DONOVAN Patrick Arthur



Private, 6087357
2nd Battalion, The Buffs
(Royal East Kent Regiment)
Place of Birth: London
Date of Death: Wednesday, 15th May 1940
Cemetery: Esquelmes War Cemetery

Patrick Arthur Donovan was born in London in 1920, the son of Bartholomew and Ellen Donovan, nee Barber. He was the second youngest of eight children, having six brothers and one sister named Ellen after her mother.

His father, Bartholomew, was born in Wapping in 1873. He married Ellen Barber in 1908 in Bermondsey and they made 56 Gainsford Street, Horselydown, London their home. Horsleydown is a small parish on the south bank of the River Thames in London, opposite the Tower of London. Bartholomew was employed as a foreman stevedore.

Ellen, was the daughter of John Barber and his wife Mary Ann formerly Argent who were from Little Wratting and Haverhill respectively. She was one of seven surviving children. A further six siblings died either in childhood or in early adulthood. In 1891 John Barber was farming Paynes Farm in Radwinter. In 1901, Ellen aged 18, who was still living with her parents and her brother Fred, was employed as a general servant (domestic). The family were now living at Brick Barn, Colchester Road, Halstead and John's occupation was listed as farmer.

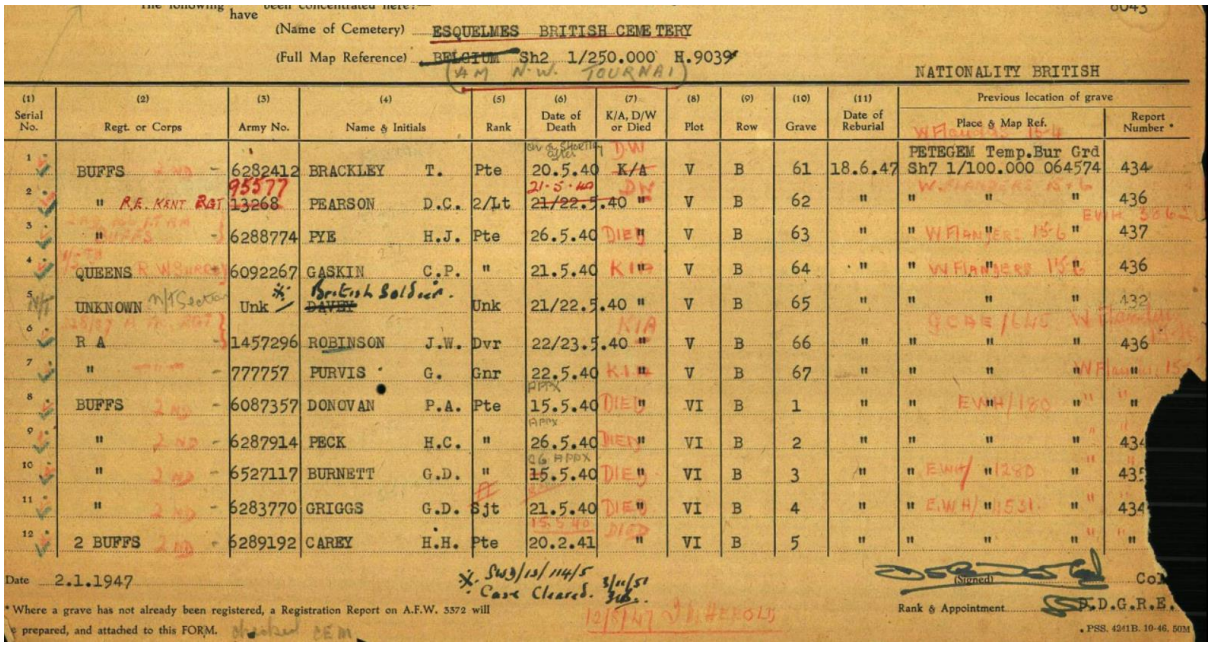
Patrick's father died in 1923. His mother was still living in London in 1939 with three of her children but she was to move back to Haverhill settling at St Botolphs Place. Her brother George lived in the town and perhaps the fact that he was widowed in 1941 when his wife Kate nee Shipp died, encouraged her to return to the place of her birth. She would eventually move to 113 Burton End.

With the outbreak of war, Patrick enlisted joining the Buffs as a Private.

According to Gregory Blaxland's short history of The Buffs published by Leo Cooper, 2nd Buffs marched into Belgium on 10 May 1940 and were allocated a front of 2500 yards on the river Escaut, astride the village of Petegem. Oddly, he says they saw no Germans until the evening of 20 May when they were attacked and partly over run so the circumstances of how Patrick died are unknown.

His death came just days before the evacuation of British and other Allied forces from Dunkirk began on 26th May 1940. Many Buffs were not evacuated but captured spending the rest of the war as POWs in Germany.

The Graves Concentration Form for Esquelmes Cemetery records that Patrick "died" rather than being "killed in action". He was originally buried in Petegem Temporary Burial Ground and reburied at Esquelmes on 18th June 1947.



(Name of Cemetery) ESQUELMES BRITISH CEMETERY

(Full Map Reference) BELGIUM Sh2 1/250.000 H.9039 (4M N.W. TOURNAI)

NATIONALITY BRITISH

(1) Serial No.	(2) Regt. or Corps	(3) Army No.	(4) Name & Initials	(5) Rank	(6) Date of Death	(7) K/A, D/W or Died	(8) Plot	(9) Row	(10) Grave	(11) Date of Reburial	Previous location of grave: Place & Map Ref.	Previous location of grave: Report Number *
1	BUFFS	6282412	BRACKLEY T.	Pte	20.5.40	K/A	V	B	61	18.6.47	PETEGEM Temp.Bur Grd Sh7 1/100.000 064574	434
2	" R.E. KENT RGT	95577 13268	PEARSON D.C.	2/Lt	21/22.5.40	"	V	B	62	"	"	436
3	"	6288774	PYE H.J.	Pte	26.5.40	DIED	V	B	63	"	"	437
4	QUEENS	6092267	GASKIN C.P.	"	21.5.40	K/A	V	B	64	"	"	436
5	UNKNOWN	Unk	British Soldier DAVEY	Unk	21/22.5.40	"	V	B	65	"	"	432
6	R A	1457296	ROBINSON J.W.	Dvr	22/23.5.40	"	V	B	66	"	"	436
7	"	777757	PURVIS G.	Gnr	22.5.40	K/A	V	B	67	"	"	"
8	BUFFS	6087357	DONOVAN P.A.	Pte	15.5.40	DIED	VI	B	1	"	"	"
9	"	6287914	PECK H.C.	"	26.5.40	"	VI	B	2	"	"	434
10	"	6527117	BURNETT G.D.	"	15.5.40	"	VI	B	3	"	"	435
11	"	6283770	GRIGGS G.D.	Sjt	21.5.40	"	VI	B	4	"	"	434
12	2 BUFFS	6289192	CAREY H.H.	Pte	20.2.41	"	VI	B	5	"	"	"

Date 2.1.1947 (Signed) Col

Rank & Appointment S.D.G.R.E.

* Where a grave has not already been registered, a Registration Report on A.F.W. 3572 will be prepared, and attached to this FORM.

PSS. 4241B. 10-46. 50M

Esquelmes War Cemetery is located 10 Km north of Tournai on the Chemin Garenne, a road leading from the N50 road to Kortrijk.



Patrick's family had the inscription

'Gone from us
But not forgotten
Never shall his memory fade'
added to his CWGC headstone.

1027/1/A/7 6.B.1 140
6087357 Private 14
P.A.Donovan 8
The Buffs 16
15th May 1940 Age 19 10
(Cross)
Gone from us 15
But not forgotten 23
Never shall his memory fade 86

