



remembrance ni



Loos Memorial and Dud Corner Cemetery

Named after the amount of unexploded enemy shells found in the neighbourhood after the Armistice. There are 2,000 burials in the cemetery and 20,000 casualties on the memorial who have no known grave.

Inniskilling's VC citation

Captain Eric Norman Frankland Bell was with the 9th Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and was attached to the 109th Trench Mortar Battery which was equipped with the Stokes Trench Mortar.

At Thiepval they were on the right of the assault and just before 7.30 crept out into No-Man's Land, waiting for the barrage to lift.

Captain Bell and his battery advanced with the infantrymen and all were in a way the victims of their own success.

In the final few minutes before the attack by the 36th Division on the 1 July 1916, the Stokes Mortar teams were part of the hurricane bombardment of the enemy trenches. As the attack began, the soldiers of the Inniskillings and Royal Irish Rifles left the British front line in Thiepval Wood to cross the 1000 yards of shell holes and open ground that led to the German trenches and, beyond, to the formidable Schwaben Redoubt.

The advance went well, but on either side of the Ulstermen the assaulting brigades were not faring so well. This led to the 36th division creating a small salient or bulge in the line. It also meant that they were vulnerable to merciless machine gun fire from the sides as well as the front.

As planned, Captain Bell and the Stokes Trench Mortar teams, along with the Vickers Machine Gun teams, followed to support the infantry attack. As the German machine-gunners started their work, the 36th Division's casualties mounted and the attack faltered. With incredible coolness

and bravery, Captain Bell crept forward and shot the nearest German machine-gunner, then operated the Stokes Mortar alone to aid the soldiers clearing the German trenches. When he had no mortar bombs left he grabbed a rifle and stood up in full view of the enemy firing at the German soldiers advancing to counter-attack. He was eventually killed as he gathered up and reorganised the men to try to hold their position.

Captain Bell's citation from the London Gazette, September 26th 1916 reads.

"For most conspicuous bravery, when the front line was held up by enfilading machine gun fire, Captain Bell crept forward and shot the machine gunner. Later, on no less than three occasions when the bombing parties that were clearing the enemies trenches were unable to advance, he went forward alone and threw trench mortars among the enemy. When he had no more bombs available, he stood on the parapet under intense fire and used a rifle with great coolness and effect on the enemy advancing to counter attack.

Finally he was killed rallying and reorganising infantry parties, which had lost their officers. All this was outside the scope of his normal duties with his battery.

He gave his life in his supreme devotion to duty."

Captain Bell was just twenty years old. His body was sadly never recovered from the battlefield so this brave young man has no known grave but is remembered with honour on the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing.

Captain Eric Norman Frankland Bell VC was born on 28/08/1895 at Alma Terrace in Enniskillen, the son of Edward and Dora Bell. At the time, his father was

Quartermaster to the 2nd Battalion The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. His mother came from Manorhamilton, County Leitrim and his father from Budeaux, Devon.

By 1901, his father had been posted and the family were living in Seaforth in Lancashire where Eric went to school. When his father retired from the army the family settled in Hill Street, Liverpool and from there Eric, a budding artist, attended Liverpool University to study architecture. Before the war he had worked as an assistant to a professor in the school of architecture at Liverpool University.

His Victoria Cross was presented to his family on November 29th 1916, by King George V at Buckingham Palace. Eric Norman Frankland Bell's VC is still held by members of the family.

The Battle of Loos

The Loos Memorial commemorates 20,605 British officers and men who were killed from 25th September 1915 to the end of the war in November 1918 in the battle sector between the river Lys in French Flanders and the village of Grenay, near Lens, in Artois.

The Loos Memorial to the Missing forms the rear and the two sides of Dud Corner Cemetery. The thousands of names of the servicemen missing in action with no known grave are inscribed on 139 stone panels attached to these side and rear walls.

Astonishingly, the grave errors committed by the British High Command at the Battle of Loos were not learned from and were to be repeated on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, on 1 July 1916 in the greatest military disaster in the history of the British Army.

The piper of Loos

Piper Daniel Logan Laidlaw VC, The Kings Own Scottish Borderers. (26th July 1875 - 2nd June 1950)

London Gazette, 18th November, 1915. - For most conspicuous bravery prior to an assault on German trenches near Loos and Hill 70 on 25th September 1915. During the worst of the bombardment, when the attack was about to commence, Piper Laidlaw, seeing that his company was somewhat shaken from the effects of gas, with absolute coolness and disregard of danger, mounted the parapet, marched up and down and played the company out of the trench.

The effect of his splendid example was immediate, and the company dashed out to the assault. Piper Laidlaw continued playing his pipes till he was wounded.

On this Day – September 26

1915

Stubborn British defence against German counter attacks around Loos. The French progress in Champagne, taking 16,000 German prisoners.

1917

The Battle of Polygon Wood commenced on 26 September 1917. Despite its name, there was very little of the physical

surrounds that resembled a "wood", continuous bombardment had seen the trees in the woods blown to bits and reduced to splintered stumps.

The joint British and Australian attack commenced in the mist just before 6am. The infantry advanced behind a heavy artillery barrage - the noise of this was compared to a roaring bushfire. While the artillery greatly assisted in taking Polygon Wood, the attack did not destroy numerous German concrete pillboxes. As the barrage lifted, attacking troops would attempt to surround a pillbox to eliminate the machine gun positions, edging their way around the structure to throw grenades through the firing slits. There were many tragic moments. Men accepting surrender were often killed in these desperate confrontations, during tense moments of uncertainty and confusion. The battle was regarded by the Allies as a success although it came at a high price; over 15,500 British and 5,700 Australian casualties.

Today the Battle of Polygon Wood is especially remembered at the CWGC Buttes New British Cemetery, located just outside the town of Zonnebeke. On the butte itself stands the Memorial to the 5th Australian Division who captured it on 26 September 1917. There are over 2,100 servicemen buried; over 1,650 are unidentified. A memorial to the missing of The New Zealand Division stands at the rear. Further on in the woods behind the cemetery, visitors can readily discover the remnants of some pillboxes and bunkers; ongoing reminders of the total destruction of this now peaceful area over 100 years ago.

1918

The French and American attack on a 40 mile front from the

middle of Champagne to the Meuse. The French under General Gouraud, Americans under General Pershing. Both armies advance several miles, capture Montfaucon, Varennes and many villages.

1944

As dawn broke on 26 September 1944 the last boats evacuating troops from the Oosterbeek perimeter departed. Almost 2,500 men had been saved in Operation Berlin, but more than 6,000 were left behind with over 1,400 having been killed.



The Battle of Arnhem ends in Allied defeat with more than 8,000 British and Polish soldiers killed or captured. Operation Market Garden, the largest airborne operation so far of the Second World War. The aim of the operation was to seize key bridges in the Netherlands using airborne troops, creating a wide salient through which allied forces could advance into the German heartland. Intelligence

initially suggested that the only German resistance in the area would come from lightly armed reserve forces, however the German Commander headquartered at Arnhem anticipated the invasion and moved not only elite SS units into the area, but seasoned veterans and units specifically trained to combat airborne landings. What followed was nine days of intense battle with poor radio communication, isolated units, low supplies and constant assault from German armour and artillery. By the ninth day, Adolf Hitler, giving priority to the defence of the Netherlands had ordered the terrifying Tiger Tanks into the battle and the allied troops began withdrawing, taking yet more casualties.



1942

Destroyer HMS Veteran was torpedoed and sunk by U-404 while on convoy duty in the Western Atlantic. She was picking up survivors from torpedoed merchant ships when

attacked. All on board died: 159 crew and 76 rescued seamen from other ships

Operation Market Garden had come to an end. The shattered survivors from Arnhem had crossed the Lower Rhine. But so many never made it back - the Airborne Carpet, those who guard the old Drop Zones for ever more.

Roll of Honour – September 26

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1914

+ARTHUR, Richard James

Royal Engineers, 1st Signal Coy. Pioneer. 23831. Died 26/09/1914. He was posthumously mentioned in dispatches on 20/10/1914. Born in Lismore, County Tyrone. Bourg-et-Comin Communal Cemetery, France. Dungannon WM. Brantry C of I RH

1915

+BROLLY, Hugh

Highland Light Infantry. 12th Btn. Private. 17970. Died 26/09/1915. Age 38. Born near Draperstown about 1877.

Son of Hugh and Ellen Brolly, of Cloughfin, Draperstown, Co. Londonderry; husband to Ellen Brolly. Loos Memorial, Dud Corner Cemetery in Pas-de-Calais, France

+CRAIG, John

Royal Scots Fusiliers. 7th Btn. Private te 13674. Died 26/09/1915. Aged 23, Son of Mary J. Craig, Ballee. Loos Memorial, Pas De Calais, France. 1st Ahoghill Pres. Church.

+DONNELLY, Thomas

Royal Scots Fusiliers, 7th Btn. Private.12925. Died 26/09/1915. Born at Derrynoose, Co. Armagh. Resided in Belfast for a period. Son of Susan. He had four brothers and a sister. Loos Memorial, France

+JOHNSTON, William

Royal Scots Fusiliers, 7th Btn. Private.13228. Died 26/09/1915. Age 39. Born at Kilmarnock. In 1901 he was living with his family at Drumman, Hamiltonsbawn. He returned to Scotland and enlisted. Disembarked France in July 1915. Son of William and Mary Johnston, of Drummond, Richhill, Co. Armagh. Loos British Cemetery. St John's C of I Mullaghbrack WM

+McILROY, John

Royal Scots Fusiliers. 6th Bn. Private.11929. Died 26/09/1915. Aged 25. Son of Robert and Ann McIlroy, of Dunnygarron, Cullybackey. Loos Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

+McKENNA, Charles

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 1/8415. Died 26/09/1915. Age 29. Son of Charles and Elizabeth McKenna, of Belfast; husband to M. McKenna, of Chapel House, Bishopgate St., Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium

+REILLY, M

Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), 1st Btn. Private. 7655. Died 26/09/1915. Age 21. Son of Edward and Margret Reilly, of Belfast. Cambrin Churchyard Extension, France

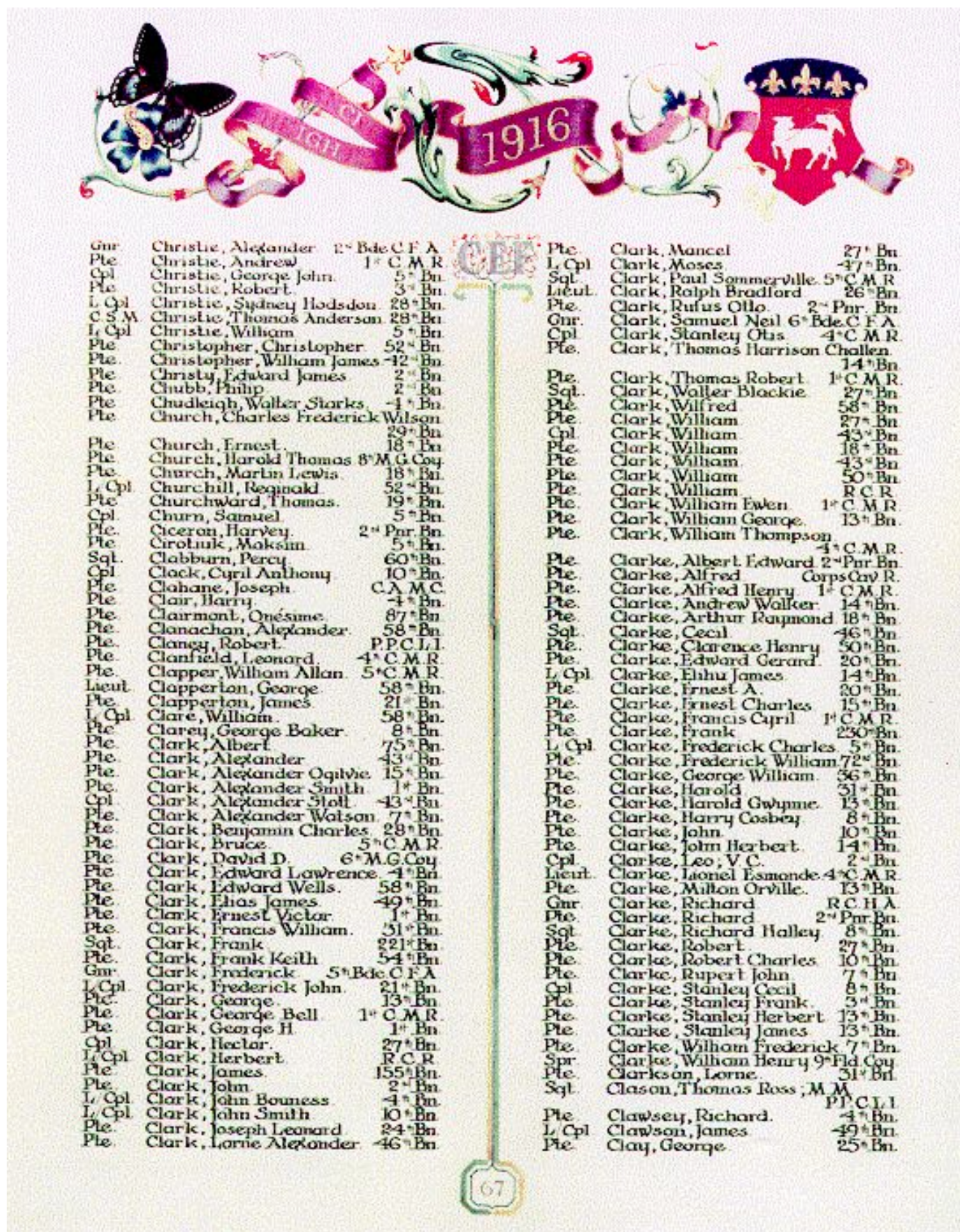
+STEVENSON, Thomas

Australian Expeditionary Force (Australian Light Horse). Trooper. Died 26/09/15. Thomas emigrated to Brisbane, in Queensland, Australia. On the outbreak of war he answered his new country's call to arms and enlisted in 2nd Bn Australian Light Horse. Following training he became part of the Australian Imperial Force and was posted to the Middle East. He contracted acute dysentery at Gallipoli and died in hospital in Egypt. One of eight children of John James and Jane Stevenson who lived in Killyclooney, Strabane. His father was a farmer and auctioneer. Alexandria (Chatsby) Military Cemetery.

1916

+CLARKE, John

Canadian Infantry, 10th Btn (Alberta Regiment). Private. 161113. Died 26/09/1916 during an assault on German Hessian and Zollern trenches between Theipval and Courcellette, France. Born Belfast, Ireland 04/09/1888. He came to Canada in 1913. RBAI. Enlisted 06/12/1915. Calgary, Alberta. Pozieres British Cemetery, Somme,



France. Canadian First World War Book of Remembrance, page 67 (See RH column above). RBAI WM

+DOYLE, John

Canadian Infantry, 8th Btn. Private. 150067. Died 26/09/1916 east of Courcellette on the Somme. Age 27. His father was from Wexford and a member of the RIC. In 1911 the C of I family were resident in Byron St., Belfast and it was from there that John emigrated to Canada. Son of John Robert and Mary Jane Doyle. Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

+DUNBAR, Robert Glass

Canadian Infantry, 5th Btn. Private. 105253. Died 26/09/1916. Born 29/12/1872, Edinburgh, Scotland. Lived Ballycastle. Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France. Ballycastle WM

+McNEICE, Robert John

Canadian Infantry, 8th Btn. Private. 461500. Died 26/09/1916. Age 26. His fighting career lasted 12 days. He arrived at the front on 15/09/1916. His brother James Hamilton McNeice, 8th Btn. (90th Winnipeg Rifles) survived his time in France with Canadian forces. He emigrated from the family home in Tullygarley near Cullybackey. He was a farrier by trade. Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France

+NEWELL, Thomas

Royal Irish Rifles, 14th Btn. Private. 18/1042. Died 26/09/1916. Son of Mr. T. Newell, of Kilmore, Crossgar. Pond Farm Cemetery, Belgium

1917

+BUSBY, Isaac

Middlesex Regiment, 18th Btn. Private. G/597. Died 26/09/1917. Age 38. Son of Samuel Busby, of 82, Henry St., Belfast, and the late Catherine Busby. Hooge Crater Cemetery, Belgium

+MASSEY, David Samuel

The Kings (Liverpool Regiment), 4th Btn. Lance Sergeant. 13643. Died 26/09/1917. Age 26. Born in Augher, on 22/02/1891. Son of David and Eliza Mossey. The 1901 census records the family is living at Main Street, Augher. He enlisted in Liverpool. Husband to Nora (nee Patterson) Massey, of Liverpool. Tyne Cot Memorial, Zonnebeke. West-Vlaanderenland, Belgium. Clogher WM

+BROLLY, Hugh

Highland Light Infantry. 12th Btn. Private. 17970. Died 26/09/1915. Age 38. Born near Draperstown about 1877. Son of Hugh and Ellen Brolly, of Cloughfin, Draperstown, Co. Londonderry; husband to Ellen Brolly. Loos Memorial, Dud Corner Cemetery in Pas-de-Calais, France

1918

+MARTIN, T

Royal Irish Regiment. 8th Btn. Private. 93. Died 26/09/1918. Age 32. Son of Agnes Martin, 7 Hornby St., Belfast. Le Grand Beaumart British Cemetery, Steenwerk, France

+McVEA, John

Corps of Hussars, North Irish Horse. Private. 71473. Died 26/08/1918. Age 23. Born 02/11/1894 at 18 Ponsonby Ave., Belfast. Enlisted Antrim. Served as Private 1617 in the 5th Cyclist Regiment, North Irish Horse. Son of James and Mary J. McVea, of 28, Cedar Avenue, Belfast. Vis-en-Artois Memorial, France. North Irish Horse WM, Belfast City Hall

+MULHOLLAND, John

Royal Irish Fusiliers. 3rd Btn. Boy. 28750. Died 26/09/1918. Aged 16. Son of Joseph and Elizabeth Mulholland, of 20, Boyne Square, Sandy Row, Belfast. Dundonald Cemetery

1942

+DAWSON, William

RN. Leading Stoker. C/KX 89752. Died 26/09/1942. Age: 25. HMS Veteran. Son of Richard and Mary A. Dawson, Lurgan. Chatham Naval Memorial, Panel 61. Lurgan WM

+SMITH, John Preston Thomson

RN. Leading Stoker. C/KX 90277. Died 26/09/1942. HMS Veteran. Served in RN in WW1. Re-joined at beginning of hostilities WW2. Brother Harry, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, taken prisoner in France shortly after outbreak of war. Parents resident Convention St., Belfast. Wife and four children in London. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 27/11/1942). Chatham Naval Memorial

1943

+SOMERVILLE, William

RAF. Corporal. 626169. Died 26/09/1943. Aged 22. Son of Joseph and Mary Somerville of Upperlands. Upper Tamlaght-O'Crilly C of I Churchyard

1944

+CAMERON, James

Parachute Regiment, ACC, 21st Independent Company. Private. 6982743. Died 26/09/1944. Age 22. Son of Thomas Cameron and Ellen "Nellie" Cameron (née Armstrong) of 64 Davy's Street, Carrickfergus. Thomas Cameron served in 12th Btn Royal Irish Rifles during the First World War. James enrolled in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in 1940. He volunteered for airborne training in 1942 and saw action in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy. In Operation Market Garden he sustained gunshot wounds during house-to-house fighting at Stationweg 6-8, Oosterbeek, Netherlands. Before transfer to the hospital at Apeldoorn, James received treatment inside the house from Sergeant Gerry Thompson and Private Harry Bruce. His death at St. Joseph's Mental Hospital, Apeldoorn came on what would be the final day of the Battle of Arnhem. Temporary burial took place at Heidehof General Cemetery before reinterment in Oosterbeek War Cemetery, Gelderland, Netherlands. Family memorial Victoria Cemetery, Carrickfergus

1945

+McMICHAEL, David

Royal Ulster Rifles. 2nd Btn. Lance Serjeant. 7009901. Died 26/09/1944. Age 36. David sustained injuries caused by shrapnel when crossing the Escaut Canal on 19/09/1945.

Son of Alfred and Mary McMichael, of 46 Louisa Street Belfast. (David is misnamed as Daniel on CWGC records). Leopoldsburg War Cemetery, Limburg (Belgium), Belgium

+MONTAGUE, James

RAFVR. Flt. Sgt. 1051821. Died 09/02/1945. Aged 27. 630 Sqdn. Son of Denis and Alice Montague; husband to Brigid T. Montague, of Swatragh, Co. Londonderry. Runnymede Memorial, Surrey, Panel 272.

VETERAN

McDONNELL, Randal John Somerled

HMS Caroline. RNVR. Captain. Served WW2 in various theatres and with the Special Operations Executive where he worked at times with Peter Fleming the elder brother of Ian Fleming, creator of James Bond. Commander of the Ulster Division, RNVR, 1954 -1957. 8th Earl of Antrim. Eton College. Christ Church, Oxford. Honorary Attaché to Tehran 1932. Clerk of the House of Lords 1932 - 34. Succeeded to the title of 8th Earl of Antrim 15/06/1932. Vice-Lord-Lieutenant of County Antrim in 1955. Chairman of Ulster TV. Invested as a Fellow, Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) 1972. B 22 /05/1911. Son of Randal Mark Kerr McDonnell, 7th Earl of Antrim and Margaret Isabel Talbot. Husband to Angela Christina Sykes, daughter of Sir Tatton Benvenuto Mark Sykes, 6th Bt. and Edith Violet Gorst. Died 26/09/1977. Age 66

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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