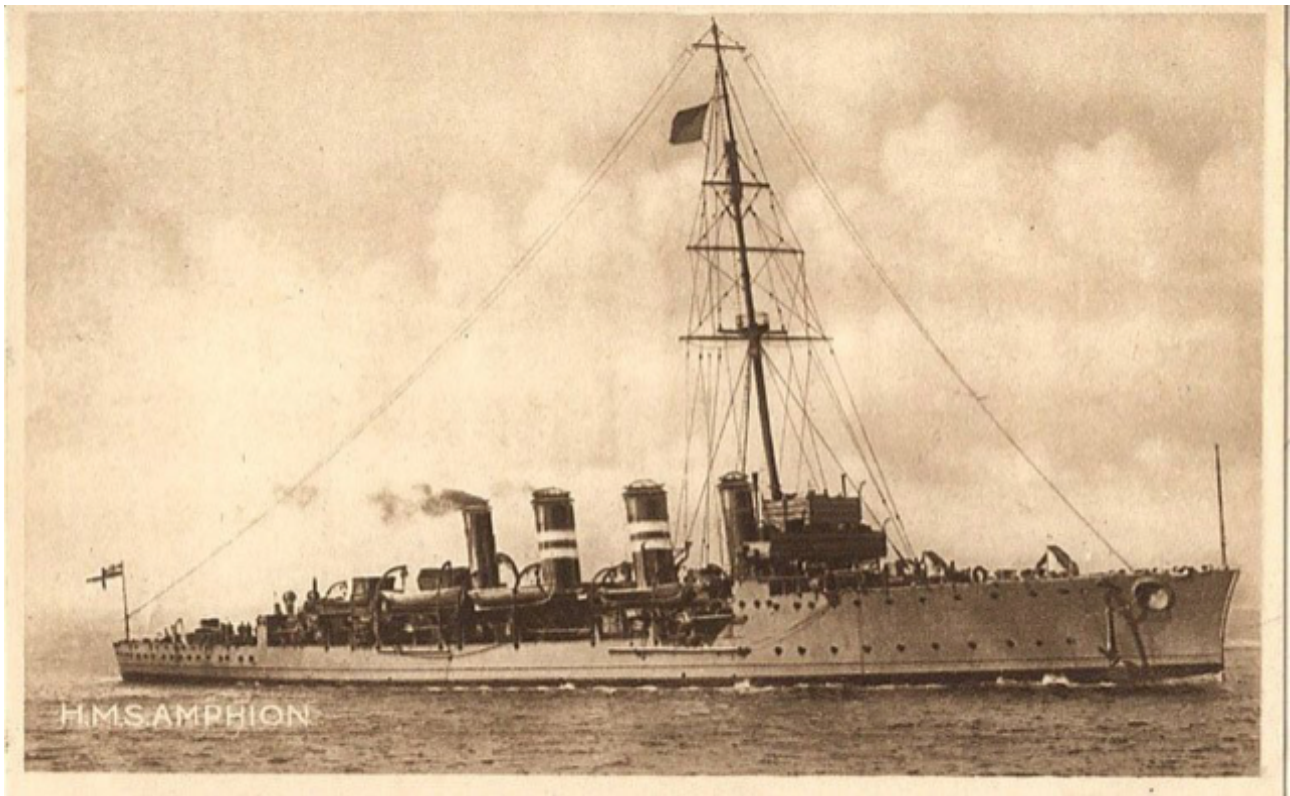




remembrance ni



HMS Amphion - the first RN loss of the first war

HMS AMPHION became the first Royal Navy ship to be lost in WW1 when she struck a mine in North Sea. Paymaster Joseph Gedge, became the first British Forces Officer killed in the war (after whom Gedge Medal was instituted). 150 men (crew & prisoners) died including four from Northern Ireland.

Following years of international rivalry involving the race to colonize Africa and the building of fleets to ensure naval supremacy guarding the trade routes which enhanced the economies of the colonising powers, the final events leading to the First World War were swift.

Within a week from the order mobilizing the Royal Navy, three men serving from Northern Ireland were to die on HMS Amphion, the first Royal Navy ship to be sunk in the war.

On Saturday, 1st. August, 1914, France mobilized. Germany also mobilized and declared war on Russia. The mobilization of the Royal Navy included the taking up of supplies and hospital ships, colliers and oilers. The following day, Sunday 2nd. August, Germany invaded Luxembourg. The mobilization of the Royal Fleet Reserve was ordered.

On Monday, The King of Belgium appealed for the preservation of Belgium's neutrality. Germany declared war on France.

On Tuesday 4th, Britain protested against German violation of Belgian territory when Germany invaded Belgium early on that day. British mobilization was ordered and Britain was at war with Germany from midnight 4th. August 1914. Admiral Jellicoe took command of the Grand Fleet.

NORTHERN IRISH LOSS

On August 6th, Henry John Bennett, George Christie, Joseph Lynch and Charles George McConachy from Northern Ireland lost their lives on HMS Amphion.

Henry John Bennett was from Culfeightrin, Torr Head. Joseph Lynch was born in Bright, Co. Down. Belfast born Charles George McConachy was a former pupil of Ballymena Academy, Co. Antrim. George Christie's parents lived in Draperstown. HMS Amphion was the first Royal Navy ship to be sunk in WW1. These men were the first fatalities from Northern Ireland. There were at least 14 Irish men in the crew.

**DISASTER TO BRITISH
CRUISER.**

H.M.S. Amphion Sunk.

131 LIVES LOST.

152 Officers and Men Saved.

The British cruiser Amphion was sunk yesterday morning, after striking a mine.

One hundred and thirty men were lost.

The official message issued by the Admiralty was as follows:—

H.M.S. Amphion sank this morning, after striking a mine.

The following were lost—Paymaster Gedge and 130 men.

Saved—Captain and 16 officers and 135 men.

The Amphion, which was concerned in the sinking of the German mine-layer Koenigin Luise on Wednesday and so soon afterwards was blown up by a submarine mine, was a new protected third class cruiser of 3,440 tons, 385ft. in length, with engines of 18,800 horse power, and speed 25.5 knots. She was built at Pembroke, and was completed last year, her total cost being nearly £278,000. She carried ten 4in. and four three-pounder guns, and was attached to the third destroyer flotilla.

The Secretary of the Admiralty last night issued the following statement with regard to the loss of the Amphion:—

In the course of reconnoitring after the mine-layer Koenigin Luise was sunk the Amphion this morning struck a mine and foundered. The forepart of the ship was shattered by the explosion, and practically all the loss of crew ensued from this cause. All not killed by the explosion were taken off by destroyers' boats before she sank. Paymaster Gedge and over 100 men were killed. The captain, 16 officers, and 135 men were saved. Twenty German prisoners of war confined in the forepart of the ship were killed in addition.

Belfast Newsletter
07/08/1914

Amphion was an Active class Scout cruiser, and part of the 3rd Flotilla which left the east coast port of Harwich on August 5 to carry out a sweep for submarines in the southern part of the North Sea. Around 10.25 am, Konigin Luise, a German holiday ferry converted for mine laying, which had left her home port of Emden on the night of 04/08/1914, was sighted. The flotilla had received reports from local fishing vessels of an unknown vessel throwing things over the side. At 1025 hrs, the destroyers Lance and Landrail were ordered to investigate. Konigin Luise altered course and sailed into a squall where she began laying mines. She ignored a shot across her bows from Lance which is accredited with firing the first naval

shots of World War 1.

A contemporary newspaper report stated, "Lance was the hero of Britain's first naval engagement. She only fired four shots but they were all sufficient. The first shot destroyed the bridge and the third

and fourth tore away her stern. She sank in six minutes. The British destroyer took the promptest measures to save those on board and 28 prisoners are now in Shotley naval barracks... Four have had legs shot away while two are armless. None of the crew of the Lance received any injuries.”

Konigin Luise under Commander Biermann was sunk before noon. 46 survivors of its crew of 100 were rescued and taken aboard Amphion.

Returning to Harwich the next day, Amphion changed course in the early hours to avoid the Southwold minefield off the Thames Estuary and by 6.30 am was assumed to be clear, but detonated a mine which wrecked the fore part of the ship, started a fire and broke her back. Almost immediately all the forward parts of the were on fire and it proved impossible to flood the fore magazine. The ship's back appeared to be broken and by the time other destroyers closed in it was clearly time to abandon ship. Three minutes later the vessel exploded, debris falling on the rescue boats.

One of Amphion's shells burst on the deck of HMS Lark, a destroyer, killing two men and a German prisoner rescued from the cruiser. After 15 minutes the Amphion had disappeared. 151 lives were lost, together with those of 19 of the 46 German sailors who had been rescued from the Konigin Luise.

The Ballymena Observer of 21st August 1914, carried this report -

The official press bureau on Wednesday afternoon issued the following:-

“3.30pm – at 9am on August 5th, HMS Amphion with the 3rd flotilla proceeded to carry out a certain pre-arranged plan of search and about an hour later a trawler informed them that she had seen a suspicious ship ‘throwing things overboard’ in an indicated position. Shortly afterwards the mine layer Konigen Luise was sighted steering east. Four destroyers gave chase and in about an hour’s time she was rounded up and sunk. After picking up survivors the search continued without incident till 3.30am when the Amphion



was on the return course.

The Gedge Medal - Paymaster Joseph Gedge, became the first British Forces Officer killed in the war (after whom Gedge Medal was instituted).

“At 6.30 am Amphion struck a mine. A sheet of flame instantly enveloped the bridge which rendered the Captain insensible and he fell on the fore and aft bridge. As soon as he recovered consciousness he ran to the engine room to stop the engines, which were still

going at revolutions for 20 knots. As all the forepart was on fire, it proved impossible to reach the bridge or to flood the fore magazine. The ship's back appeared to be broken and she was already settling by the bows.

“All efforts were therefore directed to placing the wounded in a place of safety in case of explosion and towards getting her a tow by the stern. By the time destroyers closed in it was clearly time to

abandon ship. The men fell in with composure and 20 minutes after the mine struck, the men, officers and captain left their ship.

“Three minutes later it exploded. Debris falling from a great height struck the rescue boats, destroyers and one of the Amphion’s shells burst on the deck of one of the latter killing two of the men and a German prisoner rescued from the cruiser. After 15 minutes the Amphion had disappeared. Captain Fox speaks in the highest terms of the behaviour of the men throughout.”

The bodies of four British and four German sailors were recovered together from the Thames estuary. Four coffins were covered with the Union Jack and four with the German ensign. All were given full naval honours and were buried together in a common grave at Shottley. (Report in Evening Post 11/08/1914).

Two brothers, Joseph, 28, and Thomas Hamlin, 23, died whilst serving on HMS Amphion. Sons of James and Viola Hamlin of Newton Abbot, Devon. The brothers have no known graves and are commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial.

ON THAT DAY - ‘YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU’ CALL ISSUED

In Belgium - The morning’s telegrams suggest that both Liege and the forts may soon be in the hands of the Germans, the defence has succeeded in holding up two German army corps, and if sources are reliable there should, within a few days be fought a battle which may have a determining effect on the campaign.

500,000 more men - The House of Commons unanimously granted to the government a vote of credit for £100,000,000 and sanctioned an increase to the army by 500,000 men. Mr Asquith in commending to the House these unprecedented steps vindicated the policy and position of this country in a speech of extraordinary eloquence.

Call to Arms Lord Kitchener’s appeal - Lord Kitchener, Secretary for War issued the following appeal

“Your King and country need you, a call to arms.



“An addition of 100,000 men to His Majesty’s Regular Army are immediately necessary in the present grave national emergency. Lord Kitchener is confident that this appeal will be at once responded to by all those who have the safety of the Empire at heart.

Terms of Service General service for a period of three years or until war is concluded age of enlistment between 19 and 80.”

IRISH REMEMBRANCE

In 2014 a mass was held at the Irish Naval Service base at Haulbowline, Cork Harbour, in remembrance of the seven Cork men who died serving in Amphion. Due to the efforts of Fr. Ivan Tonge, a plaque was erected in memory of Joseph Pierce Murphy behind St Patrick’s Church, Thomcastle Street, near to his home in Ringsend, Dublin.

IRISH SURVIVOR AWARDED VICTORIA CROSS IN WORLD WAR II

One of the midshipmen saved from HMS 'Amphion' was young Stephen Fogarty Fegen, of Tipperary. Twenty-five years later, in 1940, while skippering HMS 'Jervis Bay' he ordered a suicidal assault on the German pocket battleship 'Admiral Scheer' in defence of the convoy he was escorting.

He and his vessel perished in the process. He was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross.

BENNETT SISTER A FATALITY

In World War II Charles McConachy’s sister Ethel joined the Malayan Nursing Service. She died when SS Tanjong Pinang was

sunk by a Japanese submarine in February 1942. The ship had just picked up survivors of another ship, SS Kuala, off the Indonesian island of Banka.

On this Day – August 6

1914

Cruiser HMS Amphion sank after striking a mine laid by German minelayer SMS Königin Luise off the Suffolk coast. Königin Luise had been sunk on 5 Aug by destroyers under Amphion's command. 132 RN personnel and 20 German POWs from Königin Luise died.

1915



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

ART02931

Anniversary of the Battle of Lone Pine. The attack was launched on 6 August 1915 by the 1st Brigade, AIF. Four days of vicious hand-to-hand fighting resulted in more than

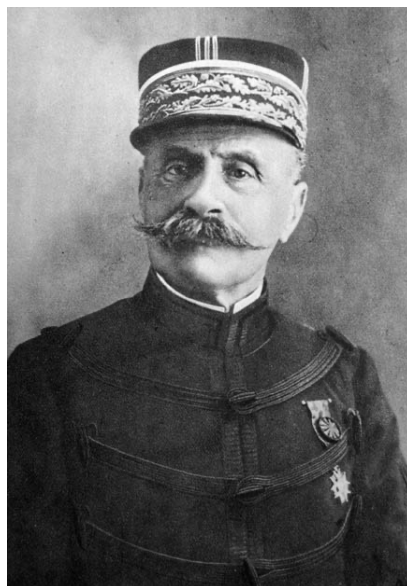
2,000 Australian casualties. Image: The taking of Lone Pine, Fred Leist 1921

Armed merchant cruiser HMS India (ex P&O SS India) was torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U-22 off Helligvær, Norway. 160 died in the sinking (some sources say 166) while 100+ survivors were interned in Norway for the remainder of the war.

1916

At the Battle of Verdun the German attack at Thiaumont work and in Vaux-Chapitre Wood.

1918



General Foch is promoted to the rank of Marshal of France.



Destroyer HMS Comet sank with the loss of 7 men south-east of Sicily. Some sources say she was torpedoed and sunk by a submarine, others that she was lost because of damage caused in a collision. No German or Austrian submarine claimed the sinking.

The Germans attack south of Morlancourt, south of Albert, and retake ground won by the Australians.

1940

Goering sets the 10th August 1940 as 'Eagle day', the start of the Luftwaffe major offensive against the RAF and its Airfields.

Italian forces reach Odweina in British Somaliland. Battles at Tug Argan and at Hargeisa.

1941

The Japanese foreign minister, Admiral Nomura, proposes to the USA a meeting between Roosevelt and Prime Minister Konoye.

1942

General Dwight D. Eisenhower is appointed as commander-in-chief of allied forces preparing to invade North Africa.

The British section of the 'World Jewish Congress', claims that 1,000,000 Jews are already dead in occupied Europe.

German 1st Panzer Army crosses the Kuban river at Armavir.

1943

A partial evacuation of Berlin is announced in order to avoid another Hamburg.

German troops pour into Italy as Axis foreign ministers meet at Treviso.

Battle of Vella Gulf: 4 Japanese destroyers attempt to bring troops and supplies to Kolombangara, Solomon Is. and are attacked by 6 U.S. destroyers. 3 Japanese destroyers are sunk and 1 damaged. U.S. destroyers suffer no damage.

The Japanese air base at Munda is in the hands of the U.S. Marines. Control of the site, in the center of the Solomon archipelago, gives the Marines a base for bombing Japanese positions in the Philippines.

1944

The U.S. XX Corps enters Laval and continues south-east.

The U.S. 4th Armoured Division advances to Vannes and Lorient, while the U.S. 6th Armoured Division, on their right flank, is headed for the westernmost point of the Brittany Peninsula and the ports of Brest.

North of them, 8th U.S. Infantry Division is passing along the northern coastline of the peninsula.

The Russians seize the Polish oil centre of Drohobycz.

The German Rahmel aircraft factory near Gdynia in Poland, is attacked by allied bombers.

The last Jewish ghetto in Poland, Lodz, is liquidated with 60,000 Jews sent to Auschwitz.

1945

"8:15:15." At 8;15 am the B-29 Enola Gay, piloted by Paul Tibbets, dropped the first Atomic bomb, Little Boy, on the



city of Hiroshima, Japan. The bombardier announces: "Bomb away." Enola Gay rises ten feet as the 9,700 pound bomb is released. It is rush hour in Hiroshima 31,000 feet below.

The US drops the first of two atomic bombs on Japan.

"What has been done is the greatest achievement of organized science in history" -- President Truman

"The time will come when mankind will curse the names Los Alamos and Hiroshima" -- Robert Oppenheimer



The Belgians announce that 2,117 collaborators have been sentenced to death, out of 16,00

Roll of Honour – August 6

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1914 HMS AMPHION

+BENNETT, Henry John

RN. ERA I. 269426. LS & GC Medal. HMS Amphion. Died 06/08/1914. Aged 36 years. Born Belfast 11/07/1889. Culfeightrin, Torr Head

+CHRISTIE, George

RN. Shipwright 2nd Class. 345261. HMS Amphion. Died 06/08/1914. Son of William and Elizabeth Christie. Born on 05/05/1884 in Kilmaloda, County Cork. He was one of ten children, nine surviving. William Christie was a National School Teacher. The family moved around quite a lot. By 1911, the family were living at Cavanreagh, near Draperstown. It is not known if George ever lived in Draperstown. Plymouth Naval Memorial

+LYNCH, Joseph

Petty Officer 2nd Class. 160591. HMS Amphion. Died 06/08/1914. Age 39. Born Bright, Co Down. Son of John Patrick and Hannah Lynch, Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork. Plymouth Naval Memorial.

+McCONACHY, Charles George

RN. AB. 234602. HMS Amphion. Died 06/08/1914. Aged 25. Amphion, was lost as the result of mine explosion. "HMS Amphion was the first Royal Navy ship to be sunk in WW1. On the 5th August 1914 HMS Amphion sank the German vessel Konigin Luise but next day at 6.30 am she hit a mine off the Thames Estuary. Almost immediately all the forward parts of the were on fire and it proved impossible to flood the fore magazine. The ship's back appeared to be broken and by the time other destroyers closed in it was clearly time to abandon ship. Three minutes later the vessel exploded, debris falling on the rescue boats. One of the Amphion's shells burst on the deck of a destroyer killing two of the men and a German prisoner rescued from the cruiser. After 15 minutes the Amphion had disappeared. 151 lives were lost,

together with those of 19 German sailors who had been rescued from the Konigin Luise.” - Ballymena Observer, 21/08/1914. Born Belfast, he attended Ballymena Academy. His first ship when he joined the service was HMS Queen Mary. Son of David and Margaret McConachy, of Strath House, Dungiven. Plymouth Naval Memorial. Limavady WM. Boveva - PCI RH

+CHRISTIE, George

RN. Shipwright 2nd Class. 345261. HMS Amphion. Died 06/08/1914. Son of William and Elizabeth Christie. Born on 05/05/1884 in Kilmaloda, County Cork. He was one of ten children, nine surviving. William Christie was a National School Teacher. The family moved around quite a lot. By 1911, the family were living at Cavanreagh, near Draperstown. It is not known if George ever lived in Draperstown. Plymouth Naval Memorial

1915

+COWAN, Basil Terence Reilly

Lincolnshire Regiment, att'd. 1st/5th Bn. Manchester Regiment. Lieutenant. Died 06/08/1915. Age 30. Born on 23/05/1885 in the parish of Antrim, he was an accomplished sportsman, “being the holder of several ‘firsts’ for tennis, golf, rowing and swimming”; he was also “in constant demand” as a footballer and cricketer. At the outbreak of the war in August 1914 he was living at “The Park”, Lunugala in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) where he worked as a planter. It was there that he joined a party of volunteers and sailed for England to join up. Examined at London on the 13/12/ 1914 and, giving his permanent address as his

father's house at 65 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin, he enlisted there the following day as Private S7565 in 2 Coy., the Rifle Brigade, Ceylon Contingent Special Reserve. Aged 29 and a single man, he was 5'7" tall, weighed 141lbs and had a 38" chest fully expanded with 4" range of expansion. His physical development was described as "good" as was his sight at 6/6 in both eyes. Stationed at Winchester, his career in the Rifle Brigade was short lived as he was discharged at his own request on the 20 January 1915 having applied for a Temporary Commission in the Leinsters or Rifle Brigade.

In fact he was commissioned into the 9 Lincolns and at the end of May 1915 was sent to Gallipoli where he was attached to the 1/5 Manchester Regiment. By this point he was probably married to Norah Campbell Cowan of The Waldrons, Eyre Court Road, Seaton, South Devon although when the ceremony took place is not clear.

Writing on the 2 July he described how, "We got into Lemnos last night and went into camp for the night. We are now on our way to the mouth of the Dardanelles, ten miles off, so expect to be in the thick of it before the day is out. In fact I believe the Turks generally shell the boats before they get alongside". Three weeks later he confirmed how, "The worst shelling we have had was on the day we landed. They started shelling the boat before we got ashore; then the beach had a very warm half-hour of it, but not very much damage was done". Basil Cowan reached his battalion on the 2 July along with another junior officer Second Lieutenant Philip Box, also of the 9 Lincolns and on attachment to the 1/5 Manchesters.

The battalion had landed at Cape Helles on the tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula on the 6 May and apart from a week at Imbros in the middle of June were still there when Cowan and Box arrived on the 2 July. Since the 23 June, two days after their return from Imbros, they had been in or just behind the firing line at Krithia Nullah alternating with the 6 Manchesters. It was here that Cowan had his first experience of life in the trenches. There had been no major engagements and “quiet day” was a frequent observation in the battalion diary. Nevertheless, there was a more or less constant trickle of casualties, what the army would have considered “normal wastage” and of course those other unpleasantnesses of Gallipoli in the summer time – the heat and the flies. Pulled back to the reserve lines at “Clapham Junction” on the 11 July, Cowan wrote, “We have been in the rest trenches for some days now, as the men were absolutely done up after having been in the firing line for 16 days on end” Even here though there was little respite. Nowhere on the allied side of the line at Gallipoli was far from the fighting or out of range of the enemy, so the casualties continued. By the 20th another 5 men had been killed, 11 wounded and one, Private John Brown from Wigan, had died from heart failure. Moved to the Eski Line on the 21st where several days were spent digging saps and a new trench, and then back to Krithia Nullah on the 29th, by the end of the month the battalion’s total casualties for July amounted to at least 44 of whom 14 had been killed.

The start of August was quieter; in the first five days only three men were wounded and the battalion diary for the period records no other details of any sort. It was the calm before the storm. In another attempt to end the stalemate on the peninsula the British had decided to open a new front

at Sulva Bay where fresh troops were to be landed from 10pm on the evening of the 6th. This was to coincide with attacks at the existing fronts at Helles and Anzac Cove. At 13.00 on the 5 August orders were issued by 127 Brigade HQ instructing 1/5 Manchesters that they would be involved in an attack the following day in support of 88th Brigade. Their objective was the Turkish trenches (H11a and H11b) that lay to the north of what was known as the Vineyard. The artillery bombardment was to begin at 14.20 and the infantry assault at 15.50.

The attack went in on time and at 4.10 p.m. Brigade HQ received news that parts of H11a and H11b had been captured. However, whatever success there had been was short lived. By 5.35 p.m. the attacks on the two trenches had failed. The NW end of H11b had in fact turned out to be a dummy trench and once in it the men had been exposed to enfilade fire. That, however, does not appear to have been the only or even the main reason for the lack of success. The battalion diarist put it bluntly. "Artillery preparation entirely failed and the infantry attack made against entirely unsubdued rifle and M.G. fire was practically wiped out and failed. Our artillery dropped some shells in our own trench."

That evening the attack continued using reinforcements from 7 Manchesters. It was no more successful and during the night they had to fall back. The following morning the attacks resumed. The outcome was the same. "Artillery preparation 9 a.m. attack 9.40 a.m. 5th Manc[hesters] ... ordered to make another attack on H11a and H11b. We were very badly shelled by our own guns and sustained several casualties from them probably 30. Artillery preparation and consequently infantry attack again failed."

In two days of fighting the battalion had sustained 229 casualties – 20 killed, 158 wounded and 51 missing. Basil Cowan was one of seven officers in the battalion listed as missing believed killed. Another was Philip Box who had arrived with Cowan from the 9 Lincolns and landed with him in Gallipoli at the start of July.

The omens were not good. The Adjutant of the battalion, Captain J.M.B. Sanders who himself was wounded and invalided home two months afterwards, reported how on that day, “we were ordered to storm some of the Turkish trenches. I saw Cowan at the head of his men calling and cheering them on; and although one of his hands was severely wounded, he refused to return to the field hospital, but continued to lead his Company forward. Then I heard a bomb burst and saw Cowan fall. I had no time to halt but as I rode by I saw him lying in one of the trenches, motionless and bleeding profusely. I fear he was mortally wounded”. His death, which had taken place during the attack on the 6th, was not confirmed until early the following summer.

He was the husband of Norah Campbell Cowan of The Waldrons, Eyre Court Road, Seaton, South Devon and second and youngest son of Major Samuel K. Cowan of Drenta, Dunmurry, 65 Fitzwilliam square, Dublin and Stanhope Gardens, London. His elder brother may have been E.R. Cowan of 22 Adolphus Road, Finsbury Park, London.

In his will dated the 1 July 1915, the day he had arrived at Lemnos, and in which he gave his address as Drenta, Dunmurry, Co. Antrim, he left his estate to his widow who was also the sole executive. His property consisted of £65.19.0 cash, 22 5% preference shares in the Linen

Thread Co. Ltd., a one third share of the house and lands of Drenta, Dunmurry valued at about £940 and any balance he had with Messrs. Cox & Co. his bankers. At probate his estate was given a gross value of £329.1.8. In addition, Norah Cowan received a pension of £100 a year and a gratuity of £140. Although it is not clear, a letter to the War Office dated 10 September 1919 from an M or N. C. Ford of 3 Alexander Place, Colyton, S. Devon regarding the estate of Lieutenant B.T. Cowan, suggests that Norah Campbell Cowan may have re-married. Helles Memorial, Turkey

+CUNNINGHAM, George

Royal Engineers, 2nd. Field Company. Sapper. 2424. Died 06/08/1915. Age 19. He enlisted at Rutherglen. Born 03/01/1896 in Hillsborough, Co Down. Son of William and Emma (nee Leech) Cunningham of Farmeloan Road, Rutherglen, Glasgow. Helles Memorial, Gallipoli, Turkey

+HYNDMAN, James

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Private. 20114. Died 06/08/1915. Age 28. Son of Mrs. Mary Hyndman, of Killycloney, Donemana, Co. Tyrone. Helles Memorial, Turkey (including Gallipoli)

+LYNN, Robert

Royal Field Artillery, 87th Bty. Driver. 45206. Died 06/08/1915. Aged 30. Son of James and Elizabeth Lynn, of Mousetown, Coalisland, Co. Tyrone. Member of Coalisland LOL 93. One of four brothers who died on service during WW1; two are buried in Belgium, one in France and the fourth is buried in Israel. Hop Store Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium

+REID, Richard

Royal Inniskillings Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Corporal. 8527. Died 06/08/1915. Born in Lisburn, he enlisted at Belfast. Helles Memorial, Gallipoli, Turkey

+SHEPPARDSON, S

Royal Irish Rifles. 18th Btn. Corporal. 26. Died 06/08/1915. Age 26. No family details. St Patrick's C of I churchyard, Newry

1916

+IRWIN, James.

Royal Irish Rifles, 7th Btn. Rifleman. 7/8557. Died 06/08/1916. Age, probably 18 or 19. He served as James Duggan. There is no indication from the evidence as to why he served under an assumed name. Born and living in Dunmurry, he enlisted in London and served in 7 RIR. Son of James and Mary Ann Irwin of 19 Mill Row, Dunmurry. Vermelles British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France

+MORRISON, Francis

Royal Irish Rifles, 7th Btn. Lance Corporal. 7/1219. Died 06/08/1916. Age 22. Son of Francis and Susanna Morrison, of 36, McDonnell St., Belfast. Vermelles British Cemetery, France

+MULHOLLAND, S

Royal Irish Rifles. 10th Btn. Rifleman. 15648. Died 06/08/1916. Brother-in-law of Sarah M. Quillan, of Brook Place, Coleraine. Etaples Military Cemetery, France

+SLOAN, Joseph Willoughby

Royal Irish Rifles, 14th (Service) Btn. B Coy. (Young Citizen Volunteers). Rifleman. 14/15949. Died 06/08/1916. Age 24. Born Lisburn. Son of Jane Sloan nee Scott and the late Sergeant Joseph Sloan, (Royal Irish Constabulary), of 16 Malone Avenue, Belfast, also of 10 Donnybrook Street, Belfast. Berks Cemetery Extension, Belgium. Ulsterville Presbyterian Church WM, Ulsterville Presbyterian Church RH later held in Windsor Presbyterian Church Belfast.

+SWANN, Jim

Royal Irish Rifles, 11th Btn. Sergeant. 11/19786. Died 06/08/1916. Age 23. Born Antrim. Son of Jane and the late David Swann of Fountain Street, Antrim. He was a member of Murrays Temperance LOL 201. He was also on the first list of Antrim Ulster Volunteers to join the 11th RIR. First Antrim Presbyterian Church WM, Antrim District Orange Order WM. Antrim New Cemetery, Antrim.

+WALKER, Alexander

Australian Infantry, 48th Btn. Private. 2938. Died 06/08/1916. Born Ballymoney, Co. Antrim. Timber Worker prior to enlistment 23/07/1915 at Blackboy Hill, Western Australia. Villers Bretonneux Memorial, France. Australian WM

+WRIGHT, Alexander Allen

Kings Own (Royal Lancashire Regiment). 1st Btn./4th Btn. Captain. Died 06/08/1916. The former Collegians rugby player was educated at the Ulster Provincial School now known as Friends' School, Lisburn. He regularly attended St

Paul's Parish Church, York Rd., Belfast. Pre-war he worked in the Audit Office at Belfast City Hall. His father, Joseph S Wright, also worked for Belfast Corporation in the Rates Department. Theipval Memorial, Somme, France. Belfast Corporation Staff Roll Of Honour

1917

+BECK, James

Royal Irish Rifles. 11th Btn. Rifleman. 17244. Died 08/08/1917. Age 19. Son of Annie Rogan (formerly Beck), of 46, Sloan St., Lisburn. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

+BELL, John

Royal Irish Rifles. 10th Btn. Rifleman. 5775. Died 06/08/1917. Age 20. The Battalion was holding the line prior to the attack at Langemarck on 16/08/1917. Born on 18/01/1897 in Craigavad. He was a son of David and Jane Bell (nee Malcolm) who were married on 6 July 1883 in Ballygilbert Presbyterian Church. The Bell family lived in Craigavad (1901), Trevor Street, Holywood (1911) and Hill Street, Holywood (1917). David Bell worked as a gardener and domestic servant and he and Jane had nine children. Their father, David Bell, died of tuberculosis 10/12/1911 (aged 59) at 7 Trevor Street, Holywood. After leaving school John Bell worked as a message boy. He enlisted in Belfast, joining the Royal Irish Rifles. At that time John's widowed mother was living at 4 Hill Street, Holywood. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium, Holywood and District WM Son of Jane Bell, of 4, Hill St., Holywood, Co. Down. Ypres (Mennin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

+BENSON, William James

Royal Irish Rifles, 10th Btn. Lance Corporal. 14084. Died 06/08/1917. Son of Samuel James and Mary Anne Benson, of Canagola, Portadown. New Irish Farm Cemetery, Belgium

+BLACK, D G

Royal Irish Rifles, 8th Btn. Rifleman. 19/349. Died 06/08/1917. Age 21. Son of Ellen Black, of 21, Lyle St., Belfast, and the late James Black. Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium

+BROADLEY, H

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Captain. Died 06/08/1917. Age 35. Husband to Agnes Broadley, of 12, Egeria St., Belfast. Potijze Chateau Grounds Cemetery, Belgium

+DRUMM, John

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 7th Btn. Serjeant. 29674. Died 08/06/1917. Age 22. Son of Robert and Elizabeth Drumm, of 22, Belmore St., Enniskillen. Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium

+GIBSON, William James

Royal Irish Rifles. 13th Btn. B Coy. Rifleman. 17702. Died 06/08/1917. Age 25. Killed in action while holding the line at the beginning of the Third Battle of Ypres. After Rifleman William James Gibson died, his platoon officer Second-Lieutenant R W Craig wrote to Samuel Gibson to express sympathy and to assure him that his son's death had been

instantaneous. Born on 01/11/1892 in Lower Mary Street, Newtownards. A son of Samuel James and Margaret (Maggie) Gibson (nee Cameron) who were married on 06/10/1888 in Ballyblack Presbyterian Church. Samuel James Gibson from Newtownards was a labourer and he was a son of James Gibson, a shoemaker. Maggie Cameron from Ballyblack was a daughter of William Cameron, a labourer. Samuel James Gibson worked as a carter and labourer and he and Margaret had five children. Their mother Maggie died of influenza on 01/05/1898 (aged 33) in Movilla Street, Newtownards. Their widowed father, Samuel James Gibson, lived at 166 Greenwell Street, Newtownards. Potijze Chateau Grounds Cemetery, Belgium. Newtownards and District WM, Greenwell Street Presbyterian Church, Newtownards - PCI RH.

+HAMILTON, Edward

Royal Irish Rifles, 8th Btn. Corporal. 14833. Died 06/08/1917. Age 21. Born and living in Dromore, (or Drumlough, south west of Annahilt) he enlisted at Belfast. Son of James and Elizabeth Hamilton of Leopoges, Dromore Co. Down. Tyne Cot Cemetery, Passchendaele, Belgium

+HENDERSON, Thomas

Royal Irish Rifles. 8th Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 06/08/1917 during the Third Battle of Ypres. Age 30. Born on 04/11/1886 in Riverside, Holywood. Son of George and Mary (Minnie) Gibson Henderson (nee Withers) who were married on 26/12/1876 in Rosemary Street Presbyterian Church Belfast. The Henderson family lived in My Lady's Mile, Holywood. George Henderson Senior worked as a druggist and commercial traveller and he died of heart disease on 20/09/1897 (aged 52). Mary (Minnie)

Henderson died on 23/08/1924. Thomas Henderson attended Sullivan School from 1899 to 1903 and it was noted that his widowed mother had 'private means'. Thomas Henderson moved to Glasgow where he became an active member of St Vincent Street Unitarian Church. In October 1916 he and Lucia Traill Smellie married in Glasgow and they lived in Glenavon Terrace, Partick, Glasgow. At the beginning of the war Thomas Henderson enlisted and he served with the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers 11th Btn. After being promoted to the rank of Sergeant he was commissioned into the Royal Irish Rifles 8th Btn in 107 Brigade of the 36th (Ulster) Division. Son of the late George and Mary Gibson Henderson, of Craigtara, Holywood, Co. Down; husband to Lucia Traill Henderson, of 8, Glenavon Terrace, Partick, Glasgow. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium. Holywood and District WM. WW1 Roll of Honour of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. Annals of Sullivan Upper School

+IRWIN, Thomas James

Australian Pioneers, 4th Btn. Private. 2396. Died 06/08/1917. Age 25. Son of James and Anna Bella Irwin, of Corcreaney, Waringstown. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium

+LITTLE, S

Royal Irish Rifles. 15th Btn. Rifleman. 81. Died 06/08/1917. Age 24. Foster son of Elizabeth Little, of Buskill, Donaghmore, Newry. Wieltje Farm Cemetery, Belgium

+McCLELLAND, James

Royal Irish Rifles. 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 10528. Died age 17 on 06/08/1917 during the Third Battle of Ypres. The Battalion was in action at Westhoek Ridge on the night of 5 August 1917 and there was an intense German barrage at Chateau Wood. Heavy intermittent shelling continued over the next three days and the Battalion suffered many casualties.

Eldest son of Annabella McClelland, of 9, Ann St., Newtownards. Ypres (Mennin Gate) Memorial, Belgium. Newtownards and District WM. Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) Roll of Honour 1914 – 1919 for Ballygrainey Presbyterian Church and for Greenwell Street Presbyterian Church Newtownards.

+McLEAN, Robert George

Royal Irish Rifles, 10th Btn. Rifleman. 995. Died 06/08/1917. Age 21. Son of Annie McLean, of 34, Fortuna St., Donegall Rd., Belfast, and the late Thomas McLean. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium

+MITCHELL, Robert

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 9th Btn. Corporal. 21296. Died 06/08/1917. Age 24. Enlisted at Randalstown. He survived the Battle of Messines and died in action on the eve of the Third Battle of Ypres. Born at Tamlaght, Co. Tyrone. Son of James and Lizzie Mitchell, of 72, Greenfield St., Govan, Glasgow. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium

+MULHOLLAND, S

Royal Irish Rifles. 10th Btn. Rifleman. 15648. Died 06/08/1916. Brother-in-law of Sarah M. Quillan, of Brook Place, Coleraine. Etaples Military Cemetery, France

+NAPIER , Joseph

Royal Irish Rifles, 10th Btn. Rifleman. 689. Died 06/08/1917. Age 19. Son of Johanan and Sarah Napier, of 132, Beersbridge Rd., Belfast. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium

+NEILL, John

Royal Irish Rifles, 15th Btn. Rifleman. 12100. Died 06/08/1917. Age 24. Son of John and Annie Neill, of The Lane, Whitehouse, Belfast. Ypres (Menin Gates) Memorial, Belgium

+NEWEL, George Frank

Royal Irish Rifles, 15th Btn. Company Quartermaster Serjeant. 12102. Died 06/08/1917. Age 26. George was one of three brothers to die in the war. Walter, a lance-corporal in the Black Watch, having been killed in 1915, and David, a private in a public schools battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, having been killed in 1916, while a fourth son, Thomas, also in the Royal Fusiliers, was wounded. Son of Henry Arthur and Helen Hunter Newel, of 362, Antrim Rd., Belfast. Wieltje Farm Cemetery, Belgium. A handsome memorial cross of Irish granite was erected at the Gobbins with the inscription — “To the memory of Lance-Corporal Walter Newel, 6th Battalion Black Watch, who fell in action in France, 10th

July, 1915. Erected by his friends, with whom he spent many happy days at the Gobbins Farm.”

+PATTERSON, Alexander

Royal Irish Rifles, 13th Btn. A Coy. Rifleman. 18607. Died 06/08/1917. Age 24. Alexander and his brother Sam enlisted in September 1914 in Holywood and then trained at Clandeboye Camp. Sam was drafted to India and Alex went to France with 108th Brigade in the 36th (Ulster) Division.

Both men were accomplished musicians and Sam played in his Regimental Band. Alex was described in Glencraig Parish Magazine as ‘*a splendid specimen of robust manhood*’ and went into the fighting line. Alex was wounded in action on 14/02/1917.

Alexander Patterson, known as Alex, was born on 23/12/1892 at Sion, Navan, County Meath and he was a son of William and Sarah Bowden Patterson (née Cooke) who were married on 16/09/1880 in Sandy Row Presbyterian Church Belfast. William Patterson worked as a gardener for the Dunville family and in the 1880s/1890s he was working at *Sion House* in Navan. *Sion House* was one of the residences of the Dunville family and was used by them as a base for their pursuit of hunting. [John Dunville, father of John Spencer Dunville VC, was brought up partly at Redburn House, Holywood and partly at Sion House, Navan. John Dunville was Master of the Meath Hounds from 1911 to 1915.]

By 1901 William and Sarah Patterson and two of their sons, Sam and Alex, were living in *Ardnalea Cottage*, Craigavad. William and Sarah Patterson (née Cooke) had seven children but by 1911 four of their seven children had died.

Prior to the outbreak of the Great War brothers Alex and Sam Patterson both worked as gardeners and they were active members of their local company of the Ulster Volunteer Force. Alex Patterson worked as an under-gardener at Rockport School. Ypres Town Cemetery Extension, Belgium, Holywood and District WM, Glencraig Parish Church of Ireland Church (Holy Trinity), Rockport School

+REA, J

Royal Irish Rifles. 8th Btn. Lance Corporal. 3/8834. Died 06/08/1917. Age 20. Son of Matthew and Hannah Rea, of Drumcrow, Carnalbanaagh, Ballymena. Tyne Cot Military Cemetery, Belgium. Carnalbanagh Presbyterian Church RH

+ROBSON, Richard Ivan

Royal Irish Rifles. 15th Btn. Captain. MC. Previously Sergeant 18701, 13th Btn. Died 06/08/1917. Age 26. Born on 033/04/1891 in Notting Hill, Belfast. Elder son of John and Elizabeth (Bessie) Robson (nee Finlay) who were married on 01/07/1890 in Fisherwick Presbyterian Church in Belfast. The Robson family lived in Malone Road, Belfast before they moved to *Glenoe*, 85 Princetown Road, Bangor. John Robson was a livestock auctioneer and merchant and he and Bessie had four children. Their father, John Robson, died in the Royal Victoria Hospital on 19/07/1911 (aged 57) and their mother, Bessie, died on 16/08/1943 (aged 77). Both remains were buried in Belfast City Cemetery. Richard Ivan Robson was educated at Blackwood's Preparatory School in Northamptonshire and then at Oundle School in Northamptonshire where he was a House Prefect. He shot at Bisley for the Ashburton Shield and was noted for his

swimming and diving prowess. When war broke out Richard Robson was in Trinity College, Dublin University, preparing to enter the Divinity School. Richard Robson had been a Company Commander in the Bangor contingent of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and he joined the Ulster Division. He was awarded the Military Cross in the spring of 1916 for gallantry in the field and was on active service during the Battles of the Somme and Messines. Captain Robson was a brother-in-law of the Rev John Reginald McDonald MA who was a Curate in Bangor Parish Church. (Later Archdeacon of Connor and Rector of St Matthew's, Belfast). The Rev McDonald and Norah Annette Robson were married on 18/07/1916 in Bangor Parish Church. Son of Elizabeth Robson, of Glenoe, Bangor, Co. Down, and the late John Robson. Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium. Bangor and District WM, Memorial Plaque in Royal British Legion (Bangor Branch). Memorial Plaque in Bangor C of I Parish Church (St Comgall's). Family grave headstone in Belfast City Cemetery

+SMYTH, J

Royal Irish Rifles, 13th Btn. Rifleman. 18786. Died 06/08/1917. Age 21. Native of Comber. Son of David and Elizabeth Smyth, of 49, Beersbridge Rd., Belfast. Potijze Chateau Grounds Cemetery, Belgium

+TOYE, Robert Ernest

Royal Irish Rifles. 15th Btn. Company Quartermaster Sergeant. 15/13744. Died 06/08/1917. Age 26. Son of John and Elizabeth G. Toye, of Fortavon, Garvagh. Wieltje Farm Cemetery, Belgium

+WARWICK, William Neville

Royal Irish Rifles, 10th Btn. Corporal. 529. Died 06/08/1917 at Wieltje near Ypres. Born 10/03/1889 at Shane's Castle, Randalstown. Son of gardener Charles Warwick and his wife Emily Maria Davison. The couple, both aged 21 years, had married in St Patrick's Parish Church, Ballymena, on the 27/06/1888. He gave his address as Shane's Castle and she came from Clinty, Ballymena. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium. RBAI WM

+YOUNG, Charles

Canadian Infantry, 103rd Btn. D Coy. Sergeant. 706672. Died 06/08/1917. Son of John and Agnes Young, of 17, Lawnview St., Woodvale Rd., Belfast. Belfast City Cemetery

1918

+McCREADY, Robert

Nottinghamshire Yeomanry (Sherwood Rangers) 1st Btn. Formerly of the North Irish Horse. Private. H/71705. Died 06/08/1918. Age 20 years old. Son of William and Mary McCready, of 45, Sunningside St., Ormean Rd., Belfast. Alexandra (Hadra) War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt

1943

+STOKES, Harry

Royal Corps of Signals, att'd. III Indian Corps Sigs Indian Signal Corps. Driver. 4969494. Died 06/08/1943. Age 34. Son of Jaben Stokes, and of Sarah E. Stokes (nee Pullen); husband to Jane Agnes Stokes, of Belfast. Kanchanaburi War Cemetery, Thailand

+WATT, George

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Fusilier. 6975419. Died 06/08/1943. Age 35. Son of Michael and Ellen Watt, of Belfast; husband to Mary Watt, of Belfast. Catania War Cemetery, Sicily, Italy

1944

+IRWIN, William Edward Carson

Royal Artillery. Formerly of 24 Battery of 9th (Londonderry) HAA Regiment with whom he served in North Africa. Captain. 255942. Died 06/08/1944. Aged 31. An Old Portoran, 'Big Bill' Irwin was born in Brownhill, Irvinestown, Co. Fermanagh on 27/07/1913, the son of William Robert Irwin and Rebecca Jane (nee Armstrong) of Irvinestown, Co. Fermanagh. His parents had married in Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal, on 17 /10/1906. Bill had two sisters, Eileen Mary and Beatrice Kathleen Rebecca, and three brothers, John James Albert, Hugh and Robert Donald. William's father was a native of Makeny, Ballinamallard, and the manager of Irvinestown Co-operative Dairy Society in Pound Street in the town. William Senior died on 17/07/ 1934. Rebecca Jane, his mother, was from Bundoran, Co. Donegal. She died on 06/09/1953. Imphal War Cemetery, India. Derry Cathedral WM. Portora RS WM

+McCORKELL, Francis Dudley Pakenham

Irish Guards, 2nd Btn. Lieutenant. 258178. Died 06/08/1944. Age 21. Educated in England, he attended Seafeld Park, Hampshire and Charterhouse School, Godalming, Surrey. He enlisted in the Irish Guards at the outbreak of the war.

He later completed an Officer's course at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.

His death occurred as the Irish Guards fought during the Battle of Normandy near Le Busq, Normandy, France. Known as 'Packy', he was a popular and respected officer. Several authors have written about his death. In 'A History of the Irish Guards in the Second World War', Desmond Fitzgerald writes:

"The Germans knew every inch of Le Busq and poured shells into it from the wood to the east. Lieutenant P. McCorkell moved his troop across the road to protect the Coldstreamers. They got into the second field and shot high explosive and Browning into the woods, but it was blind shooting and the German fire continued. Major P. Whitefoord joined them and climbed up on his turret to look over the high hedge. A German machine-gunner saw his head and put a burst into the hedge below it. Patrick Whitefoord slid down his tank with a bullet through his knee. A stream of abuse of the Germans and Normandy poured over the air as he "rang up" for a jeep to fetch him. Captain Michael O'Clock took command of No. 3 Squadron.

"Lieutenant McCorkell kept his tank where it was, up against a thick hedge. He himself was standing in the turret directing the fire of his troop on to the muzzle flashes of a battery of mortars. By the one unlucky chance in a thousand a mortar bomb fell straight down the turret and touched off the ammunition. The other tanks' crews heard a muffled explosion, then, very slowly, the Sherman rose straight in the air, the turret below off and the hull turned an ungainly somersault. It landed on its back and lay there like a beetle, its tracks spinning in the air, till another explosion blew the

whole suspension to the other side of the field. A blood-stained book stuck out of the side – it came away in Mick O’Clock’s hand. By the hedge where the tank had been there was a large smoking crater. Lying in the grass near the tank was the Troop Sergeant. He was walking across to talk to Lieutenant McCorkell when the tank blew up; he had to be evacuated as “bomb happy”.”

A similar record appears in Edward Roderick Hill’s ‘The Story of the Guards Armoured Division’. One last account comes from fellow Guardsman Sir John Gorman writing in ‘The Times of My Life’:

“My close friend Packy McCorkell’s troop was fighting up the next hill in front of my troop and the Nebelwerfers were putting their six close shells all around his tanks, when suddenly we saw a body, arms outstretched, rising from his tank, which had erupted. A mortar shell had fallen through the Commander’s hatch, exploded in the turret, killing all in it and resulting in poor Packy’s body being thrown high in the air.

“By now one was getting the understandable dread that one’s luck could not go on. Of the thirty-five officers of 2nd Battalion, over half had already been lost and the odds of the remaining surviving was even money and reducing.”

Francis McCorkell was born on 22/04/1923. He was the only son and heir to the estate of Sir Dudley Evelyn Bruce McCorkell M.B.E., K.St.J., J.P. and Lady Helen Elizabeth McCorkell (née Usher) of Ballyarnett, Co. Londonderry. His father had served as Mayor of the City of Derry from 1929-1935, and later as Lord-Lieutenant of Co. Londonderry from 1957. St. Charles de Percy War Cemetery, Normandy,

France. Charterhouse School WM, Godalming, Surrey, England.

VETERAN

STEPHENSON, George Vaughan

RNVR. Surgeon Commander. Served 11/39 - 04/46.
30/11/1939. RN Hospital Chatham, 06/1943 in charge of
RN Auxiliary Hospital Columbo, 19/07/1945 in charge of RN
Auxiliary Hospital Knowle. Born Dromore 22/12/1901. Son
of Rev GA Stephenson and Gertie A Paddon of Belfast.
Brother of Henry William Vaughan Stephenson who served
in RN in WW1. Married May Fraser, daughter of JC Fraser
1933. Played rugby for QUB and London Hospitals.
Between 1920 and 1930 was capped 42 times for Ireland
which he captained 13 times. Consultant psychiatrist, Hill
End Hospital, St Albans. QUB 1924. Died 06/08/1970

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We will remember them

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masthead.**

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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