



remembrance ni



Five crew members from NI lost in HMS Bittern

On 04/04/1918 the destroyer HMS Bittern was rammed in thick fog by merchantman SS Kenilworth off the Isle of Portland and sank with all hands. The Master of the

Kenilworth was judged to be at fault in the subsequent inquiry.

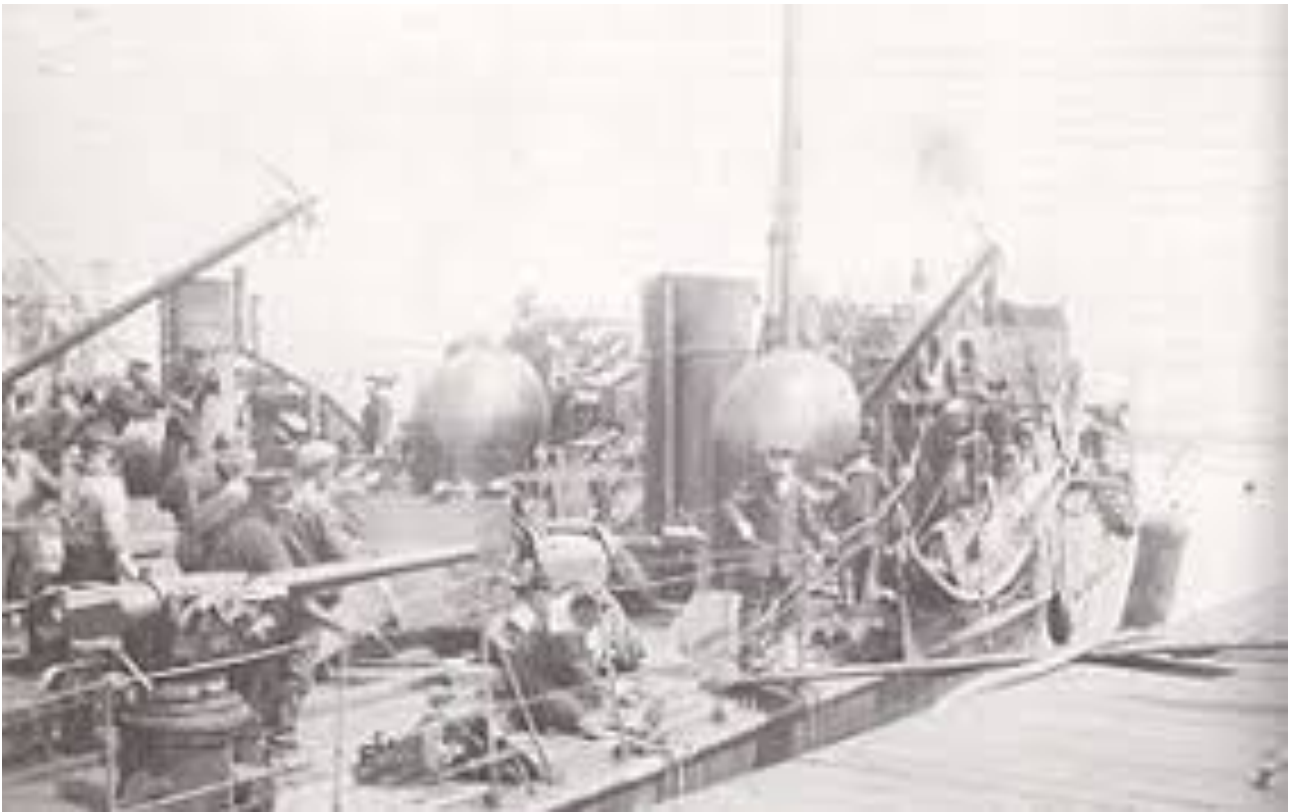
HMS *Bittern* was a Vickers three funnel, 30 knot destroyer, ordered by the Royal Navy under the 1895 – 1896 Naval Estimates. She was the fourth ship to carry this name since it was introduced in 1796 for an 18-gun sloop.

After commissioning she was assigned to the Chatham Division of the Harwich Flotilla. She was deployed in Home Waters for her entire service life.

On 30 August 1912 the Admiralty directed all destroyer classes were to be designated by alpha characters starting with the letter 'A'. Since her design speed was 30 Knots 30 (56 km/h; 35 mph) and she had three funnels, she was assigned to the C class. After 30 September 1913, she was known as a C-class destroyer and had the letter 'C' painted on the hull below the bridge area and on either the fore or aft funnel.

In August 1914 she was in active commission in the Devonport Local Flotilla tendered to HMS Vivid, Royal Navy Barracks. She remained in this deployment until her loss.

On 4 April 1918, *Bittern* was involved in a collision with SS *Kenilworth* off the Isle of Portland in thick fog. The destroyer was overwhelmed and sank quickly with the loss of all hands. A Court of Inquiry found negligence on the part of the master of SS *Kenilworth*. His instructions had been to hug the coast as closely as possible from Portland Bill to Start Point. Instead he headed straight across, showing no lights nor sounding for fog. At 0315 *Kenilworth* saw a red light and a ship 'small and low down' at the moment of impact.



HMS Bittern

The various parties involved in the saving of *Clan Sutherland* put in their claims for rewards under salvage rules. Following a Court of the Admiralty case concluded on 31 July 1918, the judge awarded 6,000 pounds to the Admiralty, which had coordinated the operation.

The crew of *Boarhound* were awarded £500 to be divided between them. The crews of *Lois* and *Woonda* were awarded £360. The crew of *Fortitude* were awarded £300. Lieutenant Irving of *Bittern* was awarded £300.

Captain Edwards of *Lois* was awarded £200. The crew of *Bittern* were awarded £900 to be divided between her then 72-man complement (£12 10shillings each).

On this Day – April 4

4th April 1915 Northern Whig - Ulster Division Rank and File Fatality

An impressive military funeral took place in Belfast on Saturday, when the remains were conveyed to their last resting place of Private Robert B. Bustard, who was in No.1 Company of the 15th Royal Irish Rifles stationed at present at Ballykinlar. The deceased, before joining Lord Kitchener's army, had been a popular member of the North Belfast Regiment, Ulster Volunteer Force. Service honours were accorded, and there was an imposing procession through the city, the cortege being largely constituted of comrades of the late Private Bustard, whose remains reposed upon a gun carriage, the coffin being enshrouded with the Union Jack, and covered with wreaths. Numerous friends of the deceased in private life attended the funeral, and also a number of brethren of Foster Memorial Loyal Orange Lodge No. 499 (David Lynn Wor. Master and George Moore, Secretary), of which Private Bustard had been a member. The internment took place at Carnmoney, the officiating clergymen being the Rev. F.W. Warren, B.A.

Rifleman Robert Beadnell Bustard, 11891, 15th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, died of cerebral spinal fever in the Purdysburn Fever Hospital, Belfast. Son of William and Martha Bustard nee Beadnell, of 16 Baden Powell Street, Belfast ; Nephew of Thomas Beadnell, of 15 Buler Street, Belfast. Deceased was 21 years of age and is buried in Carnmoney Cemetery, Count Antrim.

1918

Destroyer HMS Bittern was rammed in thick fog by merchantman SS Kenilworth off the Isle of Portland and sank with all hands. The Master of the Kenilworth was judged to be at fault in the subsequent inquiry.

1940

In France, spreading Communist or antiwar propaganda is declared a capital offense.

1941

Field Marshal Erwin Rommel captures the British held town of Benghazi in North Africa.

Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia, is abandoned by Italians.

1943

Newly built gas chamber/crematory V opens at Auschwitz.

1944

Charles de Gaulle becomes the head of Free French armed forces in place of Giraud. Army Group Centre, under General Busch launches a counterattack which succeeds in reaching German units surrounded at Kovel in the Pripet swamps since the 19th March.

The 17th Indian Division reaches the Imphal plain after a 20-day fighting retreat. Japanese forces begin five weeks of attacks to reach Imphal from the South and begin their attack on Kohima, Assam.



A British Vickers machine gun crew, Italy, 1944

1945

The US Third Army advancing toward Leipzig takes Suhl and Gotha and finally clears Kassel of German resistance. The British Second Army captures Osnabruck. The French First Army enters Karlsruhe.

The First Belorussian Front breaks through at Stargard and drives towards Stettin and also establishes a new bridgehead across the Oder to the South of Frankfurt.

The US 8th Air Force launches its heaviest raid to date (700 bombers) against Kiel on the Baltic.

US Third Army liberates Ohrdruf concentration camp, the first liberated by US troops.

April 4

The Russian 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian front complete the liberation of Hungary. Troops of the 2nd Ukrainian front capture Bratislava. The German forces counterattack in Moravska-Ostrava and Nitra.



Roll of Honour – April 4

*Representing their comrades who died on
this day*

1915

+AGNEW, Myles

Connaught Rangers, Depot. Private. 4863. Died
04/04/1915. Bohermore New Cemetery, Galway. Larne WM

+McMICHAEL, Patrick

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 10122. Died 04/04/1915. Age 39. Died with 5 other men. Born in Ballyclare or in Ballytaggart near Ballymoney. Nephew of Mrs Rose McNeill, Ballycastle, uncle to John and Mary McGill, Ballycastle. Sent donation to the Parish Priest "for the purpose of saying masses for myself". Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium. Ballyclare WM

+SNOWDEN, William

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. H Coy. Corporal. 8727. "H" Coy. 1st Btn. Died 04/04/1915. Age 26. Born at Belfast. Son of Thomas and Margaret Snowden. Dundonald Cemetery, Belfast

1916

+ANDERSON, Private Thomas

1 Royal Scots Fusiliers. Private. 19554. Died 03/04/1916. Born in Drumbo, he lived in Carryduff, Co. Down, enlisted at Mauchline, Ayrshire. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium, Panels 19 and 33.

+BELL, Arthur

RIR ..9th Btn. A Company. Rifleman. 11/6455. Died 04/04/1916. Aged 19. Somme. Born in Killead (beside Aldergrove airport). Son of Daniel and Mary Jane Bell of the Diamond, Crumlin, Co. Antrim. A member of the Orange Order in Glenavy, he enlisted at Clandeboye, Co. Down. Forceville Communal Cemetery, France

+BURNEY, Hugh Waterworth

Canadian Infantry, 31st Btn. Private. 80009. Died 04/04/1916. Born Ballywonard 21/11/1888. Enlisted Edmonton, Alberta 12/12/1914. Son of Paul and Margaret (nee Auld) Burney, Rockmount, Whitewell, Belfast. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium. Carnmoney Presbyterian Church RH

+JOHNSON, David

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 7th Btn. Private. 23871. Died 04/04/1916. Born Whitewell, Co. Antrim. Enlisted Belfast. Son of Thomas Johnson. Philosophe British Cemetery, Mazingarbe, France

+KIRK, William

Canadian Infantry, 27th Btn. (Manitoba Regiment). Private. 71816. Died 04/04/1916. Born Ballynure 02/09/1879. William worked pre-war as a carpenter. He was a member of LOL 1913, Winnipeg. Enlisted Winnipeg, Manitoba, 24/10/1914. Son of Samuel Kirk, 370 Manitoba Ave, Winnipeg. William's mother Eliza had died prior to his father moving to Canada. It seems probably he later moved back to Ballyhamage, Doagh. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium. Ballyclare WM. Kilbride Presbyterian Church RH

+McBRIDE, Thomas

Royal Irish Rifles. 11th Btn. Rifleman. 19633. Died 04/04/1916. Aged 25. Born Kilnock, Drummaul. Thomas enlisted in Antrim in September 1914. Eldest son of John and Ellen McBride. He was born in Randalstown, on 15/07/1889. He left all his possessions to his nine year old

sister Maggie. The family lived in Muckrim, Toomebridge. St Sever Cemetery, Rouen, Seine- Maritime, France. Grange Presbyterian Church RH

+NIXON, William Henry

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 7th Btn. Lance Corporal. 19822. Died 06/04/1916. Age 26. Born at Downpatrick. Son of Robert and Elizabeth Nixon, of 251, Woodstock Rd., Belfast. St Patrick's Cemetery, Loos, France

1917

+HAMILTON, William

Royal Field Artillery, 61st Bty. Corporal. 90547. Died 04/04/1917. Born Glengormley. Enlisted Belfast. Brother of Mrs Martha Jane Eaton, 27 Ligoniel Rd., Belfast. Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery, Iraq

+McFADDEN, S

Canadian Infantry, 1st Btn. Private. 772240. Died 04/04/1917. Age 25. Son of William and Nancy McFadder, of Larne. Ecoivres Military Cemetery, Mont-St-Eloi, France. Larne WM

1918 HMS BITTERN

+BELL, Joseph

RNR. Stoker. 7603TS. HMS Bittern. Died 4/4/1918. Aged 19. (Served as Joseph Green.). Son of William Bell, Shaftesbury St., Belfast. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 31. IMR

+CANNING, James

RNR. Trimmer. 7611TS. HMS Bittern. Died 04/04/1918. Aged 28. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Canning, Belfast; husband to E. Canning, Stanhope St., Belfast. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 31

+CULLEN, Daniel

RNR. Trimmer. 7508TS. HMS Bittern. Died 04/04/1918. Age 20. Son of the late Daniel and Sarah Cullen, of Belfast; brother of Margaret O'Neill, Henrietta St., Belfast. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 31

+GRAHAM, William

Royal Irish Rifles. 19th Btn. Rifleman. 17/1004. Died 04/04/1918. Age 32. Husband to Eliza Graham, of Belfast. Carnmoney Cemetery

+MAGINNIS, James Abraham

RN. AB. 223915. HMS Bittern. Died 04/04/1918. Age 33. Drowned through collision in English Channel. Enrolled 01/11/1903 for 12 years. Born Lurgan 01/11/1885. Son of Jane Maginnis, Lismachan Cottages, Belmont, Strandtown, Belfast, and the late John Maginnis. Plymouth Naval Memorial. ADM 188/394/223915

+McCLEAN, Albert

RN. SS/112148. HMS Bittern. Died 04/04/1918. Age 25. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert McLean, of 55, Coolfin St., Belfast. Coolfin St., Belfast. Plymouth Naval Memorial.

1918

+AGNEW, Jack

Royal Field Artillery, 285th Brigade. A Battery. Gunner. 238859. Died 04/04/1918 during the German Spring Offensive. Born in Bangor and enlisted in Belfast. His mother's name was Elizabeth. Ploegsteert Memorial, Belgium.

+BOND, J

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 9461. Died 04/04/1918. Husband to Mrs. A. Bond, of 9, Conlig St., Belfast. Maubeuge-Centre Cemetery, France



Commander Joint Task Force 661, Air Commodore Richard Owen, AM, salutes after laying a wreath at a memorial service held at the Trincomalee Commonwealth War Cemetery in Sri Lanka, during Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2019

+CRAWFORD, Hugh

Machine Gun Corps, No.1 Squadron. Lance Corporal. MM. Died 04/04/1918. According to his sister, Mary Crawford, Hugh found "sitting on an office stool...training to be a solicitor's clerk far too frustrating". He left Ballybrakes and enlisted in Scotland. His parents received his Military Medal in September 1918, Why he was decorated has never been discovered by his family. However, in a letter to his parents his Commander said of Hugh 'he died a gallant soldier and men of his character can ill be spared'. Ballymoney WM

+GRAHAM, William

Royal Irish Rifles, 19th Btn. Rifleman. 17/1004. Died 04/04/1918. Age 32. Husband of Eliza Graham, of Belfast. Carnmoney Cemetery. UK Book of Remembrance

+HAMILTON, Charles

Irish Guards. 2nd Btn. Private. 11393. Died 04/04/1918. Born and living in Lisburn, he enlisted at Hamilton, Lanark and served in 2 IG (11393). Etaples Military Cemetery, France

+McCURRIE, Robert

Army Service Corps, 58th Div. M.T. Coy. Private. DM2/164694. Died 04/04/1918. Husband to Mrs M. A. McCurrie, of 70 Montreal St. Belfast. Noyon New British Cemetery, France

+VERCOE, James

RN. Stoker First Class. 302700. HMS. Bellona. Jutland. Died 04/04/1918, drowned on duty. Enrolled 12/01/1903 for 12 years. War service in Bellona (13/08/1912 - 29/10/1917)

Vivid and Bittern. Born Belfast 24/12/1884. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 28. ADM 188/492/302700

1919

+McLEAN, Robert John

Canadian Infantry, 24th Btn. (The Québec Regiment)
Lieutenant. Died 04/04/1919. Aged 44. Robert John McClean was the son of John and Jane McLean. Robert was born about 1877. His father was Clerk of Petty Sessions, living in Draperstown. At some point Robert emigrated to Canada. Robert was active in the 29th Light Horse and was an insurance broker living in Regina which is the capital city of the Canadian province of Saskatchewan. Robert McLean enlisted at Regina late in 1916. Lieutenant McClean was serving with the 24th Battalion of the Canadian Infantry when he was involved in an accident on 02/04/1919 that resulted in a compound fracture of his leg. Despite the amputation of his leg, he died two days later of his injuries on 4th April 1919. Valenciennes (St Roch) Communal Cemetery, Valenciennes, Nord 4, France.
Tobermore WM, Draperstown PCI RH

1940

+McGREEVY, Hugh

RN. AB. D/JX 146756. HMS Arteus. Died 04/04/1940. Son of Mrs. E. McGreevy, Belfast. Interred Milford Haven Cemetery. Family memorial, Milltown Cemetery, Belfast.
QG26B

+MILLAR, Robert Lawrence

RAF. Aircraftman 1st Class. 569861. Died 09/04/1940. 210 Sqn. Son of John and Anne Mary Millar, of Limavady. Selling Churchyard, Norway

1941

+GAULT, William Francis Ernest

RAFVR. Sergeant. 950326. Died 04/04/1941. Aged 20. He was a pilot in RAF 245 (North Rhodesian) Squadron. During the evacuation of Dunkirk, RAF 245 Squadron operated a detachment from RAF Hawkinge, Kent. The rest of the squadron was at RAF Drem, East Lothian. After Dunkirk, in July 1940, the entire squadron moved to RAF Aldergrove, Co. Antrim on defensive duties during the Battle of Britain. While based at Aldergrove he was the pilot of Hawker Hurricane V7678 that crashed near Carrickfergus on 04/04/1941. Son of John Ernest and Isabella Gault of Bangor. Bangor Cemetery. 502 (Ulster) Squadron WM, St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast

+McMENEMY, James Alexander

Royal Engineers, 4 Field Sqn. Driver. 1907684. Died 04/04/1941. Age 23. Son of James A. and Charlotte McMenemy, of Caledon. Alamein Memorial, Egypt

+ROWAN, James

RAF. Corporal. 522932. Died 04/04/1941. Aged 28. 39 Sqn. Jim served as a Wireless Operator with 39 Squadron and he was killed near Heliopolis in Egypt as the result of an aircraft accident. He was being transferred from Egypt to Aden, but the plane failed to take off and burst into flames

on the runway. James Harvey (Jim) Rowan was born on 11 September 1912 in Castlewellan and he was the elder son of William George and Elizabeth Rowan (nee Harvey) of 28 Broadway, Bangor. They were married on 11/03/1912 in Trinity Presbyterian Church, Bangor. They had three children: James, William. And Sarah (Sally). During the First World War their father, Lance Corporal William George Rowan (44457) served with the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, First Btn. and he was killed in action on 20/10/1918 – some two months before his daughter Sally was born.

Jim Rowan was six years old when his father died. He joined Bangor Grammar School in 1929 in fifth form, when he was almost 17 years of age. He studied for the King's Scholarship examination which he passed in 1931. In school he was 'popular with both pupils and masters' and the Headmaster also said that he was 'something of a bohemian with a vein of whimsical originality peculiar to himself.' He was 'a skilled exponent of association football' and he played rugby for the school.

Jim Rowan was confirmed in Bangor Parish Church of Ireland Church (St. Comgall's) in 1929 and he and Sarah Francis were married in Bangor Abbey on 18/04/1938. They had one child, a son named Hugh Harvey Rowan, who was born on 23/08/1939 and who attended Bangor Grammar School from 1950 until 1957. Prior to the outbreak of war Jim Rowan worked as an insurance agent. Husband to Sarah Rowan, of Bangor. Cairo War Cemetery, Egypt. Cairo War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt. Bangor and District WM. Bangor C of I Parish Church (St. Comgall's). Bangor Grammar School

1943

+BURGESS, John

RAFVR. Flying Officer. 128714. Died 04/04/1943. Aged 21.158 Sqdn. Before the outbreak of war, he worked as an engineer at the Harland and Wolff Shipyard . By 1943, he had 3 years service in the Royal Air Force and joined RAF 158 Squadron on 14/03/1943 from No. 1658 Heavy Conversion Unit. He died when Handley-Page Halifax HR754 NP-K crashed near Goxhill, Hornsea. The crew was bound for a bombing raid on the German city of Essen. They took off from RAF Lissett, Yorkshire at 1940hrs on 03/04/1943. The Halifax bomber came down on the return leg of the journey between Stud Farm and Wassand Hall on the south of Hornsea Mere at 0048hrs on 04/04/1943. Of a total of 7 crew members on board, 4 died in the incident. Son of John and Elizabeth Burgess of 3 Cambrai Street, Belfast. Family memorial, Carnmoney Cemetery

+JONES, Kenneth Douglas

Royal Artillery. 92 Field Regt. Gunner. 987599. Died 04/04/1943. Aged 24. Son of William and Emily Jones; husband to Dora Jones, of Sion Mills, Co. Tyrone. Suez War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt

+NEILL, Victor Stephenson

RAFVR. Flying Officer. 127166. Died 04/05/1943. Aged 24. 611 Sqdn. Son of Samuel James Neill and Sarah Jane Neill, of Belfast. Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. 502 (Ulster) Squadron WM, St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast

1944

+BELL, Henry

Royal Artillery. 9th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regt. Gunner. 1463074. Died 04/04/1944. Age 29. The 9th became known as "The Derry Boys". They fought alongside the Desert Rats in North Africa before taking part in the Italian invasion. They landed at Salerno in September 1943 on D-Day + 6. While in Italy, they received praise for the accuracy and effectiveness of their shooting. Husband to Martha Bell of Harryville. Son of William McNiece Bell and Hannah Grace Louisa Bell. Ballymena Cemetery, Cushendall Road.

1945

+GRISSAM, David

Royal Ulster Rifles. 1st (Airborne) Btn. Rifleman. 14449287. Died 04/04/1945 of wounds. Aged 21. From Ardreagh, Aghadowey, County Londonderry. Buried in Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany

+McMILLEN, Malcolm

Royal Ulster Rifles. 1st (Airborne) Btn. Rifleman. 3196800. Died 04/04/1945. Age 34. Born in Belfast. Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany

VETERANS

McFADDEN, John Thomas Brooks

RNVR. Lieutenant. Served on Atlantic Convoys and in the Pacific. Following demobilisation, he continued his service with the RNVR being promoted to Lieutenant on 02/08/1956 with seniority back-dated to 25/11/1951. He was known as Brooks. Born at Armagh on 03/04/1920 to Henry

John McFadden, Grocer and Elizabeth Maria McFadden nee Brooks. They had married on 03/09/1919 at Armagh Presbyterian Church. Brooks joined the Belfast Banking Company on 06/09/1939 and is recorded as working in Ballyclare branch. He is recorded as being a member of the Belfast Banking Company Sports Club in March 1947 paying 5 shillings subscription. Promotions followed with Lisburn (1952), Inspector (1956), Bradbury Place (1962 - Manager), Assistant General Manager (1967), Advance Controller (1970).

ORR, Samuel

Samuel Orr (1894-1958) was born in Londonderry, Ireland in 1894, the son of Andrew and Catherine Orr. He was one of 15 children, only 5 of whom appear to have survived past the age of 12. His two sisters Margaret and Agnes and a brother Andrew lived to adulthood. The family were in the bakery business and relatively successful. It is believed that Sammy, after leaving school, became a rivetter in the Londonderry shipyard prior to the outbreak of the Great War, and possibly for a period of time afterwards.

During the First World War, Sammy joined the Highland Light Infantry and was awarded the Military Medal while attaining the rank of Sergeant, No A/7937. Following the war he joined the Ulster "A" Special Constabulary, during which time he would be awarded the Empire Gallantry Medal. He married Matilda, known as "Tilly". The couple had no children, and she pre-deceased him.

In 1922, in Belfast, Sammy Orr effected the capture of an armed criminal, though he was unarmed himself. He was also involved in the capture of two armed robbers, one of

whom he grappled with and arrested. In this action, he was severely wounded by the second robber. He suffered the loss of the use of his right arm in the action and was invalided out of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. On 30/05/1924, in the King's Birthday Honours, Sammy and Constable Francis Mortshed were both awarded the Empire Gallantry Medal for their actions.

Sammy then decided to join the Harbour Police (possibly in 1928) and eventually rose to the rank of Sergeant. While serving in the Harbour Police he was awarded the Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal in 1952. There is a family legend (not confirmed) that whilst in the Harbour Police he attempted to save the lives of some Merchant Seamen during the little known "Belfast Blitz" during World War II. Sammy appears to have been an immensely brave, but very modest man. He was a prominent member of the Masonic Order and was a Past Master of St Columba's Masonic Lodge No 640 and a Past King of St Columba's Royal Arch Chapter No 640.

In September 1940, like all his fellow living recipients of the Empire Gallantry Medal, his medal was exchanged for the newly created George Cross. He was invested with the George Cross at Buckingham Palace on the 25/11/1941 (at the time he was residing at Albert Place, Fountain, Londonderry). Sammy died on 4th April 1958 in Eglinton, and was buried in an unmarked grave in Faughanvale Burial Ground, which is 5 miles NE of Londonderry. Samuel's medals including the GC, MM, 1914 Star, British War Medal 1914-20, Victory Medal 1914-19, 1953 Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal and Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal were originally set to be kept within the

family, but they appeared at auction in May 2016. The medals went unsold and their present location is unknown.

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**

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Remembrance Ni, April 4

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 houston.mckelvey@btinternet.com

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