



remembrance ni



Churchill tank bearing the Hitler Line award. A permanent memorial at Carrickfergus presented by The North Irish Horse

The WW1 memories of Francis Joseph McMahon of the North Irish Horse

Tip - Do not miss the section on page 6 about the Solicitor from Shanghai...

Francis Joseph McMahon died on this day in 1971 in Canberra, Australia.



He was born on 2 August 1894 at Clough, County Down, the fourth of eight children of Royal Irish Constabulary sergeant Philip McMahon and his wife Catherine (nee Sharpe). Educated at the Newry Christian Brothers School, by 1911 he was living with his family at 8 King Street, Newry, and working as a grocer's apprentice.

McMahon enlisted in the North Irish Horse on 13 October 1914 (No.1308) with his pal Jack McGuigan. After training at Antrim, on 17 November 1915 he embarked for France with F Squadron, which was then serving as divisional cavalry to

the 33rd Division. Many years later he wrote a memoir describing his experiences:

It was nearly the middle of August 1914. I was on holidays at my uncle's farm. News didn't travel too fast in those days and it was only now people had heard of the war being declared between England and Germany.

It was a real break to holiday here, there was trout fishing, hunting, shooting and the sea was only ½ mile away. And best of all my uncle bred a good quality of horse. I was particularly fond of horses and horse riding. This suited me fine.

When I returned home to my native town which was about 30 miles from Belfast, the town was agog with excitement. It was a garrison town, reservists were being called to the colours and all the young men were eager to enlist. To enlist now was quite the thing, but previous to the war, to enlist was only for corner boys and ne'r do-wells. But now it was "the proper thing to do".

I was educated at a Christian Brothers college where I was taught amongst other subjects, French, German and Gaelic. French was taught by an old French priest and I was keen on learning French and found it very useful.

At that time I was indentured to a firm of wholesale and retail, milling and shipping merchants, a job which I hated, but my father had to pay a premium ... that I would serve 5 years apprenticeship, starting every morning at 7AM, work to 8pm, and on Saturdays until 10pm, I received no pay but had my meals there.

When I returned from holidays I met a friend of mine, Jack [McGuigan], who was a good few years older than me, and whom I knew at school. Jack suggested we should run away to Belfast and enlist in a cavalry regiment. The idea appealed to me so the next morning we boarded a train to Belfast and proceeded to enlist. We wanted to enlist in the Inniskilling Dragoons but they had closed recruiting and were allowed to try another cavalry regiment. Eventually we enlisted [in the North Irish Horse], were sworn in and received our day's pay of 1/- each.

The next day we were issued with a rifle, sword, saddle, blankets and other equipment and were each given a horse, our day was occupied with drawing equipment and all other gear. The next morning Reveille at 5.30am, beds made up, floors swept and then fall in at 6am for physical jerks, dismissed at 6.15am to stables, where one man was detailed to ride one horse and lead 3 for exercise and watering, the remainder of the troop cleaned out the stables, then the exercise party returned at 6.30am and each man started grooming his horse.

We were issued with a curry comb, tail comb, dandy brush, body brush, a sponge (to sponge the horse's nostrils) a cloth and a plaited straw contraption with which you massaged the horse's body after he had been passed as properly groomed by the Troop Sergeant. You were not allowed to use the curry comb on the horse (the curry comb was for cleaning the body brush). If you were caught using the curry comb on the horse you were up before the Troop Officer and were warned by him not to do it again or else. The Sergeant kept warning you to be "careful of that horse, he cost £40, you can get a soldier for 1/-".

After breakfast the recruits were fallen in for riding school. The recruits with their horses formed a large ring in the centre of which stood the riding master, he was a Sergeant with a ram-rod back, a Kaiser William moustache and a fog-horn voice. He taught you the proper way to mount your horse, when you got mounted he gave the order "walk march", after a short time he yelled "trot", the horses were all cavalry trained and on the command "HALT" from the Sergeant, the horses all stopped dead with the result most of the recruits fell over the horses heads. The Sergeant would then threaten those men who had fallen off with disciplinary action, viz "Dismounting without an order".

We continued attending the riding school until the final passing-out test, you got the order "Cross your stirrups over your saddle, fold your arms" and ride your horse over a 4' jump. If you passed the test you were then posted to a troop as a trooper. You were also trained in sword and rifle drill. If you passed your firing test with the rifle you got an extra 6d per day as a marksman.

At the beginning of the recruit's training I had quite a few brushes with the Authorities, but after a few weeks I settled down and began to enjoy the soldiering, the life wasn't bad, you could get a pint of Guinness was 1½d and cigarettes 5 for 1d at the Canteen and you had quite a few good friends and there was always a sing-song in the Canteen from 5.30pm to 10pm. As the regiment was mostly recruited at that time from the north of Ireland, in my troop they were all Protestants with the exception of Jack [McGuigan] and myself. Sunday was a good day for us, we had no church parade, but for the others they hated it. Church parade was all spit and polish, burnished sword scabbard, burnished

spurs and a spotless turnout and a lynx eyed inspection by the Sergeant and then after him by the troop officer. The boys used to rouse and say "the next bloody war, I'll be a tyke [taig]". As soon as they returned from Church parade, it was change into stable clothes and off to stables, then grooming and saddle inspection.

Rumours that we were going overseas. We entrained for Dublin, arriving in England we found we were billeted in a small village in Hemel Hempstead, after a spell there we were off to Salisbury Plain, a short stay there and we left for France, just after the battle of Loos. Cavalry weren't required, so we went into the trenches, attached to a Middlesex regiment. The procedure was 1 man to 3 horses and the remainder into the trenches, those left behind had to groom, exercise, feed etc, they had also to mount a guard at night on the horses.

We had various talent amongst us, University students, 2 Australians, one chap from the Canadian North West Mounted police, boilermakers, farm labourers, grocers, you mention it and we had them. ...

The solicitor from Shanghai

The regiment's first six months was on the La Basse front:

We had a chap with us who had been a solicitor in Shanghai, he got 14 days imprisonment in England for "ill treating one of His Majesty's chargers", viz galloping his horse on a hard road. On his discharge from prison he reckoned that was the end of his soldiering. He bought a copy of the K.R.R. [King's Rules and Regulations] (which were on sale openly in any paper shop) and studied it.



When he would be up on a charge, he would quote K.R.R.'s section so and so in his defence and the charge would invariably be dismissed. He was a real headache to the Sgt. Major, so when there was a request from G.H.Q. for a mounted traffic man, the Sergt Major promptly detailed O'Sullivan for the job. His job was to keep the roads clear for infantry going up the line.

One day in Bethune (a large French Town) a battalion of infantry were going up the line, a French civilian in a cart wanted to break into the column, O'Sullivan tried to stop him, but the French man persisted, so O'Sullivan drew his sword and nearly severed the Frenchman's ear. He was

charged with insulting a civilian, he got out of it, saying "he was carrying out his orders".

Shortly after this incident, he was riding through Bethune, where a large number of brass of all regiments were stationed, including the General Commanding the Cavalry Division, O'Sullivan saluted the General's Aide-de-Camp, but the Aide-de-Camp didn't bother acknowledging his salute, so O'Sullivan charged him with "not acknowledging a soldier's salute" and the Aide was reprimanded. Very soon after this incident O'Sullivan was returned to his unit, much to the horror of the Sergeant Major. Apparently by pulling strings by the C.O., O'Sullivan was transferred to England. We never knew what happened to him.

In the trenches I was hit on the head with a piece of shrapnel (there were no steel helmets in the Army at this time 1915), but on account of the shortage of men, a Sergeant just cut the hair around the wound with a jack knife, poured some iodine from a field dressing and declared me fit. About a fortnight after I was again in the trenches and was again slightly wounded in the arm with a piece of shrapnel and again the same treatment.

The regiment spent Christmas in Bethune and then started off by road to outside of Boulogne for Divisional Cavalry training in preparation for the Somme offensive.

In June 1916 F Squadron was re-designated as B Squadron and brought together with C Squadron and the 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons Service Squadron to form the 2nd North Irish Horse Regiment, serving as corps cavalry to X Corps. The regiment was behind Aveluy Wood at the

beginning of the Battle of the Somme and witnessed the attack by the 36th (Ulster) Division:

This was to be the final break through of the war, guns were moving up day and night, the Artillery were packed wheel to wheel, Cavalry and infantry were there in thousands, we were to be attached to the 36th Infantry Division (North of Ireland). The 36th were to be given the honour of taking the Thiepval wood on 1st July 1916 (in commemoration of the Battle of the Boyne in Ireland).

We moved up behind the 36th Division. The infantry attacked after a terrific bombardment on the German trenches which was supposed to cut the German wire. When the infantry attacked the wire wasn't cut, the Germans were in 20' [deep] dug outs, they simply came out of their dug outs with their machine guns and cut the infantry to pieces, leaving 100s dead and wounded. In the mean time the Germans' artillery ranged in on us, by nightfall we had suffered badly in killed and wounded horses and men.

Dismounting of the NIH

In August 1917 orders came that the 2nd North Irish Horse Regiment would be dismounted and the men transferred to the infantry. McMahon was one of 70 men given the job of conducting the regiment's horses to Egypt. They embarked from Marseilles on board HMT *Bohemian* on 25 August. After a month at Alexandria they returned to France, through Italy. McMahon was by then a corporal. He later described this period as follows:

[We] were withdrawn to down near Boulogne, where it was decided to send the horses to Egypt to the Australians.

My knowledge of French came in handy, in doing a few deals with the French.

We entrained the horses for Marseilles (we never knew where we were going until we got there) with an officer [Lieutenant Leader] and some men were put in charge of the horses, we ultimately arrived in Marseilles where an Indian regiment officered by English officers took the horses from us, we hung around Marseilles for 2 weeks, then joined a ship with 850 horses as usual destination unknown.



McMahon in Egypt, September 1917. Inset is his sister Josie.

We set sail with the ship overcrowded with indentured Indians, returning home. We had 2 Japanese destroyers as escort for the ship, conditions were really tough, bad food, grooming horses and cleaning out the manure at night time, it was essential it was done at night, because the manure

floated on the sea and it was a real give away for German submarines.

We arrived at Malta but were not allowed ashore, after taking on stores and water we sailed again and finally arrived in Alexandria (Egypt) where the Australians took over the horses. After a short time in Alexandria we boarded a ship (destination unknown). Arriving at some Greek islands we lay up by day in these islands and sailed at night (submarine scare), arrived at Salonika in Greece, then Taranto in Italy, entrained in Taranto, crossed Italy by train, held up at Farenzo [Firenze] whilst the brass discussed using us as reinforcements on the Pavo [Piave River], then back through France to Le Havre, transferred to a famous Irish Infantry regiment, then up into the trenches.

On 5 October 1917 they arrived at the 36th (Ulster) Division Infantry Base Depot at Harfleur for infantry training. After just a few days they were posted to the 9th (Service) Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers – renamed the 9th (North Irish Horse) Battalion, joining it in the field at Ruyaulcourt on 12 October. McMahon was issued regimental number 41567 and posted to D Company.

He saw action with the battalion during the Battle of Cambrai in November and December 1917.

On 21 March 1918 the 9th Battalion was at the front near St Quentin.

[We had] intensive training for the capture of St. Quentin, [but] the Germans beat us to it by attacking on the 21st March 1918.

This was the first blow of the German Spring Offensive. Over the next eight days McMahon's battalion made a fighting retreat to just east of Amiens, where the survivors were relieved, having lost the great proportion of their number killed, wounded or captured. McMahon was initially captured with much of his company near Essigny on the second day, but managed to escape. While trying to locate his battalion he attached himself to a French Hotchkiss machine gun unit, but was wounded soon after. According to his account of the time:

I with an advance party of 12 men was captured by the Germans, escaped, joined up with a French unit where we were issued with Hotchkiss M. Guns (we used Hotchkiss machine guns in the British Cavalry). I was shot through the left arm by a bullet, told to make my way towards Paris. Everything was haywire, Armies retreating and demoralised. I was 10 days on the road walking, no medical attention for my arm. Ultimately after a nightmare experience, I was sent from St. Omer to Deauville, then to Harfleur where I was convalescent and marked B.3. Got a job as a clerk to the Commandant of a British staging camp for Americans.

McMahon remained in this job for the duration of the war, rising to the rank of Acting Company Quartermaster Sergeant. He was transferred to Class Z, Army Reserve, on 31 May 1919. In Ireland he found the transition to peacetime difficult:

There wasn't any jobs I could do offering, [so] I went off to Liverpool, but the unemployment was worse than in Ireland ... I had sat for an examination as a Railway clerk in Ireland but had heard no word, [so] I took a job as a barman in Liverpool and after a time I received a telegram informing

me I had passed my examination ... I returned to Ireland and was posted to a job as the Locomotive Superintendent clerk.

Once back in Ireland, McMahon's military abilities found an outlet in the war of independence, the civil war and in the cross-border fighting around Newry. He aligned himself with the pro-Treaty forces, as did many Irish soldiers who had returned from the war. However, by the end of 1922 he was forced to leave Ireland. Staying at first with family in Manchester, McMahon recalled the stories Australian soldiers had told him about their country:

During my time in France, I had met many Australians, and liked them. The Australian and Irish soldiers got on well together, they seemed to have much in common, disregard for unnecessary discipline and a devil may care way about them. The Australians and Irish were all volunteers. From personal experience the Australians stopped a complete rout once on the Somme and again in the 1918 retreat, the Irish regiments were always pleased if the Australians were near them in the trenches.

He raised the funds for a passage and left for Australia, arriving in Melbourne on board SS *Benalla* in January 1923. Here, and later in Sydney, he made a new life, marrying an Australian girl with whom he had three children.

When the Second World War began he joined the Australian Army and served much of the war as a regimental sergeant major in the 16th Garrison Battalion at the prisoner of war camp in Hay, New South Wales. He died in 19 May 1971 in Canberra, Australia.

From "The North Irish Horse in The Great War"



On this Day – May 19

1915

Turkey launched a large-scale frontal assault against the ANZACs. A small section of trench was captured at Courtney's post. There, Captain Albert Jacka performed the action for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross, he was the first Australian recipient.

1916

36th (Ulster) Division - On the night of the 16th-17th May, the 9th Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers (Armagh) take over the Hamel Sector of trenches. The 11th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles (South Antrim) take of the G2 Thiepval Wood sector of trenches

2nd Royal Irish Rifles - in the trenches around the mine craters at Vimy Ridge and Zouave Valley, heavy bombardment by the enemy of shells and trench mortars , resulting in casualties 9 killed 14 wounded.

Local casualties

1935

Colonel Thomas Edward Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, dies of injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident.

Born out of wedlock in Tremadog, Wales to an Anglo-Irish father and a Scottish mother, he had a happy and active childhood despite the stigma of his parents circumstances.

He excelled academically and early in life displayed an exceptional talent for languages. He became an accomplished archaeologist and was engaged in this profession when World War 1 began and he was co-opted by the British military where he explored and mapped ground that would be strategically important if the Ottoman Empire was to advance against Egypt. He quickly drew the attention of senior commanders and was commissioned on the General List (specialists not attached to a particular regiment or corps.)

By June 1916, Lawrence was involved in the Arab Revolt which would define his career and make his name. After the failure of the Gallipoli campaign, the British turned to another strategy to divert and disrupt the Ottomans. They would begin an Arab uprising, drawing the Ottoman army into a difficult guerilla war against nomadic desert tribes.

Lawrence once again displayed his exceptional talent and ability, endearing himself to Faisal, the future King of Iraq who urgently requested that Lawrence remain on his staff for the duration of the revolt.

His most important contributions were in matters of strategy and liaison with the British, however he participated personally in at least twelve military engagements, where he led men in attacking Ottoman outposts, railways and bridges and at the Battle of Tefilah, after which he was promoted to

Lieutenant Colonel. He was so successful, that a bounty of £20,000 (Approximately £1.5million in todays money) was placed on him. It is a testament to how highly the Arabs regarded him that he was never betrayed. As the war drew to an end, Lawrence sought to convince his superiors that Arab independence would be in their interests, which was met with mixed success. He later became involved in various roles both military and civilian until his untimely death in 1935.

1940

Destroyer HMS Whitley was beached near Nieuwpoort, Belgium, after being damaged by German dive-bomber attacks, and was destroyed by gunfire from HMS Keith to prevent her falling into enemy hands. Four of Whitley's crew lost their lives.



**Citation for VC for PO Alfred
Sephton**

ADMIRALTY.

Whitehall.

2nd December, 1941.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the grant of the VICTORIA CROSS, for valour and fortitude in action against the Enemy on 18th May, 1941, to:

The late Petty Officer Alfred Edward Sephton, P/JX.130821, H.M.S. Coventry.

Petty Officer Sephton was Director Layer when H.M.S. Coventry was attacked by aircraft, whose fire grievously wounded him. In mortal pain and faint from loss of blood he stood fast doing his duty without fault until the Enemy was driven off. Thereafter until his death his valiant and cheerful spirit gave heart to the wounded. His high example inspired his shipmates and will live in their memory.

1941

PO Alfred Sephton is awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions in HMS Coventry during a German attack on a hospital ship. Sephton died of his wounds the following day. His medal was stolen whilst on display at Coventry Cathedral in 1990 and never recovered. (See photo and citation on page above)

1944

Destroyer HMS Quail, damaged by a mine in the Adriatic on 15 Nov 1943 and temporarily patched up in Bari, sank in the Gulf of Taranto while under tow to Malta for full-scale repair and return to service.

Roll of Honour – May 19

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+BOYLE, Edward

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 9236. Died 19/05/1915. Age 25. Son of John and Annie Boyle, of Maguires Bridge, Co. Fermanagh. Pembroke Military Cemetery, Malta.

+COLLINS, Francis

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, "D" Coy 2nd Bn. Fusilier. 4088. Died 16/05/1915. Aged 19. First Newtownstewart man to loose his life. In action about 3 mths. Born in Ardstraw. Only son of James and Ellen Collins, of Mill St., Newtownstewart. Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

+DAWSON, J

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Serjeant. 8233. Died 19/05/1915. Age 26. Son of Samuel and Margaret Dawson, of Magheralin, Lurgan. Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery, Turkey (including Gallipoli)

+HAMILTON, Alexander

RND. Stoker First Class. K21644. Anson Battalion. Died 19/05/1915 of wounds received in action in Dardanelles. Enrolled 09/01/1914 for 12 years. Joined Anson Battalion 15/09/1914. Born Belfast 04/06/1895. Brother of Minnie McVicker, City St., Sandy Row, Belfast. Lancashire Landing Cemetry, Cape Helles, Gallipoli. ADM 188/910/21644, ADM339

+KYLE, David Logan

Royal Engineers. Second Lieutenant. Died 19/05/1915. Aged 23. Born at Ballymena. David Logan Kyle lived in Londonderry from 1906 until 1914, and attended Foyle College from 1906 until 1910. He was a member of First Derry Presbyterian Church, and a resident of Woodleigh Terrace, Londonderry. The name of David Logan Kyle was among a list of Great War dead, associated with Foyle College, Londonderry, read aloud during that College's annual prize giving ceremony, held on Thursday, December 19, 1918. His father, William Kyle, B.A., was formerly Senior Inspector of Schools in the city of Londonderry. Eldest son of William and Maggie Kyle (nee Logan), of 11, Palace St., Drogheda, Co. Louth, and 4, Frankfurt Avenue, Rathgar, Dublin.. Perth Cemetery (China Wall), West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Diamond WM

+MOWBRAY, David

David Mowbray, 2nd Battalion. Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Private. 2320. Born at Londonderry, enlisted at Enniskillen, and died in France on 19/05/1915. Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France



The Guards' Memorial, St James Park.

+MURPHY, John

Royal Irish Fusiliers. 9th Btn. Private. 14444. Died 18/05/1917. From Milford. Served an apprenticeship as a joiner with McCrum, Watson & Mercer Ltd. Was a member of the UVF before enlistment. He was a capable musician and was a member of the 9th Btn's band. Disembarked France on 04/10/1915. Armagh Guardian (02/02/1917) states he was the son of Mr & Mrs A H Murphy of Milford, Armagh, who have another son serving in France with the Canadians and who is in hospital suffering from trench foot. John had married the previous December and his widow was residing at Umgola. Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, France

+McCONNELL, James

Australian Infantry, 8 Platoon, 'B' Coy. 11th Battalion. Private 984. Died 19/05/1915. Aged 29. He was born in Sydney, Australia, raised in Ballymena and attended Ballymena Academy. The 28 year old RC was an engineer's machinist and lived at Bay Road, North Freemantle, Western Australia. He had enlisted on the 10/09/1914 and had left Australia on HMAT Ascanius from Freemantle on the 02/11/1914. His uncle, Mr Charles McConnell, Brookville, Galgorm Road, Ballymena, was given as his next of kin. Charles McConnell, J.P., lived at Brookville, Galgorm Road, now site of the town's police station. He was a prominent businessman, a partner in the firm C & M McConnell. They had a wholesale wine and spirit business at 79, Church Street, Ballymena and other wine and spirit outlets at 14, Bridge Street and at 23, William Street, Ballymena. James named Margaret McKinney, Broughshane Street, Ballymena, a nurse, as main beneficiary of his will. Later, however, it emerged he had a half-sister, Miss Rose McConnell (Box 161, GPO Sydney) who allegedly learned of his death in 1922 from a newspaper, though he had apparently visited her before he left Australia. His remains were buried near Anzac Cove but his remains were later removed and now he is buried in Lone Pine Cemetery, Gallipoli. His name appears on at least one listing of soldiers associated with All Saints RC Church, Ballymena.

+McGILL, William J

Irish Guards. Private. 5246. Died 19/05/1915 of his wounds at No 764 Field Ambulance. It is believed he was injured while trying to charge a machine-gun nest during the Battle of Festubert. He was born in Kilrea. He lived at 11 Hopehill

Road, Maryhill, Glasgow. Bethune Town Cemetery, Pas De Calais, Pas-de-Calais

+MOWBRAY, David

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Bn. Private. 2320. Died 19/05/1915. Born at Londonderry, enlisted at Enniskillen. Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

+ROBINSON, Albert

The King's (Liverpool Regiment), 1st Btn. Private. 8164. Died 19/05/1915. Age 28. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Kelso Robinson, of 32, Roe St., Belfast. Le Touret Memorial, France

+WEIR, Patrick

Royal Irish Rifles. 3rd Btn. Rifleman. 4770. Died 19/05/1915. Aged 31. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Weir, of 133, Victoria St., Lurgan. Arnos Vale Roman Catholic Cemetery, Bristol

1916

+LEIGHTON, William Alexander

Royal Irish Rifles, 7th Btn. Rifleman. 4329. Died 19/05/1916. Aged 17. Son of James and Rosie Leighton, of Islandeffrick. Coleraine. Dud Corner Cemetery, Loos, France

+MANSON, A

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 5592. Died 19/05/1916. Aged 26. Two brothers served Rifleman Sydney Manson (398) Royal Irish Rifles, Rifleman Clarence Manson (5035) Royal Irish Rifles. Born 1889 in Seapatrick,

Banbridge. Son of Thomas and Elizabeth Manson, Ballyvally, Dromore Road, Banbridge. Ecoivres Military Cemetery, Mont-St. Eloi, Pas de Calais, France. Banbridge WM

+McKENZIE, Daniel

Royal Irish Rifles. 11th Btn. Rifleman. 18/754. Died 19/05/1916. Born Linenhall St., Ballymena on 22/09/1887. Pre-war he worked for Kirkpatrick Brothers, Ballyclare. He was a member of the UVF and of Ballyeaston LOL 420. Enlisted in Belfast. Son of Malcolm and Eliza (nee Tomlinson) McKenzie. Husband to Margaret (nee McConnell). They married in Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church on 28/03/1910. They had three children. Daniel's half-brother, Robert served with 12th Btn., and was present at Daniel's grave-side service. Authuille Military Cemetery, Authuille, France. Ballyclare WM. St John's C of I, Ballyclare RH. First Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church RH

+McMANUS, E

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 8174. Died 19/05/1916. Aged 27. Husband to Margaret McManus, of 5, Sherriff St., Belfast. Aubingy Communal Cemetery Extension, France

+McNALLY, Charles

Royal Irish Rifles, 2 Btn. Rifleman. 10461. Died 19/05/1916. Aged 26. Born June 1886 Belturbet Co Cavan. Son of David and Mary McNally, of Castle Lane, Lurgan; husband to Sarah McNally, of 226, Lesson St., Belfast. Married 31/12/1910 in Magheralin, Lurgan. Father of 3 children Ecoivres Military Cemetery, Mont-St. Eloi, Pas de Calais, France. Lurgan WM

+McQUILLAN, William James

11 RIR. D Company. Sergeant. DoW at Thiepval Wood on the Somme on the 19/05/1916, age 21. He embarked for France from Bordon Camp in October 1915. Born in Ardmore, Killead, Co. Antrim. Son of Robert Harper and Annie McQuillan of Crumlin. A member of the Orange Order in Glenavy LOL 314, he enlisted at Belfast. Forceville Communal Cemetery and Extension, France. Crumlin WM. Glenavy Protestant Hall. Crumlin Presbyterian Church RH

+SMYTH, William

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 6823. Died 19/05/1916. Aged 22. Son of George and Margaret Smyth, of 59, Greenwell St., Newtownards. Arras Memorial, France

1917

+ANNESLEY, James Ferguson St. John

RAMC. Captain. Died in an air accident 19/05/1917. Age 52. James was educated at Armagh Royal School, and at Queen's College, Belfast, where he was a Dispensary Doctor and qualified MB MCh, BAO, in 1888. He was the dispensary medical officer and registrar of births, deaths, and marriages at Derrylin in the union of Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh, prior to entering the Army on 17/01/1916, when he gained a temporary commission in the RAMC, at the rank of Corporal.

He first served on a hospital ship from July 1916, and was promoted to Captain in January 1917, after one year's service. He then became attached to the hospital in connection with Thetford Aerodrome, Co. Norfolk, and met

his death at the aerodrome whilst flying in a biplane with 2nd Lieutenant Charles L. Beaumont, RFC.

An inquest was held by the Norfolk Coroner:- It was established that James had asked if there would be any objection to him going up as a passenger, as so many flying men suffered from nerves and it was very difficult for him to judge the effects of flying on the nerves until he had had personal experience - permission was granted.

An air mechanic gave evidence that he saw the machine pass over the road at a height of about 400 feet. The machine later did a right bank, which developed into a spinning nose dive. The witness went to the wreckage, and found James had been thrown clear out, but the pilot was underneath the machine. Major Orton said he thought the machine stalled and developed into a spiral nose dive through losing flying speed. A verdict of accidental death was returned.

James was the second son of Rev. Canon James Blair Annesley, Canon of Clogher Cathedral and Rector of Drumkeeran, near Kesh, Co. Fermanagh and Mrs. Eliza Annesley. He was husband to Geraldine Clara, daughter of the Rev. Canon James Anderson Carr, L.L.D., Canon of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin. They were married at Whitechurch, Rathfarnham, Dublin on 04/01/1898. They had four children. Interred, Euston (St Genevieve) Churchyard, Suffolk

+CROZIER, Frederick William

Royal Irish Rifles, 13th Btn. Rifleman. 6025. Died 19/05/1917. Age 27. Born on 11/03/1888 in Carrickblacker,

Portadown. Son of William James and Henrietta Crozier (nee Neill) who were married on 11/07/1872 in Seapatrick Church of Ireland Church, Banbridge. The Crozier family lived in Carrickblacker, Portadown before moving to Bangor in the late 1890s where they lived at 71 Castle Street and 4 Castle Cottages. William James Crozier was a coachman and he and Henrietta had six children. When Rifleman Frederick William (Willie) Crozier died, his elder and only brother, Sergeant Walter Henry Crozier, 5th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles was stationed at Clandeboye. Walter Henry Crozier and Annie Nelson were married on 23/09/1902 in St Anne's Church of Ireland Church, Belfast. and they had six sons, two of whom died in the Second World War: William James (Willie, born 13 January 1903; drowned in the Nile while on R&R in Second World War – information per a family member). Walter Henry (Walter, born 8 January 1907; served in the Second World War, Army Number 131397, RASC, awarded the Africa Star with 8th Army clasp; died 1 May 1986). Archibald (Archie, born 31 July 1909; died 15 September 1941, never recovered after being in the water at Dunkirk – information per a family member). Frederick (Freddie, born 27 August 1912, served in the Second World War and survived, Army Number 131396; died April/May 1986). Rifleman Frederick William (Willie) Crozier (No. 6025) is remembered at Kemmel Chateau Military Cemetery and is commemorated on Bangor and District WM; Royal British Legion (Bangor Branch) Memorial Plaque; in the Comrades of the Great War (Bangor Branch) Album in North Down Museum; Bangor Church of Ireland Parish Church (St Comgall's), Family grave headstone in Bangor Cemetery

+FOSTER, Andrew

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. B Coy. Lance Corporal. 3302. Died 19/05/1917. Age 21. Son of Mrs. Bridget Foster, of 73, Brookfield St., Belfast. Arras Memorial, France

+KERR, George

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Died 19/05/1917. Age 27. Son of Henry and Mary Kerr, of Cavanacaw, Clanabogan, Omagh, Co. Tyrone. Arras Memorial, France

+MARSHALL, James

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Private. 29916. Died 19/05/1917. Age 19. Son of William and Sarah Marshall, of 49, Sugarfield St., Belfast. Arras Memorial, France

+McLAUGHLIN, Alexander

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Private. 29794. Died 19/05/1917. Age 26. Son of Mrs. Catherine McLaughlin, of 7, Thomas St., Londonderry. Arras Memorial, France

+McSHERRY, William

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Private. 4245. Died 19/05/1917. Age 20. Son of Thomas and Mary McSherry, of 25, Bridge St., Londonderry. Arras Memorial, France

+MULLAN, James

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. C Coy. Private. 29447. Died 19/05/1917. Age 27. Son of Michael and Catherine

Mullan, of Cranny Vale, Fintona, Co. Tyrone. Arras Memorial, France

+ROCKS, Joseph

RNVR. Petty Officer. Clyde Z4397. Drake Battalion, RND. Died 19/05/1917. Age 22. Enlisted 12/05/1915; Draft for BEF (Bomber) 10/07/1916, joined Howe Battalion 13/11/1916 -14/11/1916. GSW left leg, Invalided to UK 19/11/1916 ; Draft for BEF 19/03/1917, joined Drake Battalion 11/04/17 - 19/05/17. Born Lurgan 10/02/1895. Son of Michael Rocks, Edward St., Lurgan. Husband to Bridget, Calders Buildings, Corbie Hall, Bowness. Arras Memorial, Bay 1, Pas de Calais. Lurgan WM. ADM339

+TOHILL, Francis

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Private. 3246. Died 19/05/1917. Born and lived in Magherafelt. Enlisted Cookstown. Arras Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Cookstown War Dead Book

1918

+FLANNIGAN, Thomas

Canadian Army Medical Corps. Private. 34462. Aged 23. Died instantly on 19/05/1918 in an air raid on hospital. Late in the evening of the 19th May 1918 German Aircraft attacked the railway near Etaples , unfortunately some of the bombs fell short and fell on the nearby Military Barracks including the Hospital. Wards 6 and 7 of No 9 Canadian Stationary Hospital incurred a direct hit killing 6 and wounded 32 a further 9 bombs fell on No 1 Canadian General Hospital complex which housed 1200 patients , 64

patients and Nurses were killed and 80 wounded. Thomas emigrated to Canada leaving Londonderry 13/05/1913 arriving at Halifax Nova Scotia 23/05/ 1913. Enlisted in Montreal 19/09/1914. Left for England 03/10/1914. Left Southampton for France 13/05/1915. Thomas was born 02/02/1895. Eldest son of John and Mary Anne Flannigan 21 Bridge Street Portadown. Married in Lurgan (Shankill Parish Church) 15/11/1916 while home on medical leave. Husband to Eliza (Hanna) Flannigan. Living with parents at 44 Hanover Street Portadown. Father of 1 daughter. Etaples Military Cemetery, France. Portadown WM. St Mark's Parish Church, Lurgan WM. Seagoe Parish Church WM

+TREANOR, Charles

Private - served in CR (2407) or the RIrF before transferring to the 197th LC (513933). Died 19/05/1918. Blargies Communal Cemetery and Extension, France

1919

+STEWART, T J

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 4th Bn. Private. 2935. Died 19/05/1919. Aged 26. Son of Thomas J. and Elizabeth Stewart, of 165, Park Avenue, Sydenham, Belfast. Dundonald Cemetery

1940

+BURNS, Joseph

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Fusilier. 6976036. Died 19/05/1940. Aged 28. On Sunday 19/05/1940 the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers were acting as part of the rear guard before the withdrawal to Dunkirk. It is believed that

Fusilier Burns was killed when the Luftwaffe carried out a bombing and strafing attack on the 1st Battalion's positions. Son of John and Margaret Burns, of Morgan's Hill Road, Cookstown. Heverlee War Cemetery, Vlaams-Brabant, Belgium. Cookstown WM

+GILLESPIE, William James

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Fusilier. 6975630. Died 19/05/1940 during the withdrawal to Dunkirk. Aged 33. Born on 17/03/1907 in Fivemiletown. His mother died when he was eleven. Son of Thomas and Alice Gillespie; husband to Margaret Gillespie, of Belfast. Heverlee War Cemetery, Vlaams-Brabant, Belgium. Fivemiletown WM

+McCRORY, James

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Fusilier. 6978959. Died 19/05/1940. Aged 21. 1st Btn. was part of the rear-guard during the British Expeditionary Force withdrawal to Dunkirk. That day, the Luftwaffe carried out bombing and strafing of the Fusiliers' position along a 5,000-yard front north-east of Ninove near the River Dendre. Son of John and Cathleen McCrory, of Gortin, Co. Tyrone. Outer Communal Cemetery, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium

+NESBITT, William James

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. Lance Corporal. 7012895. Died 19/05/1940 on the fallback to Dunkirk. Aged 20. Son of Joseph and Jeannie Nesbitt, of Keady, Co. Armagh. Denderleeuw Communal Cemetery, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium

1942

+JOHNSTON, Joseph

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Fusilier. 5671312. Died 19/05/1942. Aged 23. Son of Sarah Johnston, of Belfast. His brother Thomas also fell. Rangoon Memorial, Myanmar

+NORTON, JOHN

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 6979067. Died 19/05/1942. Aged 22. Son of James and Ellen Norton, Londonderry. Imphal War Cemetery, India

1944

+McAVOY, Archibald Dougal McCall

Royal Canadian Armoured Corps, 4th Reconnaissance Regiment, 4th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards. Trooper. C/70730. Died 19/05/1944. Son of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. McAvoy, of Belfast. Cassino War Cemetery, Italy.

+McCORMICK, James

Army Catering Corps attd. 1st Bn. The King's Regiment (Liverpool). Serjeant. Died 19/05/1944. Age 34. Son of Joseph Samuel and Caroline McCormick; husband to Eileen McCormick, of Belfast. Rangoon Memorial, Myanmar, Face 19.

VETERANS

ENTRICAN, John Cuthbertson

RN. Coder. LLB, QUB 1944. Born 24/09/1908 - Cookstown. Son of John and Mary Knox Mitchel Entrican. Died 19/05/1985. Pontefract, West Yorkshire.

SHAW, Thomas Brown

RN. Surgeon Commander. First Place RN Medical, 1901. Great War: MO in charge HMS Falmouth in Battle of Heligoland. Surgeon Commander, 1915. Professor of Hygiene and Director of Medical Studies, RNC Greenwich, 1923. Surgeon Rear-Admiral, 1934. B 19/05/1879. Son of Thomas Shaw, Kirkcubbin. Campbell College 178. Presbyterian Church RH

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We will remember them

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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

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