gun of the 19th Indian Division pounds the walls of Fort Dufferin near Mandalay, Burma. 9-10 March 1945.](#)

The U.S. First Army widens the Remagen bridgehead. The US Third Army captures Andernach on the Rhine. German light naval vessels from the still German-occupied British Channel Islands enter the allied supply port of Granville in Bretagne, sinking five ships.

USAAF B29's begin the firebombing of Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Kobe. 16 and a half acres of Tokyo is burnt out in attacks which continue for 10 days.

Roll of Honour – March 9

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+LAWRENCE, Frederick

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Bn. Private. 5955. Died 09/03/1915 at the Military Hospital, Waterside, Londonderry. Aged 38. Born in Kausili, India. Deceased had quite a remarkable career. He was in the first draft of the Inniskilling Fusiliers who left Ireland at the outbreak of the Boer War, and he came through that campaign unscathed. He had many exciting adventures, but these were entirely surpassed by his experiences during the First World War. He went out with the first batch of his regiment and took part in several engagements. He was invalided home, and a few weeks before his death re-joined his regiment at Ebrington Barracks. He succumbed to a fatal attack of pneumonia. As a ferry boatman he was well known, and amongst the National Volunteers he was very popular, having prominently identified himself with the movement as an instructor. On 11/03/1915, Private Lawrence was interred with military honours in Londonderry City Cemetery. The impressive military funeral attracted considerable attention

in the city as the cortege to the strains of funeral music proceeded to the Cemetery. At the graveside three volleys were fired and the Last Post was sounded. Son of Fred Lawrence, of Ipswich; husband to Margaret Lawrence, of Orchard Lane, Londonderry. They had four children. Londonderry City Cemetery. City of Londonderry WM

+LENNOX, Charles

Cameron Highlanders, 2nd Btn. Private. 8067. Died 09/03/1915. Age 27. Born in Aughrim, Magherafelt about 1888. The family moved to Scotland. At the time of his death, his parents were living in Shettleston, Glasgow. Guards Cemetery, Windy Corner, Quinchy, France

+O'BRIEN, Philip Anderson

Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment. 1st Btn *attached* 2nd Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 09/03/1915. Age 23. Born on 15/08/1891 in India. Son of Alexander and Mary Anderson (nee Smith, aged 16, daughter of James Smith) who were married on 13/09/1886 in Fyzabad, Bengal, India. Alexander Anderson was a Colour Sergeant in the 1st Btn, Leinster Regiment and he and Mary Anderson had two children. Philip Anderson was less than two months old when his father Alexander died on 09/10/1891 (aged 32). On 28/01/1893 Philip's widowed mother, Mary Anderson, married James O'Brien in India. James O'Brien (aged 25, born Killaloe, Co Clare) was serving in India as a Corporal in the Leinster Regiment, Royal Canadians and he and Mary had one son. Philip Anderson retained his paternal surname as his middle name and took O'Brien as his surname – thus Philip Anderson O'Brien. Philip Anderson O'Brien joined the Leinster Regiment in July 1906 and became a Lance Corporal in September 1909. He went to India with the 1st

Battalion in September 1911. He held an acting Schoolmaster's Certificate and was appointed Schoolmaster-Sergeant in December 1913. In October 1914 the Battalion returned to England for war service and in December 1914 he received a commission as Second Lieutenant in the 1st Battalion. He went to France and was attached to the 2nd Battalion. On 31/01/1915 Second Lieutenant Philip Anderson O'Brien was wounded whilst superintending his platoon, erecting breastworks near Armentieres. Philip Anderson O'Brien's death was recorded in the April 1915 Parish Magazine for Bangor C of I Parish Church (St Comgall's) and sympathy was extended to his family. Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

+STEWART, William

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. Private. 19978. Died 09/03/1915. Born at Rossmore near Lissan, Cookstown. William enlisted in Cookstown, joining the 9th Btn RInF. While in training with the battalion at Randalstown in January 1915, his health began to deteriorate Lissan C of I Churchyard, County Londonderry, Cookstown WM

1916

+CABREY, WJ

Royal Irish Rifles, 10th Btn. Rifleman. 17435. Died 09/03/1916. Age 45. Husband to Catherine A. Cabrey, of 5, Pitt St., Belfast. Douellens Communal Cemetery Extension, France

+McIVOR, Allan

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 10732. Died 09/03/1916. Age 24. Son of J. J. McIvor and Lavinia McIvor,



Prémont British Cemetery (Aisne)

of Ballynagown, Desertmartin, Belfast. Warloy-Baillon
Communal Cemetery, France

+McMURRAY, F W

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 7th Btn. Sergeant. 16511. Died
09/03/1916. Fourth son of Mr. W. J. McMurray, of Carnacaw,
Raholp, Downpatrick. Philosophe British Cemetery,
Mazingarbe, Pas de Calais, France

1917

+FARLEY, Andrew

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Rifleman. 8785. Died 09/03/1917.
Born Shankill, Belfast. Enlisted Belfast. Bray Military
Cemetery, France

+McMURRIN, James

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 9th Btn. Private. 17547. Died
09/03/1917. Age 21 years old. Enlisted in Aughnacloy. Son
of John and Matilda McMurrin, of Tonynumery, Emyvale, Co.
Monaghan. Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, France

+TAYLOR, Samuel

Royal Irish Rifles, D Coy. 12th Btn. Lance Corporal.
12/1783. Died 09/03/1917. Age 21. Native of Bushmills.
Samuel's brother Alexander was killed in action on the 3rd
October 1916 while serving with the 12th Battalion Royal
Irish Rifles. He is buried with honour in La Plus Douve Farm
Cemetery, Belgium. Samuel is remembered at St Quentin
Canaret Military Cemetery, Belgium

Ballymoney Free Press and Northern Counties Advertiser –
29th March 1917
Local soldier killed in action

“There is deep sympathy in Bushmills and Castlecatt
districts with the members of the Taylor family in the loss of
another gallant son and brother, Lance Corporal Samuel
Taylor, Royal Irish Rifles (Central Antrim Volunteers), news of
whose death in action in France reached home on Sunday
last. A brother was killed in France some time ago. Both of
these lads prior to enlisting were members of the Bushmills
Company of the Ulster Volunteer Force. Two manly lads
whom everyone knew them liked and esteemed, they have

made the great sacrifice and the sympathy of the entire community goes out to the sorrowing relatives in their double loss.

In a letter to Mrs Taylor Captain Donald Beak, 12th Royal Irish Rifles (Central Antrim Volunteers) states : - "Dear Madam -It is with very deep regret that I have to inform you of the death of your son , No 1783 Lance -Corporal Samuel Taylor. He was killed in the front line on the 9th inst, at 04-30 a.m. during a bombardment.

He was very seriously wounded in the leg, hand, and heart and died at the first-aid post about an hour after he was hit.

I and my officers and men feel his death very much as he was a very good soldier in every way, most willing and cheery and ready to do his duty at any time. I understand his brother was killed in October last.

He was buried quite a short distance from him and there will be a cross over each grave. May the Great Consoler give you strength and courage to bear up under this great loss of a son who manfully died at his post in defence of his country and those he loved".

1918

+DEVENNIE, James

Royal Scots, 13th Btn. Lance Corporal.13254. Died 09/03/1918 in hospital Edinburgh. He was wounded on three occasions. Son of James Devennie & Mary Ann McCloy, Killykergan. Garvagh

1919

+ALEXANDER, W

Royal Army Medical Corps. Lieutenant Colonel. Died 09/03/1919. Age 74. Queen's College Belfast medicine. He was attached to the 1st Western General Hospital, Liverpool overseeing the treatment of wounded soldiers. He was resident medical officer at the Liverpool Workhouse Hospital and later worked as a surgeon in the Royal Southern Hospital, Liverpool. He is perhaps best known for his work on epilepsy, and founding a home for epileptics in Maghull, England. Son of the late James and E. F. Alexander, of Holestone, Doagh; husband to the late Alice Alexander. St Peter's Churchyard, Heswall, Cheshire

+CORBETT, J

Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment), 19th Btn. Private. 81345. Died 09/03/1919. Age 19. Son of John Corbett, of 27, Cuba St., Newtownards Rd., Belfast. Knock Cemetery, Belfast

1942

+TRAYNOR, James

Royal Artillery. 76th Light Anti Aircraft Regiment, 226 Bty. Gunner. Died 09/03/1942. Aged 46. Born in Belfast. Son of Patrick and Sarah Traynor; Husband to Elizabeth Traynor of Belfast. Belfast City Cemetery, Glenalina Extension



Prémont British Cemetery (Aisne)

1943

+CURRIE, Robert James

Royal Armoured Corps. North Irish Horse. Trooper.7903319. Died 09/03/1943. Aged 26. Son of Samuel Currie and Jane Currie of Monkstown, Co. Antrim, and the husband of Sarah Currie of Monkstown, Co. Antrim. Tabarka Ras Rajel Cemetery, Tunisia.

+GOODCHILD, David John

RAFVR. Sergeant (Pilot). 1795195. Died 09/03/1943. Aged

19. Applied Science and Technology, QUB 1940 - 1941. Son of Thurlow and Mary Goodchild, of Bangor, Co. Down. Streatham Park Cemetery, Surrey. QUB WM

+HEWITT, Norman

Royal Armoured Corps. North Irish Horse, C Squadron. Sergeant. 7897725. Died 09/03/1943, in action in Sedjenane, Tunisia. Tabarka Ras Rajel Cemetery, Tunisia. Royal Courts of Justice, Belfast, WM. QUB WM. RBAI WM

+HUTCHINSON, Henry

Royal Armoured Corps. North Irish Horse. 7902402. Died 09/03/1943. Aged 26. Before the outbreak of WW2, Henry worked in the linen industry with Ulster Waving Co. in Belfast. Son of the late Henry Hutchison and Rachel Hutchison of 139 Broadway, Belfast. Tabarka Ras Rajel Cemetery, Tunisia.

+LANGLANDS, John Porter

RAFVR. Sergeant (Navigator). 947052. Died 09/03/1943. Aged 24. Son of John Baxter Langlands and Winifred Langlands, of Dungannon. Drumcoo Cemetery, Co. Tyrone. 502 (Ulster) Squadron WM, St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast. Dungannon WM

+McCULLOUGH, Henry

RAF. Sergeant. 645957. Died 09/03/1943. Age 27. 61 Sqd. Son of Henry and Mary McCullough, of Belfast. Durnbach War Cemetery, Germany

1944 HMS ASPHODEL

+BORTHWICK, Alexander Heaford

RN. Able Seaman. C/JX 204240. HMS Asphodel. Died 09/03/1944. Age 23. Son of Hiram and Sarah Isobel Borthwick, Shelley Rd., Prestwick, nr Manchester. Husband to Phyllis Maud Borthwick, Foyle Rd., Londonderry. (Derry Standard 27/03/1944, Belfast Weekly Telegraph 31/03/1944). Chatham Naval Memorial, Panel 75

+BRADLEY, David

RN. Stoker First Class. D/SKX 309. Died 09/03/1944. Age 22. HMS Asphodel. Son of David and Martha Bradley, Ballyarnett, Londonderry. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 07/04/1944) Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 89.

1945

+BAXTER, James Alex

RN. Leading Seaman. C/JX 251329. Died 09/03/1945. Aged 56. HMS Racer. Husband to Mary Baxter, Larne. Larne Cemetery

+McCORMICK, William Myles Colbert

RAF. Corporal. 537072. Died 09/04/1945. Aged 27. Son of William and Julia McCormick of Belfast; Husband to Stella Valletta McCormick. of Belfast. Aughlisnafin (Imaculate Conception) Roman Catholic Churchyard

VETERAN

MOLYNEAUX, James

RAF. Corporal. James Henry Molyneaux was born on August 27, 1920 at Killead, Co Antrim, the only son of William Molyneaux, a poultry farmer, and his wife Sarah (née Gilmore). He was educated at Aldergrove School where remarkably he was the only Protestant pupil. He died, aged 94, on March 9, 2015.

Serving in the RAF from 1941 to 1946, Molyneaux became a member of a nine-man specialist group of commandos. They landed on D-Day to reconnoitre for airfield sites on the beachhead, and had Spitfires landing within three days.

In April 1945, his unit assisted in the liberation of Belsen concentration camp, an experience that caused him to suffer nightmares for years.

Corporal Jim Molyneaux was 24 years old. What he was to see there was to leave an indelible mark on his life.

Fifty-six years later, in 2001, Lord Molyneaux returned to Belsen with a BBC NI Spotlight team to reflect on man's inhumanity to man.

He recalled the horror of the first glimpse of the camp perimeter.

"On that fence were skeletons of men and women, who in sheer desperation had deliberately put their claw-like fingers on that electric fencing and electrocuted themselves and of

course no-one bothered to take them off it," said Lord Molyneaux.

"Every step you took revealed further horrors. It was the sort of stuff of which nightmares were made."

Seventeen thousand bodies lay scattered and in great heaps inside the camp.

The dead and the living were mingled in the prison huts where indescribable conditions prevailed.

Disease was rife. Typhus had taken hold and would claim 13,000 more lives, even after liberation.

Even the normal human impulse to reach out to the prisoners had to be stifled.

Lord Molyneaux remembered a briefing from the chief medical officer after their arrival.

"He told us: 'I am warning you not to give them anything to eat, chocolate, sweets, anything because they have deteriorated to such an extent that food of any sort will just kill them stone dead.'"

Cruelty still continued by the German SS guards who had chosen not to flee the camp. They were still forcing the living to bury their own dead.

"A German soldier was ill-treating two of these prisoners and I have to admit that I broke the Geneva Convention and laid on him with the one stick I could get hold of."

Above all others one episode stood out for the young Molyneaux. One morning he came across a Mass being held by some Polish Catholics at a makeshift altar. "The young priest was standing in a very peculiar attitude and when I came closer to look lying between his feet was the body of another priest who had presumably dropped dead and nobody had the energy to move him.

"It was extremely moving to me as a Protestant and I think I meditated on it for quite a long time afterwards."

He never forgot his war-time experiences and said that they stood him in good stead for public life. When Sir Knox Cunningham stood down as MP for South Antrim in 1970, Molyneaux was prevailed upon to succeed him. In the General Election he secured a majority just shy of 40,000. In 1974, he became leader of the Unionist MPs at Westminster and in 1979 succeeded Harry West as party leader.

His leadership of the Ulster Unionist Party, from 1979 until 1995, spanned some of the worst violence and political turmoil of the Troubles. In 1983 he became the MP for the newly-created Lagan Valley seat, which he represented until he stepped down at the General Election of 1997. He was also appointed a Privy Counsellor in 1983, probably the political distinction he valued most. Knighted in 1996, he was awarded a life peerage the following year.

Between 1971 and 1998 James Henry Molyneaux was Sovereign Grand Master of the Royal Black Institution.

He was a committed member and choir member of St Catherine's, Killead which during the second world war and in to the 1970's was within the confines of RAF Aldergrove

He died, aged 94, on March 9, 2015.

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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