

## **Elizabeth S. Johnston 26.12.1890 – 25.12.1918**



Elizabeth was the second daughter of sailmaker Thomas William Johnston and Margaret McQueen of East Green, Anstruther (the business operated from premises now occupied by the Cellar Restaurant). She had five sisters and one brother, all educated at Waid Academy.

Elizabeth wanted to serve in World War One as a driver in France but, as her parents had concerns about her safety, she became a telephonist instead. She joined Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and arrived France in 1917.

At 2pm on Christmas Day 1918, Elizabeth was found unconscious by two Americans and an English soldier on the chapel roof of the church of Saint - Ouen in Rouen. She was taken to No.8 Stationary Hospital where she had recently been admitted with influenza, but she passed away on arrival at the hospital.

Elizabeth had been on night duty the previous evening and instead of going to the Christmas service in Rouen Cathedral, she opted to visit Saint- Ouen where she asked the caretaker if she could go up the tower. Elizabeth had visited the tower before but it had been misty; she had notebooks and pencils with her which were found near her body. It is believed that Elizabeth, still recovering from flu, had a dizzy spell and fell from the tower. The family in Anstruther received the tragic news via telegram on Boxing Day 1918, which would have been Elizabeth's 28th birthday.

She is buried in St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, Seine- Maritime, France. A Canadian soldier whom she had recently befriended took the Union flag from her coffin and replaced it with a Scottish saltire, a gesture which Elizabeth would have approved. Her biography, written by a friend Agnes Anderson, was called *Johnnie of the QMAAC*.