



remembrance ni



Bangor pilot fought in Battle of Britain, Russia and Africa

Thomas McCann was born in Lisburn in 1919, the eldest son of Thomas A. M. McCann, an Income Tax Inspector and his wife Florence McCann (nee Sheppard).



Thomas was educated at Bangor Grammar School, and on leaving took up a position with the Belfast Harbour Commissioners.

He joined the RAFVR in January, 1939, and was called up on the outbreak of war, got his wings on his 21st birthday.

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He had been attached to 213 Squadron and, on July 27th 1942, was scrambled from Landing Ground 154, south-west of Alexandria. The squadron was bounced by Me109s as they took off and he and two other pilots were killed.

Thomas was survived by his wife Barbara Bradshaw and an eight-month-old daughter.

Mr. M. Wilkins, M.A., Headmaster of Bangor Grammar School, writing of Thomas stated:—

“It was with deep regret that we learn that hope appears to be abandoned for the safety of Pilot-Officer Thomas A. M'Cann, last week reported to have been killed on active service in the Middle East. Another young life has been added to the tragic and glorious roll of Old Boys of Bangor Grammar School who have made the supreme sacrifice in the present war. To-day we reckon their number at seventeen, while the fate of at least three more is still uncertain and two others are prisoners of war.

“Tom M'Cann joined the School in September, 1931, at the age of twelve, and was with us for three years. It seems a long time ago, but the memory of that slight active little fair-haired figure and of his blue eyes and friendly humorous smile seems as vivid as yesterday. He was not a scholar, but everyone liked him, and he joined with goodwill and enthusiasm in all the activities and rough-and-tumble of school life. He never gave any trouble that I knew of, for his heart was in the right place in boyhood as in manhood. He was just a good sample of the average boy — inconspicuous and modest, but capable of quiet heroism in response to inspiring leadership. His great day came when unexpectedly he won the Mile Race at the annual athletic sports! Aged only fifteen and looking absurdly small to be the winner, he ran with graceful action and perfect steadiness: never was there so popular a win, never do I remember such a scene of delighted excitement. His name became a household word with us, and it was no surprise to hear in later years, of his front-line service with the Royal Air Force and of his pioneer work in flying Hurricanes to the North Russian front.

“It is a great privilege and responsibility to have the care of boys like Tom M'Cann in the critical years when they are growing into men. And an even greater responsibility rests upon us all to labour that the Divine Purpose inherent in such lives and deaths may be fulfilled.”



On this day – July 26

1915 Interesting Belfast Wedding

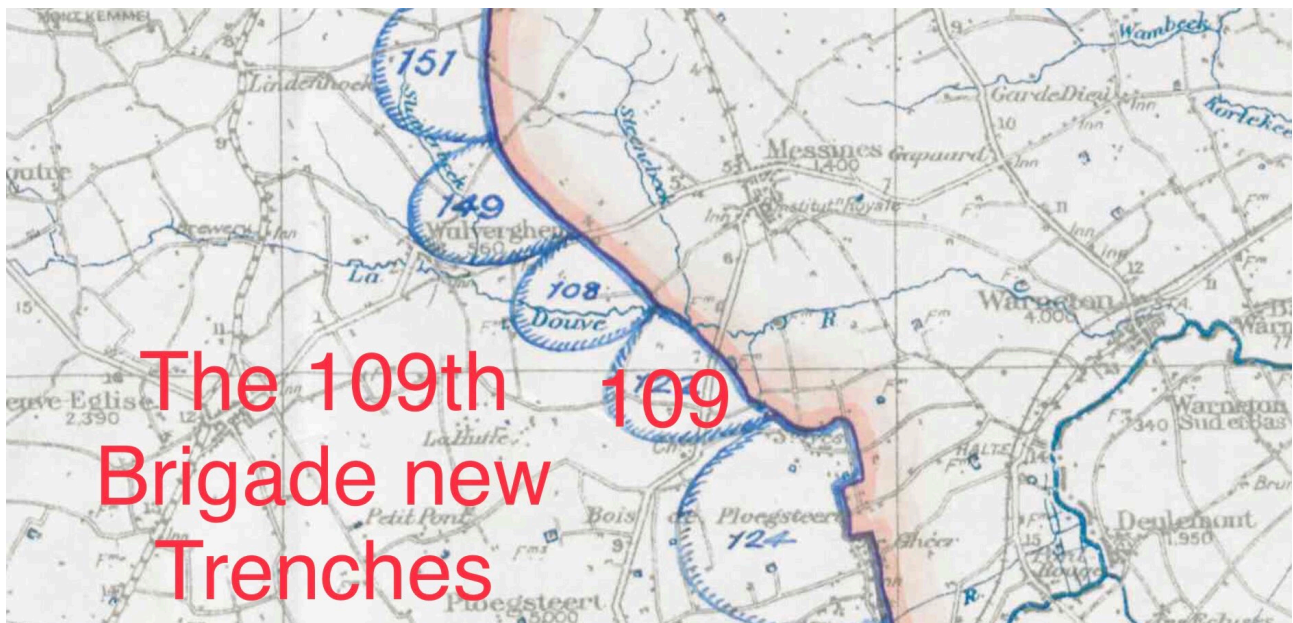
WEDGWOOD--CHARLESSON -- July 27, at Mountpottinger Methodist Church, by the father of the bridegroom, assisted by the Rev. J. Howe, Engineer-Lieutenant George Alexander Wedgwood, R.N., eldest son of the Rev. G. R. Wedgwood, Belfast, to Caroline Annie, daughter of Richard W. Charlesson, Mountpottinger, Belfast.

“The Witness” - Friday 30/07/1915 -

An interesting ceremony took place on Tuesday in Mountpottinger Methodist Church, when Engineer-Lieutenant Geo. A. Wedgwood, Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, eldest son of the Rev. Georgia R. Wedgwood, University Road Methodist Church, an ex-Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, was married to Miss Carrie A.

Charlesson, third daughter of Mr. R. W. Charlesson, a well-known Mountpottinger resident, and a grandson of the late Commander R. W. Charlesson, R.N. On account of the war the wedding was of a private nature, only the immediate relatives of the contracting parties being present. The bride, who was given away by her father, was attended by Miss Edith Wedgwood and Miss Florrie Charlesson, while Mr. Montague G. Charlesson acted as best man. The officiating clergy were the bridegroom's father and the Rev. Joseph Howe, and as the bridal party left the church the "Wedding March" was played on the organ by Mr. W. A. Firth. Subsequently a reception was given in Messrs. Thompson's, Donegall Place, by Mr. and Mrs. Charlesson, and in the evening the bride and bridegroom left for the South of England, where the honeymoon will be spent. The presents were both numerous and costly.

1916



36th (Ulster) Division - 109th Brigade go into the frontline trenches and relieve the 122nd Brigade. 108th Brigade will be to their left flank & the 124th Brigade to their right. Map shows the new trenches that the 109th has taken over

British gains at Delville Wood and near Pozieres with fighting continuing at Longueval.

The Germans make two strong attacks on the French center at Ville-au-Bois, north of Aisne, and in Champagne, west of Prosnes.

27th July 1917, Belfast Newsletter Bravery in the Field

9/15849 **Sergeant Edward Reid**, 9th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, who has been awarded the Military Medal for bravery in the field, is a member of the North Belfast Regiment, Ulster Volunteer Force. He is the youngest son of the late Mr. Gregory Reid, of Glengormley, and Mrs. Reid, 52 Stratheden Street, Belfast. Sergeant Edward Reid age 23, was killed in action 7th August 1917.

1940



Destroyer HMS Wren (Photo page above) was sunk by German dive bombers with the loss of 37 lives while providing anti-aircraft cover for minesweepers off Aldeburgh, Suffolk. (Image copyright IWM). The destroyer HMS Codrington was sunk at Dover

Japan announces its plans for the creation of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

1941

London is severely bombed by the Luftwaffe, in its first air raid for 10 weeks.

German troops liberate Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. Guderian's Panzer Group 2 is removed from its subordination to von Kluge's 4th Army and put directly under the control of Army Group Centre. This is due to severe disagreements between the von Kluge and Guderian, which are disabling operations. Fierce battles rage 25 miles to the east of Smolensk.

General Douglas MacArthur enjoys his first full day in command of all U.S. armed forces in the Far East. President Roosevelt later explains MacArthur's success; "Never underestimate a man who overestimates himself."

Peru takes Puerto Bolivar, Ecuador in first paratroop combat in western hemisphere.

1942

German troops take Bataysk, and 6th Army launches an attack to destroy the soviet bridgehead west at Kalach.

British press attack at El Alamein, but fail to make gains against Germans.

Australian Women's Land Army formed for agricultural workers.

1943

The liberation of Mussolini, the occupation of Rome and Italy, plus the capture of the Italian fleet is decided upon by the German High Command. Mussolini himself is transferred from Rome to the Island of Ponza. Heavy fighting continues in Sicily, leading Kesselring to order preparations for the evacuation of the island.

1944



Britain's jet-powered Gloster Meteor, makes its combat debut.

U.S. troops breakthrough at St. Lo, forcing a general German withdrawal from Normandy toward the river Seine. The Russians take Lvov, Dunaburg and Bialystok and secure a major bridgehead over the Magnuszew River.

Further gains are also made in Baltic States.

U.S. troops complete the liberation of Guam.

1945

Chinese retake Kweilin from Japanese in southeast China.

1953

On this day in 1953, an armistice brings the Korean War to a close. The three-year conflict has cost 3.5 million lives.



Roll of Honour – July 26

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+BUTLER, Martin

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Sergeant . 8683. Died 27/07/1915 at Hooze. Pre-war regular. One of three brothers all killed in action. Born Carrickfergus? Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

+DALY, Francis Peter

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 3rd Btn. Lance Corporal. 16388. Died 27/07/1915. Age 40. Husband to Margaret Daly. Londonderry City Cemetery.

+GAMBLE, John

Scots Guards, 1st Btn. Private. 8633. Died 27/07/1915, shot through the head by a sniper. He enlisted in Glasgow around 1912. On 28/10/1914 he was wounded at Ypres and as a result spent some time in hospital before returning to the front. Son of James and Eliza Gamble. The family were originally lived in the Ballymena area but moved to Kilrea about 1884. John Gable was born in Kilrea on 11/04/1895. He was one of 10 known children. John's mother died on 23/12/1899. John was just four years old. His father was a railway porter. Cambrin Churchyard Extension, Bethune, Pas de Calais, France. Kilrea WM

+LYNAS, William

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Lance Corporal. 9631. Died 27/07/1915. Age 23. Son of Martha Lynas, of 63, Malvern St., Shankhill Rd., Belfast. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

1916

+CHAMBERS, Thomas

Machine Gun Corps, 15th Coy. Lance Corporal. 16333. Died 27/07/1916. Son of Mrs. Charlotte Chambers, of 59, Charles St. South, Belfast. Serre Road Cemetery No 2, France

+GREER, W

Seaforth Highlanders, 4th Btn. Private. 4017. Died 27/07/1916. Age 36. Son of the late John and Susannah Greer, of 92, McTier St., Belfast; husband of Elizabeth J. Greer, of 74, McTier St., Belfast. Heilly Station Cemetery, Mericourt-L'Abbe, France

+JACKSON, George

Royal Fusiliers, 23rd Btn. Private. SPTS/274. Died 27/07/1916. Age 23 years old. Son of William and Jane Jackson, of 28, South Parade, Belfast. Sucrierie Military Cemetery, Colincamps, France

+MAKEMSON, Frank Henry

Black Watch (Royal Highlanders), 6th Btn. Private. 2812. Died 27/07/1916. Age 23. Brother of Thomas Makemson, of 35, Roe St., Cliftonville, Belfast. Theipval Memorial, France

+MAXWELL, Stanley Woods

Royal Irish Rifles, 8th Btn. B Coy. 2nd Lieutenant. Died 27/07/1916 of wounds in a Prisoner of War Camp. Age 25. In February 1915 he obtained a commission in the 17th (Reserve) Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, then in Newcastle, Co Down. He went to Ballykinler Camp and from there to the Western Front. In his captivity he wrote to his mother, Mrs. Agnes Maxwell, then resident at 30, Cliftonville Avenue, Belfast - "Just to let you know I have decided to live in Germany for the remainder of the war. Am quite well with the exception of a broken leg, which is being looked after and is doing very well." Born on 23/01/1891 in Sullatober, Carrickfergus. Son of Samuel and Agnes Maxwell (nee Woods) who were married on 12/03/1884 in Ballygowan Presbyterian Church. Samuel Maxwell from Glassdrummond was a son of Adam Maxwell, a farmer. Agnes Woods from Belfast was a daughter of Andrew Woods, a farmer. For a time, Samuel Maxwell was Printworks Manager in the Sullatober Bleaching and Printing Company, Carrickfergus. Samuel and Agnes had five children. In 1901 the Maxwell family was living at 55 Dufferin Avenue, Bangor and after that they moved to Belfast where they lived at 85 Limestone Road and later at *Calloden*, North Parade. Stanley Woods Maxwell attended Bangor Grammar School and after leaving school he worked for the firm of Messrs J. Woods & Company, wholesale tea merchants in Ann Street, Belfast. Later he worked as a traveller for Messrs Byers & Company, Oxford Street, Belfast. It was reported in the Press that he was a member of the Fortwilliam Unit of the Ulster Volunteer Force, a Lieutenant in the 14th Belfast Boys' Brigade (Cherryville Street Mission), and a member of the Queen's University

Officers' Training Corps. He played rugby for the North of Ireland Football Club. At the time of Stanley's death, his brother Wilfred was serving in the Army Service Corps. Son of Mrs. Agnes Maxwell, of "Calloden," North Parade, Belfast, and the late Samuel Maxwell. St Souplet British Cemetery, France. Duncairn Presbyterian Church, Belfast, WM. North of Ireland Cricket Club Memorial Plaque. Bangor Grammar School RH.

+MINNIS, Andrew

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Private. 7909. Died 27/07/1916 of wounds. Son of William John and Susan Minnis, nee McFerran and brother of William James who also fell with Canadian forces 01/10/1918. 1901 residing with mother Susan and siblings at 34 Dewey Street, Belfast, Ireland. 1911 serving with the 1st Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in Hong Kong. Le Cateau Military Cemetery, France. Crumlin Road Methodist Church WM, Belfast

+PATTERSON, Hugh

Seaforth Highlanders, 1/5th Btn. Private 4314. Died 27/07/1916. Aged 20. Son of George and Sarah of 85, Walmer Street, Belfast. Dartmoor Cemetery, Becordel-Becourt, Somme, France. St Jude's C of I Church, Belfast WM

1917

+FITZGERALD, William Wilks

Royal Flying Corps. Second Lieutenant. Died 27/07/1917. Aged 22. 25th Sqdn. Son of Maurice F. and Anna M. Fitzgerald, of "Fairholme," Kill-O'-the-Grange, Blackrock,

Co. Dublin. Native of Belfast. Lapugnoy Military Cemetery,
Pas de Calais, France

+GRAHAM, E

Royal Field Artillery, 173rd Bde. B Bty. Gunner. L/958. Died
27/07/1917. Age 19. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Graham,
of "The Whitehouse," Whitehouse Park, Whitehouse, Co.
Antrim. Born at Belfast. Vlamertinghe New Military
Cemetery, Belgium

+HAMILTON, John

A.I.F. Australian Infantry, 34th Btn. Private. 1832. Died
27/07/1917. Born in Antrim (Attestation papers). Enlisted in
Perth on 10/01/1916. Khandahar Farm Cemetery, West-
Belgium

+McCREA, Alexander

Royal Garrison Artillery. 2nd Lieutenant. 17201. Died
27/06/1917. Age 42. A fellow officer, Lt. Sanders, was
wounded by a shell and Alex went out to bring him in but a
second shell killed them both. Alexander enlisted in Royal
Horse Artillery which later became Royal Field Artillery. He is
believed to have served in the Boer War. 24/09/1915 saw
Alex as a Sergeant. in the 42 Siege Battery of the Royal
Garrison of the Artillery British Expeditionary Force in the
Mediterranean. He was in the landings at Gallipoli. Alex was
promoted to substantive 2nd Lieutenant. Alex and Janey
were married in England. They had a son Alexander and a
girl Eileen. Ferme-Olivier Cemetery, Ypres, West-
Vlaanderen, Belgium. Dungannon WM

+PATTON, Arthur

Royal Irish Rifles. 14th Btn. A Coy. Sergeant. 14/3482. Died 27/07/1917. Age 19, Son of Arthur and Jeanie Patton nee Galbriath of 19 Reid Street, Belfast. Killed in action 27th June 1917, deceased is buried in Messines Ridge British Cemetery, Belgium.

+RICE Lee

RNR. Second Officer. Discharged due to illness and died 27/07/1917. Age 27. Took ill in Mesopotamia and died at his uncle Lee Rice's home in Abbey Street, Armagh. The Ulster Gazette reported that he was the youngest son of the late Mr John Rice and had been educated at Armagh RS. Prior to the war he had been in the Merchant service. He was given full military honours at his funeral to St Mark's C of I, Armagh

1918

+KIRK, William John

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Private. 27232. Died 27/07/1918. Born Ballyclare 20/04/1892. Enlisted in Glasgow. Son of William John and Jane Kirk (nee Reid), of Ballyclare. Mount Noir Military Cemetery, St Jans-Cappel, France. Ballyclare WM. Ballyclare Prebyterian Church RH

1940

+STEWART, Frederick

RAF. Aircraftman 1st Class. 638353. Died 27/07/1940. Age 22. He died when a bomb exploded prematurely at RAF Newtown, seven miles east of Nottingham. During loading of bombs onto Fairey Battle L5528, one device dislodged from its mount. The bomb began to burn and both aircrew and ground crew attempted to extinguish the flames. The resulting explosion killed the aircrew and several members of the ground crew of RAF 150 Squadron including Stewart. A total of 6 members of the Royal Air Force died at the scene, leaving 5 others injured. One of the injured parties died as a result of his injuries the following day. The names of the three RAF casualties buried in the local graveyard are named each Remembrance Day with the names of those from East Bridgford who fell during the wars. Known as Freddie, he was the son of Robert and Rebecca Stewart of 6 Louisville, Cookstown, Co. Tyrone. His brothers Isaac Stewart and William Stewart served in the Royal Irish Fusiliers and Royal Air Force respectively. East Bridgford (St Peter) Churchyard, Nottinghamshire. Cookstown WM

1942

+FENWICK, James

Pioneer Corps. Private. 13007344. Died Between 27/07/1942 and 04/08/1942. Husband to Cassie Fenwick, of Aughnacloy, Co. Tyrone. Brookwood 1939 - 45 Memorial, Surrey. Dungannon WM

+O'DONNELL, Stephen James

Royal Artillery. 23 Field Regiment. Gunner. 880463. Died 27/07/1942. Age 18. Son of William and Mary Crossan, of Londonderry and is buried in Ardmore Roman Catholic Cemetery, Londonderry.

+McCANN, Thomas Andrew

RAFVR. Pilot Officer. 116980. Died 27/07/1942. Aged 23. 134 Sqdn. Born in Lisburn in 1919. Educated at Bangor Grammar School, and on leaving took up a position with the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. He joined the RAFVR in January, 1939, and was called up on the outbreak of war, got his wings on his 21st birthday. After completing his training he arrived at 6 Operational Training Unit, Sutton Bridge on 21/08/1940. On converting to Hurricanes he was posted to 601 Squadron at Exeter on September 11th. Thomas took part in the Battle of Britain before being posted to 134 Squadron which went to Russia in August 1941, leaving there in November. Commissioned in February 1942, Thomas was posted with 134 Squadron, which were operating Hurricanes, to North Africa. He had been attached to 213 Squadron and, on 27/07/1942, was scrambled from Landing Ground 154, south-west of Alexandria. The squadron was bounced by Me109s as they took off and he and two other pilots were killed. Thomas was survived by his wife Barbara and an eight-month-old daughter. Son of Thomas Andrew Mitchell McCann And Florence McCann, Bangor; Husband to Barbara McCann. El Alamein War Cemetery, Egypt

+STANFIELD, William

Royal Horse Artillery. Gunner. 880709. Died 27/05/1942. Aged 22. 107 (The South Notts. Hussars) Regt. Son of Thomas Edward and Mary Jane Stanfield, of Portadown. Alamein Memorial, Egypt. Portadown WM

+WILSON, Harrison

Pioneer Corps. Private. 13007499. Died 27/07/1945. Son of John and Mary Wilson. He was born 25th November 1903 in Armagh City. His father was a tailor. Harris was husband to Ethel Wilson. Caledon (St. John) Church of Ireland churchyard.

1943

+HERBERT, Leopold

RAMC. Captain. MC. 101317. Died 27/07/1943. Age 31. 86 Field Ambulance. M.D., QUB. Son of Abraham and Edith Herbert. Cassino Memorial, Panel 12. Lurgan WM

1944

+ARMSTRONG, Bernard

Royal Ulster Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 14220974. Died 27/07/1944. Aged 20. Son of Edward and Elizabeth Armstrong, of Manchester. Banneville - La - Campagne War Cemetery, Calvados, France

+ORWIN, Thomas William Percy

North Staffordshire Regiment, 6th Btn. Private. 5050450. Died 27/07/1944. Aged 23. Known as Percy, the young Englishman had a twin brother James Albert Orwin, known as Albert. The boys attended Tamworth Senior Boys' School, Tamworth, Staffordshire, England. After this, both young men found work at the local Alders Paper Mills before enlisting in the same battalion. Albert sustained severe wounds during the Normandy campaign. Fontenay-le-Pesnel War Cemetery, Tessel, Normandy, France.

+SHAW, Frederick

King's Own Scottish Borderers, 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 7018861. Died 20/07/1944. Aged 22. Son of Mr. and Mrs. John Shaw; nephew of Mrs. J. Deen, of Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland. Banneville-la-Campagne, Calvados, France. Harryville Presbyterian Church, Ballymena RH.

VETERANS

ADAMS, Maurice Henry

RN. Surgeon Rear Admiral. CB (Mil) 1965. Queen's Hon. Surgeon 1963. Served 1933 - 66. MB BCh, QUB 1930. DOMS Royal College of Surgeons 1947. Brother of Surgeon Lieutenant - Commander, George Fowler Adams, CBE, VRD. Born 16/07/1908. Son of Henry Adams, Cyprus Park, Belfast. One of five brothers educated at Larne Grammar School who served in the war. He also attended Campbell College. Died 27/07/1992.

BROWN, John

RN. Served on convoy escorts. A ship he was serving in bringing vital supplies to Malta was sunk in the Mediterranean. After he was picked up by another British ship it too was sunk within 24 hours. What he went through in the sinking of these ships gave him nightmares for the rest of his life. He continued his Navy service throughout the war, participating in other operations including the Normandy Landings. After the war he returned to Larne and married Robina Morrison - also from Larne - and set up home there. They had four sons - John, William, Kenneth

and George. From 1946 - 58 he served in the Ulster Special Constabulary. In 1958, he and his family migrated to Melbourne, where he lived for the rest of his life. He was a member of the Orange Institution with 84 years of unbroken service, from first joining Boyne Defenders Junior Orange Lodge in 1927, then joining LOL 766 Larne in 1944, whilst on shore leave. In Australia, he held many prominent positions within the institution, namely Honorary Past Grand Master of the Grand Orange Lodge of Australia, Past Grand Master of the Loyal Orange Institution of Victoria and a director of the Loyal Orange Trust. He was also a Past Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Black Chapter of Victoria. He died 27/07/2012. Participating in the funeral service were representatives of the Orange Institution, Returned Services League, Masonic Order and the Navy Association. His four sons and their families survive Mr Brown. His wife Robina predeceased him in 2006. Based on Larne Times, 20/08/2012.

HOTCHEN, Victor Charles

RN. Enlisted age 19. Received Royal Maundy at Armagh Cathedral, 20/03/2008. Born 1924. Died 27/07/2008. Aged 83/84. Greenland Cemetery, Larne

HULL, William Hull

Royal Ulster Rifles, Special Air Service - Blair Mayne's Driver

Born on 09/07/1922 at 33 Barrington Street, Donegall Road Belfast.

Whilst serving with the Royal Ulster Rifles he was stationed in Newtownards where he met and later married Betty Caddell.

He became Trooper 7017936, D Squadron, Special Air Service and became Blair Mayne's Driver of the specially adapted Jeeps used by the S.A.S. in France, Belgium, Germany and Norway.

Whilst at the S.A.S. Depot at Chelmsford, Essex he was preparing for a Special Operation behind Enemy Lines with a number of other Rifles when, 24 hours prior to the beginning of the Operation, he received new Orders to join Captain Anderson on a different mission.

Hull appealed to Paddy Mayne to permit him to stay with the initial Operation however, fortunately for Billy, this was refused. - This was part of Operation Gain and the story of what happened to those men became known as "The Garstin Stick".

Billy had been one of 10 Royal Ulster Rifles who had joined the Special Air service at the same time and he was the only one to survive the War.

Husband to Elizabeth and father to Victor and Billy. Died 27/07/1987. Family memorial Newtownards cemetery.

MacMAHON, Patricia E

WAAF. MCB. Born 27/07/1922. Daughter of Alfred MacMahon, Carryduff. Married 1. Donald W Bell. 2. Peter-Pool Warren. Dayton Ave., Belfast

Every Day is a Remembrance Day

We will remember them

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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
