

## PETER MCGINN (1891 - 1974)

Peter McGinn was born in Hebburn, Newcastle Upon Tyne on 12th June 1891, the son of William McGinn, a ships' calker who hailed from Co Armagh, and Mary Donnelly whose father, John, was from Co Donegal and whose mother, Jane Shannon, was born in Belfast. He served his apprenticeship as a marine engineer in Newcastle Upon Tyne. He came to Belfast in June 1912 and started working in Harland and Wolff as a draughtsman in the Engine Works Department from 17th June 1912 until 18th March 1913. He then was employed in the Merchant Navy. He married my grandmother in 1917 in Belfast and Belfast then became his permanent home address. He was employed by Workman and Clarks on 17th March 1930 but was made redundant on 19th December 1930 due to lack of orders. By 1927 the McGinn family had moved to 14 Rugby Avenue, Bangor. After losing his job at the end of 1930, Peter purchased a building in Main Street, Bangor where he opened a wall paper and paint shop. He also developed photographs.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> World War began on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939 with the German invasion of Poland. At some point Peter was appointed Temporary Lieutenant (E) R. N. R. and later promoted to Lieutenant Commander. I have 6 documents detailing some of these appointments. The first took effect on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1942 on HMS Victory, Portsmouth, which was the barracks in Queen Street and acted as accommodation onshore. The next one he was appointed as Temporary Acting Lieutenant Commander for HMS Seaborn for 7<sup>th</sup> March 1944 to repair that ship on the West Atlantic Station. HMS Seaborn, was the British navy's official headquarters on the western side of the Atlantic Ocean at Halifax, Nova Scotia. It was a converted yacht moored in Halifax and was commanded by Rear-Admiral S. S. Bonham-Carter. Peter was also appointed for duty with B.A.T.M. and Cape Wrath. On 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1945 he was appointed to the Western Isles to repair a ship at Tobermory. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War Peter also was appointed to be in charge of the maintenance of the escort ships for the convoys setting sail from Londonderry. The Royal Navy established HMS Ferrit at the old Ebrington Barracks and Fort George at the Pennyburn Shipyard. I have a national Registration identity card for my grandmother. From it we find that she moved to 53, Rosemount Avenue, Londonderry on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1943 and to 2 Aberfoyle Crescent, Londonderry on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1945. One of the stories my grandfather used to tell was that when he was stationed in Derry he was lodging in the home of a Scottish dentist. As Christmas was approaching he wanted to move out to a boarding house to be with his family but the dentist insisted that they were all to stay with him. My mother went out to a local dance with the daughter of the house. The next morning my grandfather came down for his breakfast but the dentist's wife wasn't there. He asked was she not well and was told 'No bloody wonder, papists in the house get out!' It didn't seem to matter that he was a Lieutenant Commander in the Royal Navy with a Geordie accent.