



WAR YEARS...Ned Quinn distinguished himself during active service in the the First World War. Cr48-129s

Retracing the steps of our war hero Ned Quinn

New tour of France battlefields in honour of highest decorated Coleraine soldier

DAVID
RANKIN

david.rankin@colerainetimes.co.uk

COLERAINE'S highest decorated soldier is to be commemorated in a new battlefield tour in France.

Due to his courage and heroics during the First World War, Ned Quinn was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM), The Military Medal (MM) and the 1914 Star W/Clasp, sometimes referred to as the Mons Star.

His great nephew, Gary McKay, who operates Canadian Battlefield Tours in both Canada and Europe, said: "He was was one of the first to France."

"Ned was at the 'sharp edge' of every major battle of World War One, Neuve Chapelle, Festubert, Aubers Ridge, Mont Sorrel Hill 62 (Sanctuary Wood) all Ypres battles, Loos, Vimy, the Somme, Passchendaele, Lys and many other small less known battles."

"He was mentioned in despatches four times. Not only is this a spectacular record for the Coleraine area, but indeed for anywhere else, within the Commonwealth countries."

"I am adding a World War One tour to my tour list, that will be largely based on Ned's footsteps and his time spent with 1st Canadian Corps."

Gary went on to explain his strong local connections: "My father Charlie, Ned's nephew, was born in Coleraine in 1920 and I still have many relatives in the Coleraine-Ballyrashane area. These include Ned's nephews, Jimmy and Sammy Quinn and his wife Muriel who has done a lot of research on the family."

"I have just donated my father's shadowbox to the military museums in Calgary and it will be prominently displayed in the Army Museum. Ned and Charlie's history will therefore live on in perpetuity."

Muriel Quinn, who still has a local newspaper clipping from 1916 about Ned's valour during the war, said he came home to a hero's welcome during one period of leave.

Speaking from her Ballyvelton Road home, she said: "Somebody had gone ahead to Ballyrashane to tell Ned's father that he was home and they quickly arranged a guard of honour by the kids from the local National School."

"Ned went through it all in the war. I'm sure the tour of what he did would be very enjoyable."

Sgt Edward Quinn - 73873 of the 11th Brigade RFA - 83rd Battery, was born on October 17, 1887 and enlisted with the Irish Guards on September 28, 1907 nineteen days short of his 20th birthday.

He served in Aden, frontier Burma and India until war broke out in 1914.

Originally part of the Mhow (5th Indian) Division, 11th went to



REMEMBERING NED...Sammy, Muriel and Jimmy Quinn with a gurkha knife belonging to Ned Quinn. Cr48-203pl. PICTURE: PAUL NASH



LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON...Ned Quinn and his son, Ted. Cr48-130s

France with the 3rd Lahore (1st Indian Corps) in November that year. Ned's Brigade stayed in France when most of the Lahore Division left for the Middle East in December 1915, being attached to 3rd Canadian Division, then in August 1916 to 4th Canadian Division, and in September. 1917 it became an unattached Army FA Brigade. It served on the Western Front until end of the war.

Ned was a member of the "Old Contemptibles", a title proudly adopted by the regular soldiers or reservists of the BEF who saw service on or before November 22, 1914.

In the London Gazette of March 10, 1916, it was announced that Ned had been awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for the

Battle of Loos on January 14 "for conspicuous gallantry while repairing telephone lines under heavy fire. He was constantly on duty at Observing Stations and displayed great courage and ability".

Then, in June that year, he was awarded the Military Medal for his conduct in the 3rd Battle of Ypres at Mont Sorrel, Hill 62 Sanctuary Wood, where he fought alongside the Canadians.

Gary points out that Ned was mentioned in despatches at The Somme and at three other occasions during the War.

Ned eventually emigrated to Canada and even volunteered for service in World War 2 in April 1940.

Because of age - he was then 52 - he was assigned to the Veterans Home Guard. His duties included escorting high value prisoners to prison camps. He was subsequently awarded the CVSM with bar and the General Service Badge.

From June 1940 to June 1944 he was an instructor at the Camp Borden Training Centre and at prisoner of war camps.

Following the war he became Police Chief of Forest, Ontario until his retirement. He died on June 29, 1972.

Ned had a son, Ted, who also served in the Second World War with the 30th Battery, 6th LAA Regiment, under the command of Major Conn Smythe, of Toronto Maple Leaf fame. His cousin, Charlie (Quinn) McKay, also served in the same regiment with the 112th Battery, from Lethbridge, Alberta.

Canadian Battlefield Tours organises visits to a select number of monuments, museums and European and Canadian cemeteries, maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

For more information on the tour visit www.canadianbattlefieldtours.ca or check out Gary McKay's Facebook page

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