

## History Hub Ulster – CWGC Living Memory Project 2016

Nigel Henderson, a member of History Hub Ulster, has been involved in tidying up grave plots in Belfast City Cemetery where Great War fatalities are commemorated on family memorials. Over time, Nigel noticed that weed re-growth had occurred at a number of plots that had been cleared of significant over-growth.

As a result, History Hub Ulster applied to the CWGC Living Memory project for funding to make plots more permanently presentable by removing the weeds/growth, laying down weed-suppressant membrane and then covering with a layer of woodbark.

Within the financial limitations of the funding, it was anticipated that six plots, all relating to men who died during the Battle of the Somme in 1916, could be treated – in the end, seven plots were treated.

History Hub Ulster regards this as a practical way of demonstrating remembrance.

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## City Section L1 Grave 548 (CWGC Burial)



**Frederick William Ekin** was born on 20th July 1893 to John and Annie Ekin, being the eldest of their three children. His father was a Commission Agent in the grocery trade and the family lived at "Clarnico", Ashley Gardens in Belfast. John Ekin's business premises were located in The Cathedral Buildings on Donegall Street and he was the local representative for Gray, Dunn & Company of Glasgow and Clarke, Nickolls, & Coombs of London.

In 1911, Frederick was employed as a clerk in his father's business and he enlisted with the Royal Fusiliers (The London Regiment), being deployed to France on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1915 with 20<sup>th</sup> (3rd Public Schools) Battalion.

He died of wounds incurred during the Battle of the Somme in a military hospital in Edinburgh on 18th August 1916, aged 23, his body being returned to Belfast and buried in the family plot on 22nd August 1916.



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## City Section B2 Grave 139 (Family Memorial)



**Robert Oliver Bradshaw** was born in Banbridge on 28th July 1880 to Oliver and Caroline Bradshaw. Robert Bradshaw was a carpenter and was living with his wife, Ellen, at 532 Simco Street in Winnipeg when he enlisted on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1915 with 28<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Battalion – the Saskatchewan Regiment. The battalion embarked for Europe on 29th May 1915 and disembarked in France on 18th September 1915.

Sergeant Robert Oliver Bradshaw was killed in action during a raid on German trenches on 11th August 1916, aged 36, and is buried in Reninghelst New Military Cemetery in Belgium.



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## City Section I Grave 39 (CWGC Burial)



**Victor Harold Robb** was born on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1888 to Kirker and Elizabeth Robb, being the youngest of their four children. His father was a Timber Merchant and the family lived on the Somerton Road in North Belfast – their house had more than thirteen rooms.

Victor Robb served his apprenticeship with Chambers Motors whose premises were located on University Street. By 1911, he had established his own Automobile Engineers business with premises on May Street and later on Chichester Street. The company also acted as agents for Michelin Tyres and for several car manufacturers, including Ford, Bedford, Buick and Panhard.

During the Home Rule Crisis, Victor served as a Lieutenant in the Young Citizens Volunteers and as a Company Commander in the Ulster Volunteer Force. At the outbreak of war, he enlisted for overseas service and received his commission on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1914 with the 14th Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles.

On 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916, Victor Robb was shot in the shoulders and chest and by 3rd July had been admitted to 14 General Hospital at Wimeraux. He was subsequently evacuated to England and admitted to the Royal Free Hospital in London. It was there, with members of his family present, that he died of septicemia at 6.30 on the morning of the 22nd July 1916, aged 18. Shortly after, his body was returned to Belfast where he was buried in the family plot on the morning of the 25th July.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission and Soldier Died in the Great War databases and his medal index card record the death date as 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1916 but entries in his service record, the Register of Soldiers Effects and Belfast City Council burial records hold death date as 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1916.



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## City Section G1 Grave 546 (Family Memorial)



**Hugh Corry Osborne** was born in Belfast on 20th May 1896 to Joseph and Margaret Osborne, being the eldest of their three sons. His father was a Chartered Accountant and the family lived at Hopefield Terrace, 292 Antrim Road in Belfast. His father's accountancy business was based in the Mayfair Building in Arthur Square in 1911 and later became Osborne, Cooke & Company with premises in the Scottish Provident Buildings on Wellington Place. Hugh Corry Osborne was working in the family firm when he enlisted with the Officers' Training Corps at Queen's University, receiving a commission with the West Yorkshire Regiment on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1915 and joined the 12th Battalion in France in May 1916.

Second Lieutenant Hugh Corry Osborne was killed in action on 23rd July 1916, aged 20, and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial in France – he is also commemorated on the Rolls of Honour for Duncairn Presbyterian Church and Sinclair Seamen's Presbyterian Church and on the Corry family memorial in Belfast City Cemetery (City Section D Grave 435)



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## City Section G Grave 11 (Family Memorial)



**William Kinnear Dobbin** was born on 20th December 1889 to John Muir and Florence Dobbin. His father died on 10th January 1893 and William was living with his brother and widowed mother on the Antrim Road in 1901. Florence Dobbin married Robert John Brandon on 18th June 1903 and they lived at Annadale Avenue in 1911 and at Kirkliston Drive in 1916. William's step-father was a Chartered Accountant with offices in the Scottish Provident Building on Wellington Place. William Dobbin was also a Chartered Accountant, working for H B Brandon & Company, which operated from offices in the Scottish Provident Building.

William Dobbin enlisted with the Royal Fusiliers on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1914 and was deployed to France on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1915 with 23rd (1st Sportsman's) Battalion.

Private William Kinnear Dobbin was killed in action on 27th July 1916, aged 26, and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial in France and on the war memorial for St John's (Newtownbreda) Presbyterian Church.

His brother, John Muir Dobbin, held a commission and served with 1<sup>st</sup> Garrison Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, in India.



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## Glenalina Section N Grave 242 (Family Memorial)



**Robert McMaster** was born in Belfast on 4th December 1886 to James and Mary Jane McMaster, being one of their eight children. In 1901, the family was living in North Queen Place in the Falls district and his father was employed as a general labourer.

In 1911, the family was living in Wylie Street but Robert McMaster was stationed in China and Hong Kong with 1st Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.

Robert McMaster was deployed to France with 2nd Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers on 4th September 1914 and was killed in action on 10th July 1916, aged 29, being commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial in France

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## Glenalina Section O Grave 13 (Family Memorial)



**Archibald Dunlop Lemon** was born in Castlereagh on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1875 to Archibald Dunlop and Ellen Lemon. His father was a Flax Merchant and the family lived at “Edgcumbe” on the Holywood Road.

He was educated at Methodist College and, in 1911, was boarding with the Galway family at Scotch Quarter in Carrickfergus, where he held a managerial position at the Barn Mills Flax Spinning Company. He was an active member of the County Antrim Yacht Club in Whitehead and the Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club at Holywood.

He landed at Boulogne in October 1915 with the 12<sup>th</sup> Royal Irish Rifles, in which many of the men from the Barns Mills factory also served and was 41 years old when he was killed in action on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916, being shot dead by a German officer as he led his men over the parapet. Like so many other men, he has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial in France.

Archibald Lemon is also commemorated in the War Memorial at St Nicholas’ Church of Ireland in Carrickfergus, on the War Memorial in Belmont Presbyterian Church in Belfast and on a family memorial in Belfast City Cemetery.