

# COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES

## RESEARCHING A SOUTH AFRICAN WHO DIED IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR - GUIDANCE SHEET



This bitesize guide is designed to help you research a South African, or someone who served with South African forces who died in the First World War. Firstly, you will need to decide who you will research... this might be a relative, or you could choose a name from a local war memorial, or you might select a name from a Commonwealth War Graves (CWGC) headstone in one of our cemeteries, or within a parish churchyard local to you.

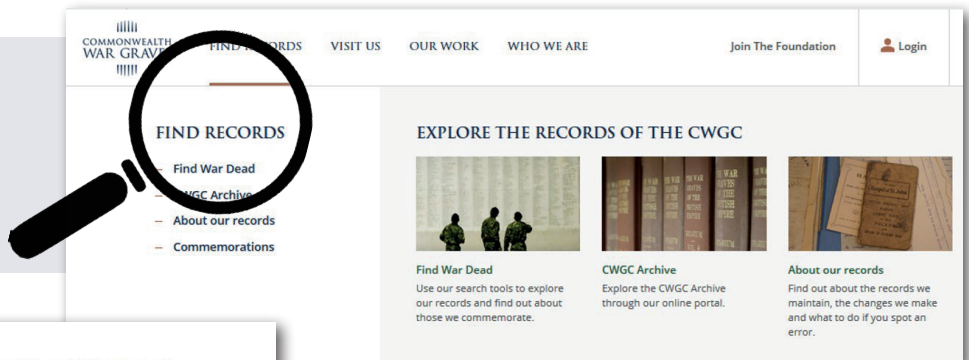
The first stage of your research starts with the **Commonwealth War Graves Commission Casualty Database**. At CWGC, we keep a record of the place of burial or commemoration of all the men and women of the Britain and Commonwealth who died in the First and Second World Wars.

### STEP 1: Visit our website at [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)



**Need help..?**  
Watch the 'How to search' video tutorials

Using the dropdown **FIND RECORDS** menu, select 'Find War Dead'



**FIND WAR DEAD**  
EXPLORE THE RECORDS OF THE 1.7 MILLION COMMONWEALTH MEN AND WOMEN THAT WE COMMEMORATE

**Last name**  
Enter the last name of the casualty

☐ Match this search term exactly

**First name**  
Enter a first name

☐ Match this search term exactly

**or Initials**  
Enter initials

☐ Match this search term exactly

**Service Number**  
Service numbers can contain numbers, letters and symbols

☐ Match this search term exactly

**Served with (country)**  
Served With

**War**  
Select War  
☐ First World War ☐ Second World War

**Regiment**  
Find records that relate to a particular regiment

☐ Match this search term exactly

**Served in (army etc.)**  
Served In

☐ Match this search term exactly

Fill in the name of the individual you are researching

Select **First World War** box



**Research tip**  
Records use different combinations of full names, name and initial, and initials only – you may have to try several of these to find your the person you are looking for

If you already have some more details about the person you are looking for such as their age, service number, date of death, or any medals they received, you can add these into the **ADDITIONAL FIELDS** section.

### ADDITIONAL FIELDS

Select additional options to add them to your search criteria

+ Country (commemorated in)
+ Cemetery or Memorial
+ Unit
+ Rank
+ Secondary Regiment
+ Age at death
+ Date of Death

+ Honours & awards
+ Additional information

Search
Clear

If you know where the person you are looking for died, for example, you can put this into the Additional Information box.

You will then get a list of the results...

SHOW 10 OF 28 WAR DEAD
Download all results
Sort by Relevance
Refine Results

Name, Rank & Service No.	Unit, Regiment, Country of Service	Date of Death	Commemorated at	
T WELSH Captain	1st Field Amb. South African Medical Corps South African	Died 12 April 1917 33 years old	ATHIES COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION A. 17. France	More details
VICTOR WILLIAM ALLEN Second Lieutenant	4th Regt. South African Infantry South African	Died 09 June 1918 19 years old	BOUCHOIR NEW BRITISH CEMETERY VI. E. 28. France	More details
GEORGE LENNOX ANDERSON Lieutenant	12th Regt. South African Infantry South African	Died 11 August 1916 24 years old	DODOMA CEMETERY II. D. 6. Tanzania	More details
CHARLES HENRY PERREM Second Lieutenant	1st Regt. South African Infantry South African	Died 19 October 1918 30 years old	ROISEL COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION II. B. 10. France	More details
MAURICE ESMOND WHELAN Lieutenant	2nd Regt. South African Infantry South African	Died 18 October 1918	ROISEL COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION II. B. 20. France	More details



**Be aware,**

CWGC records don't always include details about where an individual was from, or exactly where they died. Our records are centred around where a person is buried or commemorated.

If you have not found who you are looking for, you can refine the results

If you think you have found the person you are looking for, select 'More details' and you will get an at-a-glance record



**Did you know...?**

Wherever possible, the relatives of a casualty were offered the opportunity to have a small, personal inscription listed on their headstone.

If your the person you are looking for has a CWGC headstone, you will find any personal inscription engraved upon it listed here.

### SECOND LIEUTENANT VICTOR WILLIAM ALLEN

**Regiment & Unit/Ship**  
South African Infantry  
4th Regt.

**Date of Death**  
Died 09 June 1918  
Age 19 years old

**Buried or commemorated at**  
BOUCHOIR NEW BRITISH CEMETERY  
VI. E. 28.  
France

**Secondary Unit, Regiment** atttd. 103rd Sqdn. Royal Air Force **Country of Service** South African

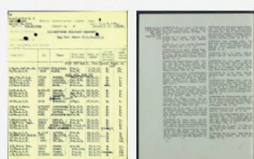
**Awards** Military Cross, Military Medal

**Personal Inscription** TO US HE LIVETH FOR EVER

COMMONWEALTH  
WAR GRAVES

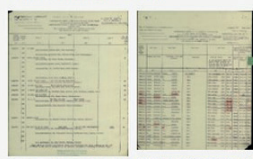
## FROM THE CWGC ARCHIVES

### GRAVE REGISTRATION (2)



Click to zoom in Click to zoom in

### HEADSTONE (2)



Click to zoom in Click to zoom in

Lower down the page you will find a link to our **CWGC Archives** and any additional information which is held about this individual. You can find several different types of official CWGC reports here. Find out more about these on page 3.

### What are **Headstone Reports**?

These provide details of what is inscribed on an individual's headstone. The main purpose of these reports was to help manage the enormous programme of headstone production and engraving embarked by CWGC during the world wars.

### What are **Grave Registration Reports (GRRs)**?

These forms detail the graves we are responsible for within a particular burial site. Each grave is listed by Plot, Row and Grave number. These reports often provide basic details of the individual such as their name, service number, rank, regiment, unit and date of their death, when known to us.

### What are **Concentration Reports**?

These record details of individuals who were originally buried in smaller or isolated cemeteries, but who, at a later date, were exhumed and reburied in 'concentrated' war cemeteries. This enabled CWGC to fully commemorate and look after otherwise unmaintainable graves.

Further down on your search page you can find more details about the cemetery where the person you are looking for is buried, or the memorial upon which they are commemorated.



#### Did you know...?

The CWGC maintains more than 200 memorials across the globe. These record nearly 700,000 names of those who have no known grave, were buried at sea or cremated

#### BURIED AT

##### LIJSSETHOEK MILITARY CEMETERY

West-Vlaanderen  
Belgium

Number of casualties: 10786

[View cemetery details](#)



## Step 2: Exploring additional resources to find out more about the individual



You need to check if there are any the Enquiry Files held by the **CWGC Archives** <http://archive.cwgc.org>. These contain correspondence between the family of those killed and the Commission. Only a small number of these files still survive.

Enquiry Files cover a range of subjects, including:

- Attempts to locate a missing individual
- Requests for the remains of a casualty to be returned to the country they came from, known as the 'repatriation of remains'
- The addition of a personal inscription to a CWGC headstone
- Requests for a photograph of a grave
- Issues about the maintenance or upkeep of a grave
- The exhumation and reburial of a casualty
- The return of wooden crosses to families



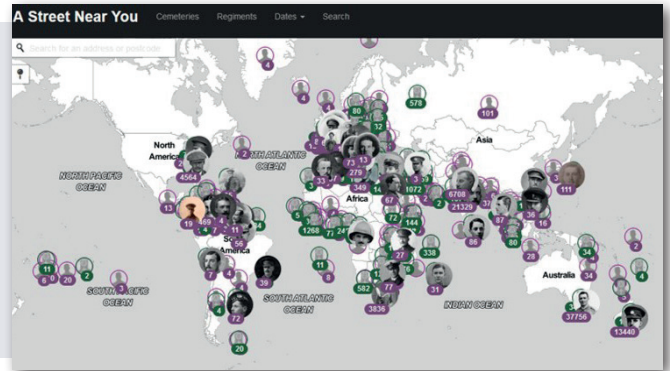
#### Did you know...?

The Imperial War Graves Commission was founded in 1917. Before that, an army unit, Directorate of Graves Registration and Enquiries (DGRE) began the work of recording details of those who had died

## Step 3: Searching for additional information online

**A Street Near You** uses maps to locate where those who died in the First World War originally came from and where they are now commemorated. You can search by lots of different terms so see what you can discover. It also provides links to other archives.

<https://astreetnearyou.org>



The **South Africa War Graves Project** has a database of all those who died during the First World War, incorporating photos of graves and memorials, as well as some personal information about the casualties.

<https://www.southafricawargraves.org/research.htm>

The **South African Military History** website contains a list of Southern Africans who served in the Royal Flying Corps, Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Air Force during the First World War.

<http://samilitaryhistory.org/ross/birdmen1.html>

### The South African Military History Society

#### Die Suid-Afrikaanse Krygshistoriese Vereniging

**Southern Africa's Birdmen of World War One, 1914-1919**  
**A List of Southern Africans in the Royal Flying Corps, Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Air Force**



The **IWMs Lives of the First World War** website is a memorial to those who served in the First World War. Enter the name and service number of the person you are searching for to get the best results. Many stories were added during the First World War Centenary. You might even find a photo!

<https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/>



## Step 4: Share their story on For Evermore

**For Evermore: Stories of the Fallen** is our new online resource to collect and share the stories of the men and women CWGC commemorates. If your research reveals more about the person than CWGC already knows, please add your person's story to our growing digital stories archive where it will live for evermore.

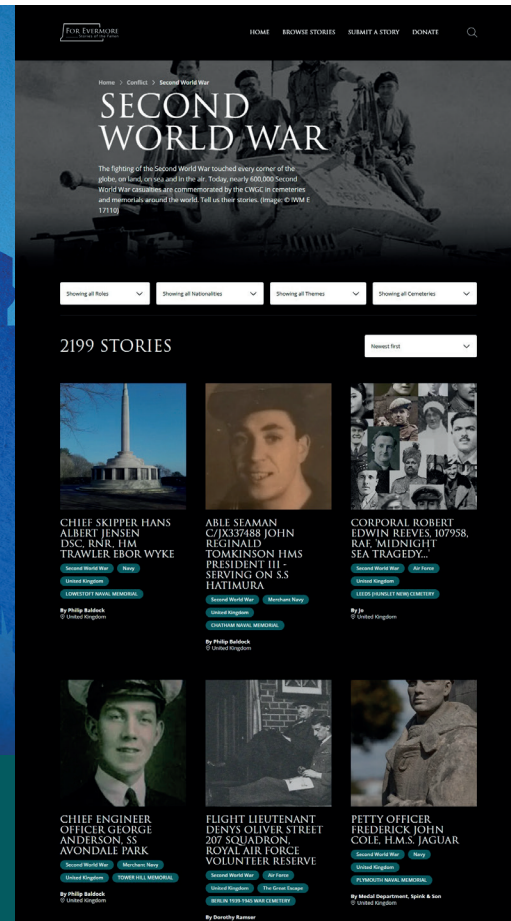
Has someone already shared something about the person you're researching?

Maybe another person from their battalion, ship, squadron, cemetery or memorial has a story?

Need inspiration before writing up your own story to share?

Visit <https://www.cwgc.org/stories/>

# EVERY STORY FOR EVERMORE



The screenshot displays the 'For Evermore' website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: HOME, BROWSE STORIES, SUBMIT A STORY, and DONATE. A search icon is also present. Below the navigation bar, a large banner features the title 'SECOND WORLD WAR' in a bold, serif font. Underneath the banner, a paragraph reads: 'The fighting of the Second World War touched every corner of the globe, on land, on sea and in the air. Today, nearly 800,000 Second World War Servicemen are commemorated by our CWGC in cemeteries and memorials around the world. Tell us these stories. (Image: © IWM F 12119)'. Below this text are four filter buttons: 'Showing all Roles', 'Showing all Nationalities', 'Showing all Themes', and 'Showing all Cemeteries'. The main content area is titled '2199 STORIES' and includes a 'Nearest first' dropdown menu. Below this, there are three story cards. The first card features a photograph of a ship and the text: 'CHIEF SKIPPER HANS ALBERT JENSEN DSC, RNR, HM TRAWLER EBOR WYKE'. The second card features a portrait of a man and the text: 'ABLE SEAMAN C/X337488 JOHN REGINALD TOMKINSON HMS PRESIDENT III - SERVING ON S.S. HATIMURA'. The third card features a collage of portraits and the text: 'CORPORAL ROBERT EDWIN REEVES 107958, RAF, MIDNIGHT SEA TRAGEDY'. Each card includes a 'Read Story' button and a 'Submit Story' button. At the bottom of the page, there are more story cards, including one for 'CHIEF ENGINEER OFFICER GEORGE ANDERSON, SS AVONDALE PARK' and another for 'FLIGHT LIEUTENANT DENYS OLIVER STREET 207 SQUADRON, ROYAL AIR FORCE VOLUNTEER RESERVE'. The page also includes a footer with the text 'By Philip Batech' and '© United Kingdom'.