



remembrance ni



Royal tribute at HMS Royal Oak remembrance

On the seventieth anniversary of the sinking of HMS Royal Oak in 2009 Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, was in Orkney to join the survivors in a service on board HMS Penzance over the wrecksite in Scapa Flow.



Battleship sunk in UK's safest anchorage

Seven men from Northern Ireland died on this day in 1939, when the battleship HMS Royal Oak was torpedoed and sunk in Scapa Flow with the loss of 833 lives. Coming just weeks after the outbreak of World War Two, it was one of Britain's worst naval disasters.

It was an even worse shock because it happened inside a famous and supposedly impregnable naval base. Scapa Flow, in the Orkney Islands, was the Royal Navy's home base in World War One. It's well-organised defences gained it a reputation as a secure anchorage, where British ships were completely safe. But in the interwar years, the defences were neglected, and when war broke out with Germany in 1939 they were in bad shape.

There were not nearly enough men, searchlights, guns or patrol ships to make Scapa Flow secure. Blockships, which obstructed the narrow channels into the Flow, had rusted away to nothing. Kapitanleutnant Günther Prien, commander of the German submarine U-47, exploited this weakness and entered the anchorage shortly before

midnight on 13th October 1939. He found the Royal Oak lying at anchor, oblivious to any danger. His first four torpedoes caused only small damage, due to a number of misses and malfunctions. But the crew of Royal Oak -



most of whom were below decks asleep in their hammocks - thought there had been a small internal explosion.

They couldn't conceive that they might be under attack. So Prien reloaded his torpedo tubes and attacked again. This time three explosions amidships sealed the Royal Oak's fate. A massive hole was torn in her side. She quickly began to roll over, and then the cordite magazines caught fire, sending balls of flame racing through the ship. The electricity failed within minutes, plunging the ship into darkness. Only the very quick-witted, or very lucky, got out from inside the ship. As U-47 escaped from Scapa Flow undetected, more than 300 British sailors jumped into the dark, freezing water of Scapa Flow. Some had terrible burns. Thick fuel oil covered, choking and blinding them.

But thanks to the heroic work of Daisy II (the battleship's tender which was moored alongside at the time of the attack) 386 men were pulled from the water alive. It was less than a third of the Royal Oak's crew.

Günther Prien and the crew of U-47 were welcomed as heroes in Germany, and Hitler sent his private plane to fly them to Berlin so he could congratulate them personally.

Prien was awarded the Knight's Cross, Germany's highest military award, and became a celebrity. The Nazi propaganda machine cranked into overdrive, and milked this admittedly brilliant achievement for all it was worth. In Britain, the loss of Royal Oak caused shock and grief, particularly over the large loss of boy-sailors.

There had been 163 of them aboard the ship, some as young as 15. 126 went down with the Royal Oak. It would contribute to the end of this ancient tradition of boys serving their apprenticeships on fighting ships. The loss of Royal Oak was a tragic and demoralising event for Britain, but on the context of the war, it was soon overtaken by events. The Royal Navy, and the survivors of HMS Royal Oak, got on with fighting the war, as did the fathers, brothers and wives of those who'd perished. But none would ever forget the loss of Royal Oak and so many men. Today they still rest within her upturned hull - a protected war grave 100 feet beneath the water of Scapa Flow.

Time table of a tragedy

9th - Over night the CinC Home Fleet was made aware that the German navy was about to launch a sortie by heavy units.

At 1320 hours the CinC Home Fleet received firm information from the RAF when one of Coastal Command's Hudson aircraft of 224 Sqd. sighted the German Battlecruiser GNEISENAU and the cruiser KOLN and 9 destroyers off Lister lighthouse (Lindesnes LH southern Norway) steaming north.

(The purpose of this sortie was to sink any allied shipping

found and to entice out the Home Fleet onto waiting U-boats and to bring them into range of German bombers).



At 1930 hours ROYAL OAK with destroyers MATABELE and STURDY sailed from Scapa Flow to patrol to the west of the Shetlands. ROYAL OAK didn't sail with the Fleet due to her slow speed, which was probably less than 20 knots, so she was given the task to act as a 'back stop', should GNEISENAU slip out of the trap being set by Forces E and F of the Home Fleet, and attempt to break out from the North Sea.

10th – Sailing west by north the ROYAL OAK force ran into very heavy seas. During the day due to the foul weather ROYAL OAK's destroyers lost touch with her. After trying to re-establish contact with her escort and failing ROYAL OAK set course to return to Scapa Flow.

11th – In the early hours of the morning ROYAL OAK arrived back at Scapa Flow. She anchored in the Northeast corner of the Flow, some 1500 yards south of the old seaplane carrier PEGASUS (ex ARK ROYAL).

(Because the CinC Home Fleet believed that an attack by the Luftwaffe on Scapa Flow was imminent the majority of the fleet left Scapa Flow and over the next couple of days

and were dispersed to other anchorages, most of them to Loch Ewe. ROYAL OAK was left in Scapa Flow as her anti-aircraft armament was deemed to be a useful addition to Scapa Flow's inadequate air defences)

Meanwhile ROYAL OAK set about making good the damage sustained on her latest sortie, in which the stormy seas had caused structural damage and washed away many of her Carley floats.

14th – At 0104 hours a torpedo, one of a salvo of three, fired by U-47 struck ROYAL OAK on her starboard bow near the anchor chains. Many of the crew heard a muffled 'whump' but were unsure of what caused it many thought it to have been an internal explosion.

At 0116 hours as Captain W G Benn and Commander R L Woodrow-Clark were examining the damage caused by the first torpedo, ROYAL OAK was struck by two more torpedoes on her starboard side amidships from a salvo of three fired by U-47.

At 0121 hours John Gatt the skipper of the 100 ton grt drifter DAISY II, ROYAL OAK's tender, tied up for the night on ROYAL OAK's port side, saw an explosion that reached masthead height. This explosion was thought to have been caused by an explosion in a small arms magazine that ignited cordite charges.

At 0129 hours ROYAL OAK rolled over and sank, 833 men were lost over 100 of who were boy seamen, some died of

exposure, some of injuries from the fires and explosions; others drowned or choked on the oil. Of the 420 chilled and oil-soaked survivors, 386 were picked by the DAISY II, including Captain Benn. This was an incredible feat for Skipper Gatt and his crew to get so many bodies on to a vessel which was 17 feet wide by 100 feet long. For his part in the rescue Skipper Gatt, although a civilian was awarded the DSC. Most of the remaining survivors were picked by boats from the PEGASUS and few managed to swim ashore.

At 0200 hours the Admiral commanding the Orkneys and Shetlands signaled the Admiralty that the ROYAL OAK had been sunk in Scapa Flow by a series of explosions.

At 0330 hours the first destroyer to move following the attack, MASHONA, slipped from No. 8 buoy. This was almost an hour after U-47 had successfully exited Scapa flow.

At 0400 hours DAISY II abandoned the search for survivors and took those she had picked up to the PEGASUS. The survivors were interviewed and asked what they thought had caused the explosions and sinking. There were suggestions of sabotage and investigations centred on a number of oil drums that had been loaded onto the ROYAL OAK on the day before. Few if any of thought the sinking had been caused by torpedoes fired by a submarine.

15th – A local salvage diver was hired to dive on the wreck in an attempt to establish the cause of the sinking. During his two dives he first found the holes caused by the torpedoes; then he found the propellers from two German type G7e/2874 electric torpedoes. Thereby definitely

establishing that a submarine had been responsible for the sinking.

17th – By this date the ROYAL OAK survivors had mostly been embarked on the accommodation ship VOLTAIRE, the uninjured, and the injured on the hospital ship SAINT ABBA.

At 1200 hours four Ju 88's dived out of the sun and bombed the fleet units that were off the Lyness naval base in Scapa Flow. Their main target was the old battleship IRON DUKE that was being used as an accommodation ship but they also dropped bombs near the VOLTAIRE and SAINT ABBA. Small boats took the ROYAL OAK survivors embarked in VOLTAIRE to the island of Flotta in the middle of Scapa Flow. There, they were landed and told to scatter until after the air raid.

Captain Benn of the ROYAL OAK protested to the Admiralty and requested that his men should be removed from the dangers at Scapa Flow. Following his protest, the men on Flotta and the remainder of ROYAL OAK survivors were taken to the mainland and sent south by rail. The SAINT ABBA, with the seriously injured men aboard, sailed during the early evening for Invergordon Naval Base where the men were transferred to the new Naval hospital.

Royal tribute at Royal Oak remembrance

On the seventieth anniversary of the sinking of HMS Royal Oak in 2009 Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, was in Orkney to join the survivors in a service on board HMS Penzance over the wrecksite in Scapa Flow.

Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, along with senior personnel from the Royal Navy joined former Royal Oak crew members Kenneth Toop 86, Bert Pocock 87, and



Lieutenant
Colonel
Norman
Thackeray
89, who
managed to
escape with
their lives
from the
sinking
battleship, in

paying their respects of the wreck which is an official war grave.

Around 150 friends and family of those who were lost made the pilgrimage to Scapa Flow to remember the terrible events of October 14 1939 when the battleship was sunk at anchor by a German U-boat.

The princess and Orkney Lord Lieutenant Dr Tony Trickett joined the survivors on board HMS Penzance. A moving service was conducted by Royal British Legion padre the Rev Jack Muir. Laurence Tait of Kirkwall City Pipe Band played a lament as wreaths and floral tributes were placed on the water from HMS Penzance and the Talisman launch Flotta Lass. The sheer number who travelled to Orkney for the ceremony is a sign of how many people are still touched by the sinking, the memory of which is being passed on from generation to generation, keeping the memory of those who were lost alive, long after their deaths in the cold, dark waters of Scapa Flow.

Acknowledgments - Sky History, Naval History Net, Orkney Today



“With the Naval Diving Group unable to replace the Ensign on the wreck of HMS Royal Oak in Scapa Flow this year due to CV-19 restrictions, it was an honour to join the HMS ROYAL OAK Society for the 81st anniversary”

On this Day – October 14

1914

Bailleul occupied by British forces

Bruges occupied by German forces

Yabasi (Cameroons) captured by Allied forces

1915

Bulgaria and Serbia declare war on one another

1916

South of the Somme, west of Belloy-en-Santerre, the French attack on a width of just over a mile and take the German first line, and also take Genermont, north east of Ablaincourt.

Entente Powers send Ultimatum to Greece; withdrawal of entire Greek Armies from Thessaly demanded.

Dr. von Körber, Austrian Premier, resigns

1918

14th October 1918 Northern Whig

Ulster Division Rank & File Fatality

Sergeant John Albert Saunders, 6065, 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, killed in action 30th September, 1918. Son of John and Sarah Saunders nee Martin, of 127 Old Park Road, Belfast. Deceased was 21 years of age and is buried in Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium. John Albert Saunders is commemorated on the Roll of Honour for Cliftonville Presbyterian Church - his brother, Harry, served with 14th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles and 1st Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers and was discharged to Class Z Reserve on 27th January 1919.

Battle of Courtrai or Battle of Roulers or Second Battle of Belgium begins

Roulers recaptured by Allied forces.

Durazzo, Novi Bazar, and Ipek retaken by Italian forces.

British troops from Vladivostok reach Irkutsk (Siberia).

President Wilson replies to German Government, attaching further military conditions to the terms of armistice, and

warning against further breaches of laws of war, and insists on dealing only with a democratic Government . Turkish Government Note to President Wilson proposing an armistice delivered at Washington.

1939

U47 (Kapitanleutnant Prien) sinks HMS Royal Oak at anchor in Scapa Flow, killing 883. U47 then escapes undetected and returns home to Germany. The press in Germany declare Prien a hero.

Polish submarine Orzel arrives in Britain having escaped internment in Estonia.

1940

Luftwaffe bomb falls on Balham Tube station in London, killing 66.

1941

Army Group Centre wipes out the Russian pocket at Bryansk, but only capture about 50,000 prisoners. The rain and mud begins to impede the German advance, but German troops manage to capture Rzhev. Hitler orders that Moscow is to be enveloped, rather than assaulted directly.

Russian troops fall back in the southern Ukraine as the Germans make for the port of Rostov.

Corvette HMS Fleur de Lys was torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U-206 approximately 100 miles south west of Cadiz. She broke in two and sank very quickly: of her 73 crew only 3 survived.

1942

Japanese bombard Henderson Field at night from warships then send troops ashore onto Guadalcanal in the morning as U.S. planes attack.

In the northern part of Stalingrad, units of the 6th Army advance in bitter fighting and surround the heavily defended Tractor Factory, following a series of devastating attacks (over 3,000 sorties) by bombers of Luftflotte 4.

Hitler orders halt in east except in Stalingrad and the Caucasus to prepare for winter defense.

Australians and Japanese battle for Templeton's Crossing on Kokoda Trail, New Guinea.

Off Newfoundland, German sub U-69 sinks British railway ferry SS Caribou; 136 killed, mostly civilians, including Naval Nursing Sister Agnes Wilkie, the only Canadian nurse killed in action in WWII.

1943

The US 8th Air Force delivers a heavy attack against the ball bearing plants at Schweinfurt. However, of the original force of 291 B-17's, 198 are either shot down or damaged beyond repair, while the Luftwaffe has lost only about 40 fighter planes.

1943

German forces evacuate the Zaporozhe bridgehead on the eastern bank of the Dnieper river.

Massive escape from Sobibor as Jews and Soviet POWs break out, with 300 making it safely into nearby woods. Of those 300, fifty will survive.

Exterminations then cease at Sobibor, after over 250,000 deaths. All traces of the death camp are then removed and trees are planted.

Jose P. Laurel, a distinguished pre-war Filipino statesman, takes office as “president” of the Philippines after being elected by a Japanese puppet “National Assembly” on Sept. 25. Surviving two assassination attempts by Filipino guerrillas, Laurel’s government enjoyed little popularity. A general amnesty after the war spared him a treason trial.

1944

The British liberate Athens and Piraeus and also land on Corfu. Russian troops and Yugoslav Partisans force their way in to Belgrade.

Operation Hurricane was a mass bomber attack on the German city Duisburg in a futile attempt to break enemy morale. 1,013 aircraft were used : 519 Lancasters, 474 Halifaxes and 20 Mosquito were used during the day with a similar amount during the night.

Ann Baumgartner becomes first Wasp to fly an experimental jet aircraft.



German Field Marshal Rommel, suspected of complicity in the July 20th plot to assassinate Hitler, is visited at home by two of Hitler's staff and given the choice of public trial or suicide by poison. He chooses suicide and it is announced that he died of wounds suffered earlier from a strafing attack.

Roll of Honour – October 14

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1914

+ADAMS, Edward

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 7944. Died 14/10/1914. Age 28. Son of John Adams, of 13, Plevna St., Belfast. Le Touret Memorial, France

+COTTRELL, Benjamin

Middlesex Regiment, 4th Btn. Private. L/9329. Died 14/10/1914. Le Touret Memorial, France

+GALLAGHER, John

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 6220. Died 14/10/1914. Age 30. Husband of Maggie Gallagher, of 17, Sheriff St., Belfast. Le Touret Memorial, France

+GOWDY, Robert

Royal Irish Rifles. 2nd Btn. Rifleman. 9276. Died 14/10/1914. Left Balmoral Industrial School 15/02/1902. Le Touret Memorial, France. Balmoral Industrial School RH

+MURRAY, William

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. D Coy. Rifleman. 7759. Died 14/10/1914. Age 29. Husband of Mrs. S. Cunningham (formerly Murray), of 76, Weir St., Belfast. Le Touret Memorial, France

+SHIVERAL, Samuel

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Private. 9115. Died 14/10/1914. Age 27. In 1911 census he was with his battalion in Bordon, Hampshire. Born Clea, Keady. Son of Samuel Shiveral. Husband to Louisa Shiveral, of 6, Sea View, Lower Halstow, Sittingbourne, Kent. Meteren Military Cemetery, France

1915

+WADDELL, George

Royal Irish Rifles, 12th or 18th Btns. Rifleman 12/553. Died accidentally on 14 or 18/10/1915 in Farnham, Surrey. Whilst practising bomb throwing a piece of metal penetrated his leg. Gangrene subsequently set in. Son of Robert and Eliza Ann (nee Jamison) Waddell, Cogry Square, Doagh. Bordon

Military Cemetery, Hampshire. Ballyclare WM. Second
Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church RH, Kilbride C of I RH

1916

+MARTIN, Thomas

Seaman. Died 04/10/1916. Age 22. Lost at sea. Coleraine.
First Coleraine - PCI RH. Coleraine WM. IMR

1917

+BELL, Robert Gaw

Black Watch (Royal Highlanders), 8th Btn. C Coy. Private.
40452. Died 14/10/1917. Age 27. Son of William James and
Margaret Bell, of 63, Bloomfield Avenue, Belfast.
Dozinghem Military Cemetery, Belgium

+MOONEY, Charles

Royal Engineers, 78th Field Coy. Sapper. 113781. Died
14/10/1917. Husband to Mary Jane Mooney, of 73, Upper
Meadow St., Belfast. Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium

+MURRAY, John

Australian Infantry 49th Btn. Private. 2250. M.M. Died
14/10/1917. Occupation prior to Enlistment: Labourer.
Enlisted: 11/06/1915, Enoggera, Queensland. Embarked:
12/06/1915, Brisbane, Queensland per "Karoo". Born:
Belfast, Ireland. Next of Kin: Cousin - James Murray, 3 High
St., Brixton, Johannesburg, South Africa. Lijssenthoek
Military Cemetery, Belgium

1918

+BERRY, Frederick Ernest

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. A Coy. Previously 14th Btn, Rifles. On their disbandment in February 1918 he was with 23rd Entrenching Btn. Private. 14/42469. Died 14/10/1918 along with 26 of his comrades in an attack on the strongly held village of Gulleghem, Belgium. Born on 31/08/1899 at Belfast where his father Charles was an RIC Sergeant. He followed his two elder brothers into the ranks of the Young Citizen Volunteers and enlisted in 14th Royal Irish Rifles in July 1916 aged 16. He embarked for active service in May 1917 and saw action at Messines, Langemarck and Cambrai in that year. Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium

+CHERRY, Joseph

Royal Irish Rifles, 7th Btn. Private. 26258. (Formerly RDF. 23525), Died 14/10/1918. Age 19. He volunteered in September 1915 when he was in all likelihood only 16 years old, enlisting in Lisburn and serving originally in the RDF, before being transferred to 7 RIR. Slightly wounded in September 1918 he died in action two months later. Writing to his mother, Lieutenant Leslie Johnston informed her that he had been, "shot through the head by a sniper's bullet, and death was absolutely instantaneous. We had just won a position during which your son behaved with great gallantry, keeping up a very heavy fire with his machine gun which was of the greatest assistance to his comrades". Born in Humbertstown or Hannaghstown, Co. Antrim probably in 1899, before the war he had worked for George Wilson of Smithfield, Lisburn. Only son of Mrs. Agnes Cherry nee Hamill of 1 Antrim Place, Lisburn, and probably of Joseph Cherry. They had been married on 02/05/893. Hooze Crater Cemetery, Ypres, Belgium

+COBURN, James

Royal Irish Rifles, 12th formerly 11th Btn. Rifleman. 2167.
Died 14/10/1918 of pneumonia whilst a POW in German War Hospital 10, at Namur, Belgium. Age 18. He enlisted at Lisburn along with his brother John when, according to the Lisburn Standard he was “still not 17” years old. Posted to A Co. 11 RIR , they embarked with their battalion for France from Bordon Camp in October 1915. Wounded on the Somme on the 01/07/1916, again in September 1916 (probably in the gas attack in which 11 RIR were involved on the 01/09/1916) and for a third time in June 1917. He transferred to 12 RIR 2167 when 11 RIR were disbanded in late 1917. Captured around the 27 March 1918 on the sixth day of the German offensive, he seems to have been held for a time at Limberg in Germany. Another prisoner there at the time was Herbert McComiskey before the war, an employee of Beechpark Dairy, who had also served as a Rifleman in 11 RIR. Posted missing in March 1918 he (McComiskey) sent a letter to his parents who lived in Market Square, saying that he had been taken prisoner on March 27 and, “I am getting along all right so far. I cannot complain, and we are getting plenty to eat. There is a young chap called Coburn of the Low Road, with me. He is the only one I know here”. James Coburn also wrote home and the letter, received by his mother on 09/05/1918, letting her know that he was all right, and “expressed the hope that his brother John had come through safely”. Born in Lisburn, he lived at 3 Wilson Street on the Low Road in the town where he and his two brothers John and David were members of Lisburn Temperance Silver band. he was the son of David and Emma Coburn of 3 Wilson Street, Lisburn. If the CWGC records are correct and he was 18 when he

died in 1918 then he could have been as young as 14 when he enlisted. James Coburn's other brother, David who also served as a Rifleman, and Herbert McComiskey both appear to have survived the War. Belgrade Cemetery, Namur, Belgium. Family headstone, Lisburn Cemetery

+CRAIG, David

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Private. 24125. Died 14/10/1918. Age 25. Born at Ballymena and enlisted in Carrickfergus. Son of William Craig, of 13 Newington Ave. Larne. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+CURLEY, William James

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Private. 19962. Died 14/10/1918. Age 22. Son of Philip Curley of Claudy, Co. Londonderry. UK Book of Remembrance

+DENNISON, Robert

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Young Citizen Volunteer. Rifleman. 5365. Died 14/10/1918. Age 38. Husband of Sarah Dennison, of 71, Bridge St., Hilden, Lisburn, Co. Antrim. Tyne Cot Cemetery, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium

+DONALDSON, Daniel

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Corporal. 22726. Died 14/10/1918. Age 22. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Donaldson, of Cross Lane, Dromore, Co. Down. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+DUFF, D

Leinster Regiment, 2nd Btn. Private. 18342. Died 14/10/1918. Husband of Mrs. J. Duff, of 7, Portland Place, Belfast. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+FISHER, Charles Heath

East Surrey Regiment, 4th Btn. att'd. 12th Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 14/10/1918. Age 27. Son of Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Fisher, of 8, Cromwell Rd. Wimbledon, London; husband to Nora E. Fisher, of Ashleigh, Newtownbreda, Belfast. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+FLEMING, William Joseph

Royal Irish Rifles, 7th Btn. Rifleman transf. to (386907) 61st Coy. Labour Corps, S/10035. Died 14/10/1918. Age 23. Son of William Fleming, of Belfast, and the late Mary Fleming. Underhill Farm Cemetery, Belgium of wounds

+GALLAGHER, Thomas

Royal Irish Rifles. 4th Btn. Rifleman. 7908. Died 14/10/1918. Brother John died a year earlier. Son of John and Mary Gallagher, Castle Street, Ballycastle. Liverpool (Ford) Roman Catholic Cemetery

+GALLAGHER, T

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 10829. Died 14/10/1918.. Age 21. Son of Thomas and Jane Gallagher, of 47, Alexandra Gardens, Portadown. Native of Dungannon, Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+KENNEDY, Robert

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Private. 15656. Died 14/10/1918. Age 27. Son of Joseph and Annie Kennedy, of 1, Connell St., Limavady. Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium

+HOWATT, J

Royal Engineers, 150th Field Coy. Sapper. 57647. Died 14/10/1918. Husband of Annie Howatt, of 42, Cherry Valley Gardens, Knock Rd., Belfast. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+KIRK, Robert Samuel

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 6103. Died 14/10/1918. Born Whiteabbey 04/06/1899. Enlisted Carrickfergus. His brother Francis also died in the war on 01/07/1916. Son of Thomas and Margaret (nee Hilditch) Kirk, of Davys St., Carrickfergus. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium. St Nicholas C of I Church, Carrickfergus, RH

+LEES, Lowry

London Regiment (London Scottish). 2nd/14th Btn. Serjeant. 511845. Died 14/10/1918. Age 22. Son of John L. and Frances A. Lees, of 31, Hughenden Avenue, Belfast. Derry House Cemetery No2, Belgium

+MAGUIRE, John

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Rifleman. 20128. Died 14/10/1918. Age 19. Son of Mr. and Mrs. James Maguire, of 2, Orchard Gardens, Queen St., Newry. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+McCOLLUM, William

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 1st Btn. Private. 21927. Died 14/10/1918. Enlisted Bathgate. Son of James and Esther McCollum. Born at Blacktown, Ballyligpatrick, Broughshane on 04/05/1890. They had eight children by 1911 and all were then still alive. William was married and living in Scotland, his wife Mary's address was later given as 9, Thistle Street, Dundee. Tyne Cot Memorial, Buckna Presbyterian Church
RH

+McCURDY, F

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 10718. Died 14/10/1918. Age 20. Son of Archibald and Catherine McCurdy, of 52, Brougham St., Belfast. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+McGIVERN, T

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Private. 24701. Died between 14/10/1918 and 15/10/1918. Age 27. Son of Mrs. Mary McGivern, of 11 Newry St., Warrenpoint. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+McKEE, John

Royal Irish Rifles, 15th Btn. Rifleman. 1500. Died 14/10/1918. Age 21. Born High St., Antrim on 07/07/1897. Enlisted Glasgow. Son of James and Elizabeth (nee Gardner) McKee, of Massereene, Antrim. Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium. Antrim WM, All Saints Church, C of I, WM

+MORAN, R

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Lance Corporal. 27941. Died 14/10/1918. Age 20. Son of Thomas and Bridget Moran, of Desertmartin, Co. Derry. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+PARKES, F

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Rifleman. 18588. Died 14/10/1918. Age 27. Husband to Elizabeth Parkes, of 46, Francis St., Newtownards. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+REID, J

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 20115. Died 14/10/1918. Son of Mrs. C. Reid, of 32, Massereene St., Cullingtree Rd., Belfast. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+REID, J

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 2nd Btn. Corporal. 4337. Died 14/10/1918. Son of Mrs. M. Reid, of Knockmuller, Douglas Bridge, Strabane, Co. Tyrone. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+REID, W J

Royal Irish Rifles. 1st Btn. Lance Corporal. 40838. Died 14/10/1918. Son of Mr. D. Reid, of Barnview House, Portstewart. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+SADLIER, Francis Arthur

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 14/10/1918. Age 21. Enlisted as a private with the

Royal Irish Rifles and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. On 30/07/1918. He was only two days on the front line after having been in France about three weeks. Born in 1898 in Orchard Terrace, Omagh, the older son of an RIC Sergeant. Entered Portora Royal School in 1914. Son of Mr. Francis A. and Katie A. Sadler, of 3, Sedan Terrace, Enniskillen. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium. Portora Royal School WM

+SIMPSON, Alexander McDonald

Royal Irish Rifles, 1st Btn. Rifleman. 20654. Died 14/10/1918. Age 19. Son of David and Lily Simpson, of 119, Rosebery Rd., Belfast. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+STEWART, Andrew

Gordon Highlanders. 6/7th Btn. Lance Corporal. S/11266. Died 14/10/1918. He was born at Ballymena, lived in Airdrie. Iwuy Cemetery, Nord, France

+TODD, W

Royal Irish Rifles, 15th Btn. Rifleman. 19/826. Died 14/10/1918. Husband to Mrs. I. Todd, of 6, Grace Avenue, Bloomfield, Belfast. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+WALKINGTON, Charles Edward

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Captain. Died 14/10/1918. Age 38. Son of the late Dolway B. and Maria Walkington, of Thornhill, Belfast. Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Belgium

+WEIR, Edward Alexander

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 1st Btn. Serjeant. 10608. Died 14/10/1918. Age 22. Son of Mr. and Mrs. James Weir, of Unshanough, Garryduff, Ballymoney; husband to Agnes Weir, of 58, King St., Waterside, Londonderry. Terlincthun British Cemetery, Wimille, France

1939

HMS ROYAL OAK

In the early hours of 14/10/1939 the battleship HMS *Royal Oak* was sunk at around 1.30 am by torpedoes fired from the German submarine *U-47*. This submarine had penetrated the British Navy's main anchorage at Scapa Flow in Orkney and more than 830 men lost their lives that night in the icy, oil-covered waters. Many of them were Boy Seamen not yet 18 years old. HMS *Royal Oak* was a Dreadnought battleship built at the Devonport Dockyard and commissioned in May 1916. She first saw action during the First World War, on 31/05/1916 at the Battle of Jutland. When Queen Maud of Norway (a granddaughter of Queen Victoria and the wife of King Haakon VII of Norway) died of heart failure in London on 20/11/1938 her body was returned to Norway on 24 /11/1938 aboard HMS *Royal Oak* for her state funeral in Oslo. Book of Remembrance and memorial St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, Orkney. The ship's bell from HMS *Royal Oak* was recovered in the 1970s and added to this display.

+ANDERSON, Edward

RN. HMS Royal Oak. Ordinary Seaman. P/SSX27561. Died 14/10/1939. Age 18. Son of Alexander and Elizabeth Anderson, Regent St., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 30/09/1939). Portsmouth Naval Memorial. Panel 33

+ANDERSON, William Thomas

RM. Marine. PO/X 2917. Mentioned in Despatches. HMS Royal Oak. Died 14/10/1939. Age 19. Son of Samuel and Georgina Anderson, Raceview Terrace, Newtownards. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 36. Newtownards WM.

+FARRELL, Robert

RNVR. HMS Royal Oak. Ordinary Seaman. P/UD/X1510. Died 14/10/1939. Aged 20. Son of James and Margaret Farrell, Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 21/10//1939). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 36.

+McGIBBON, Thomas Henry

RNVR. HMS Royal Oak. Ordinary Seaman. P/UD/X1391. Died 14/03/1939. Age 27. Served four years in the Ulster Division, HMS Caroline. His brother William served in the RAF. Son of Henry and Sarah Ann McGibbon, Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 21/10/1939). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 36

+MURPHY, Thomas

RN. HMS Royal Oak. Stoker 1st Class. P/KX 91411. Died 14/10/1939. Age: 20. HMS Royal Oak Son of James and Alice Murphy, Newtownstewart. Plymouth Naval Memorial. Panel 35

+QUIGLEY, Archibald

RN. HMS Royal Oak. AB. P/JX 132173. Died 14/10/1939. Age: 22. Joined RN aged 15. Served in Gibraltar and Malta. Son of Mrs Joseph Quigley, Bootle St., Belfast. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 21/10/1939). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 33

+WALLACE, Andrew James

RN. HMS Royal Oak. Leading Seaman. P/JX 142260. Died 14/10/1939. Age 20. Served in Neptune and Repulse. His brother George died in HMS Indefatigable 16/12/1945, Age 24. Sons of George and Annie Wallace, Florencecourt. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 21/10/1939). Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 33. Enniskillen WM

1940

HMS LIVERPOOL

+NOBLE, William Frederick

RN. HMS Liverpool. Telegraphist . C/SSX 22261. Died: 14/10/1940 Age 22. Son of Henry and Elizabeth Noble, Coolhill, Dungannon. Alexandria - Chatby War Memorial Cemetery. St Anne's Church of Ireland WM, Dungannon WM

+ROSS, Peter

RN. HMS Liverpool. Lieut - Commander (E). Died 14/10/1940. Age 34. He was a keen yachtsman and drove his own car in the Ulster TT. Son of Capt. Arthur J. Ross who was killed in WW1 and Baroness de Ros, (Lady Una), Oldcourt, Strangford. Husband to Angela (nee Dixon), daughter of Lord Glentoran, They had two little daughters. Chatham Naval Memorial, Panel 34

1940

+GARSTIN, Richard Elleker

RAF. Sergeant. 616246. Died 14/10/1940. 206 Sqdn. Educated at Rainey School, Magherafelt. Sergeant Richard Elleker Garstin was part of a four man crew flying a Hudson (Serial No N7362), part of 206 Squadron. The aircraft failed

to return from an operational flight on 14 October 1940. All four crew were killed. His brother Edward also died in service with the RAF. Born 18/12/1917 in the Waterside area of Londonderry where his father was the curate of All Saints' Church. Son of the Revd. William Fitzroy Hamilton Garstin, M.A., and Frances Dalzell Garstin, of Maghera Rectory, Co. Londonderry. Runnymede Memorial, Surrey. Rainey Endowed School RH

+ROBINSON, Robert

Royal Artillery. Gunner. 1465720. Died in London during the Blitz while on active service 14/10/1940. Aged 33. 8th (Belfast) HAA Regiment. He served in 21st Battery, which saw action in Dunkirk, France in 1940. At the time of his death, 8th (Belfast) HAA had a base at Clapham Common in. Records show Luftwaffe bombs falling in the area during the first two weeks of October 1940. Born 1907. Family and friends in Belfast knew him as Charlie. Son of John Robinson and Maria Robinson of Shankill Road, Belfast. Husband to Sophia Robinson of Belfast. Belfast City Cemetery, Glenalina

1941

+STEEDE, George Lysaght Hosford

RAFVR. Sergeant. 1063715. Died 14/10/1941. Aged 21. Died in crash while taking further instruction in night fighter training at RAF Cranwell. RAF Form 1180 for the accident, describing the event and the assumed cause is held by RAF Museum, Hendon. Son of Dr. Benjamin Hosford Steede, M.A., M.D., and of Maude Steede Belfast. Benjamin won the Queen Victoria's Gold Medal in Mathematics for advances in calculations of parabolas, used the bursary to study

medicine in Vienna, returned and established government TB clinics in Ireland. Presented papers to Royal Academy of Sciences on both subjects further on. George's older sister Muriel - lecturer at Cambridge, then Professor and Dept. Head in primary education at Christ Church College, Canterbury. Rostrevor (Knotty Ash) Cemetery

1942

+STEELE-NICHOLSON, John Edwin Charles Averell

RAFVR. Sergeant (Air Gunner).1591275. Died 14/09/1942. Aged 20. Son of Robert Charles Henry and Lydia Mary Noel Amelia Steele-Nicholson, of Ballow, Bangor, Co. Down. Kirkinner Cemetery, Wigtownshire, Scotland. Dungannon WM, Moy WM

VETERANS

ROSS, Charles Simms Ross

Serjeant Charles Simms Ross, Royal Irish Fusiliers, Machine Gun Corps and Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. Charles was born on 14/10/1893 at Strawhall, County Carlow, the youngest of 12 children of John Manson Ross, a Merchant, and Sophia Ross, nee Butler. Charles enlisted in the Royal Irish Fusiliers in the late autumn of 1910 and the 1911 Census shows him at Bordon Camp, Hampshire, attached to 1st battalion. Following the outbreak of war, he embarked for France with the battalion on 22/08/1914. He fought at Mons and the Aisne and from December 1914 was attached to the battalion's Machine Gun Company, transferring to the

Machine Gun Corps at the beginning of 1916. He was wounded in the hand during the Battle of the Somme and remained with the MGC until transferred back to the Royal Irish Fusiliers in the rank of temporary Serjeant in January 1918, seeing action during the German Spring Offensive, March 1918. As a career soldier, Charles remained with the Royal Irish Fusiliers following the Armistice and embarked in September 1919 for Mesopotamia, seeing action in what is now Iran and Iraq. Following the Army reorganisation of 1922, Charles transferred to the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and served until 1932, having served for 22 years. He died in 1939 aged 45 at Bangor, County Down.

CRAIG, Robert

A/Lance Corporal Robert Craig MM, 109th Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps. Robert was born at Jersey Street, Belfast, in April 1896. An Iron Turner's Apprentice before the War, he enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps at Belfast on 14/09/1914. He embarked for France in October 1915 and was awarded the Military Medal in November 1916 for 'bravery in the field'. Robert was wounded by shrapnel in the left leg during the Battle of Langemarck in August 1917. He continued to serve until demobilised in 1919 and was in receipt of a Disability Pension for his injuries.

Larne Times – 14th October 1916

LARNE MAN WINS THE MILITARY MEDAL

KING, Robert

Rifleman R King of the Royal Irish Rifles, who has been awarded the Military Medal for gallantry in action on 1st July. Before joining the Ulster Division Rifleman King was in the employment of the Larne Shipbuilding Company and resided with his sister and

brother-in-law at 3 Ship Street, Larne Harbour. He was a member of the Newington Company, U.V.F."

Rifleman Robert King survived the war transferring to the Z Class Reserve list on the 14th March 1919.

Every day is a Remembrance Day

We will remember them

To return to Home Page - click on Remembrance NI masthead.

remembrance ni

The **remembrance ni** programme is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD who served as Chaplain to 102 and 105 Regiments Royal Artillery (TA), as Hon. Chaplain to RNR and as Chaplain to the RBL NI area and the Burma Star Association NI. Dr McKelvey is a Past President of Queen's University Services Club. He may be contacted at houstonmckelvey@mac.com

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