



remembrance ni



HMS Hood off Iceland during April 1941. The photo is part of the HMS Hood Association archives having been sent over from a member in Canada some years ago.

HMS Hood - no match for a much younger ship - the Bismarck

On 24 May 1941 two mighty ships engaged in battle – the respective pride of the German and British navies: the *Bismarck* and HMS *Hood*.



The King during his final inspection of H.M.S. Hood on 06/03/1941. She was in Rosyth, undergoing a minor refit. In this photo, he is greeting an officer, who is most likely Captain Ralph Kerr.

When HMS Hood was sunk, she had 1415 on board. There were only 3 survivors. 11 of those who perished were from Northern Ireland.

Summary - HMS Hood was a 42,100 ton battlecruiser built in 1920 for the Royal Navy. It held the position of world's largest warship for more than two decades. In May 1941 Hood and the new battleship Prince of Wales were sent out

to search for the German battleship Bismarck, which had left Norway for the Atlantic.

On the morning of May 24th, the two British ships found the Bismark just west of Iceland. During this Battle of the Denmark Strait, one or more of Bismarck's fifteen-inch shells found HMS Hood's magazines and detonated in a massive explosion, killing all but three of her crew of 1,415. The event shocked the British nation and the entire world. The three survivors were Ted Briggs (1923–2008), Robert Ernest Tilburn (1921–1995) and William John Dundas (1921–1965). They were rescued by the destroyer HMS Electra about two and a half hours after the sinking.

Fact - Admiral Chatfield, in an article in *The Times*, summed up the sinking by saying “She was destroyed because she had to fight a ship 22 years more modern than herself. This was not the fault of the British seamen. It was the direct responsibility of those who opposed the rebuilding of the British Battle Fleet until 1937, two years before the Second Great War started”

HMS Hood had a crew of 1,419 and was faster than the [Bismarck](#) with a maximum speed of 32 knots. The Hood had been launched in 1918 and was armed with 8 x 15 inch guns, 12 x 5.5 inch guns, 8 x 4 inch AA guns, 24 x 2 pound guns and 4 x 21 inch torpedoes.

However, the Hood suffered from one major flaw – she did not have the same amount of armour as the Bismarck. The fact that the Hood was faster than the Bismarck by 3 knots was as a result of her lack of sufficient armour for a naval battle fought in World War Two. What had been considered

sufficient armour in 1918 when Hood was built, was to prove a fatal flaw in 1941.

Bismarck - “There had never been a warship like her”

Named after the 19th century German chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, the *Bismarck* had been launched just two years earlier, in February 1939, by the chancellor’s great granddaughter. The ship was an impressive sight – one sixth of a mile long and 120 feet wide.

British writer and broadcaster, Ludovic Kennedy (1909-2009), wrote of the *Bismarck*: “There had never been a warship like her... No German saw her without pride, no neutral or enemy without admiration.”

The mission set for the *Bismarck* and the *Prinz Eugen* was to head for the Atlantic and cause as much damage and disruption as possible to the British convoys shipping vital supplies across the [Atlantic](#) into Britain. On board the *Bismarck* were two of Hitler’s most senior and able seamen – its captain, 45-year-old Ernst Lindemann, referred to by his crew as ‘our father’, and Fleet Commander, 51-year-old Admiral Gunther Lütjens.

From Poland, the two ships passed Norway where their presence was picked up by the British. British aircraft and ships, keeping a safe distance, monitored their progress as the German ships skirted north of Iceland and then south down the Denmark Straits between Iceland and Greenland. It was here, in the Denmark Straits, that the British fleet, led by the HMS *Hood* and *Prince of Wales*, was ordered to intercept.

Hood - “The embodiment of British sea-power”

Built in 1916, the *Hood* was, according to Kennedy, “the embodiment of British sea-power and the British Empire between the wars.” But the *Hood* had been built at a time, during the First World War when enemy shells came in low and hit the sides of a ship near the water line. But in 1941 shells were more likely to arch across the sky and fall onto the upper decks. The decks of the *Hood* had never been reinforced and therein lay its weak spot. The “embodiment of British sea-power” had been built for a different war.

The Battle of Denmark Straits

In the early hours of 24/05/1941, the opposing fleets with their imposing ships engaged. Thirteen miles apart the ships fired one-ton shells that, travelling at 1,600 miles per hour, took almost a minute to reach their intended target. The noise, which could be heard in Iceland, was horrendous.

The battle lasted merely twenty minutes and both the *Bismarck* and the *Prince of Wales* took direct hits, but it was the fate of the *Hood* that stunned the world. A shell from the *Bismarck* hit the *Hood* on its vulnerable upper deck, tore through the ship and penetrated its ammunition room, causing an almighty explosion.

The ship sliced into two, its front end dramatically lifting out of the water. A huge fireball rocketed into the sky, followed by plumes of dense black smoke, with pieces of molten metal shooting like so many white stars, as one German sailor described it. Within five minutes, the HMS *Hood*, pride

of the Royal Navy, had sunk. It was no more. Of its crew of 1,421 men, all were killed – except for three.

The crew of the *Bismarck* was jubilant. For this they would be the toast of Germany. The *Prince of Wales* was also struggling, having been hit seven times. The German crew wanted to give chase and finish her off but Lindemann, as captain, not wanting to expose the *Bismarck* unnecessarily, erred on the side of caution and resisted the temptation.

Also, of greater concern for Lindemann, the *Bismarck* had been hit by a shell that failed to explode but had caused damage to her fuel tanks. Serious damage.

Leaking oil at an alarming rate, Lindemann knew he had to get her back to safety. He decided on Saint-Nazaire , northern France, a distance of 1,700 miles, a journey of some four days.

The *Prinz Eugene* and the *Bismarck* parted ways. The joy of the *Bismarck's* crew had evaporated. Now there was nothing but concern – could they escape the British, could they make it all the way to France? The ship was limping – the fuel leak had forced the captain to greatly reduce speed. France seemed a long way away.

Sink the *Bismarck*

Meanwhile, in Britain, a nation reeled in shock, stunned by the loss of the *Hood*. It demanded retaliation. Churchill, reflecting the public mood, issued his famous battle cry: "Sink the *Bismarck*!"



A fleet consisting of four battleships, two battle cruisers, two aircraft carriers, 21 destroyers and 13 cruisers was dispatched. The chase was on.

Boldre parish church in the New Forrest has a Hood memorial chapel

Hood memorial chapel in New Forrest - family church of Admiral Holland

St John the Baptist Church, Boldre occupies a beautiful location, standing aside the valley of the River Boldre as it cuts it's way through the New Forest.

Inside the church, a corner honours those killed when HMS Hood was hit. Amongst those killed was Vice Admiral L.E Holland CB, who worshiped at the church along with his family. Once it was realized that HMS Hood was to have no

official memorial, Mrs Phyllis Holland did all that was required to establish a memorial in the church. It occupies a peaceful corner. This area, known as the "Hood Chapel", contains a number of *Hood*-related items to include, but not limited to an ornate Roll of Honour, a gun tampon, a large painting by the late artist Montague Dawson and models of both *Hood* and *Bismarck*. There is a bench with an ornate Hood badge, runners and pillows featuring the ship's badge, plus a small, but ornate stain glassed window also featuring the *Hood's* crest.

The very strength of such an ancient building is that it can carry with it the memories of so much history and the result is a very memorable historic site.

Northern Ireland's football penalty link with the Hood

It is estimated that as many as 9,000 men served aboard the "Mighty Hood" during the operational portion of her 21 year career. One of the more famous from Northern Ireland to serve was Cecil Robert McCrum was born in Milford, Northern Ireland in 1892. He was the only son of William and Maud McCrum of Milford House.

His father William invented the penalty kick rule in football in 1889. His mother was born Maud Mary Squires, the daughter of Dr. W.W. Squires of Montreal Canada. She was one of the first female graduates of Toronto University. The Mc Crum family owned the linen manufacturing firm of

McCrum Watson and Merrcer which supplied linen to the Titanic.

Cecil was called 'Patrick' by his family and 'George' by everyone else. He was educated at the Royal Naval Colleges, Osbourne and Dartmouth, and joined the Navy in 1905. He reached the rank of Captain RN on the Hood and would have gone on further had it not been for the Invergordon mutiny. In 1931 at the time of the mutiny he was second in command. The admiralty described him as "the most brilliant officer of his year and possibly of his generation". He was forced to resign by the admiralty because he sympathized with the crew during the mutiny.

He married Ivy Nicholson the second daughter of William and Ethel Nicholson of Bexhill-on-Sea. They had four sons - Patrick (born 1917 died 1922), Antony (born 1919) Michael (born 1924) and Robert.

The three surviving sons went on to have highly distinguished careers in the Royal Navy with Michael also being a college master and Vice Chancellor.



HMS Hood – Roll of Honour

+BERNER, Robert Victor

RN: Leading Writer. D/MX 60040. HMS Hood. Died 24/05/1941, the day after his 22nd birthday. Son of Robert Victor and Catherine Berner, Tullyveery, Killyleagh. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 55. Killyleagh WM

+BROWN, Henry James

RN. AB. P/J 97379. Died 24/05/1941. Age 36. HMS Hood. Husband of Hilda May Brown.

+ERSKINE, John Gordon Morrison

RN. (Special Entry), 1925. Lieutenant-Commander (E) Oct., 1930. HMS Hood. Died 24/05/1941. Age 33. John Gordon Morrison Erskine attended Campbell College from 1919 until 1925 and he played cricket for the school. In 1925 he joined the Royal Navy (Special Entry) and attended Keyham Royal Naval Engineering College in Plymouth. He became Lieutenant (E) in 1930 and Lieutenant Commander (E) in 1939.

A short biography was published in the July 1941 edition of *The Campbellian*:

‘By the death on service of Lieutenant Commander J.G.M. Erskine the Navy has lost an officer of great ability and promise. After passing second into the Engineering branch

of the Royal Navy at the Special Entry examination in 1925, he passed out first from Keyham and followed this up by a distinguished record in the *Dagger* course at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich. Most of his subsequent service until the outbreak of war was at the Admiralty. He lost his life on HMS *Hood* in the recent battle in the Atlantic’.

Son of Robert M Erskine and Eleanor Erskine. Husband to Nancy Erskine, Holywood. Brother of Pilot Officer, Basil Pollock Erskine. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 45. Holywood and District WM, Campbell College WM

+HANNA, Robert

Royal Navy. Plumber 3rd Class.P/MX 56977. Died 24/05/1941. Age 31. Joined HMS Hood circa 1939. Born on 09 /05/1912 in Lurgan. Robert assisted his father in the family’s extensive plumbing business. He was also known to be a keen football player (fullback and centre-forward) having played for Central, Sunnyside, Celtic II and Glenavon. Third son of William David and Elizabeth Hanna, High Street, Lurgan; husband to Phyllis Lilian Hanna (married in 1939), of Stedham, Sussex. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 56

+KEENAN, Robert John

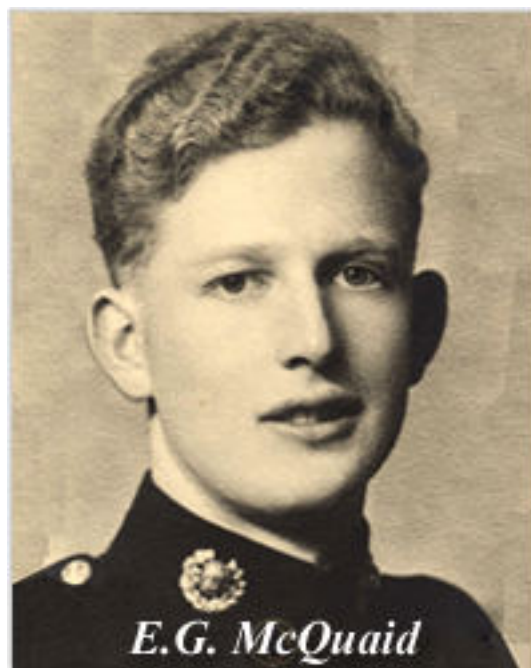
RN. Stoker 2nd Class. P/KX 116918. Died 24/05/1941. Age 24. HMS Hood. Son of William Keenan and of Agnes Keenan (nee White), Portglenone. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 56

+KELLY, Robert

RN. Petty Officer Stoker. P/KX 75556. Date of Death: 24/05/1941. Age: 41. HMS Hood. Son of James and Margaret Kelly; husband of Matilda Armstrong Kelly, Culmore, Co. Londonderry. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 54

+LYNCH, James Francis

Petty Officer S & S. P/MX46844. HMS Hood. Died 24/05/1941. Age 31. N. Atlantic. Son of Michael and Hannah Lynch; husband to Elizabeth Lynch. Limavady. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 57. Limavady RNA RH



+McQUADE, Ernest George

RM. Marine. PO/X 3494. Date of Death: 24/05/1941. Age: 19. HMS Hood. Ernest joined the Marines in September 1938. He served under the name "McQuade". He was a member of *Hood's* Number Four 4" gun crew. Along with other marines from Hood, Ernest is known to have participated in Operation Primrose in Norway and Operation

"Catapult" (Mers-el-Kebir) in 1940. Younger brother Douglas in HMS Rodney since prior to the war. Born 13/06/1921. Father served with Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in WW1, and was seriously injured at the Battle of the Somme. Son of Robert and Ellen McQuade, Albert Place, Armagh. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 31/05/1944). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 39

+O'CONNELL, John Felix

RN. Petty Officer. P/JX 143771. Died 24/05/1941. Age: 27. HMS Hood. Lived at Lake End, Camlough. Son of David and Margaret Anne O'Connell, Camlough. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 46. Bessbrook WM

+SHEARER, George Bramato Brown

RN. Leading Cook (S). P/MX 59307. Died 24/05/1941. Age 26. HMS Hood. Son of Robert and Margaret Shearer, Portrush. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 57

+SHEPHERD, Lambert Charles

RN. Ordinary Seaman. P/JX 223842. Died 24/05/1941. Age 30. HMS Hood. B 29/02/1911 in Hale, Cheshire. Shrewsbury School and Jesus College, Cambridge. Graduated 1933 with first class honours in Classics and a second class honours in English literature. His family came to Northern Ireland around 1922 when his father Major Shepherd became Director of Works for the Government of Northern Ireland. Only son of Major Percy Shepherd and Mrs. Ella Shepherd, Knockmore Pk., Bangor. Husband to Iris Eunice Shepherd. B.A., Hons. (Cantab.). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 51

+STEWART, Thomas

AB. P/JX 127556. Died 24/05/1941. Age 30. HMS Hood, 15 years old when he joined up. 15 years service. Took part in battle of Narvik and the action at Oran. He had qualified as a diver. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 07/06/1941). Son of Robert and Mary Stewart, North Ann St., Belfast. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 49

+STOTHERS, Hugh

RN. AB.P/JX 148611. Died 24/05/1941. Age 23. HMS Hood. 8 years service. Son of Mrs. Rebecca Stothers, Bloomfield St., Belfast. Husband to J. Stothers, Hartlepool, Co. Durham. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 49

+TELFORD, Charles

RM. Marine. PO/X 3647. Died 24/05/1941. HMS Hood.. Born Ballee, Co Down. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 59

+WATSON, Robert

RNVR. AB. P/UD/X 1551. Died 24/05/1941. Age 20. HMS Hood. Trained in HMS Caroline. Son of Robert and Susanah Watson, Medway St., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 31/05/1940). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 61



Roll of Honour – May 24

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+BARLOW, James

Royal Irish Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Private. 11453. Died 24/05/1915. Disembarked France 22/08/1914. Son of James and Kathleen Barlow, of Forkhill, Co. Armagh. His effects went to his brother Daniel. Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, France

+DONNELLY, Joseph

Royal Dublin Fusiliers Service, 2nd Btn. Private. 9563. Died 24/05/1915. Aged 20. Born about 1895 in Annagher, County Tyrone. His father was a hackler. Joseph Donnelly enlisted in Dungannon. Son of Mr. and Mrs. B. Donnelly, of 20, Springview St., Belfast. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium. Dungannon WM

+GIVAN, Mervyn Ross

Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians). Private. 14536. Died 24/05/1915. He was the youngest son of the John Givan and Araminta Reid Givan (nee Ross). Mervyn was born in Ballygawley on 25/12/ 1887. He was 25 years old when he enlisted in Valcartier, Quebec, Canada on the

24/09/1914. He was married to Mildred Givan and working as a printer. Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.
Ballygawley War Dead Book

+HARPER, George

North Irish Horse. Private. 899. Died 24/05/1915. Age 21. Born in Errigal, Tyrone on 05/09/1893. Son of William and Martha Jane Harper, of Corcreevy, Fivemiletown. They were a farming family. His father died when he was ten. George enlisted in Fivemiletown. Netley Military Cemetery, Southampton

+McGINLEY, James

Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Fusilier. 19435 died at Flanders on 24/05/1915. Aged 26,

On 24/05/1915, the 2nd Dublin Fusiliers were subjected to a major gas attack at Mouse Trap Farm, a Flemish chalet about two and a half miles from Ypre's Menin Gate. Close to 3am, red lights speckled in the skies overhead. The Germans had begun firing chlorine gas. The gas came 'drifting down wind in a solid bank some three miles in length and forty feet in depth, bleaching the grass, blighting the trees and leaving a broad scar of destruction behind it.' The RDF trenches were about 35 metres from the German lines. The soldiers desperately attempted to evade the poison but it was useless. Many dropped instantly, the others were picked off by the quick-moving German infantry.

By 2130, out of a strength of 668, 647 were casualties, 149 listed dead. Included among the fatalities was Sergeant William Malone, whose brother, Lieutenant Michael Malone,

Irish Volunteers, was an Easter Rising casualty, killed at Northumberland Street, on April 26, 1916.

Another 2nd Dublin Fusilier fatality at Mouse Trap Farm on May 24, 1915, was former Irish Rugby International Captain, Basil Maclear. His brother, Lieutenant Colonel Percy Maclear was also killed in action on August 30, 1914, and is remembered on the Lokoja Memorial, Nigeria.

James McGinley was a son of Charles and Mary J. McGinley, 18, Cross Street, Waterside, Londonderry. He was also the brother of Ellen J.; Charlotte; Charles; Joseph; Patrick; Michael; and Francis. His name is recorded on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium, and commemorated on the Diamond War Memorial.

+McINTYRE, James

Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Fusilier. 9977 died at Flanders on 24/05/1915. Private McIntyre was stationed with his battalion in India for six years, and had been at the Front since December 1914. Describing the activities of the 2nd Irish Fusiliers in the month Private McIntyre lost his life, Henry Harris, author of The Royal Irish Fusiliers, wrote: 'In the mid-May fighting the 1st and 2nd Battalions were on the right and left of their respective divisional fronts...It was the closest the two battalions were to come for the rest of the war. They shared adversity at this time; the mere occupation of trenches, without attacks, cost the 2nd Battalion two officers killed and four wounded and 192 other rank casualties during the month of May.' He was the brother of Charles McIntyre, 2, Artisan Street, Rosemount, Derry, and his remains are interred in Bailleul Communal Cemetery

Extension, Nord, France. His name is commemorated on the Diamond War Memorial.

+McKEE, R

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Lance Corporal. 6766. Died 24/05/1915. Age 32. Served in the South African Campaign with the RAMC. Son of Mrs. Mary Ann McKee, of 77, Greenwell St., Newtownards; husband to Mary McKee, of 101, Mill St., Newtownards. Dickebusch New Military Cemetery, Belgium

+McPARTLAND. Bernard

Royal Irish Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Private. 8444. Died 24/05/1915. Disembarked France 22/08/1914. In 1901 he was living at Mullatrea, Richhill, with his mother Isabella, his brother Francis and his sister Kate. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial Belgium. Richhill WM

+MILLER, Joseph Ewing Bruce

Royal Irish Rifles, 5th Btn (attached 1st), Lieutenant. Born on 02/01/1895, and died from terrible shrapnel wounds, in the chest and shoulder, at the Field Hospital, St Omer, France, on 24/05/1915. Aged 20. Lieutenant Miller, after the outbreak of the Great War, received a commission in the 5th Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles, and was stationed in Belfast up till March 16, 1915, when he went to the Front and was attached to the 1st Battalion.

At a sitting of the Londonderry Rural Petty Sessions, held on Wednesday, June 9, 1915, tribute was paid to Lieutenant Bruce Miller, and a number of Derry men, who had recently fallen in the field of battle. Lieutenant Colonel Cecil H.

Browne-Lecky, D.L., who presided, said before proceeding with the business he wished, on behalf of the Bench, to express deep regret with reference to the sad loss a number of Derry families and some of their present brother justices had recently sustained. They desired to express sincere sympathy with one of their number, Dr Joseph Miller, on the loss of his fine and valiant son, who fell on the field of battle fighting for his country; with another of their colleagues, Mr Marshall Tillie, on the death of his son-in-law, Captain Geddes; also with the relatives of Captain Valentine Gilliland, Brookhall, whose father, the late Mr G. K. Gilliland. D.L., was a well known and eminent citizen and a constant attender at that bench.

They also deeply regretted the death of Lieutenant W. M. M. Gilliland, a son of Mrs Louis Gilliland; and of Captain Goold-Adams, whose father, the Venerable Archdeacon of Derry, was for many years a distinguished Derry clergyman. It was a source of great regret to the Bench that so many young lives were sacrificed when doing their duty for the welfare and safety of the United Kingdom.

There were, the Chairman added, many more young men in all stages of life who could follow these brilliant examples, and it was a pity that so far as Ireland was concerned, in spite of what had been done, more did not come forward to give effect to the magnificent fighting qualities of the race.

The name of Bruce Miller was read out during a memorial service held in St Columb's (Church of Ireland) Cathedral, Londonderry, on Sunday, August 1, 1915, to commemorate the officers and men of the city of Derry, who had died during the first year of the Great War.

His name was also 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.

Bruce Miller belonged to a family that had been connected with the city of Londonderry for centuries. His great-grandfather, Dr Joseph Ewing Miller, a son of the Reverend Henry Miller, Presbyterian minister of Old Glendermott, served on the Corporation from 1832 to 1880, having been a member of the old Corporation which was abolished in 1841. He was Mayor of the next Corporation, known as the Reformed Corporation, which came into being in 1842, and held this position, during his forty-eight years' membership, no fewer than seven times. Bruce Miller's grandfather, Sir William Miller, J.P., M.B., of Termonbacca, served on Londonderry Corporation for thirty-two years, and was five times Mayor, in 1875-76-77-78-79.

Bruce Miller's father, Dr Joseph Ewing Miller, has been described as genial and courteous in disposition, and skilful and conscientious as a physician. He was medical officer to the Post Office Department in the city of Londonderry, and also to the Prisons Board. He was also one of the honorary staff of the Infirmary, of which for a long succession of years his father was surgeon in charge. He married Miss Helen Stewart Bruce, daughter of Major Bruce, of Crawford Square. Their only daughter died not long after her husband, Captain Charles Norman, D.L., was killed in France during the Great War (Florinda, a little daughter of Captain and Mrs Norman, survived).

Bruce Miller was the son of Dr Joseph Ewing and Helen Stewart Miller, Pump Street, Londonderry. He was educated

at Foyle College, and belonged to the Apprentice Boys of Derry Club of Apprentice Boys of Derry. His remains are interred in Longuenesse (St Omer) Souvenir Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, and his name is inscribed on St Columb's Cathedral (Church of Ireland) Memorial to the men connected to that cathedral who died during the 1914-18 War. His name is also commemorated on the Diamond War Memorial.

+QUINN, John

Royal Irish Fusiliers. 4th Btn. Private. 17803. Died 24/05/1915. He was from Cullyhanna. His effects were left to his widow, Catherine, and children. Milltown Roman Catholic Cemetery, Belfast

+RAMSHAW, William Greenwell

Durham Light Infantry, 1st/7th (Territorial Force) Btn. Private. 3221. Died 24/05/1915 on the first day of the Battle for Bellewaarde during the Second Battle of Ypres. Age 23. Son of William and Mary Elizabeth Ramshaw, of 27 Mount Road East, Sunderland, County Durham. Ypres Reservoir Cemetery, Belgium. Strandtown WM

+SLEETH, William

Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. 1st/9th Btn. Private. 2651. Died 24/05/1915. It is believed that his parents came from County Armagh and lived in Scotland where he too resided. His service records show aunts and uncles resident in the Kilkmore area of Co. Armagh. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial Belgium

+TONER, John

Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 9552. Died 24/05/1915. Age 40. Born on 10/12/1875. He was one of ten children, seven surviving all born in Dungannon town area. Son of William and Sarah Toner, of Beech Valley, Dungannon. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium. Dungannon WM

+VENNARD, Frederick

6th Dragoons (Inniskilling). Private. 4123. Died 24/05/1915. Bedford House Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Seapatricks C of I Parish WM, Banbridge

1916

+McLAREN, Matthew

Seaforth Highlanders, 1st/4th Btn. Private. 3971. Died 24/05/1916. Age 30. Born in County Antrim about 1886. Enlisted in Belfast. Son of William and Mary McLaren, of Moneymore. Louez Military Cemetery, Louez-les-Duisans, Pas de Calais, France.

1917

+BROOKE, Patrick Harry

RN. Sub - Lieutenant. HMS Courageous. Died 24/05/1917 on active service with enteric fever. Aged 22. Son of Sir Harry Vesey Brooke, K.B.E. and Lady Brooke, of Fairley, Countesswells, Aberdeen. His paternal grandfather was Sir Arthur Brinsley Brooke Bt, MP for Colebrook, County Fermanagh, who had also served in the 92nd Regiment. His

paternal grandmother was the Honourable Julia Henrietta Brooke nee Anson, a Maid of Honour to Queen Victoria. Brother of James Otto Anson Brooke VC, Gordon Highlanders, died 29/10/1914 at Gheluvelt, Belgium. and Captain Henry Brian Brooke, Gordon Highlanders, died at Mametz 24/07/1916. Springbank Cemetery, Aberdeen. Enniskillen WM. IMR

+HOGG, Walter Gordon

Royal Irish Rifles. 15th Btn. Lieutenant. Died 24/05/1917. Age 22. Son of Walter Gordon Hogg, of Mertoun, Knock, Co. Down. Pond Farm Cemetery, Belgium

+MAGEE, Samuel

East Lancashire Regiment. Lance Serjeant. 8285. Died 24/05/1917. Age 33. Prior to the war, Samuel Magee had previously served in India and South Africa. He received severe gunshots to face. He was returned to Nottingham War Hospital where he died. Born in Cookstown about 1884. Samuel Magee enlisted in Belfast. He was living in Greenock, west of Glasgow. Samuel had gone to France at the outbreak of the war in August 1914. Son of Samuel and Annie Magee, of 38, Main St., Greenock; husband to Sarah Jackson Magee. Greenock Cemetery, Cookstown War Dead Book WW1

1918

+MILLER, W

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 9th Btn. Private. 31387. Died 24/05/1918. Age 19. Son of William Miller, of 21A, Ayr St., York Rd., Belfast. Esquelbecq Military Cemetery, France

1940

+CAIRNS, Samuel

Royal Artillery, 3 Searchlight Regt. 10 Bty., Gunner. 1465695. Died 24/05/1940. Age 31. Son of Samuel and Mary Cairns; husband to Christina Cairns, of Belfast. Dunkirk Memorial, France

+LEONARD, Patrick

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 6977063. Died 24/05/1940. Son of James and Sarah Leonard, of Strabane, Co. Tyrone. Annezin Communal Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

+MILLS, Robert

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Fusilier. 6975262. Died 24/05/1940. Son of Alexander and Mary Mills, of Ballymoney; husband to Isabella Mills, of Worthing, Sussex. Fleurbaix Communal Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

+MURRAY, James

Royal Artillery, 3 Searchlight Regt. 10 Bty. Gunner. 1468833. Died 24/05/1940. Age 30. Husband of Susan Murray, of Belfast. Les Moeres Communal Cemetery, France

1941

+BERNER, Robert Victor

RN. HMS Hood. Leading Writer. D/MX 60040. Died 24/05/1941. Age 22. He was onboard Hood when the ship battled the Bismarck. Son of Robert Victor and Catherine

Berner, Killyleagh. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 55.
Killyleagh WM

+BROWNE, George Alfred

RN. Leading Stoker. D S M. D/KX 81441. HMS Shikari. Died 24/05/1941. Age: 27. George won the DSM for bravery at Dunkirk. He was serving on the destroyer HMS Shikkari. Along with two comrades he manned a small boat and saved several people from drowning. Tragically he lost his life in May 1941 in a drowning accident while serving in Barrow in Furness. Son of Richard and Margaret Browne, Long Commons, Coleraine. Barrow-in-Furnace Cemetery

+ERSKINE, John Gordon Morrison

RN. Lieut-Commander (E). Died 24/05/1941. Age 33. HMS Hood. Special Entry 1925. Lieut-Commander 1930. Son of Robert M Erskine JP and Eleanor Erskine (nee Pollock). Husband to Nancy Erskine, Holywood. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 45. Campbell College 1625

+McQUADE, Ernest George

Royal Marines. Marine. PO/X 3494. HMS Hood. Died 24/05/1941. Age 19. Son of Robert and Ellen McQuade, of Armagh. Plymouth Naval Memorial

1942

+MONTGOMERY, Neil Morrison

RAF. Aircraftman. 1st Class. 622499. Died 24/05/1942. Son of William Moore Montgomery and Edith Morrison Montgomery, Belfast. Nairobi War Cemetery, Kenya

1943

+McMULLAN, William Neil

RAFVR. Sergeant (Wireless Op./Air Gunner). 1088074. Died 24/05/1943. Aged 21. RAF No. 1654 Heavy Conversion Unit. He was on board Avro Lancaster W4303 UG-D. The Mark I bomber took off from RAF Wigsley, Nottinghamshire at 2323hrs on 23/05/1943. The flight was a night navigation exercise with a fighter affiliation exercise.

The exercise was the final part of the crew's training and saw them simulate a bombing raid on the town of Hull. At around 0300hrs on 24/05/1943, the Lancaster was 10,000 feet above Hull, Yorkshire. Local defences lit up the skies with searchlights as part of the exercise. The bomber crew took evasive action, entering a diving turn during which the tail fins failed.

At 0308hrs on 24/05/1943, the plane broke up mid-air and crashed near the village of Humbleton, Yorkshire. All members of the crew died as a result of the crash.

William was the son of Frederick and Annie W. McMullan of Belfast. Belfast City Cemetery, Glenalina Extension. On 29/05/2016, a local group in Humbleton, Yorkshire, unveiled a memorial to the crew at St. Peter's Church.

+PLENDERLEITH, Norman Peter

RAFVR. Sergeant (Navigator). 1504640. Died 24/05/1943. Aged 24.10 Sqdn. He was on board Halifax HR696 on a mission when the aircraft crashed with the loss of all crew.

Son of James P. and Essie E. Plenderleith, of Balmoral, Belfast. Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany

1944

+MACARDLE, Arthur Aloysius

RAFVR. Sergeant (Wireless Op./Air Gunner).1136009. Died 24/05/1944. Aged 24. He was the youngest son of the late Peter Joseph Macardle and Mary Ann Macardle of 80 University Street, Belfast, Co. Antrim, and husband to Mary Freda Macardle of Streatham, London. Milltown Cemetery, Belfast

+STEWART, Thomas

Royal Artillery. 69 LAA. Regt. Gunner. 7013277. Died 24/05/1944. Aged 23. Son of James and Martha Stewart; husband to F. A. Stewart, of Armagh. Rangoon Memorial, Myanmar

1945

+QUIGG, John McMullan

RN. AB. D/JX 302542. Died 24/05/1945. Aged 24. Son of Robert and Elizabeth Quigg, Bushmills.

+TOMLINSON, Joseph

Royal Army Service Corps, 378th General Transport Company. Driver. T/13009997. Died 24/05/1945. Aged 45. He was from Gilford, Co. Down. Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany. Gilford WM

VETERANS

DARLING, Rupert Thomas Shillington

RNVR. Sub.Lieutenant (SP). Ap Sci, QUB 1943. MSc (thesis) QUB 1954. Died 24/05/2016 near Bath, aged 91. Husband to the late Elaine Margaret nee Pease

DENNISON, Phyllis C

WAAF. MCB. Born 24/05/1921. Daughter of Rev WT Dennison, Larne. Married Albert E Jeffers, Castlebellingham 1948.

**Every day is a Remembrance
Day**

We will remember them

On this Day – May 24

1914

London Unionists drilling in support of the Ulster Volunteer Force were presented with colours at Wealdstone.

Organised under the auspices of the British League for the Support of Ulster and the Union, this body sometimes referred to as the 'Union Jack Corps'

1915

John Condon from Waterford died during a German chlorine attack on the Western Front. For a long time Condon was considered the youngest soldier to die in WW1 at 14 years of age. However, he was most likely 18 years old at death.

1916.

At the Battle of Verdun the Germans capture Cumieres and regain Fort Douaumont.

1939

The British Fleet Air Arm was transferred from the Royal Air Force to Admiralty control and renamed as the Air Branch of the Royal Navy

1940

A secret meeting was held in London between members of Irish Military Intelligence and the British Armed Forces. Its purpose was to plan joint military operations in the event of an invasion of Ireland by Nazi Germany – known as 'Plan W.'

German aircraft sank British destroyer Wessex off the coast of Calais, France.

At 0248 hours, the unescorted neutral 3,994-ton Greek cargo steamer Kyma was struck by a torpedo from German

submarine U-37 when sailing about 175 miles south of Cape Clear Island, Ireland and about 200 miles west of Brest, France. The attack was made without warning and despite the neutrality markings.

King Leopold III assumed command of the Belgian Army. German troops captured Ghent and Tournai, Belgium.
ww2dbase

The Polish destroyer Burza was ordered to join the British destroyers HMS Vimiera (L 29) and HMS Wessex (D 43) and shell German positions in Calais area on the French coast. At 1620 hours the Allied vessels opened fire on a German armoured column at Sangatte Hill, west of Calais. Ten minutes later they were attacked by 27 German aircraft which hit and sank HMS Wessex about 5 miles off of the coast. HMS Vimiera managed to escape.

In France, the German 10th Panzer Division began an attack on Calais and captured the town of Boulogne (capturing 5,000 Allied troops), Maubeuge, and Saint-Omer. To the north, the German 1st Panzer Division reached the Aa Canal 10 miles from Dunkerque in an attempt to cut off the Allied troops in Belgium. At this key moment, Adolf Hitler interfered and ordered the tanks to pull back; he was promised by Hermann Göring that the Luftwaffe would be able to prevent the Allied evacuation from taking place; German Army generals protested, but to no avail.

British Lieutenant Christopher Furness, the son of Viscount Furness, was killed in hand to hand fighting near Arras, France after his Bren gun carrier group engaged a vastly

superior enemy force in order to allow a convoy to escape. He was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross.

The 2,939-ton passenger steamship Brighton, in service with the British Admiralty as a hospital ship, was bombed and sunk by German aircraft at Dieppe, France.

1941

At 0552 hours, battleship Bismarck reported 'in fight with two heavy units' as she was engaged by British warships. Between 0555 and 0601 hours, she was hit on the port side by three shells from HMS Prince of Wales, but by 0601 she was able to sink HMS Hood.

King George II of Greece departed Crete, Greece for Cairo, Egypt.

The British government collected £124,000,000 in donations after a week-long War Weapon Week event. ww2dbase Allied troops began to fall back southward in Crete, Greece. German bombers attacked Chaniá on the northern coast, causing great damage. After dark, British minelayer HMS Abdiel transported 200 British commandos from Alexandria, Egypt to Suda Bay, Crete; another effort to transport 800 commandos to Port Lutro, Crete was canceled due to bad weather.

British Lieutenant Commander Malcolm Wanklyn of the submarine HMS Upholder won the Victoria Cross for sinking 18,017-ton Italian transport Conte Rosso 20 miles southeast of Syracuse, Sicily, Italy and surviving 37 depth charges in

20 minutes. Conte Rosso was one of the largest (maximum passenger capacity of 2,366) and most luxurious passenger ships built at the Dalmuir Shipyards in Scotland, United Kingdom; at her launch she stuck on the slips and it took two weeks before she was re-launched. She was converted into a troop ship in 1940. 1,291 perished as Conte Rosso sank. By the end of the year Wanklyn would sink 140,000 tons of enemy shipping; Wanklyn and Upholder would be lost off Tripoli, Libya in Apr 1942.

1942

German bombers attacked the Royal Navy seaplane training center at Poole in southern England

1943

US troops mopped up the final Japanese opposition groups in the Aleutian Islands. Overall in this campaign, the 2,600 Japanese men were wiped out at a cost of 550 American lives.

SS-Hauptsturmfuehrer Dr. Josef Mengele arrived at Auschwitz Concentration Camp. He was soon to begin experiments on prisoners.

1944

Japanese troops captured Gibraltar Hill and attacked Lone Tree Hill near Imphal, India. To the north at Kohima, Indian 7th Division began an offensive against Dyer Hill, Pimple Hill, and Big Tree Hill.

The German Senger Line south of Rome, Italy was breached by troops of Canadian 1st Infantry Division, Canadian 5th Armoured Division, and II Polish Corps.
ww2dbase

1945

38 (Irish) Brigade .2 LIR in Austria:

Political and Military Situation -

In the area are located 7 German hospitals administered by 5 Bn CCS. Also in the area are several Austrian Reserve Lazarette all containing wounded or sick enemy soldiers. The total number of troops being 1,500. No fraternisation with the local population was allowed. All displaced civilians were directed to the Divisional Civilian Camp at Spittal. Any requests for passes were directed to the Town Commandant, an officer from the Guards Brigade in an office in the same building as Bn HQ.

2 LIR:

1500 Pipe Band played **Lt Col HEN Bredin DSO MC** out of Bn HQ. As per tradition, the CO's car was pulled by the sergeants for the 1st stage of his journey to take up a new position at Divisional HQ.

Lt Col JM Coldwell-Horsfall DSO MC assumed command of the bn.

At Salzburg, Austria, Field Marshal Robert Ritter von Greim, head of the Luftwaffe, committed suicide in American captivity. Having learnt that he was to be a part of a Soviet-American prisoner exchange and, fearing torture and

execution at the hands of the Russians, he took cyanide. His final words were: "I am the head of the Luftwaffe, but have no Luftwaffe."

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

Copyright - all material in this **remembrance ni** publication is copyright, and must not be reproduced in print or electronically.
