

Pluscarden War Memorial

The Pluscarden war memorial is a rustic cairn constructed of large roughly hewn boulders. The commemoration and names of the dead are listed in gold lettering on a black marble tablet set into the front of the cairn. The memorial stands in the grounds of the church.

The unveiling ceremony was undertaken by Mr. P. C. Oswald of Wester Elchies on 27th March 1920 and was reported in *The Northern Scot* newspaper of 3rd April 1920 as follows: 'War Memorial Unveiled. Eleven Pluscarden Men who made the Sacrifice. The unveiling of Pluscarden War Memorial took place last Saturday afternoon. A large number of people assembled in the church, when an impressive service was conducted by the Rev. R. Mackintosh. In making reference to the eleven members who had fallen in the war, Mr Mackintosh commented on the great sacrifice that had made for the benefit of their fellow-men, having gone forward to battle faithful to all that was best in men. He pointed out the great indebtedness they owed to the men whom they were now honouring, and the need for unselfishness on the part of those who were left behind to carry on their work in the world. After the singing of "Now the Labourer's task is o'er," led by a full choir, the people retired for the unveiling ceremony. The memorial, which has been erected in the form of a cairn of stones, with a tablet inserted in front, is situated a little to the right of the path leading up to the church.

When the people had assembled outside, Mr P. C. Oswald, Wester Elchies, stated the purpose of the memorial, and thereafter unveiled it by drawing aside the Union Jack.

The choir gave a fine rendering of the 66th paraphrase "How bright these glorious spirits shine," and at the close Rev. R. Mackintosh pronounced the benediction. The "Last Post" was impressively sounded by Mr McTavish, bandmaster, Elgin, and the proceedings terminated.

The memorial tablet bears the following inscription:- "This cairn was erected by the people of Pluscarden in appreciative and grateful memory of the following members of the community who were killed in the European War" -

1914 – 1919.

Sergeant Peter A. Chisholm, M.M., Seaforth Highlanders.

Pte. John A. Grant, Seaforth Highlanders.

Pte. William Kynoch, Seaforth Highlanders.

Pte. James Munro, Seaforth Highlanders.

Pte. Alexander Ogilvie, Seaforth Highlanders.

Pte. Eric Phimister, Seaforth Highlanders.

Pte. Leonard West, Seaforth Highlanders.

Pte. William F. Chisholm, A.S.C.

Pte. Frank Petrie, H.L.I.

R.S.M. James Kay, M.C. D.C.M., M.M., Canadians.

Pte. James Garden, Canadians.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

The erection of the memorial was carried out by Mr Henderson, sculptor, Elgin, the stones having been taken from Heldon Hill. The architect was Mr John Wittet, Elgin.'

The Roll of the Fallen

Peter A. Chisholm M.M.

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 57) as follows: 'No. 265511, Sgt., 1/6th Seaforths; born at Duffus, Sept. 13th, 1882; joined at Elgin, Oct., 1914; served in France; killed in France, 22nd July 1918; awarded Military Medal. Son of Son of James and Sarah Chisholm, Fosterseat, Pluscarden. Occupation, gardener.'

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being buried at Terlincthun British Cemetery, Wimille, Pas de Calais, France, section XVII row B, grave 8. Medal Roll in National Archives notes him being awarded British War and Victory Medals with no date of entry into a theatre of war. Formerly Sergeant 1888 of the 6th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders. Award of Military Medal announced in the *Supplement to the London Gazette* of 6 August 1918, page 9235 – '265511 Cpl. P. Chisholm, Sea. Highrs. (Elgin).'

Reported in *The Northern Scot* of 17th August 1918 of the following: 'Roll of Honour. Died of Wounds. Sergt. P. Chisholm, M.M., Pluscarden. Mr Chisholm, Fosterseat, Pluscarden, has been informed that his son, Sergeant P. Chisholm, M.M., Seaforths, has died of wounds received in action. Enlisting in 1914, Sergeant Chisholm had seen over two years' active service. This is the second son Mr Chisholm has lost in the war, while a third has been badly wounded. The sergeant leaves a widow and four children.'

Also commemorated on the Elgin and Tomintoul War Memorials.

William Fraser Chisholm

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 58) as follows: 'No. 45028, Pte., Army Service Corps; born at Pluscarden, 12th June 1894; joined at Banchory, Kincardineshire, March, 1915; served in France; killed in France, 1st Dec. 1917. Son of James and Sarah Chisolm, Fosterseat, Pluscarden. Occupation, sawmiller.'

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being of the 15th Battalion Highland Light Infantry, commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium, Panel 131 to 132. Son of James and Sarah Fraser-Chisholm, of Fosterseat, Pluscarden, Elgin; husband of Isabella Black Fraser-Chisholm, of St. Machar, Banchory, Kincardine-shire. Medal Roll in National Archives notes him being awarded British War and Victory Medals with no date of entry into a theatre of war. Noted as formerly Pte 48239 Royal Scots attached 20th I.B.D, attached 5th entrenching battalion, formerly 45028 15th Battalion Highland Light Infantry. Soldiers Died in the Great War notes him as formerly 2265 of the Royal Army Service Corps.

Reported in the *Northern Scot and Moray & Nairn Express* of 29th December 1917 of the following: 'Private W. T. Chisholm. Mr and Mes Chisholm, Fosterseat, Pluscarden, have received intimation that their youngest son, Private W. T. Chisholm, H.L.I., was killed in action on December 1. Private Chisholm enlisted into the A.S.C. in 1915, but was afterwards transferred to the H.L.I., proceeding to the front in June last. He was 24 years of age, and served his apprenticeship with Messrs Wink & Mackenzie, solicitors, Elgin. When war broke out, however, he was working in Banchory. Two brothers are serving with the Seaforths and another is engaged on Admiralty work.'

Also commemorated on the Elgin and Banchory War Memorials.

James Garden

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 132) as follows: 'No. 161171, Pte., 82nd Battn. Canadians; born at Spynie, Elgin, 24th March 1886; joined at Calgary, Alberta, Canada, May, 1916; served in France; killed 28th March 1917. Son of James Garden, Spynie, and Elsie Collie or Garden (both deceased). Occupation, farm servant.'

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being of the 10th Battalion Canadian Infantry, aged 31, died 28th April 1917, son of James and Elizabeth Shand Garden, of Blackfriars Road, Elgin. Commemorated on the Vimy Memorial, Pas de Calais, France.

Canadian Archives (RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 3401-8, Item 405750) his attestation paper shows he enlisted 4 January 1916 as Pte 161171 in the 83rd Regiment at Calgary, where he gave his occupation as Farmer, with next of kin being his sister Miss Betsy Garden, 835 Namayo Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Stated as born Parish of Elgin on 24 March 1889. Summary of Service – Sailed from Halifax SS "*Empress of Britain*" arrived England 29 May 1916, 8 Jul 1916 – Posted to 9th Reserve Battalion, 17 July 1916 – Struck off to 10th Battalion, 18 July 1916 – Taken on Strength, 4 August 1916 – Posted to 1st Canadian Entrenching Battalion, 30 August 1916 – Rejoined 10th Battalion, 31 January 1917 – Admitted 3rd Canadian Field Ambulance, 1 February 1917 – Reported from base to hospital sick Pyrexia, 6 February 1917 – Rejoined unit, 28 April 1917 – Killed in action.

Canadian Archives notes him being awarded British War and Victory Medals which were sent to his sister Mrs A Burness, 11327 St. Albert Road, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Left effects to his sister of £225.8.3.

John A. Grant

Not located.

James Kay M.C., D.C.M., M.M.

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 194) as follows: 'Sergt.-Mjr., Canadians; born at Torehead, Pluscarden, Elgin, 1881; joined at Winnipeg, Canada, Sept., 1914; served in France; awarded D.C.M.'

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being of the 16th Battalion Canadian Infantry (Manitoba Regiment), Regimental Sergeant Major, 29166, died 18th February 1919. Buried at Antheit Communal Cemetery, Leige, Belgium, at North end.

Mentioned in Despatches in the *Supplement to The London Gazette* 27th January 1916, page 1100 – 'Canadian Forces. 16th Infantry Battalion. Kay, No,29166 Regimental Serjeant-Major J.' Awarded Distinguished Conduct Medal on 11th March 1916 *The Edinburgh Gazette*, page 511 - 'Kay J, RSM 29166 16th Bn - For conspicuous gallantry since the formation of the battalion, in all the actions in which it has been engaged. He has invariably exhibited bravery and skill in the performance of his duties, and given a fine example of devotion to all ranks.'

Awarded Military Cross on 1st January 1919 *Supplement to The London Gazette*, page 32 – 'No. 29166 S.M. James Kay, D.C.M., 16th Bn., Can. Infy.' Awarded Military Medal posthumously on 3rd July 1919 *Supplement to The London Gazette*, page 8345 – '29166 R./S.M. Kay, J., D.C.M., 16th Bn., Manitoba R.'

Service Papers in the Canadian Archives (RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 5009-47, Item 489796) show he enlisted 23 September 1914 in the 79th Camerons, transferred to 16th Battalion at Valcartier, Quebec where he gave his occupation as Checker, with next of kin being his wife Mrs. Fay Kay, 965 Lipton Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Stated as born at Elgin 19 February 1890. Formerly served 12 years in the Seaforth Highlanders.

Summary of Service – Sailed from Quebec on 7 Oct 1914 per S.S. Andania, 11 Jul 1915 – To be acting Battalion Sergeant-Major, 4 Nov 1915 – Promoted Sergeant-Major Warrant Officer, 14 Jan 1916 – Awarded Distinguished Conduct Medal, 18 Feb 1918 – Posted to Depot for Return Home, 25 Feb 1918 – Ceased to Canada on enquiry of being absent without leave and to have deficiencies in kit valued at £7.10.8½ being posted as deserter, 14 Jun 1918 – Court of Enquiry held at Salford, 22 Jun 1918 – Granted extension of furlough in Canada, cancelled same day, 25 Jul 1918 – Posted to 11th Reserve Battalion, 21 Aug 1918 – Proceeded to France with 16th Battalion, 30 Aug 1918 – Rejoined unit, 2 Oct 1918 – Gunshot Wound left hand and forearm to 26 General Hospital, Etaples, 11 Oct 1918 – To 4th Canadian General Hospital, Basingstoke, 5 Dec 1918 – Discharged to 11th Reserve Battalion Salford from Cambridge Hospital, Aldershot, 18 Dec 1918 – Arrived back in France, 23 Dec 1918 – Rejoined Unit, 1 Jan 1919 – Awarded Military Cross, 17 Feb 1919 – Admitted 3rd Canadian Field Ambulance with influenza, 18 Feb 1919 – 50th Casualty Clearing Station died of Bronchitis Pneumonia, 3 Jul 1919 – Awarded Military Medal.

War Pension paid to his widow Mrs Annie Kay of 175 Smith Street, Winnipeg formerly of 95 Furbeg Street, Winnipeg. Was paid gratuity of £198.66 and was awarded pension of £1.4.19. Paybook indicates that he sent home \$40 per month to his wife. Canadian Archives notes him also being awarded 1914-15 Star, British War and Victory Medals.

Reported in *The Northern Scot* of 19th February 1916 of the following: ‘Pluscarden Soldier Honoured. D.C.M. for Sergt.-Major James Kay. Many Morayshire soldiers have distinguished themselves in this war, and have had their bravery recognised by their superior officers, and Pluscarden people will be pleased to hear that a native of their district, regimental Sergeant-Major James Kay, has been awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for bravery in the field.

Sergeant-Major Kay was born at Torehead, Pluscarden, and is a nephew of Mr John Smith, 16 Blantyre Street, Bishopmill, Elgin. The Sergeant-Major has seen a considerable amount of active service. He was in South Africa, for which he has the King’s medal, and also in Somaliland, being at that time in the 1st Seaforth Highlanders. After twelve years’ service with the regiment, he went to Canada, where he remained for six years. When war was declared he lost no time in getting into khaki again. He joined the 16th Canadian Scottish, and came overseas with the 1st Canadian Contingent. He has met the Huns in many a stiff struggle, but has not been wounded. We hope he will be spared to come safely home again.’

Reported in *The Northern Scot* of 12th April 1919 of the following: ‘Gallant Pluscarden Soldier Dies in Belgium. Mr John Smith, 18 Blantyre Street, Bishopmill, has received the sad information that his nephew, Regimental Sergt.-Major James Kay, M.C., D.C.M., M.M., died at Anthent, Belgium, on February 22 of pneumonia. The news was conveyed by Captain McNeill, an Elgin man with the Canadians. Last summer R.S.M. Kay was home in Canada on three months furlough and was offered a staff appointment there but preferred to see the war finished, and duly returned to France. He held three war honours, having been awarded the

D.C.M. in 1918, the Military Medal about a year ago, and the Military Cross a few months since. He served in the South African war, for which he holds the King's Medal, and also in Somaliland, India, and Egypt with the 1st Seaforth Highlanders. After serving twelve years with his regiment he went to Canada, and had been there about six years when war broke out. Joining up immediately in the 16th Canadian Scottish, he came overseas with the first Canadian contingent and had seen much heavy fighting, having been wounded three times. He leaves a widow and two children, who reside in Winnipeg, Canada. R.S.M. Kay formerly resided at Torehead, Pluscarden.'

William Kynoch

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 201) as follows: 'No. 265813, Pte., 6th and 4th Seaforths; born at Miltonbrae, Elgin, April, 1896; joined at Elgin, Sept., 1914; served in France; twice wounded; killed, March 1917, in France. Son of John and Elizabeth Kynoch, Overton, Pluscarden, Elgin. Occupation, farm servant.'

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being of the 4th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders, died 24th March 1918, aged 22, brother of Margaret Kynoch, Overton, Pluscarden. Buried at Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport, Seine-Maritime, France, section VI, row E, grave 11A. Medal Roll in National Archives notes him being awarded 1914-15 Star, British War and Victory Medals with date of 1st May 1915 given as entry into a theatre of war. Formerly Private 2403 of the 6th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders. Noted as died of wounds.

Reported in *The Elgin Courant* of 27th April 1917 of the following: 'Roll of Honour. Wounded. Privates W. & A. Kynoch, Pluscarden. Mr and Mrs Kynoch, Overton, Pluscarden, have received information that their sons, Ptes William and Alex. Kynoch, Seaforths, have been wounded. Before enlisting they were employed as farm servants.'

Reported in *The Northern Scot* of 30th March 1918 of the following: 'Roll of Honour. Died of Wounds. Private William Kynoch, Pluscarden. Miss Kynoch, Overton, Pluscarden, has received word that her brother, Private William Kynoch, Seaforth Highlanders, has died of wounds received on March 24. Private Kynoch enlisted in the local Seaforths in September, 1914, and was wounded on two occasions. The last time he returned to duty he was transferred to another battalion of the Seaforths. Before joining the colours he was employed as a farm servant in the Roseisle district. Private Kynoch was 21 years of age.'

James Harrold Munro

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 249) as follows: 'No.2402, Pte., 1/6th Seaforth Highlanders; born at Pluscarden, 18th June 1896; joined at Elgin, 14th Sept., 1914; served in France; killed 22nd July 1915, by sniper. Son of William Munro and Elizabeth Harrold or Walker. Occupation, ploughman.'

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being of the 6th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders, died 15th June 1915. Commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial, Pas de Calais, France, Panel 39 and 39. Medal Roll in National Archives notes him being awarded 1914-15 Star, British War and Victory Medals with date of 1st May 1915 given as entry into a theatre of war of France. Noted as killed in action.

Alexander Ogilvie

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 334) as follows: ‘No. 266225, Pte., 1/6th Seaforths; born at Blinkbonny, Pluscarden, Elgin, Dec. 1889; joined at Elgin, July, 1915; served in France; killed in action, 2nd August 1917. Occupation, farm servant.’

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being of the 6th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders, aged 28, grandson of Mrs. A. Ogilvie, Blinkbonny, Pluscarden. Commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Belgium, Panel 38. Medal Roll in National Archives notes him being awarded British War and Victory Medals with no date of entry into a theatre of war. Formerly Private 3218 of the 6th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders and latterly Private 266225 of the 4th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders.

Reported in the *Northern Scot and Moray & Nairn Express* of 25th August 1917 of the following: ‘Private A. Ogilvie, Pluscarden. Mr Alex. Ogilvie, Blinkbonny, Pluscarden, has received information that his son, Private Alex. Ogilvie, Seaforth Highlanders, was killed in action on August 2. Private Ogilvie, who was 28 years of age, enlisted in June, 1915, and was invalided home from the front about a year ago. He returned to France at the end of May. Before enlisting Private Ogilvie was a farm servant at Crossley, Pluscarden.’

Reported in the *Elgin Courant* of 31st August 1917 of the following: ‘Roll of Honour. Pte. A. Ogilvie, Pluscarden. Pte. Alexander Ogilvie, son of Mr Alexander Ogilvie, Blinkbonny, Pluscarden, has been killed in action. He was 28 years of age, and before enlisting was a farm servant at Crossley, Pluscarden.’

By the death in action of Pte. Alexander Ogilvie (writes a correspondent), the Glen of Pluscarden loses one of its best-known young men. He responded voluntarily to the country’s call for men, and has now made the supreme sacrifice for the land and the glen he loved so well. That the sacrifice is not made in vain is evidenced by the feelings of the Glen folks, for whom he gave his all, even life itself. It will be long ere his memory die and his life be forgotten. A winsome personality, a sparkling humour, a straight, clean life, and Alexander Ogilvie goes to join so many of his comrade-in-arms, in the path of duty and to the altar of sacrifice.

During divine service last Sunday morning the following reference was made to his death by the Rev. R. Mackintosh, minister of the Glen :- “There is a burden laid upon me this morning that I feel heavy to bear – the burden of expressing the sympathy of this congregation to the relatives of Private Alexander Ogilvie, who was killed in action on the second day of August. We shall all miss him – his cheer, his wit, his humour, his life. This congregation will miss one of its most regular worshippers, and the Bible class one of its most constant attenders. Let there be but one heart in the Glen, and let it beat with a deep sympathy for the relatives in their sorrow, and thus make it a little easier to be borne – a sympathy all the deeper because of the difficulty of expression. The death he died was honourable, one more grain of seed sown to give us abundant life. These lives that we all mourn to lose remind us forcibly of a phrase used in the description of the New Jerusalem – “They shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. I pray God that we all in the Glen may live as clean a life and die as clean, as honourable, a death.”

Also commemorated on the Elgin War Memorial.

Frank Petrie

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 341) as follows: ‘No. 14980, Pte., 2nd Btn., H.L.I.; born at Elgin, 7th May 1884; joined at Glasgow, 30th Nov. 1914; served in France; killed in France, 1st July 1916. Son of Francis Petrie, Middlesborough, and Alice Britton or Petrie. Occupation, farm servant.’

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being of the 16th Battalion Highland Light Infantry. Commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France, Pier and Face 15C. Medal Roll in National Archives notes him being awarded 1914-15 Star, British War and Victory Medals with date of 23rd November 1915 given as entry into a theatre of war. Formerly Private 14980 16th Battalion Highland Light Infantry.

Death Notice in the *Elgin Courant* of 28th July 1916 of the following: ‘Petrie – Killed in action in France, on 1st July Private Frank Petrie, H.L.I., late of Howe, Pluscarden, Elgin.’

Eric Phimister

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 343) as follows: ‘No. 267002, Pte., 1/6th Seaforth Highlanders; born at Burghead, 1st August 1893; joined at Elgin, 3rd August 1916; served in France; killed at Arras, 9th April 1917. Son of Alexander Phimister, The Wards, Pluscarden, Elgin and Elizabeth Cumming or Phimister. Occupation, farm servant.’

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being of the 6th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders, husband of C. Phimister, 7 Gregory Place, Lossiemouth. Buried at Highland Cemetery, Roelincourt, Pas de Calais, France, section I, row C, grave 45. Medal Roll in National Archives notes him being awarded British War and Victory Medals with no date of entry into a theatre of war. Formerly Private 4423 of the 6th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders.

Reported in the *Forres Gazette* of 25th April 1917 of the following: ‘Seaforths in Action. Killed. Mrs Phimister, Lossiemouth, has been informed that her husband, Private Phimister, Seaforths, was killed in action on the 9th inst.’

Also commemorated on the Lossiemouth War Memorial.

Leonard West

Recorded in the Morayshire Roll of Honour (1921, 465) as follows: ‘No. 265180, Pte., Seaforth Highlanders; joined at Grantown; served in France; reported wounded and missing, 1918. Occupation, farm servant.’

Commonwealth War Graves Commission notes him as being of the 4th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders, died 20th July 1918, aged 28, son of John Thomas and Harriett Mary West, Tehiddy Cottages, Larkfield, Maidstone, Kent. Commemorated on the Soissons Memorial, Aisne, France. Medal Roll in National Archives notes him being awarded 1914-15 Star, British War and Victory Medals with date of 1st May 1915 given as entry into a theatre of war. Formerly Private 1289 6th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders.

Sources

McKenzie, W J (ed) (1921) *The Morayshire Roll of Honour*. Elgin.

The Edinburgh Gazette, The London Gazette, Supplement to The London Gazette.

Elgin Courant & Courier, Forres Elgin & Nairn Gazette, The Northern Scot