

CHAPTER 15: THOMAS FLEMING STEVENSON FULTON (1887-1974).

Thomas Fleming Stevenson Fulton was born in Newchwang, Manchuria, on the 26th February 1887, the oldest of three children of Rev. Thomas and Barbara Fulton. He was given his middle names in memory of Rev. Dr. Fleming Stevenson (1832-1886) (Ref.Fig.12-17), who had been Convener of the Irish Presbyterian Foreign Mission.

In 1888, still in his first year of life, Fleming nearly died of small pox (Ref.P.94). The family moved to live in the capital of Manchuria, Mukden, in 1889 and in 1894 Fleming made his first visit to Ulster at the age of seven. He went to school at the 'School of Sons of Missionaries' in London, which had been founded in 1842 and moved to a purpose built site shown here, at Blackheath, in 1857. It remained there until 1912 when it moved down the road to Mottingham, where it became known as Eltham College and still exists today. A famous graduate was Eric Liddell (Ref.Fig.19-26).



Fig.15-1 Missionary School, 1905
Fig.15-2 Fleming Fulton, 1896.



Fleming was recorded at Eltham College in a 1902 exam certificate for junior students, age 15, and a 1903 1st XV rugby team photograph, age 16.

It seems likely that he remained there until entering Queens College Medical School, Belfast (Ref. Fig.11-11) in 1906.



Fig.15-3 Eltham College 1st XV, 1903.

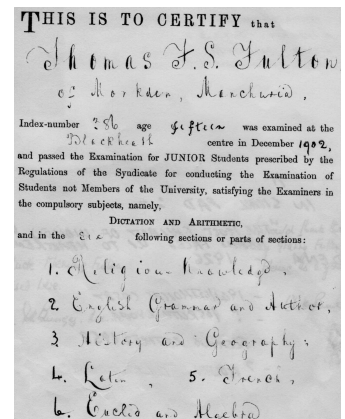


Fig.15-4 Exam Cert. 1902.

Fleming was at Queens College Belfast when it received its charter in 1908 as Queens University Belfast Medical School and graduated with an MB in 1912 and a DPH (Diploma in Public Health) in 1913.

This photograph might have been taken during his houseman year in Belfast or in his first year of medical work in Rochdale, Lancashire.



Fig.15-5 Dr. Fleming Fulton, 1913/1914.

On the 2nd September 1914, four weeks after the outbreak of WWI had shattered the peace of Europe, he married, Mary (May) Elizabeth Lyons at Cooke Centenary Church (Ref.Fig.15-13). This church, where the Lyons had worshipped for years, was named after the famous Ulster Presbyterian Rev. Henry Cooke (Ref.Fig.9-16) with the foundation stone laid in 1888, on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

Fleming and May's son Terence would describe the wedding reception at their golden anniversary in 1964.

"History does not relate the goings on at the reception but the photo of the bridal party is excellent, the beauty and charm of the bride and bridesmaids being matched only by the upright bearing of the handsome young men of whom none was more personable than the bridegroom. After the reception at Valere, the happy couple departed for their honeymoon in Edinburgh and the Trossachs."



**Fig.15-6 James Lyons, William Lyons, Fleming Fulton, May Lyons, Norman Fulton, Victor Lyons
Fred Lyons, Annie Lyons, Kathleen Fulton, Ruth (Sherrard) Lyons.**

Chapters 16 & 17 are being devoted to a detailed account of the Lyons and Sherrard families but a brief description of Fleming's in-laws is presented now.

May Lyon's father, Thomas Henry Lyons (1857-1906), was born in Killyclogher Townland, Omagh, County Tyrone, the second child of tenant farmer Thomas Lyons (1817-1892) and his wife Anne Jane (Armstrong) Lyons (1825-1904).

May's mother, Ruth Sherrard (1855-1845), was born in Owenbeg Townland, Dungiven, County Derry, the sixth child to tenant farmer James Sherrard (1802-1892) and his wife Elizabeth Jane (Hume) Sherrard (1813-1901).



Fig.15-7 Thomas Henry Lyons & Ruth Sherrard

Thomas Henry Lyons left the County Tyrone family farm and moved to Belfast as a young man to work as a manufacturer's agent in the linen trade.

Ruth Sherrard similarly left the County Derry family farm and moved to the city to work as a milliner. They married in Holywood Presbyterian Church in 1885 and moved to live in Rosetta Avenue and then Valere, Rosetta Park, Belfast, where May was the second of their six children, (Fred, May, Annie, Willie, Jim and Victor) born between 1887 and 1898.

Her father died in 1906 at the age of 49 and further tragedy was to engulf the family in the form of the Great War of 1914-1918.

Fleming continued his work in Rochdale but on the 3rd August 1915 he joined the Royal Army Medical Corp (RAMC) as a Lieutenant and was stationed in France for the next four years.

The RAMC operated the Army's 'Front Line Medical Units' in France. Each unit was a highly organized series of stations linking the battlefield or trenches with a 'Base Hospital' which was often situated on the coast for easy evacuation.

"Once admitted to a Base Hospital, Tommy had a reasonable chance of survival. Of Base Hospital admissions: 10% died; 60% were evacuated; 30% returned to duty."

The journey to the Base Hospital was via an 'Advanced Dressing Station' (ADS), which had limited medical facilities, through stretcher relay posts every 1,000 yards to the 'Main Dressing Station' (MDS), which could provide first aid.



Fig.15-8 Advanced or Main Dressing Station.



Fig.15-9 Stretcher Relay Post.

From the MDS wounded moved on to the 'Casualty Clearing Station' (CCS), which was the first large, well equipped medical facility but often miles from the front. It was able to retain and treat cases unfit to travel, while evacuating others often via a railway infrastructure.

In 1916 alone 750,000 wounded were evacuated from CCSs in France. Many of the sites of the CCSs became large military cemeteries.

Each 'Front Line Medical Unit' required 10 medical officers. In 1914, at the outbreak of war, the RAMC had a total of 200 medical officers but by July 1916 there were 10,000.



Fig.15-10 Casualty Clearing Station.

The famous RAMC poem read in part:

"We carry no rifle, bayonet nor bomb but follow behind in the rear,
Of VC's not many they score,
Yet are earned every day,
In a quiet sort of way, by the RAMC."

In WWI, the RAMC lost a total of 470 officers and 3,669 other ranks.

This was Fleming's official Medal Card, which was filed at the National Archives in London. It showed that he served in France starting as a Lieutenant on 3/8/1915. He was promoted to Captain in July 1916 and over the course of his four years of duty was awarded three medals: Star, British & Victory Medal (Ref.Fig15-12).

Name	Grade	Rank	Regt. No.
FULTON	P.A.M.C. Lt	Capt	
Thomas Fleming Service			
Medal	Star	Page	Remarks
16-34	R.A.M.C. 4/11/15	5445	1.V. 4745 15/6/16 NW/6
16-34	4/11/15	259	15656
EMBLEMS			
Theatre of War first served in: France			
Date of entry World: 3-8-15			

Fig.15-11 Captain Fleming Fulton's Medal Card.

RAMC Medical Officers did not get assigned Regiment numbers so it is impossible to know exactly where they served at any particular time in the RAMC system but they presumably moved around to where they were most needed.

We do know that Fleming was in France and did not see his family for four years.

Fig.15-12 Star, British & Victory Medals.



His name appears on the Cooke Centenary Honour Roll at the church where he was married in 1914.

Sadly on the Cooke Centenary 'In Memoriam' plaque on the left hand side of this photo are the names of two of Fleming's brothers-in-law, Willie and Victor Lyons, who had stood either side of him in 1914 in that wonderful wedding photograph.

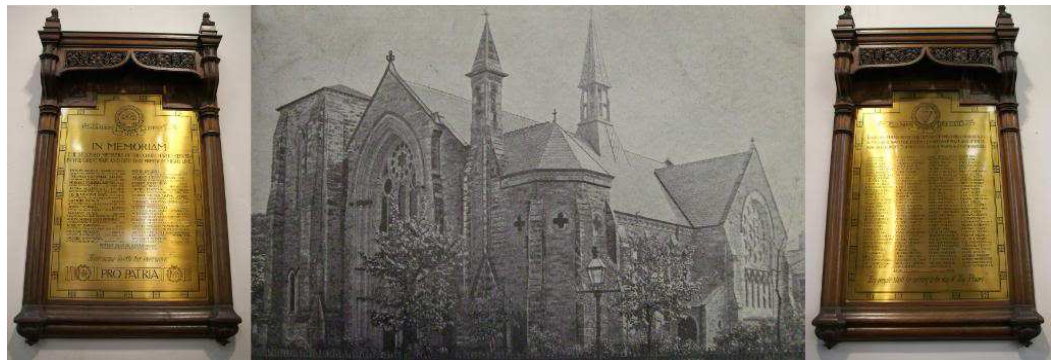


Fig.15-13 Cooke Centenary 'In Memoriam' & 'Honour Roll'.

Willie was a Captain in the Royal Lancashire Regiment when he died in July 1916 at the start of the Battle of the Somme (Ref.Fig.17-34).

He was one of 72,191 soldiers missing with no known grave, between 1915 and 1918. They were commemorated at the Thiepval Memorial. His name is engraved in the Portland stone of the memorial.

He was awarded the Star, Victory & British medals and posthumously the Military Cross for 'Exemplary Gallantry'.

He was also remembered at the Queens University War Memorial.

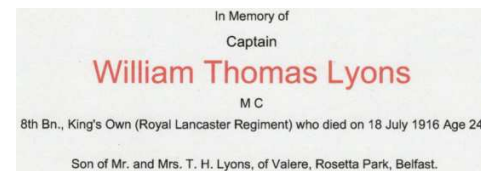
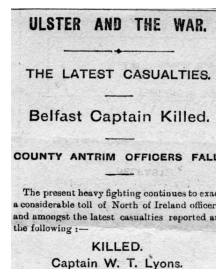


Fig.15-14 Capt.W.T.Lyons, MC.

Victor was the youngest in the Lyons family. He enrolled as a private in the North Irish Horse and in June 1917 was promoted to a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Irish Rifles. He died in action in March 1918 defending the same ground that his brother had died taking in 1916.

He is remembered at the Pozieres Memorial, which relates to the period of crisis during March and April 1918 when the Allied 5th Army was driven back by overwhelming numbers across the former Somme battlefields before the 'advance to victory', which began on the 8th August 1918. There were 14,656 casualties during this 'crisis period' with 1,380 soldiers unidentified, including Victor Lyons.

His name is engraved in the memorial stone and his medal card records the awarding of the Victory and British Medals (Ref. Fig.15-12).

FURTHER ULSTER LOSSES.
BELFAST OFFICERS
KILLED.
FAMILY'S DOUBLE SACRIFICE.
RANK AND FILE CASUALTIES.
 The following officer casualties are reported under various dates:—
KILLED.
 Second-Lieut. Robert Victor Lyons, Royal Irish Rifles, Valere, Rosetta Park, Belfast.



Second-Lieut. R. V. LYONS,
 Royal Irish Rifles, Valere, Rosetta Park, Belfast, killed in action.

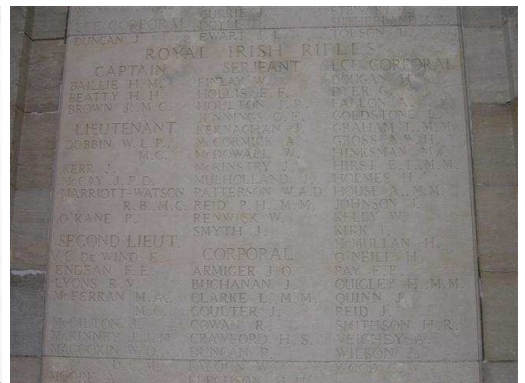
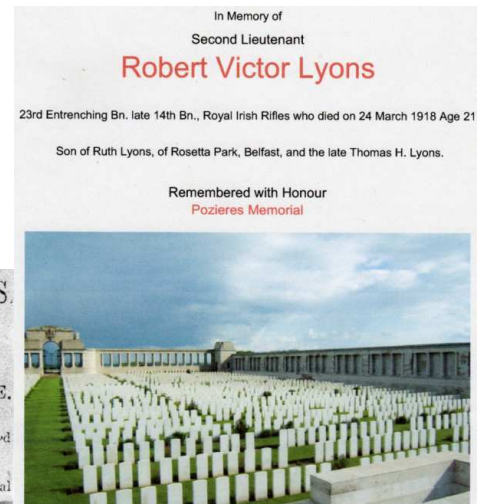


Fig.15-15 Lieut. Robert Victor Lyons.

Victor's older brother, Jim Lyons, like his brother Willie, was a Captain in the Royal Lancashire Regiment but he survived and was awarded the Military Cross for 'Conspicuous Gallantry'.

After the war Fleming continued his medical work back in Rochdale before moving to Southend around 1919. His son Terence recorded his parent's nomadic life in the years after the war.

In 1920 Fleming returned to the land of his birth, working as a Medical Officer of Health in Shanghai, which by then had a population of nearly 2 million. Health concerns caused them to return to the UK in 1921, with posts in Whitehead, Nottingham and Pembroke, before finally settling in Belfast in 1923.

*Honeymoon - Southend & the Trossachs
 1914-5 1yr Rochdale Lancashire
 1915-9 4yr France
 1919 1/2 Rochdale
 1919 Southend
 1920-1 1yr Shanghai
 1921 Whitehead
 1921 Nottingham
 1922-3 Pembroke
 Nov. 1923 2 1/2 yrs Shanghai Park
 April 1926-11/2p. 1962 Pasadena*

Fig.15-16 Terence's Location List

Fig.15-17 Chinese Memorabilia;
 Shanghai 1920.



For the next thirty years Fleming became a pioneer of the school medical services, ending up as Senior Officer of Health for Schools and developing a special interest in handicapped children.

In his position as chairman of the N.I. Orthopaedic Services he was closely involved with the development of a multidisciplinary school to teach children with cerebral palsy.

The Belfast Education Authority opened Mount Collyer House in 1957 but soon renamed it 'Fleming Fulton School' in his honour.

The official motto was 'Faith Friendship, Service' (F.F.S.) and the prevailing philosophy 'One Step at a Time'.



Fig.15-18 Fleming Fulton School.

On returning to Belfast, Fleming and May lived in Shandon Park, Belfast, where their second child, Elizabeth Sherrard was born in 1923.

Fig.15-19 May, Terence & Betty 1923.



In 1926 they moved a short distance to a house at the junction of Knock and Kensington Road, called 'Pasadena'. This was to become the family home for 36 years.



Fig.15-20 Pasadena & garden: Betty, May, Terence, Kathleen & Fleming.

Terence wrote: "Eventually in 1926 they entered their life's home at Pasadena and there they created a garden not just of flowers but a garden of fragrant, lovely and lasting friendships which go on blooming perpetually. This I think is their crowning glory and this is why we, the family, thank them from our hearts."

May's mother, Ruth, would join them at Pasadena as would Fleming's father, Thomas, on returning from 56 years in Manchuria in 1941.

Fig.15-21 May, Ruth and Terence .



Fleming retired from his medical duties in 1953. He and May moved to a purpose built home at Lennoxvale, Belfast in 1962 in the grounds of their daughter's home, which was closer to both their two children and nine grandchildren.

Fleming was an avid gardener and spent his retirement years creating wonderful floral displays for the neighbourhood in his garden, described by Terence.

"They created a garden of dahlias, tulips, delphiniums, cosmos, sweet peas and roses, which were a joy to behold. Many a basketful brightened the homes of their neighbours and friends."



Fig.15-22 Fleming & May, Lennoxvale.

They had maintained their involvement with Knock Presbyterian Church but in 1969 Fleming relinquished his duties as Clerk of Sessions after 15 years and the event was recorded in the church bulletin:

"Dr. Fleming Fulton had a remarkable talent for administration, a gift for leadership and distilled the wisdom of his wide experience of men and affairs."



Fig.15-23 Knock Presbyterian Church.

All that he undertook was accomplished with a quiet unassuming efficiency, evidence in itself of natural ability but, more important still, evidence of the fact that his work amongst us was inspired by his great love for the Church and undertaken in the name of a loving Heavenly Father. None of those who were privileged to hear then will forget the kindly and understanding words he used in welcoming young communicants when introduced to the Session prior to their first communion. These short and simple addresses were deeply moving, reflecting as they did the sincerity and humility of the man who delivered them.

In other fields, particularly in that of the noble calling to which he devoted his professional life, Dr. Fulton's achievements have been signally honoured. When we, in our turn, express our gratitude to him for all he has done for Knock we cannot forget that he has had throughout the support of Mrs. Fulton, his gracious and charming partner, who has so generously concerned herself with so many church activities. The continuing presence of Dr. and Mrs. Fulton with us cheers us with the knowledge that this happy association is still ours to cherish.

Fig.15-24 Knock Church Bulletin.

Thomas Fleming Stevenson Fulton passed away on the 9th January 1974, at the age of 87. His obituary described his 'devotion to handicapped children.' Senior boys from Fleming Fulton School attended the funeral at their request.

May moved to live closer to her son, Terence, who visited her daily in her later years. She was pictured here in 1982 with two of her great grandchildren.



Fig.15-26 May Fulton, 1982.

May (Lyons) Fulton passed away on the 27th July 1985 at the age of 97.

Fleming and May Fulton were both buried in the family grave at Dundonald Cemetery with his father.

Fig.15-27 Fulton Grave, Dundonald.

Fig.15-25 Obituary Fleming Fulton.



FLEMING FULTON DIES AT 87

DR. FLEMING FULTON, who has died at the age of 87, was chief schools' medical officer for 30 years, from 1923. He set up the schools' medical service, and through it developed a special interest in handicapped children.

When the Orthopaedic Development Council, of which Dr. Fulton was chairman for many years, set up the Fleming Fulton School for handicapped children, it was named after him in honour of his devotion to the children.

Born in Manchuria, the son of a missionary, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Cosby Fulton, Dr. Fleming Fulton qualified in Belfast in 1912, and gained his Diploma of Public Health in 1913.

He served in the Royal Army Medical Corps during the war, and later was MOH in Shanghai for a year.

He is survived by his wife, May, his son, Terence, a consultant surgeon in the Royal Victoria Hospital, and his daughter, Betty, who is married to another consultant, Mr. Sinclair Irwin.

The three words on the grave below all their names recorded what Rev. Thomas Cosby Fulton described in his book as, 'The Fulton Motto': 'After Labour, Rest'.