

OUR WAR GRAVES YOUR HISTORY

CARDIFF (CATHAYS) CEMETERY

This beautiful Victorian cemetery was opened in 1859 and has been extended to cover over 100 acres. The Cemetery contains war graves of both the world wars and has the most CWGC war graves in Wales. Just over a third of the First World War burials are contained in a CWGC plot in the location of Section EB, this plot is on two converging roadways. The remainder of the graves are scattered in other parts of the Cemetery. After the First World War, a Cross of Sacrifice was erected in front of the plot in the angle formed by the junction of the two roadways, the whole forming a triangle island site.

The Second World War burials are scattered throughout the Cemetery in more than 30 different sections. A number of them are airmen who came from Royal Air Force stations at Cardiff and St Athan. There are now nearly 500, First World War and over 200 Second World War casualties commemorated at this site. Some 40 French and Norwegian nationals are also commemorated here.

Key CWGC features to look out for:

In the CWGC Plot you will notice a number of private memorials. These were often paid for and erected with funds raised by their comrades. Although not Commission Headstones, these will remain in place until such time as the inscription is no longer legible at which time a CWGC headstone will be placed over the grave.



Points of interest...

Commemorations: **697**
First World War: **469**
Second World War: **228**

Casualties from the following nations;

Australia
Canada
Czechoslovakia
France
Ireland
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
UK

Things to look out for...

Sergeant **Frank Hilery Phillips**, whose headstone includes details of how he was mentioned in despatches at the Battle of Loos (Grave EH. 2060)

Norwegian War Graves in Sections EG and EJ

An aboriginal Canadian – **Stephen Tomer** (Section EB)

Discovering CWGC graves at Cardiff (Cathays) Cemetery



A third of the First World War burials are located in Section EB, where the iconic CWGC Cross of Sacrifice, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, was erected after the war. The remainder are scattered throughout the cemetery, in both the Old and New Cemeteries.

1 The CWGC Plot

The tour is in two parts. The first part is for the 'New cemetery' accessed from Allensbank Road.

There are 170 burials in the CWGC Plot in the New Cemetery. Amongst the first to be buried in this plot is **Private John Y. Laing**, a regular Scottish soldier who had joined the Black Watch in January 1913. He had fought with the army in France before being wounded and evacuated to the UK, where he died of his wounds in the King Edward VII Hospital in Cardiff. The Glasgow Herald of 23 November 1914 reported 'Private John Laing of the Black Watch, who belongs to Creetown, Kirkcudbright, has succumbed to injuries in Cardiff hospital. He was in several engagements and received dangerous bayonet wounds.' He is buried in Grave EB.1A.

Buried nearby are two 'boy' soldiers who were both 17 when they died. **Stanley Helyer**, from Theodora Road, Roath died in April 1915 while serving with the 2nd Welsh Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. (Grave EB.13). **Lewington Davis** (pictured) from London, Ontario. He had served in France since April 1916 and was a marksman and sniper. 'Lew' has been wounded in France in November 1916 on the Somme, suffering a gun-shot wound which had fractured his leg. He was evacuated to the UK where he died of his injuries in December 1916, two weeks before his 18th birthday. (Grave EB.46). In Grave EB.106 is one of the oldest soldiers buried in this plot, 60-year-old **Joseph Lowry** of the Royal Defence Corps, a veteran of the Egypt Campaign of 1882-89.

Also buried in the CWGC plot is **Stephen Tomer**, a Maliseet First Nation Canadian. He served in France with the Canadian Army Veterinary Corps. He became seriously ill in 1917 and died at Albany Road Military Hospital in 1918. (Grave EB.57)



Lewington Davis



Stephen Tomer

2 Armistice Day 1918

In Section EF, is the grave of **Private Charles Henry Russ**. Charles was the husband of Edith Russ of Pen-y-Peel Street, Canton, Cardiff. He was called up in May 1916, having previously worked at a boot binding works. He served with the 16th Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment but does not appear to have served overseas. He died at Windy Knowle Military Hospital on 11 November 1918 – Armistice Day.

3 Scattered Graves

In Sections EG, EH and EK are several interesting 'scattered' CWGC headstones. In Section EG, there are number of Norwegian Merchant Sailors graves. These distinct granite headstones mark the graves of a number of men who died during air raids on Cardiff or when their ships were attacked. Amongst them is 77-year-old **Ole Toresius Pedersen** killed on the worst night of the Cardiff Blitz on 2 January 1941 at the sailor's home near the docks. (Grave EG.215)

In Section EH is the grave of **Serjeant Frank Hilery Phillips** of the Welsh Guards. He had served in France since August 1915 and fought with distinction at the Battle of Loos. He died of wounds at a military hospital at Blean in Kent in March 1916. His headstone is interesting in that the personal inscription details how he was mentioned in despatches at the Battle of Loos in 1915 for rescuing a wounded officer. (Grave EH.2060)

In Section EK is the grave of a Czech RAF airman – **Sergeant Jaroslav Kulhavý** (pictured). A flight engineer with 311 (Czech) Squadron, he was part of Coastal Command flying patrols in B24 Liberator aircraft. He died when the aircraft he was flying in crashed on a training flight, killing all on board. (Grave EK.2970)



Sergeant Jaroslav Kulhavý

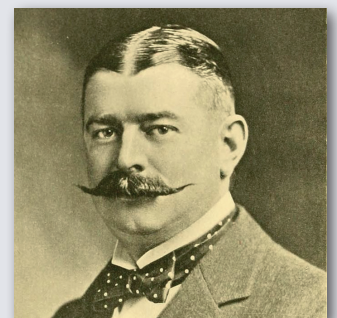
4 Civilian War Dead

In Section EJ, is the **Civilian Blitz Memorial**. During the Second World War, the War Graves Commission was tasked with maintaining a record of all civilians who died as a result of enemy action. The Civilian Roll of Honour is held at Westminster Abbey. Among those named are all the Cardiff Blitz dead, including **Terence and Flora O'Brien** of 62 Neville Street, Canton. They died on 2 January 1941, the worst night of the Cardiff Blitz, along with their children, Maureen (3) and Terence (2). Another family to be killed during the Cardiff Blitz were **Phillip and Emily Palmer** and eight of their children, who were killed at their home, 19 Wyevern Road, Cathays on 30 April 1941 when their Anderson shelter received a direct hit. The Palmer family grave is in Section EP, Grave 90.

The tour now moves to the Old Cemetery. This part of the cemetery is accessed from Fair oak Road.

5 The Old Cemetery

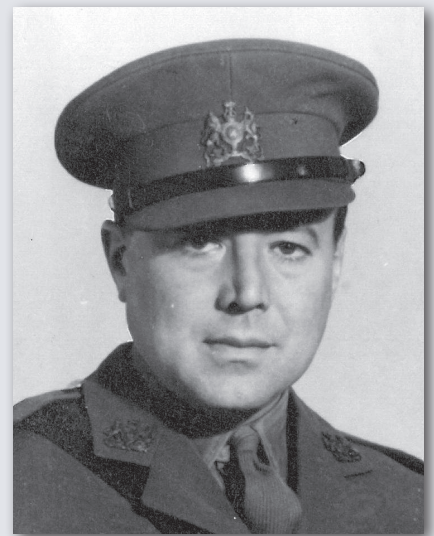
In Section L, you will find the private grave of **William Tatem** (pictured) – a civilian killed in a bombing raid on Weston-Super-Mare in June 1942. William Tatem, was better known as **Lord Glanely** and was a well-known shipping owner and later a race horse owner. He was generous in his support of worthy causes in South Wales including Amgueddfa Cymru (National Museum Wales) and Cardiff University.



William Tatem

6 An SOE agent

Major Jacques Vaillant de Guellis (pictured) was born in Cardiff of French parents. During the Second World War he was a member of the Special Operations Executive – a secret organisation formed to encourage resistance and sabotage in Nazi-occupied Europe. In 1941, he was parachuted into France to begin setting up resistance networks and training agents. He was awarded the MBE for his work. A further mission in 1943 was to Corsica where he supported the uprising which saw German troops leave the island. A further mission in France after D Day in 1944 led to him being awarded the Military Cross. Towards the end of the war he led a mission to liberate agents from German concentration camps. He was seriously injured in a 'possibly suspicious' motor accident in Germany in 1945. He was evacuated to the UK where he died of his injuries in August 1945. (Grave I.22E.)



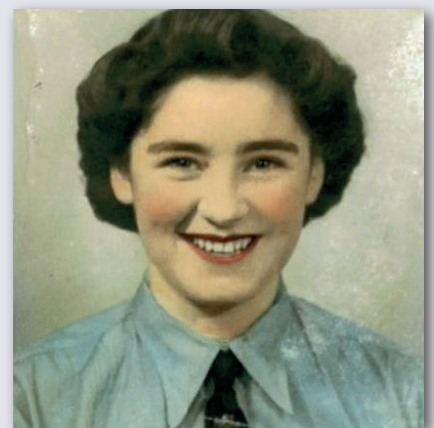
Major Jacques Vaillant de Guellis

7 An 'Australian' War Worker

In Section A (Grave A.1729), there is the grave of an 'Australian War Worker' **William Arnos Thomas** who died on 6 November 1917. Born in Aberdare, William was a coal miner before he enlisted into the Welch Regiment in 1915. He served at home until taken ill with bronchitis in September 1915. He was later discharged as 'unfit for General service' in July 1916. After this, William enlisted into an Imperial scheme which provided war workers to the British government but died in service at 3rd Western General Hospital in November 1917.

8 Women at War

Lastly, in Section O is the grave of 17-year-old Aircraftwoman 1st Class **Barbara Sarah Watkin Williams** (pictured), Women's Auxiliary Air Force. She is one of eight service women buried in the cemetery. Born in Cardiff, she had enlisted in 1939 at the age of 16. She was serving at an RAF station in Lincolnshire when she was killed in a collision between two cars in the black out in June 1940. She is buried in Grave O.1107.



Barbara Sarah Watkin Williams