



remembrance ni



Etaples - the largest Commonwealth War Graves cemetery in France

During the First World War, the area around Etaples was the scene of immense concentrations of Commonwealth reinforcement camps and hospitals.



Air photo The Hospital at Etaples. © IWM (Q 12290)

Étaples is a town about 27 kilometres south of Boulogne. The Military Cemetery is to the north of the town.

It was remote from attack, except from aircraft, and accessible by railway from both the northern or the southern battlefields. In 1917, 100,000 troops were camped among the sand dunes and the hospitals, which included eleven general, one stationary, four Red Cross hospitals and a convalescent depot, and could deal with 22,000 wounded or sick.

In September 1919, ten months after the Armistice, three hospitals and the Q.M.A.A.C. convalescent depot remained.

The cemetery contains 10,771 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, the earliest dating from May 1915. 35 of these burials are unidentified.



Hospitals were again stationed at Etaples during the Second World War and the cemetery was used for burials from January 1940 until the evacuation at the end of May 1940. After the war, a number of graves were brought into the cemetery from other French burial grounds. Of the 119 Second World War burials, 38 are unidentified.

Etaples Military Cemetery also contains 662 Non Commonwealth burials, mainly German, including 6 unidentified. There are also now 5 Non World War service burials here.

The cemetery, the largest Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery in France, was designed by [Sir Edwin Lutyens](#).

On this Day – August 3



1914

7 a.m. Belgium refuses German demands.

Germany declares war on France. Hours later, France reciprocates.

The Belgium King appeals to King George for diplomatic intervention to safeguard Belgian integrity.

Sir Edward Grey speaks in the House of Commons.

Order for British mobilisation.

1916

Roger Casement was hanged for High Treason in Pentonville Prison, London. Casement was arrested for gun smuggling for the rebels for the Easter Rising. He was the last of the Rising leaders to be executed.

1941 Saw the first operational success by a Hurricane fighter ship when Lt Everett launched from HMS MAPLIN to destroy a German Focke Wulf attack. As the Hurricanes were single use, the pilot had to ditch after their mission, Everett just about escaped and was recovered

1943



38 (Irish) Brigade CENTURIP

6 Innisks:

0330 Town reported clear of enemy.

0630 Bttn HQ moved into the town & B Coy also came in from the east.

The enemy consisted of the 3rd Parachute Regiment. Total casualties were 8 ORs killed. Four officers & 36 ORs wounded.



CENTURIPLE, 2 LIR:

1700 Bn moves through town & down through hills to positions 1 mile from River Salso.

Three patrols left at 2100 hrs & returned at approx 0500 hrs. They made no contact with the enemy. The River Salso was fordable & the Bridge was blown.

Lt Percy Hamilton 6 Innisks, Centuripe:

"The press report of the taking of the town was typical. The write up we got was deserved, but the carriers came up with the rations in the morning, so the picture published of "Bren carriers rushing in to capture Centuripe" is misleading.

CQMS Edmund O'Sullivan, 2 LIR:

"Dysentery had me in its grip. I approached a young man, who motioned me to follow him. We went to the town wall & down a steep path. Under the walls was a vast culvert lined with metal. With municipal pride he pointed & said: 'Il gabinetto.'"

1945



HM Submarines Trump and Tiptoe attacked a Japanese convoy in the Java Sea sinking 10,000 tonnes of Cargo ships. Trump sank the biggest one at 6000 Tonnes.

Roll of Honour – August 3

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1915

+BLACKWOOD, J

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 5th Btn. Private. 12201. Died 03/09/1915. Age 22. Son of Elizabeth and the late James Blackwood; husband of M. J. Blackwood, of 27, Ashdale St., Belfast. Green Hill Cemetery, Turkey (including Gallipoli)

+ECCLES, Francis

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Private. 9949. Died of his wounds in hospital in Malta on 03/08/1915. Age 27. Serving with the 1st Btn, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers at Gallipoli where he was wounded in action. Enlisted in Cookstown about 1909. Born on 04/12/1888 in the Dungannon area. Son of Francis and Mary A. Eccles, of Carland, Dungannon. Addolorata Cemetery, Malta. Dungannon WM

+FRIZELLE, Edwin Samuel

Lancashire Fusiliers, 5th Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 03/08/1915. Age 21. Educated at Queen's University. He moved to Bury and intended studying for the medical profession, but upon the outbreak of war he volunteered for active service, and received his commission in the Lancashire Fusiliers in August 1914. Son of William George and Janie Frizelle of Dungannon, and later of Knutsford House, Cliftonville, Belfast and Drumreagh, Alliance Avenue, Belfast. Addolorata Cemetery, Malta. Dungannon WM, QUB WM

+MORRISON, Hugh

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 7th Btn. Serjeant. 16523. Died 03/08/1915. Age 36. Son of James and Margaret Morrison, of Water Street, Enniskillen. Breandrum Cemetery, Co. Fermanagh

1916

+NESBITT, S

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Private. 13151. Died 03/08/1916. Age 44. Son of Samuel and Mary Nesbitt, of Wilson St., Belfast; husband of Mary Nesbitt, of 36, Campbell St., Belfast. Dundonald Cemetery, Belfast

+SMITH, John Joseph

Royal Field Artillery, 34th Bde. H.Q. Driver. 58574. Died 03/08/1916. Age 25. Son of Patrick and Annie Smith, of Belfast. La Neuville British Cemetery, Corbie, France

+STERLING, James

RMLI. Private. 13644. Plymouth Division. 2nd RM Battalion, RND. Died 03/08/1916. Killed by accidental explosion of a Stokes Ammo Dugout. Age 30. Enlisted 01/03/1906 age 17. Draft for BEF 28/06/1915, joined Plymouth Battalion 18/07/1915 - 18/08/1915. BW Forehead. Rejoined 2nd Royal Marine Battalion 26/10/1915-17/06/1916. Struck off Strength 2nd Royal Marine Battalion on joining 1st Brigade Light Trench Mortar Battery. 1st Royal Marine Battalion War Diary 03/08/1916 reads:- "Front Line Trenches Angres II Sector. An explosion occurred in a Dugout in which was stowed about 100 rounds of Stokes Gun Ammo. The Dugout

was completely wrecked & 1 Corporal & 4 Privates of the 188th Trench Mortar Battery were killed. No knowledge as to how explosion occurred." Born Dromara 31/07/1888. Son of Elizabeth J. Sterling, Well St., Woodstock Rd., Belfast, and the late Robert Sterling. Tranchee de Mecknes Cemetery, Aix - Noulette, Pas de Calais. ADM 159/153/13644

1917

+DINSMORE, Charles

Leinster Regiment, 7th Btn. Serjeant. 1553. Died 03/08/1917. Age 24. Son of John Dinsmore, of 97, New Lodge Rd., Belfast, and the late Margaret Dinsmore. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

+McCRACKEN, Joseph

Royal Irish Rifles, 14th Btn. Rifleman. 241. Died 03/08/1917. From Shankill, Belfast. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

+McGIMPSEY, Robert

Royal Irish Rifles, 14th Btn. Rifleman. 1594. Died 03/08/1917. From Ballycopeland, Donaghadee. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

+McILWEE, James

Connaught Rangers, 6th Btn. Private.: 7481. Died 03/08/1917. Age 34. Son of the late Patrick and Rose McIlwee; husband of Susan McIlwee, of 2, Ballygolan Terrace, Whitehouse, Co. Antrim. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

+McINTYRE, A

Irish Guards. 1st Btn. Serjeant. 326. Died 03/08/1917.
Husband to Mary McIntyre, of 14, Florence St.,
Londonderry. Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Belgium.
Londonderry Diamond WM

+OGLE, Christopher

Royal Irish Rifles, 16th Btn. Rifleman. 1074. Died
03/08/1917. Age 37. Son of James and Ellen Ogle, husband
to Catherine Ogle of Coolsallagh, Donaghcloney.
Vlamertinghe Military Cemetery, Belgium

+TAGGART, Thomas

Royal Irish Rifles, 14th Btn. Rifleman. 1636. Died
03/08/1917. Aged 37. He enlisted in September 1916 and
was at the front about nine months. Before enlisting he was
employed by Mr. John Carson, builder and contractor. Son
of William John and Hanna Taggart, Queen Street,
Ballymena; husband to Martha Taggart and father of two
children. 31, Alfred Street, Ballymena. Ypres Memorial
(Menin Gate), Belgium.

+WHITESIDE, William

Royal Irish Rifles, 14th Btn. Rifleman. 1638. Died 03/08/1917.
Son of John Whiteside of Eglis, Ballymena. He lived at
Glenleslie, Clough. Vlamertinghe Cemetery, Ypres, Belgium.
Cloughwater Presbyterian Church.

1918

+DUKE, James

Royal Irish Rifles, 16th Btn. Rifleman. 16/284. Died 03/08/1918. Age 28. Son of Jane Duke, of Drumgask, Co. Armagh. Lurgan cemetery

+DUNNING, David J

Royal Irish Rifles, 12th Btn. Rifleman. 3180. Died 03/08/1918. Aged 22. Taken prisoner on March 21, he died from pneumonia in Bona Hospital Germany. He had four years service. Prior to enlistment he was employed as a labourer on the Queen's Island. He was a member of the West Belfast UVF. Son of David and Lavinia Dunning, of 15, Northland St., Belfast. He had a sister and two brothers. Berlin South-Western Cemetery, Brandenburg, Germany

+HUEY, William Wallace

Royal Warwickshire Regiment, 1st/7th Btn. Private. 33483. Died 03/08/1918. Age 25. Son of John and Mary Huey, of Carnacunagh, Co. Antrim. Barenthal Military Cemetery, Italy. Larne WM

+MacNAMEE, J J

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 9th Btn. Lieutenant. Died 03/09/1918. Age 25. Son of Peter and Bridget MacNamee, of Enniskillen. Arneke British Cemetery, France

+SPEERS, Samuel William

Royal Irish Fusiliers. 9th (North Irish Horse) Btn. Private. 41579. Died 03/08/1918. Age 23 years old. Son of Mr. and Mrs. William Speers, of Cullyhanna, Crossmaglen, Co. Armagh. Bertenacre Military Cemetery, Fletre, France

1919

+WATSON, George Albert

Royal Army Service Corps. Lance Corporal. M2/01847. Died 03/08/1919. 25 years old. Youngest son of William and Catherine Watson. George was born in County Galway about 1894. By 1911 the family had moved to Moy, Co Tyrone. His father worked as a land steward on the Roxborough Estate. The family lived in the only house in Clonbeg. Clonbeg was north of Roxborough Castle. Moy St James C of I Churchyard

1942

+BUTTON, Alfred Stanley

Royal Engineers, 9 Movement Control Group Sapper.1986286. Died 03/08/1942. He was born about 1915 in Sussex. Prior to joining the Army at the beginning of the war, Alfred was a porter on the railways. Awarded the Boy Scouts' Gilt Cross for Gallantry. Son of Henry and M. J. Button, of Lewes; husband to Florence Irwin Button, of Dungannon. Awarded the Boy Scouts' Gilt Cross for Gallantry. Lewes Cemetery, Sussex.

+WALLACE, Robert Joseph

RAF. Pilot Officer. 49696. Died 03/08/1942. Aged 23. 213 Sqdn. Son of Robert and Mary Wallace, Belfast. Alamein Memorial, Column 249, Egypt

1943

+JOHNSTON, George

Royal Canadian Infantry Corps, Loyal Edmonton Regiment. Private. M/16958. Died 02/08/1943. Age 44. The Loyal Edmonton Regiment was part of 2nd Infantry Brigade, 11st Canadian Infantry Division during Operation Husky, the Allied invasion of Sicily. The Division landed between Pachino and Syracuse tasked with moving north to liberate the eastern coast as far as Messina. They encountered resistance from the German Army and scaled high ground around Etna before facing stiff opposition in the town of Leonforte. Further heavy fighting took place at Agira and Nissoria and the Canadian Regiments sustained many losses. George Johnston's death took place as his Regiment advanced to Adrano. Son of Thomas Johnston and Margaret H. Johnston of Ballymena. Agira Canadian War Cemetery, Sicily, Italy.

1944

+DOUGLAS, John

Royal Engineers, 510 Field Coy. Corporal. 1895512. Died 03/08/1944. Aged 25. Son of John C. and Eva Douglas, of Londonderry. Fontenay-Le-Pesnel War Cemetery, Tessel, France

+KNOX, Robert

Royal Scots Fusiliers, 6th Btn. Lance Corporal .14431907. Died 03/08/1944. Aged 22. Son of John and Louisa R. Knox, of Gortin, Co. Tyrone. St. Charles de Percy War Cemetery, Calcados, France

+OSTERFIELD, Frank

Royal Armoured Corps, 1st Royal Tank Regiment. Trooper. 7912649. Died 03/08/1944. Aged 29. Born in 1914, he was the son of John Francis Osterfield and Ellen Osterfield of Wirral, Cheshire, England. Frank had a younger brother Harold and a younger sister Ruth. He was husband to Mary Henrietta Osterfield of 10 Stranmillis Road, Belfast. Bayeux War Cemetery, Bayeux, Normandy, France. Fitzroy PCI Belfast WM, Eastham village memorial at St. Mary's Church, Wirral, Cheshire, England

VETERANS

BAIRD

RN. CPO. HMS Hunter. Served in army in WW1 having joined up aged 15. Husband to Mrs. Annie Baird, Hazelbrook St., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 03/08/1940).

LOVE, William Frederick

RN. Stoker First Class. SS11711. Enrolled 12/05/1915 for 5 and 7 years. In Victory II, Dido and Nimrod. Invalided out 02/08/1917. Born Coleraine 03/08/1896. ADM 188/1123/117119

MARTIN, Robert

Lt. Cdr. Father of John, Robert and Shelagh. Slievenamaddy Ave., Newcastle. Died 03/08/2009

Every day is a Remembrance Day

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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