



remembrance ni

The Unknown Warrior - the secrets of a Royal Irish Rifles officer from Bangor

On this day in 1920 in strictest secrecy, four unidentified British bodies were exhumed from

temporary battlefield cemeteries at Ypres, Arras, the Asine and the Somme.





None of the soldiers who did the digging were told why. The bodies were taken by field ambulance to GHQ at St-Pol-Sur-Ter Noise. Once there, the bodies were draped with the union flag.

On the night of 7 November 1920. The bodies were received by the Reverend George Kendall OBE. Brigadier L.J. Wyatt and Lieutenant Colonel E.A.S. Gell of the Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquiries went into



the chapel alone.

The two officers did not know from which battlefield any individual soldier had come. Brigadier Wyatt with closed eyes rested his hand on one of the coffins. The other soldiers were then taken away

for reburial by Kendall. And so the story of the Unknown Warrior begins, and his journey to Westminster Abbey.

An amazing piece of recently unearthed footage shows Ernest Fitzsimon (Fitz) sitting in the family garden in Bangor in 1966, casually discussing his pivotal role in one of the greatest mysteries of the First World War - The Unknown Warrior.



Burial service by F. Matania

Fitz, who had served with the 14th Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles, carried many of these secrets to his grave, that is until recently.

An amazing piece of footage was rediscovered from the Ulster TV archive. Filmed in 1966 as part of the commemorations of the Battle of the Somme, the interviewee was identified as Major Ernest Fitzsimon, known as 'Fitz'.

In his interview he speaks about how he submitted a scheme for the operation, which was accepted and implemented under his supervision. He talks about sending Cedric Hardwicke - later Sir Cedric Hardwicke, a well-known

actor - to create a smokescreen for inquisitive journalists so that they couldn't uncover the operation's secrets.

The discovery of this amazing story is all the more poignant as it came about, coincidentally, so close to the 100th Anniversary of the events described. The selection of the body took place just after midnight on 8th November 1920, at St. Pol. Once selected, the remains were removed to the destroyer Verdun at Boulogne, not by gun carriage, as Fitz had arranged, but by a more utilitarian military wagon.

Although he makes light of it in the footage, his son remembers that he was furious about it at the time, as evidenced by the expression on his face in a photograph of the event, now held in the Imperial War Museum. The unscheduled presence of Marshall Foch, Supreme Allied Commander in France and Flanders, on the quayside in Boulogne may have been as a result of his meeting with Fitz on 7th Nov at Amiens cathedral, a meeting which could have prompted him to come and pay his respects.

“This amazing piece of unearthed footage shows Ernest Fitzsimon sitting in his garden in Bangor in 1966, casually discussing his pivotal role in one of the greatest mysteries of the First World War - The Unknown Warrior. The Nation has honoured this Warrior, who was buried without distinction of rank, birth or service for generations and Fitz, a local man carried many secrets from this historical event to his own grave.”

This clip comes from a longer interview which is, in turn, part of a bigger collection of interviews that were made around

a programme called “With Heart and Hand: Battle of the Somme”

<https://digitalfilmarchive.net/media/with-heart-and-hand-battle-of-2985>.

Fitz can be seen in the crowd at about three minutes into that clip. Northern Ireland Screen's Digital Film Archive team is in the process of researching the material in partnership with the Somme Association and other organisations and individuals who can shed light on this incredible footage.

Northern Ireland Screen staff were supported in identifying Fitz by Carol Walker MBE, Director of the Somme Association & Somme Museum, where Ernest Fitzsimon's collection is held, and historian Mark Scott, who has been researching this story for over 8 years and has published a book entitled “Among the Kings”, which uncovers some of the stories behind the Unknown Warrior, particularly the connection with a number of soldiers from Ireland and Northern Ireland who took part in the scheme. Dan Gordon has written a play with the same title, with actor Michael Condon as Fitz.

11 November 1920

The idea of a **Tomb of the Unknown Warrior** was first conceived in 1916 by the Reverend David Railton, who, while serving as an army chaplain on the Western Front, had seen a grave marked by a rough cross, which bore the pencil-written legend 'An Unknown British Soldier'.

He wrote to the Dean of Westminster in 1920 proposing that an unidentified British soldier from the battlefields in France

be buried with due ceremony in Westminster Abbey
"amongst the kings".

On the morning of 11 November 1920, the body of the
Unknown Warrior" was laid in a grave which was then
capped with a black Belgian marble stone (the only
tombstone in the Abbey on which it is forbidden to walk)
featuring this inscription, composed by Herbert Edward
Ryle, Dean of Westminster, engraved with brass from
melted down wartime ammunition.

Beneath this stone rests the body
Of a British warrior
Unknown by name or rank
Brought from France to lie among
The most illustrious of the land
And buried here on Armistice Day
11 Nov: 1920, in the presence of
His Majesty King George V
His Ministers of State
The Chiefs of his forces
And a vast concourse of the nation

Thus are commemorated the many
Multitudes who during the Great
War of 1914 – 1918 gave the most that
Man can give life itself
For God
For King and country
For loved ones home and empire
For the sacred cause of justice and
The freedom of the world

They buried him among the kings because he
Had done good toward God and toward
His house

Around the main inscription are four New Testament quotations:

The Lord knoweth them that are his (top; 2 Timothy 2:19)
Unknown and yet well known, dying and behold we live
(side; 2 Corinthians 6:9)
Greater love hath no man than this (side; John 15:13)
In Christ shall all be made alive (base; 1 Corinthians 15:22)

Acknowledgments - Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey, Carol Walker MBE, The Somme Association and Somme Museum, Northern Ireland Screen Digital Film Archive.

Copies of the Westminster photographs above are available at -

<https://www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-commemorations/commemorations/unknown-warrior>

On this Day – November 7

1939

The Belgium and Dutch Monarch's emphasize their country's neutrality, but offer to act as peace negotiators. Hitler rejects the proposal, as do both Britain and France.

Paul Thummel, a double agent, passes details of the German plans for the western offensive to the Czech government-in-exile.

1940



Submarine HMS Swordfish struck a mine and sank off St Catherine's Point, Isle of Wight, a few hours after leaving Portsmouth on patrol. All 41 crew were lost. The circumstances of her loss were unexplained until her wreck was found in 1983.

The Royal Air Force attacks the Krupp munition works in Essen.

1941

The RAF bombs Berlin with 169 aircraft, but 21 are lost.

USSR celebrates anniversary of the Revolution with a parade in Red Square, despite presence of the German army on outskirts of Moscow.

Speaking from Red Square in Moscow, with the spearheads of the Wehrmacht less than 100 miles from the capital, Stalin predicts that 'the Fascist German invaders are facing disaster'.

The German High Command decides to resume the advance on Moscow as soon as possible, although by now it is estimated that 80 Russian divisions stand in their way.

German torpedo aircraft sink the soviet hospital ship Armenia killing approximately 7,000 people.

US Marine Corps approves establishment of women's reserve.

1943

British troops launch a limited offensive along the coast of Burma.

1944 President Franklin D Roosevelt won an unprecedented fourth term in office, defeating Thomas E. Dewey.

British Eighth Army opens drive for Forli, Italy.

Japanese execute Soviet spy Richard Sorge.

Notes on today's Roll of Honour

Five members of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers from N Ireland are named. There were almost 30 men from the regiment killed on this day. Most entries in the CWGC roll do not include their home addresses. All are named on the

Ploegsteert Memorial, Belgium. They died in the *First Battle of Ypres*, the last major battle of the first year of World War I, which ends the *Race to the Sea*. The Germans are prevented from reaching Calais and Dunkirk, thus cutting off the British Army's supply lines. Part of the price paid for the victory is the complete destruction of *The Old Contemptibles* – the highly experienced and professional British regular army will be replaced by fresh reserves of conscripts.

Three NI men were lost on the Landing Craft LST- 420 left Dover on 7 November, 1944, with a party of airmen, trucks and supplies for RAF personnel in Belgium. It was unable to enter the port of Ostend because of a severe storm and the captain decided to return to England. The ship was still within sight of Ostend when she hit a mine that immediately broke the ship in two parts. She quickly sank. 14 officers and 224 other ranks were lost. 31 were saved. It was the greatest loss of lives on a British landing craft during the war. Above the wreck today is a marker buoy "LST 420."

LST- 420 was built in Maryland in USA and launched in December 1942. She was sent over to England and stood ready for service in Royal Navy in February 1943. She participated in operations in North Africa and in Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of Normandy in June 1944. In 1990 parts of the bow was salvaged and the remains of the wreck rest on a depth of 10 to 20 meter northwest of Oostende near Middelkerke Bank.



Roll of Honour – November 7

Representing their comrades who died on this day

1914

+AVERALL, Robert J

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 4247. Died 07/11/1914, at the 1st Battle of Ypres. Age 22. Born on New Year's Eve in 1891, eldest son of James and Mary Jane Averall, 22, Brooke St., Milltown, Dungannon. Robert and his father were both labourers. Robert was called up with the Reservists on 07/08/1914 and went to the front on 05/09/1914. Ploegsteert Memorial, Belgium. Dungannon WM, Holdfast L.O.L. 1620, Dungannon RH

+DAVIDSON, Frederick

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 8557. Died 07/11/1914. Age 27. Son of Robert Davidson, of Maymount St., Belfast; husband to Lily Davidson, of 25, Fairview St., Crumlin Rd., Belfast. Ploegsteert Memorial, Belgium.

+ELPHICK, ROBERT J

Royal Irish Rifles, 2nd Btn. Corporal. 9719. Died 07/11/1914, in Nottingham General Hospital, England, succumbed to wounds received in the trenches at Neave Chapelle. He had spent most of his boyhood in Downpatrick. Son of Colour Sergeant Major Elphick, of the South Downs, he did his training at Downpatrick before joining the 2nd battalion. He was buried with military honours. Having regard to the fact that Elphick's home was so far away, and to meet the emergencies of the case, the Nottingham Crimean and Indian Mutiny Veteran's Association placed a grave space at his family's disposal. His parents Robert and Elizabeth Elphick, later lived at 143, Dunluce Avenue, Belfast. Nottingham General Cemetery

+NEWELL, John

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, A Coy. 2nd Btn. Private. 4069. Died 07/11/1914. Age 18. Son of Rachel Newell, of North St., Stewartstown, Co. Tyrone, and the late William Newell. Ploegsteert Memorial, Belgium.

+O'CONNELL, Patrick

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 9179. Died 07/11/1914. Age 24. Son of Daniel O'Connell, of 5, Walker's Place, Londonderry, and the late Annie O'Connell. His brother John also fell. Ploegsteert Memorial, Belgium.

+PARKER, William Ephraim

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 7938. Died 07/11/1914. Age 29. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Parker, of Enniskillen. Ploegsteert Memorial, Belgium.

1916

+GORDON, John

Machine Gun Corps (Infantry), 56th Coy. Corporal. 28989. Died 07/11/1916. Age 25. Born in Markethill. By 1911 he was living with his parents in Belfast. Son of John and Elizabeth Gordon, of 3, Ina St., Belfast. Theipval Memorial, Somme, France

+McBRIEN, Robert

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 10th Btn. Private. 28296. M M. Died 07/11/1916. Age 21. Son of Robert and Matilda McBrien, of Lisdillon, Drumahoe, Co. Londonderry. Pond Farm Cemetery, Belgium

+NELSON, Redmond

Royal Irish Rifles. 8th Btn. B Coy. Rifleman. 17/1243. Died 07/11/1916. Age 22. Son of Eliza Jane Nelson, of 36, Belvoir St., Belfast, and the late Samuel Nelson. Kandahar Farm Cemetery, Belgium

+SPIERS, Samuel

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 9th Btn. Private. 17827. Died 07/11/1916. Age 33. Son of Robert and Ellen Spiers, of Cookstown; husband of Annie Spiers, of Coagh St., Cookstown. Pond Farm Cemetery, Belgium

1917

+BOYD, Matthew

Canadian Light Trench Mortar Battery, 5th. Private. 140021. Died 07/11/1917 at No 10 Casualty Clearing Station. Age

23. Born 28/04/1894 at Grange Park, Ballyscullion. Enlisted on 23/07/1915 in Toronto with the 75th Btn. Son of Caroline Nicholl-Boyd, of Dunturkey, Ballynure. Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium

+DOWDS, Hugh

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 5th Btn. Private. 5/12333. Died 07/11/1917. Age 23 years old. Son of James and Rachel Dowds, of Carnlough. Beersheba War Cemetery, Israel and Palestine (including Gaza)

+DOWNEY, John

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Lance Corporal. 12446. Died 07/11/1917. Age 23. Born at Belfast. Son of the late Robert and Annie Downey; husband of Christina Downey (nee Burgess), of 10, Grove Rd., Portobello, Dublin. Gaza War Cemetery, Israel and Palestine (including Gaza)

+FINNEGAN, Samuel James

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 17385. Died 07/11/1917. Son of William and Anne Finnegan, husband of Anne Finnegan of 5 Jervis Street, Portadown. Portadown News: 1st December 1917:

“Mrs Finnegan, Jervis Street, Portadown, has been official informed that her husband, Private Samuel Finnegan, has been killed in action while serving with the Egyptian Forces. Private Finnegan had close on three years’ service to his credit.” The regiment saw action on the Western Front, the Macedonian Front and then to Egypt to serve in Palestine in September 1917 where the Egyptian Camel Transport Corps gave support to the British forces, by way of supplying water, medical supplies and food. Private

Finnegan's remains rest in Gaza War Cemetery. Also buried in this cemetery is 2nd Lt. Stephen Boughey V.C of the Royal Scots Fusiliers who died from wounds three days after his act of bravery. Finnegan family memorial Drumcree Church of Ireland Parish churchyard, Portadown

+McCLINTOCK, James

Canadian Machine Gun Corps. No. 2 Coy. Private. 174339. Died 17/11/1917. Age 40. Born in Ballyboley, Ballyclare on 31/01/1878. Enlisted Hamilton, Ontario, on 23/08/1915 with address at 35 Britannia Ave., Hamilton. Son of John and Mary (nee McCrea) McClintock; husband to Isabella McClintock. Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium. Ballyclare WM. Ballynure Presbyterian Church RH

+McGUIGAN, John

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 2nd Btn. Private. 10608. Died 07/11/1917. Age 29. Born about 1888 in Blackwatertown, County Armagh, son of George and Ellen McGuigan. By 1911, it seems both his parents had died. John was living in Dungannon when he enlisted in Armagh. Private John McGuigan was one of three brothers who served. John and two brothers were members of Moy Company, Irish National Volunteers. He disembarked in France in December 1914 and later served in Egypt where he died in action. Henry McGuigan was serving with the Royal Irish Fusiliers when he died in France in May 1917. Gaza War Cemetery, Gaza, Egypt. Dungannon WM, Moy WM

+REID, George

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 5th Btn. Private. 11746. Died 07/11/1917. Age 25. His father was from Armagh. George

and an older brother were born in Scotland. Prior to the war he lived with his cousins in Callan St., Armagh. He disembarked at Gallipoli on 07/08/1915 with the 16th (Irish) Division, which then moved to Salonika and Egypt where he was injured and subsequently died from his wounds. Son of David and Marion Ann Reid, of 245, Westmuir St., Parkhead, Glasgow. Beersheba War Cemetery, Israel and Palestine (including Gaza)

+TREANOR, James

Royal Irish Fusiliers, 2 Btn. Private. 22946. Died 07/11/1917. Born Clogher, Co. Tyrone. Gaza War Cemetery, Israel and Palestine

+WRIGHT, Robert

Royal Irish Rifles, 18th Btn. Second Lieutenant. Died 07/11/1917. Age 21. Only son of David and Marion Dunlop Wright, of The Moat, Dundonald, Belfast. Born at Downan, Ballantrae, Ayrshire. Gaza War Cemetery, Israel and Palestine (including Gaza)

1918

+CAMPBELL, Samuel

East Yorkshire Regiment, 1st Btn. Private. 29640. Died 07/11/1918. Age 30. Husband to Maggie Campbell, 41 Lindsay Street, Belfast. Father of a little son. Vis-en-Artois Memorial, France

+ELDER, Charles

North Irish Horse. A Squadron, V Corps Cyclist (North Irish Horse) Regiment. (Corps of Hussars). Private. 71585. Died 07/11/1918. Age 23. Son of James Elder, of Mullartown, Annalong. Dourlers Communal Cemetery Extension, France. Belfast Co-Operative WM

+GORDON, AW

Military Police Corps, Military Mounted Police. Lance Corporal. P/12014. Died 07 /11/1918. Age 23. Son of Elizabeth Gordon, of The Square, Annalong, and the late John Gordon. St Pol British Cemetery, St Pol-sur-Ternoise, France

+HILAND, Hector Turpin

Honourable Artillery Company, Reserve Bty. Driver. 626542. Died 07/11/1918 in hospital at Leeds. Age 18. Born at Armagh. Son of Maj. and Mrs. J. H. Hiland, of 37, Maryon Rd., Old Charlton, London. Harehills Cemetery, Leeds

+MARTIN, T

Army Service Corps, 2nd Cav. Reserve Park. Driver. T/ 329783. Died 07/11/1918. Son of James McLean, of 3, Bradburys Buildings, Lisburn, Belfast. St Pol British Cemetery, St Pol-sur-Ternoise, France

+McBRATNEY, Herbert

Royal Irish Rifles, 14th Btn. Private. 14/15335. Died 07/11/1918 from illness contracted on active service in Belgium. Age 23. Son of James and Sophia McBratney, 10

Mountcashel St, Belfast. Belfast City Cemetery, Glenalina Extn. Sec.

+McFADDEN, P

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 6th Btn. Private. 21800. Died 07/11/1918. Age 33. Son of Patrick and Margaret McFadden, of Newtownstewart, Co. Tyrone; husband to Susan McFadden, of 6, Napier St., Yoker, Clydebank, Glasgow. Dourlers Communal Cemetery Extension, France

+McTAGGART, J

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. 6th Btn. Private. 10888. Died 07/11/1918. Age 28. Brother of Mrs. Sarah Quinn, of Henry St., Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh. Dourlers Communal Cemetery Extension, France

1940

+SHIELDS, William Hugh

RN. Stoker 1st Class. D/KX 96853. Died 07/11/1940. Age 26. HMS Valiant. A brother AB Seaman Gunner, Thomas Shields was in HMS Gurka which was bombed and sunk by German planes off Norway in April 1940. Another brother Samuel was a Leading Seaman in RN. Son of David and Mary Shields, Ferris's Lane, Larne. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 41

1941

+McGARVEY, George Albert

RAF Sergeant.(Wireless Op./Air Gunner). 969452. Died 07-08/11/1941.455 Sqdn.(Royal Australian Air Force) at R.A.F.

Swinderby, Lincolnshire. Sergeant McGarvey was aboard Handley Page Hampden I, AE243, when it took off at 1830 hours on 07/11/1941 on a mission to the Cologne area of Germany. The aircraft failed to return and Sergeant McGarvey along with the rest of the crew were initially reported as "Missing". After six months had passed he was presumed to have lost his life. The aircraft had crashed in Belgium and the crew had been laid to rest in St. Trond Cemetery. Son of Roy Mc Garvey, 13, Eveleyn Gardens, Cavehill Road, Belfast. Allied Cemetery of Saint-Trond, Belgium, and transferred to Heverlee Cemetery, Vlaams-Brabant, Belgium, after the war.

1942

+BARTON, Charles Henry

RAFVR. Sergeant. 1111461. Died 07/11/1942. Aged 23. 79 Sqd. Son of James and Edith Marie Barton, Bloomfield, Belfast. Singapore Memorial, Column 414. Singapore

+KILLOPS, Thomas

RN. Leading Seaman. DEMS Gunner. D/JX 204718. SS Roxby. Date of Death: 07/11/1942. Age: 29. SS Roxby, steam merchant, was attacked by U 613. Son of Robert and Anna Killops, Killyleagh. Husband to Rebecca Killops, Killyleagh. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 64. Killyleagh WM

+McCLOSKEY, Hugh

Pioneer Corps. Private. 10561379. Died 07/11/1942. Age 46. Son of James McCloskey and Mary McCloskey of Londonderry. Bedlay Cemetery, Glasgow, North Lanarkshire, Scotland

+MORRISON, Samuel Cecil

RAFVR. Flying Officer (Pilot). 115396. Died 07/11/1942. Aged 22. 104 Sqdn. He was the co-pilot on Vickers Wellington Z8590 ER-D when the Mark II bomber came down on the island of Malta. The crew took off from R.A.F. Luqa on the island at 2040hrs bound for a raid on Decimomannu Airfield, Sardinia, Italy. The plane struck high ground near Jebel Chantar in the Siggiewi region of Malta killing all six crew members. Cecil joined the RAFVR circa 1940 when he traveled to California, USA to start training for the Royal Air Force. "At the morning service of Great James Street Presbyterian Church, Londonderry, on Sunday, Rev. J.A. Donaldson, B.A., recalled that on Remembrance Sunday Mr. S. Morrison, accompanied by Captain Sir James Wilton, M.C., had laid the wreath on the War Memorial of the congregation. We were unaware then" he said. 'that just a few hours before that very moment his son, Pilot Officer Cecil Morrison, had given his life on service in the Middle East. ...' Samuel Cecil Morrison, known as Cecil, was the first son of Samuel Morrison and Charlotte (Cissy) Rebecca (née Wilson) and the eldest of six children. He was born on 22/06/1920 on Creggan Road in Londonderry, and was baptized in Great James Street Presbyterian Church where his family worshipped and his father Samuel was a Scout Leader. Rev. Mr. Donaldson, added that he "knew Cecil Morrison for almost two years after he came to Great James Street Church. He was a member of their Christian Endeavour Society, a teacher in the school, and a young fellow who promised well as far as the Church and the Kingdom of God was concerned.... 'That day they as a congregation sorrowed. Although they had been in the fourth year of war and although they had 70 and 80

members on active service, that was the first son of that congregation to fall in this war'. On 27/05/1942 Samuel and Margaret (Betty) Elizabeth Barclay at Runcorn, Cheshire, married. Known as Betty, she too was serving her country during World War II. Son of Samuel and Rebecca Charlotte Morrison, of Londonderry; husband to Elizabeth (nee Barclay) Morrison. Malta (Capuccini) Naval Cemetery, Malta

+CLYDE, William

RAFVR. Sergeant (Air Gunner). 1798065. Died 06/11/1944. Aged 20. Son of William and Frances Maud Clyde, of Bushmills, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland. Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany

+DINSMORE, Robert John

RN. Leading Telegraphist. D/JX 153254. Date of Death: 07/11/1944. Age: 22. H.M. L.S.T. 420. Brother of William G (also RN). Son of Andrew and Mary Elizabeth Dinsmore, Grosvenor Rd., Londonderry; husband of H. Sybil G. Dinsmore, Derryarkin, Claudy, Co. Londonderry. (Belfast Weekly Telegraph 08/12/1944). Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 88

+FOREMAN, Samuel

RN. AB. D/JX198120. HM LST420. Died 07/11/1944. Age 31. LST 420, was built for the US Navy and transferred in 1943 to the Royal Navy. She participated in the Sicily, Salerno, Anzio and Normandy operations. On 07/11/1944, LST 420 was on a voyage from the UK with mainly RAF personnel to Ostend. She intended to land her passenger-

troops and tanks at Ostend, but because of the very bad weather, the commander of the LST 420 decided to return back to England. Around 1500, on her way back, LST 420 struck a mine near the Middelkerke bank, off the Belgian coast. With her aft burning fiercely, she broke in two pieces. The bow and stern sank near to each other. Of the 263 on board LST-420, only 32 survived. Many bodies washed ashore on the Belgian coast. Son of Mary Foreman, Belfast. Plymouth Naval Memorial, Panel 86

+ROSBOROUGH, John Alexander

RN. Able Seaman. D/JX 732178. Date of Death: 07/11/1944. Age: 20. HM LST 420. He joined the army in 1941 and transferred a year later to the RAF, and in July 1943 to the RN. Son of Andrew Lindsay Rosborough and Martha Rosborough, Waterside, Co. Londonderry. Portsmouth Naval Memorial, Panel 87

VETERANS

+BOND, Ronald

RN. UDR part time. Captain. 425021. David McKitterick in 'Lost Lives' states Ronald Bond was in landing craft which put allied forces ashore in the invasions of Sicily and Italy. Post war he served as a police inspector in Kenya. He was shot by the IRA on 28/10/1976 outside his home in Londonderry. He was walking home from his job in the Housing Executive when he was hit 12 times. He died on 07/11/1976. Age 53. He was one of the first to join the UDR on 01/04/1970. He was the 63rd UDR member and 6th officer to be killed.

CARSON, John

RNVR. Lieutenant. Served 23/05/1942 - 05/06/1946. He was thirty when he joined HMS Venomous as one of the CW Candidates in time to escort Arctic Convoy PQ.18 to Archangel. PQ.17 had been a disaster and nerves must have been on edge as they set off for Iceland where the convoy assembled but once again their elderly worn out engine let them down and they had to turn back to Londonderry with serious boiler defects. They berthed alongside the destroyer depot ship, HMS Sandhurst, and 200 boiler tubes had to be replaced making it impossible for them to escort PQ.18. The six CW Candidates were aboard Venomous when HMS Hecla was torpedoed off North Africa on November 11 and left Venomous at Gibraltar in February 1943 to return to England for officer training. John Carson was commissioned and Sub Lt J.Carson RNVR his first posting was to LSE 1 commanded by Lt Geoffrey N Spring RNR who had been rescued by Venomous in November 1942 when his previous ship, HMS Hecla, was torpedoed. Lt Spring credited John Carson with his rescue and asked for him as one of his officers. LSE 1 had seen action off the D-Day beaches as an LST (Landing Ship Tank) but had been converted into a landing craft repair ship, an LSE. In September 1944 John Carson was promoted to lieutenant but remained on LSE 1 until 28/02/1946 when he transferred to HMS Sefton at Singapore for two months before returning to Britain and being discharged from the RNVR in August. John Carson only saw his first born child when he returned to Northern Ireland in the late summer of 1946 and resumed his career in banking. He and his wife joined the Belfast branch of the Royal Naval Mine Watching Service which manned observation points overlooking ports

and strategic waterways to report mines dropped by aircraft during the war. It was based in HMS Caroline. On 10/01/1952, he became the 'Mine Watching Service Officer' for Belfast. Joined Head Office Northern Bank 07/04/1931 and served in several branches prior to war service. Post-war he returned to bank at Head Office. Transfers followed to Royal Avenue (1947), Antrim Road (1953), Head Office (1953), Donegall Square (1957), Knock (1963), Windsor (1963) and Randalstown (1967). Retired as manager of Carrickfergus branch. Born Co. Down, 07/11/1912. Died just before his 69th birthday in 1981. Atlantic, Africa, Burma and Italy stars. Northern Bank WM

HAWKESWORTH, Richard John

RN. Lieut.-Commander (E). (Special Entry), 1936. RNE College, 1937 - 40. AMI. Mech. E. Lieut.-Commander (E), 1948. B 24/04/1919. Son of RW Hawkesworth, Shandon Pk., Knock, Belfast. Died 07/11/1997. Campbell College 2555

KEENAN, Colin

Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. Rifleman. B/203366. Born 1898 in Omagh. Enlisted 17/09/1914. Discharged 17/01/1919. Son of Bernard Keenan and Rebecca Monaghan of Eden Street, Enniskillen. Married Molly in Scotland after the war. Died 07/11/1924 in Scotland. Funeral to the Sisters of Mercy Convent Cemetery in Enniskillen.

Every day is a Remembrance Day

We will remember them

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remembrance ni

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

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