

They Grow Not Old



Scottish Charity Number SC014790

War Memorial Window
Kemnay Parish Church of Scotland

THE WAR MEMORIAL WINDOW

We have been greatly blessed at Kemnay church with the stained glass windows around the building (a small booklet is available with the background of each one). These were all designed by the same artist William Wilson, regarded as one of the truly great Scottish modern artists. His work underwent a major retrospective at the prestigious National Galleries of Scotland in 1994, accompanied by a biographical work published in the *Scottish Masters* series by Fiona Pearson. The production of this window was carried out by John Blyth, FMGP, under the supervision of the same William Wilson who produced the main window, but who had by this time become blind.

The Welcome Home Fund paid for this. The names of those who died in both World Wars are inscribed on the village War Memorial situated at the junction of Station Road and Grove Road.

We would also like to thank Mr Duncan Downie for the material he has gathered together to make this booklet possible. It is much appreciated.

We hope by producing this booklet on the Memorial Window, that it will be of interest to members and friends and also to families of those named, and that their sacrifice and service is not forgotten.

John P Renton
Minister
November 2011

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Each year on Remembrance Sunday a wreath is placed below the window in thanks for those who gave their lives and the many others in the village and beyond.

‘They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
and in the morning,
We will remember them.’
We will remember them.

(From Laurence Binyon's poem
"For the Fallen")

Corporal George Robb 2876139

George Robb was born in Kintore, and lived with his foster parents, Mr & Mrs A.G. Reid, at Backward, Kemnay. Following his education at Kemnay School, he worked as a farm servant at Bridgefoot, Monymusk, before enlisting in the 1st Battalion The Gordon Highlanders in the early 1930's. When war broke out, he saw service in France, and after the evacuation of Dunkirk he was stationed for some time at Kintore. He then served in the Middle East campaigns and was killed in Sicily on 29th July 1943. He is buried in Catania War Cemetery, Sicily, Italy, Plot 4 Row B Grave 6.



Cover image by Frazer Simpson

Private I. McGregor Petrie 2878085

During the 1930's, Maxwell Petrie was employed at the farm of Milton. He had three children, the eldest was George, who left school and went to work in the Meldrum area. His daughter Kirsty married a William Donald, and William McGregor Petrie, 2878085, served with the 2nd Battalion The Gordon Highlanders. He died on 23 November 1944 in the Far East, at the age of 26. After the war, his grave was among those the Graves Registration Service were unable to trace, and he is commemorated by name on column 80 of the Singapore Memorial, Singapore.

Corporal James Duguid Rae 2886053

James D. Rae, was born at Kinnernie, Cluny in 1915, where his father, James Rae, was a horseman. The family moved to Kemnay in 1916, where James Rae was employed as a horseman at Kemnay House. In 1918 the family moved to North Cottown, Kintore, and James jr. walked from there to school at Kintore. On leaving school, he served his apprenticeship as a butcher with William Gerrard in Station Road, Kemnay. In 1938, he married Doris Daun.

He was called up in 1940 and received his training at Bridge of Don Barracks, moving from there to Colchester. He was with the 51st Division throughout the campaign in Alamein and North Africa, moving up to Sicily. He came home from Sicily to take part in the "D" Day Landings at Normandy. He was killed in France on July 23rd 1944, and is buried in Banneville-la-Campagne War Cemetery in France, Plot 9 Row A Grave 26.

The Window

The small window on the left hand side of Kemnay Parish Church is particularly poignant. It was installed in memory of those from the parish who paid the supreme sacrifice in service to their country during the two world wars of the twentieth century.

The design is simple, but this simplicity seems to increase the window's significance. A plain white cross fills the central area of the window. It is surmounted by a thistle, and in the four quarters of the cross are placed the emblems of the four services: the Royal Navy, the Army, the Merchant Navy and the Royal Air Force. Along the foot of the window are the dates of the wars, 1914 - 1918, 1939 - 1945. Around the outer edge are the words,

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS THAT
A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS

A plaque below the window states:

THIS WINDOW WAS INSTALLED
TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN MEMORY OF
THE FALLEN IN BOTH WORLD WARS

The stained glass was fitted in the window in 1972 when the memorial window on the opposite side of the church was completed.

The Brass Plaque

A brass plaque below this bears the names of the fallen in the Second World War.

1939 - 1945

KEMNAY
ROLL of HONOUR

Sgt. J. CHEYNE	Pte. C. MCLEOD
Sgt. Gnr. L. HARVEY	Lieut. C. G. MALCOLM
Cpl. B. KNOWLES	Pte. I. McG. PETRIE
Spr. G. W. LAWRIE	Cpl. J. D. RAE
L.Cpl. L. N. MILNE	Cpl. G. ROBB

THEY DIED THAT WE MIGHT LIVE

Private Charles McLeod 3252293

Charles McLeod was born at Kemnay on September 17 1914. His father, also Charles, served in the 1914 - 1919 war, and was discharged in 1919 as wounded. Charles Jr. joined the territorials in the early 1930's, but employment eventually took him to the north of Scotland where he was unable to carry on with his training.

On the outbreak of hostilities in 1939, he was not called up with the territorials, but when his turn came by age. He first saw service with the Cameronians but was later transferred to the 2nd Battalion The Gordon Highlanders, and was stationed, among other places, in Orkney, where he was in the guard of honour inspected by the Duke of Gloucester. During leave in 1943, he married a girl in Montrose. He was wounded in France during the offensive in the summer of 1944, was flown home to Basingstoke, where he died on September 1 1944. His body was taken home to Kemnay and buried in the churchyard on September 6 1944.

Lieutenant Coert Grobbelaar Malcolm 225143

Coert Grobbelaar Malcolm was the son of Dr & Mrs Malcolm of Finnercy, Kemnay. He was born at Craigearn on April 19th 1913, and named after a South African doctor, who was a friend of the family. (Dr. Malcolm practised for a time in South Africa during the Boer War.) Following his education at Kemnay School, he joined the North of Scotland Bank, first at Strathdon, then at Kintore and Inverurie. In 1934 he joined the firm of Harrison & Crossfield in London and in June 1935 was sent by them to Medan in Sumatra. He was unable to return home after the outbreak of war, and joined the army in the Far East being commissioned into the Intelligence Corp. He was captured at the fall of Singapore and died in a P.O.W. camp on September 26, 1942. He is buried in the British Commonwealth War Cemetery in Yokohama, Japan. British Section F. Row D. Grave 3.

'Neath Orient's sun mid leafy bowers
God's acre, call, serene,
Cream of Britain's manhood rests
Oh glorious be his dream.
The passer-by may heave a sigh
Or scan home of the grave,
But Kinsmen ne'er say drop a tear
Or flower upon his grave.

Great ruler of our universe
Our hearts are full and sore.
Pray give us strength to bear our loss
And bid us grieve no more
Though far may be our homes apart
By mountain, sea and valley
In that temple never made by man
We will gather at reveille.

ooOOoo

Lance Corporal Lamond Nicol Milne 2118679

Lamond Nicol Milne was born at Fetterangus on September 30 1914, where his father Mr Thomas Milne carried on the local bakery. He took over the bakery at Monymusk in 1916, and moved to Kemnay in 1932, taking over the business in Station Road of McLeay. Lamond, in his youth was a very active leader of the boy scouts, then newly established in the village. He was also a very keen golfer, and after leaving the local school, he served his apprenticeship as an architect with McMillan's in Aberdeen.

He was called up in 1940 and trained with the Royal Engineers at Pinefield, near Elgin, and later moved to Northallerton. He was transferred to the Red Caps (Military Police) with whom he was serving in Burma when he was reported missing, presumed killed, on 6th April 1943. He is commemorated on the Rangoon Memorial face 19.

Sergeant John Cheyne 2876138

John Cheyne was born at Muiryfold Turriff on the 1st of May 1916. (The night the German Airship crossed over the district). He was the second son of George Cheyne who was a horseman at that farm. Up to May 1929, John received his early education at Woodhead, Fyvie. His father moved to Todfold, Kemnay, where he worked with Allan Forbes of Tillybin, Kintore, and John finished his education at Kemnay Secondary School. He then worked for two years on local farms.

At a little over sixteen years old, he lied about his age and joined the 2nd Battalion Gordon Highlanders serving in Gibraltar and Singapore. Following his seven years in the Gordons, he worked with J. Joss in the sand quarries at Bridge of Don. At the first sign of hostilities, he was recalled from the reserves to train conscripts, a job which he disliked, as he could not bear to train boys to go out to be killed, while he, a trained soldier, remained at home.

When the 11th Scottish Commandos was formed, he was one of the first volunteers, taking part in many of the first raids. The 11th Commando was disbanded in the summer of 1941 and John Cheyne was one of the first to be picked by David Stirling to form the S.A.S., the elite band, who were trained to work in small numbers behind enemy lines.

He perished on their first raid on the night of 17/18 November 1941. They set off from an airfield in Cyrenaica in Libya, fifty five men in five old Bombay aircraft, with the intention of parachuting behind enemy lines to place a limpet mine on every plane at Malene and Tmimi aerodromes at Gazala. They ran into a terrific thunder storm and no one knows yet what happened to most of them. He has no known grave, and his name appears on the pillar of the Alamein Memorial, in Egypt in column 69.

Sergeant Gunner Lyall Harvey 1825211

Lyall Harvey was born at Osborne, Dalriadilly, Kemnay, on February 28 1915, the son of Mr & Mrs Archibald Harvey. The family later moved to Orient, Kendal Road. He attended Kemnay School, following which he served his apprenticeship as a baker with Thomas Milne in Station Road, Kemnay. He then worked as confectioner with Kennaways Bakery in Aberdeen.

A sportsman of some repute, he was a champion golfer at Kemnay on several occasions and also had a keen interest in badminton.

On the outbreak of hostilities, he went to Steventon in Ayrshire to the Army supply bakery, which was a reserved occupation. He joined the R.A.F. (V.R.) 161 Sqdn. In 1941 and gained his wings at Evanton in Ross-shire, serving later at St Johns Wood, London.

He was posted missing presumed killed, on 23rd January 1944, after a bombing mission over Norway. He is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Panel 231.

Corporal Bertie Knowles 2873887

Bertie Knowles was born in Aberdeen in 1912, the son of Mr & Mrs William Knowles. His parents moved to Lilydale, Aquithie Road, Kemnay, in 1924 where his father carried on a fish retail business.

Bertie trained as a Mental Health nurse at Cornhill Hospital in Aberdeen and enlisted in the 1st Battalion The Gordon Highlanders in 1940. He was killed at Tripoli on 2nd March 1943, and is buried in the SFAX War Cemetery Tunisia TUN. 7 Plot 7 Row D. Grave 26.

Sapper George Walker Lawrie

George Walker Lawrie was the youngest son of James and Margaret Lawrie, Brownhill, Kemnay. He was educated at Kemnay School, leaving at sixteen years of age to work on a farm. One of the school teachers of the time, Miss Elsie Harper, persuaded him to return to school to carry on with his studies, which he did and in 1934 was Dux of the school. He then went on to Aberdeen University where he graduated M.A., with 1st Class Honours, before going out to Malaya to work in a rubber plantation. When war broke out the Japanese moved into Malaya, George was called up, joining the Jahore Volunteer Engineers. Tragically, while being treated for injuries sustained in battle, he and everyone in the hospital were massacred on 22nd February 1942. He is commemorated in Singapore Civil Hospital Grave Memorial SIN 1A Column 9.

The following poem, entitled "Thoughts of a Dead Brother" was written on January 18 1946, by his eldest brother James, who retired in 1944 to Balloch, Victoria Terrace, Kemnay, after a lengthy career in the Ayrshire Police, in which he attained the rank of sergeant.

Fair Scotia's son at Empire's call
In a land across the sea
In danger's hour his life laid down
That we might all go free
His name now swells the honours roll
Of loyal true and brave
And a wooden cross now larks the heath
Of a soldier's sun-kissed grave.

The sun will chase the winter snows
And clouds will drop their rain
The cuckoo's note the woods make ring
And swallows cross the main
The lambs will skip on hillocks green
And salmon seek the burn
But Kemnay's vale will never hail
Our brother's proud return.