



remembrance ni



**Runnymede Memorial**

**Bowman Brothers from Bangor died serving with RAFVR in WW2.**



**Geoffrey and Eric Bowman were sons of Hugh and Annie Bowman, of Bryansburn Rd, Bangor, Co. Down.**

Hugh Bowman, MBE, was an official in the Ministry of Agriculture and his brother, Robert Ritchie Bowman, was Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Labour.

Hugh and Annie had six children. Three sons served in the RAF and a daughter in the WRNS.

Eric, Sergeant (Pilot) 1500548, was killed in an aircraft accident on Wednesday 24/12/1941.

Geoffrey (Flying Officer) 149526, was lost in a Liberator over the Bay of Biscay on 21/05/1944.

Hugh (Flight Sergeant) was stationed in Imphal, India 10/1943 - 1945, with South East Asia Command during the major Japanese offensive and was injured from shrapnel.

Rosaleen (Petty Officer Rosaleen Bowman, later Mrs Douglas Wood), served with the Women's Royal Naval Reserve.

**+BOWMAN, Eric**

Eric Bowman was born on 4 August 1916 . He was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution (RBAI) from 1929 until 1934. He entered the Civil Service and worked in the Ministry of Agriculture. He enrolled in the RAFVR before the outbreak of war and held a commission

in the Reserve of Officers. He was called up on the outbreak of hostilities and in the 30/12/1939 edition of the *County Down Spectator* it was reported that he had been seriously injured on Christmas Eve in a flying crash in Scotland. He suffered concussion and multiple injuries and then, with his parents at his bedside, he regained consciousness four days later.

At the time, his brother Geoffrey, also in the RAF, was at home on Christmas leave.

As a result of his injuries Eric was passed unfit for flying and, in November 1940, he resigned his commission and returned to civilian life. Then, following the Blitz on Belfast in April 1941, he applied for another medical examination and was passed fit for service. Some eight months later, Sergeant Eric Bowman (No. 1500548) was killed on Christmas Eve (exactly two years to the day after his previous crash) when the Short Stirling aircraft on which he was a crew member crashed in the Bedfordshire countryside while on training manoeuvres. He was based at RAF Waterbeach, north of Cambridge. Five other RAF personnel were also killed in the crash

### **+BOWMAN, Geoffrey Alexander**

RAFVR. Flying Officer. 149526. Died 21/05/1944 lost in a Liberator over the Bay of Biscay. Aged 25. 53 Sqdn.

Geoffrey Bowman was born on 01/06/1919. After attending Bangor Public Elementary School, Geoffrey attended Bangor Grammar School from 1932 until 1935. He played





## Runnymede Memorial

both rugby and cricket for the school and was a member of the Dramatic Society. The headmaster wrote later that Geoffrey had taken first place in the 1932 entrance scholarship competition, with his close friend Bertie Hannay coming second.

The headmaster went on, 'they were together in their work and play; together in their love of fun and abounding vitality; together in their examination successes, in their time of leaving school and choice of a career; together in their voluntary self-dedication to the hazards of air-warfare and now, beyond death's mystery, together they wear the crowns

of immortality'. Flight Sergeant Bertie Hannay was killed in action on 12/06/1941.

After leaving school, Geoffrey Bowman worked for the Friends' Provident and Century Insurance Company in Belfast. In 1938 he joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve and, when the Bangor ATC was founded, he gave talks to the boys about his experiences. In the 11 April 1942 edition of the *County Down Spectator* it was reported that a British bomber had made a forced landing on the coast of Portugal, near Cape Espichel, and the crew of four (including Geoffrey Bowman) all survived.

In May 1944 Geoffrey Bowman was reported as missing in action and, one year later, his death was reported in the 2 June 1945 edition of the *County Down Spectator*. It was noted that he was 'officially presumed to have lost his life on anti-submarine operations'. Flying Officer Geoffrey Bowman and eight other crew members died when their Consolidated B-24 Liberator aircraft crashed into the sea.

Geoffrey is commemorated at - Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. Bangor and District WM, Bangor Grammar School RH, First Bangor PCI RH, 502 (Ulster) Squadron WM, St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast

## In the newspapers

### The Northern Whig on 21st May 1918

- carried an account of the service of "Major Holt Waring, 12th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, formerly 11th/13th Battalion. 41 years of age, died of wounds, 15th April, 1918. Husband of Margaret Waring, of Waringstown, County

Down. Deceased is buried in Wulverghem-Lindenhoek Road Military Cemetery, Belgium.”

## On this day - May 21

### 1916

At the Battle of Verdun the French capture quarries at Haudromont and take two trenches on the Esne Haucourt road. The German attack on the western slopes of Mort Homme has much success.

### 1941

German airforce occupies airport at Maleme, Crete. See account of HMS Gloucester and HMS Fiji - See May 22 Roll this site

SS Robin Moor becomes the first US ship sunk by a U-boat during World War II

### 1942

Convoy PQ16 departs Great Britain for Russia

### 1945

### 38 (Irish) Brigade

Brigadier Pat Scott in Austria:

"By the evening of the 21st, it almost looked as if the war was over at last. We had fixed 3 international boundaries within as any days. We had handled vast numbers of surrendered Germans, Hungarians and Cossacks. We had stopped a war. We had fed Heaven knows how many

people. We had moved trains around. We had rounded up “dyed in the wool” Nazis. We had liberated prisoners of war; in fact there was hardly any form of diversion that we had not tried. It was high time we settled down...”

## TREFFEN/VILLACH SECTOR.

It became apparent that Yugoslav forces in South Austria were obeying the orders of Marshal Tito & that an operation by the brigade would now be most unlikely.

2 LIR were ordered to recce locations on the northern shores of the Ossiach See.

# Roll of Honour - May 21

**Representing their comrades who died on this day**

**1915**

### **+PRESTON, Josias W**

Scots Guards. 2nd Btn. Private. 10977. Died 21/05/1915. Age 22. He worked on the family farm before enlisting. Son of William and Mary Jane Preston of Camly, Newtownhamilton. Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, France

### **+QUINN, Robert**

South Lancashire Regiment, 2nd Btn. Private. 7338. Died 21/05/1915. Age 29 . Son of Sarah Quinn, of 51, Fifth St., Belfast, and the late Hugh Quinn. Hamburg Cemetery, Germany

## **+RAMSEY, James**

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Private. 9669. Died 21/05/1915. Born in Randalstown and lived in Ballyclare. Enlisted Antrim. His sole legatee was Mrs Ellen McKee, of Castle St., Antrim. Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery, Turkey (including Gallipoli). All Saints C of I Parish Church, Antrim RH. Ballyclare WM. Antrim Town WM

**1917**

## **+DORNAN, George.**

1 RInF. Private. 16945. Died 21/05/1917. Born in Lisburn, he was a veteran of the Boer War, re-enlisted at Glasgow. Involved in the landings at Sulva Bay in Gallipoli where he subsequently contracted malaria, he was back at the Front for three months before he died of wounds. son of Robert Dornan of Lisnagarvey Cottages, Lisburn. Abbeville Communal Cemetery, France

## **+GURNELL, Robert Matthew**

Royal Irish Rifles, 18th Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 21/05/1917. Age 20. "He joined the colours as a cadet, and received his commission; a short time ago. He only arrived in France on 02/05/1917, and Captain Gibson, Chaplain, in writing to the young man's mother on the day that he fell, stated that he had made a most favourable impression upon all during his all too brief term of service. Captain Somers, his Company Officer, in a letter to Mrs. Gurnell, says — "Your gallant son was only a very few days with us, but even in that short time, we had formed a real admiration for his calm and splendid manly conduct, in the carrying out of his many dangerous duties." At the weekly meeting of



Boardmills No Compromise Lodge 221, I.O.G.T., Bro. Rev. J. L. M'Candless, C.T., presiding, reference was made to the sterling ability, high character, and popularity of their late Brother — Second-Lieutenant R. M. Gurnell — and a resolution of heartfelt sympathy with the mother of the deceased and other relatives was passed by a standing vote, an appropriate hymn being afterwards sung." Son of Mrs. Gurnell, of Boardmills, Lisburn. Pond Farm Cemetery, BelgiumMcComb family headstone in Boardmills Presbyterian churchyard.

### **+KINNEY, James**

Royal Irish Rifles. 4th Btn. attd. 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 9711. Died 21/05/1917. Age 27. Son of Agnes Brady (formerly Kinney), of 28, Ivy Row, Whitehouse, Belfast, and the late John Kinney. Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, France

### **+LEONARD, John**

Royal Irish Fusiliers. 2 Btn. Private. 3673. Died of wounds received at Kallendra Wood Salonika on the 21/05/1917. Aged 32. Enlisted at Finner Camp Co Donegal. Born 13/06/1885. Husband to Sarah Ann Leonard, 7 Wesley Place, Lurgan. Father of 4 children. Struma Military Cemetery, Greece. Lurgan WM

### **+RICE, J**

Leinster Regiment, 7th Btn. D Coy. Lance Corporal. 2500. Died 21/05/ 1916. Age 45. Husband of Mary Ann Rice, of 17, Alton St., Old Lodge Rd., Belfast. Noeux-Les-Mines Communal Cemetery, France

**1918**

**+CAMPBELL, James**

Royal Irish Rifles. 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 16/100. Died 21/05/1918 in the 4<sup>th</sup> London General Hospital, Denmark Hill. Age 24. Enlisted in Lurgan. Son of Robert and Mary Campbell, of Crumlin, Co. Antrim. Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England. Crumlin WM. Crumlin Presbyterian Church RH

**+KELLY, James**

Irish Guards, 1st Btn. Private. 2075. Died 21/05/1918. Age 32. Enlisted in Omagh. Son of James and Mary Kelly, of Augher, Co. Tyrone; husband to Sarah Kelly, "St. Aidans," Woodman Rd., Coulsdon, Surrey. Bac-Du-Sud British Cemetery, Bailleulval, France

**+MILLAR, Benjamin**

Royal Irish Rifles, 12th Btn. Rifleman. 18/627. Died 21/05/1918. Age 24. Son of Samuel and Alice J. Millar, of Harperstown, Cullybackey. New Irish Farm Cemetery, Belgium. Cunningham Presbyterian Church RH

**+THOMPSON, Herbert**

RASC. 15<sup>th</sup> Division Train. Driver. T3/O31111. Died 21/05/1918. Age 22. Born in Shankill, he lived and enlisted at Belfast. Son of Joseph Thompson of Ballydrain, Dunmurry. Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun, Pas De Calais, France

## **+WILLIAMSON, Thomas J**

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 9th Btn. Lance Corporal. Military Medal. 19450. Died 21/05/1918 as a result of an accident in France. Age 22. Born on 03/02/1896, one of five children, all born in the Lisfearthy area of Clonavaddy. He enlisted in Ballygawley. Lance Corporal Thomas Williamson was awarded the Military Medal in 1917. Son of James and Hannah Williamson, of Clintyfollow, Greystone, Dungannon. Canada Farm Cemetery, Belgium. Dungannon WM

## **+WIGGINS, Thomas Edward**

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 9th Btn. Private. 17361. Died 21/05/1918. Age 25. Son of James and Elizabeth Wiggins, of Anagulgan, Rosslea, Co. Fermanagh. Canada Farm Cemetery, Belgium

## **1940**

## **+TAYLOR, James**

Royal Warwickshire Regiment, 8th Btn. Lance Corporal. 5111711. Died 21/05/1940 during the battle on the line of the River Scheldt (Escaut) before the final withdrawal to Dunkirk. Age 22. From Aughnacloy. Bruyelle War Cemetery, Belgium

## **+WHITE, Samuel**

2nd Battalion Norfolk Regiment. Died 21/05/1940 at Le Paradis Massacre retreat to Dunkirk

## **1941**

### **+BEATTIE, Tudor**

RAFVR. Sergeant. (Wireless Op./Air Gunner). 974076. Died 21/05/1941. Age 27. QUB Fifth Year Medical Student 1931 - 34. He was a Wireless Operator / Air Gunner on Bristol Blenheim V6390 with RAF 110 Squadron The Mark IV bomber took off at 1547hrs from RAF Wattisham, Suffolk on a daytime raid on a power station at Gosnay, Pas de Calais, France. It came down near Allouagne, Pas de Calais, France. He was the son of the late Reverend James Moore Allen Beattie and Margaret Jane Beattie of Convoy, Donegal, Ireland. The family later lived in Portrush, Co. Antrim. His headstone in France bears the inscription: Son of the late Rev. JMA Beattie, Convoy, Eire. Allouagne Communal Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France. QUB RH

### **+FERGUSON, Clifford Samuel**

RAFVR. Leading Aircraftman. 1109099. Died 21/05/1941. Aged 18. Holywood Cemetery, Co. Down

### **+O'NEILL, William J**

Leading Stoker..C/KC 91458. HMS Juno. Died 21/05/1941. Age 27. Enrolled 1937. Ship sunk off Crete by German and Italian bombers. Son of John and Jane O'Neill. Member of Myroe L.O.L. Carrowclare, Limavady. Chatham Naval Memorial , Panel 47. 1

## **1942            HM SUBMARINE P514**

### **+McALISTER, James**

RN. Petty Officer. P/SSX 15157. HM Submarine P 514. Died 21/06/1942. Age 28. P514 was an ex-US Navy boat, formerly R-19, and was used to train escort groups off the east coast of Canada. Lost with all hands when it was



rammed by minesweeper Georgian which believed it to be a U-boat. Son of James and Kathleen McAlister, Ballynastraid, Bushmills. Husband to Ina McAlister, Feigh, Bushmills. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 62

**+MURRAY, Robert**

RN. Stoker 2<sup>nd</sup> Class. D/KX 134458. Died 21/06/1942. Age 19. HM Submarine P 514. Son of Robert and Sarah Murray, Ballymena. Plymouth Naval Memorial. Panel 71

**+PATTERSON, Hugh**

RN. Telegraphist. D/JX 156607. HM Submarine P 514. Died 21/06/1942. Age 20. He joined the merchant service when he was 15 years old. After a few months he transferred to the RN. He had seen much foreign service. Son of Archibald and Isabella Patterson, Hillview Terrace, Greencastle. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 10//07/1942). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 49

**1942**

**+KEENAN, Norman Clements**

RAFVR. Sergeant. 934645. Died 21/05/1942. Age 22. He was flying Airspeed Oxford aircraft BG 207 of Number 14 Pilot Advanced Flying Unit with Sergeant Pilot T.H. Campbell of the Royal Canadian Air Force. During the flight the aircraft flew into the ground near Hall Farm, Egmont, Nottinghamshire killing both men. Son of William John and Elizabeth Keenan, Belfast. Belfast City Cemetery, Glenalina Section

**+SHAW, Edmund Verner**

RAFVR. Flight Sergeant (Pilot). 748518. Died 21/05/1942. Aged 22. Son of Edmund and Mary Shaw, of Belfast. Dundonald Cemetery. Belmont Presbyterian Church, Belfast, RH. 502 (Ulster) Squadron WM, St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast

**1944**

**+BOWMAN, Geoffrey Alexander**

RAFVR. Flying Officer. 149526. Died 21/05/1944. Aged 25. 53 Sqdn. Son of Hugh and Annie Bowman, of Bryansburn Rd, Bangor, Co. Down. Brother of WRNS Petty Officer Rosaleen Wood. Three of her brothers served in the RAF. Eric, a Sergeant - Pilot, died when a Stirling crashed on Christmas Eve 1941. Geoffrey, Flying Officer, was lost in a Liberator over the Bay of Biscay 21/05/1944. Hugh, Flight Sergeant, was stationed in Imphal 10/1943 - 1945, with South East Asia Command during the major Japanese offensive and was injured from shrapnel. Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. 502 (Ulster) Squadron WM, St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast

**+WILSON, Samuel Robinson**

2nd Bn. The London Irish Rifles, Royal Ulster Rifles. Rifleman. 7020667. Died 21/06/1944. Aged 23. Son of John Wilson and of Sarah Wilson (nee Hayes), of Rasharkin. Orivieto War Cemetery, Italy.

**1946**

**+GORDON, William Gallagher**

RAFVR. Warrant Officer. 1682131. Died 21/05/1946.  
Newtownards Movilla Cemetery. Died on Active Service  
according to Family Memorial.

**VETERANS**

**BEAMISH, Cecil Howard**

Air Vice Marshall, Director of Dental Services, Royal Air  
Force.

Cecil Howard Beamish, LDS (QUB 1936)CB (1970),  
FDSRCS, from Coleraine, served during the Second World  
War and was later Director of RAF Dental Services from  
1969–1973.

He was the youngest of the Beamish brothers, the others  
being Victor, George, and Charles. They were all RAF  
officers and accomplished sportsmen. Beamish played  
rugby for London Irish, the Barbarians and the RAF.

His brothers were Group Captain Francis Victor Beamish  
DSO and Bar DFC, AFC, Air Marshal Sir George Robert  
Beamish KCB, CBE, and Group Captain Charles Eric St  
John Beamish

Born 31 March 1915, he was a son of Francis George  
Beamish, and of Mary Elizabeth Beamish. The sons were  
born in Dunmanaway, Co. Cork, before their father who was  
an inspector of schools moved to a post in Coleraine. They  
lived in Castlerock, County Londonderry, and were educated  
at Coleraine Academical Institution.

In 1955 he married Frances Elizabeth Sarah Goucher and they had two two sons. He died on 21 May 1999. Family plaque in Kildollagh Parish Church, the Loughan, Coleraine.

**CARROLL, Timothy**

RN. Stoker Second Class. SS109871. HMS Falmouth. Jutland. Enrolled 10/05/1910 for 5 and 7 years. Born Coleraine 21/05/1889. ADM 188/1115/109871

# Every day is a Remembrance Day

***We will remember them***

**To return to Home Page - click on Remembrance NI masthead.**

**Information about individuals who served - please forward to remembrance ni at**

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



## remembrance ni

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The **remembrance ni** programme is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD who served as Chaplain to 102 and 105 Regiments Royal Artillery (TA), as Hon. Chaplain to RNR and as Chaplain to the RBL NI area and the Burma Star Association NI. Dr McKelvey is a Past President of Queen's University Services Club. He may be contacted at [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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