

Memorials and Memories- Exploring WWII's Impact on Wales



Introduction

This article documents the gradual journey and evolution of my research projects. Initially unplanned, these projects emerged in response to various circumstances, leading one to another in a serendipitous manner. The starting point was the Llandry Church Cemetery Project, which set the stage for the subsequent endeavours. Here, I will outline the progression and development of these projects, illustrating how each one unfolded and contributed to the next.

Llandry Church Project.

Llandry Church initially was to document my family memorials at the church cemetery on the Find a Grave site for record. But while there, I came across some war memorials dedicated to fallen servicemen, which prompted me to research and document their history. These are the ones I initially looked at and my entry in the project.

Memorials

One particularly weathered memorial, cloaked in layers of lichen and moss, caught my attention. Armed with a specialized cleaner, I dedicated myself to revealing its hidden inscription.

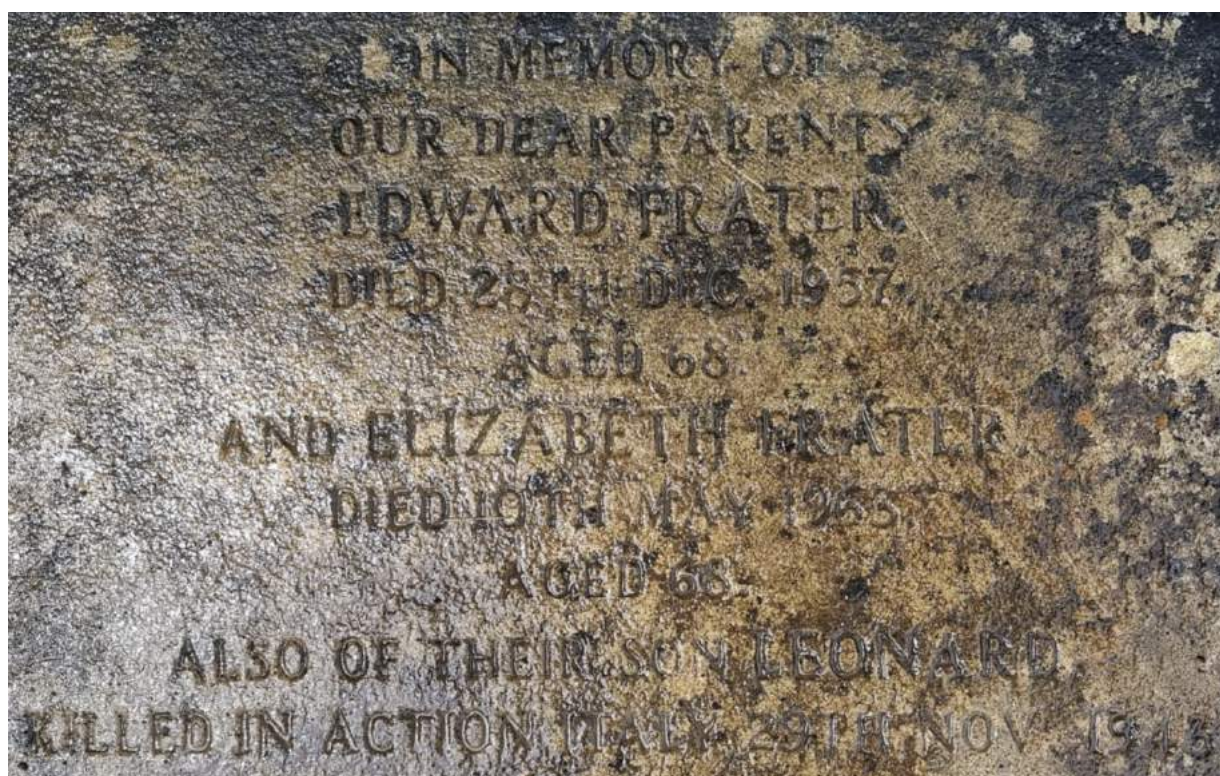
After meticulous efforts, Edward, and Elizabeth

Frater's memorial (Plot PW-C8) names emerged. Their stories, intertwined with the history of this place, stand as a testament to the power of perseverance. and the enduring spirit of remembrance, humbled to discover the location of his burial in Italy.

I felt compelled to preserve this important connection between Edward, Elizabeth, and their beloved son, Leonard, on Findagrave. It seemed fitting to pay tribute to their memory and ensure that others could also find solace in their story.

It is from this inscription I found on their memorial stone led me on a journey of discovery to find out who their son Leonard Frater was who was killed in action in Italy on 19th November 1943. This is what I found and his memorial in Italy.

Leonard Frater, Fusilier, 14200801, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers



IN MEMORY OF
OUR DEAR PARENTS
EDWARD FRATER
DIED 29TH DEC 1957
AGED 68.
AND ELIZABETH FRATER
DIED 10TH MAY 1963
AGED 68
ALSO, OF THEIR SON LEONARD
KILLED IN ACTION ITALY 29TH NOV 1943

From the poignant inscription I uncovered on their memorial stone, a new chapter of discovery unfolded before me – one that would lead me to Leonard Frater, the son of Edward and Elizabeth Frater. Leonard's story, intertwined with the indelible mark of sacrifice, stirred my curiosity. The name etched onto

that stone held within it a tale of courage and duty that resonated through time.

Leonard Frater, a Fusilier bearing the service number 14200801, stood among the ranks of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers' 6th Battalion. As history unfolded, this battalion played a role in the sweeping North African campaign and later became part of the forces that ventured into Italy, a land embroiled in war. It was amidst these unforgiving battlegrounds that Leonard's fate was sealed. On the 29th of November 1943, during a daring assault on a ridge that cast its shadow over the Sangro River, tragedy struck. Artillery fire, an indiscriminate messenger of destruction, claimed Leonard's life at the tender age of 20. His youth belied the weight of the responsibilities he bore and the courage he exhibited.

Leonard found his final resting place in the Sangro River War Cemetery in Italy, a solemn testament to the countless lives altered by the tumultuous events of that time. The inscription on his gravestone captures the essence of his sacrifice – a fusilier in the ranks of The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, cut down on the 29th of November 1943 at the age of 20.

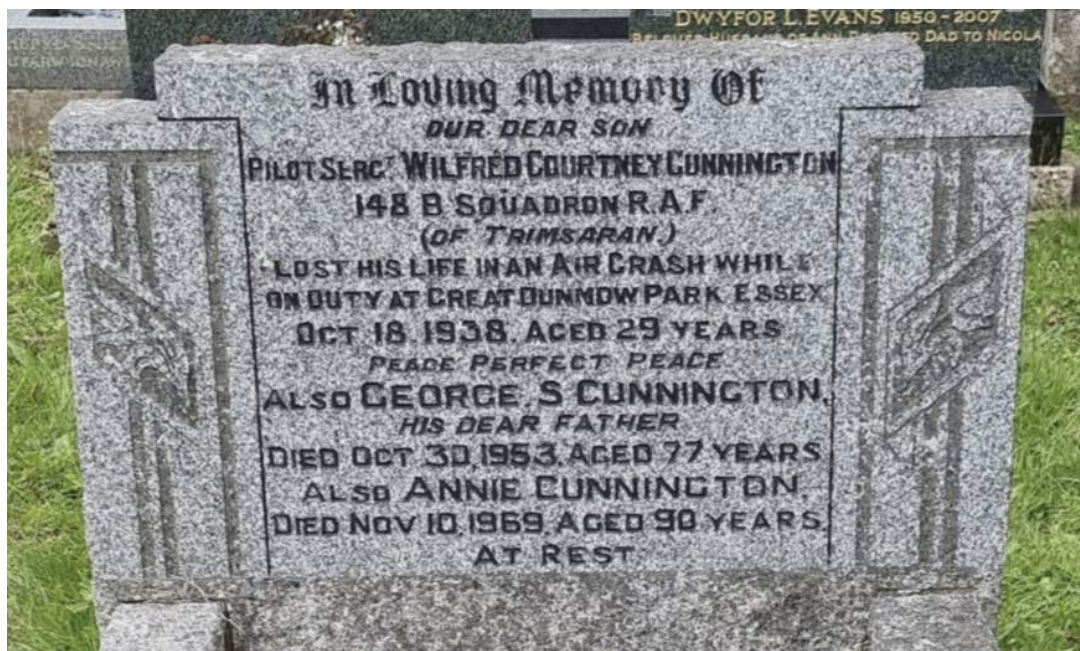


Each letter etched into the stone becomes a thread connecting the past to the present, and the sacrifice of a young life to the enduring memory of those who fought for freedom.

As we stand before Leonard's memorial, I'm reminded of the intricate tapestry of history, woven from the threads of countless lives like his. Each name represents a story, a family, and a legacy. Leonard's legacy is one of bravery and selflessness, a reminder that the echoes of war are not just dates and battles, but the lives of individuals who should never be forgotten. With each day more family history is discovered before I came onto the grave of George & Annie Cunnington with an inscription that mention their son Wilfred Courtney Cunnington with the mention on the headstone of his fate in the World War II.

As the days unfold, the tapestry of family history continues to reveal its intricate threads, each thread representing a story waiting to be told. And in this journey of discovery, I stumbled upon the grave of George and Annie Cunnington (Plot PN-J4), bearing an inscription that spoke of their beloved son, Pilot Sergeant Wilfred Courtney Cunnington, whose fate was intertwined with the tumultuous times of World War II.

Pilot Sergeant Wilfred Courtney Cunnington,



"In Loving Memory of OUR DEAR SON PILOT SERG WILFRED COURTNEY CUNNINGTON 148 B SQUADRON RAF (OF TRIMSARAN) LOST HIS LIFE IN AN AIR CRASH WHILE ON DUTY AT GREAT DUNNOW PARK ESSEX OCT 18, 1938, AGED 29 YEARS PEACE PERFECT PEACE"

Driven by the desire to uncover the story behind this brave soul, I delved into the annals of history. The narrative that unfolded painted a picture of dedication and tragedy. Pilot Sergeant Wilfred Courtney Cunnington, a member of the esteemed

148 Squadron of the RAF, found himself in the cockpit of a Vickers Wellesley Mk. I, identified by the serial number K7716.



Tragedy struck on the 18th of October 1938, as two aircraft, including Wilfred's Wellesley K7716, met in a devastating mid-air collision. The other aircraft involved, Wellesley K7714, was also from the same 148 Squadron. The collision occurred over the skies of Great Dunmow, Essex. In an instant, lives were forever altered, and the fate of those aboard the ill-fated K7716 was sealed.

The crew of K7716 included:

- Sgt Reginald Prosser (aged 24)
-
- Sgt Wilfred Courtney Cunnington (aged 29)
- <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/257664361/wilfred-courtney-cunnington>
-
- Act Sgt James Crane Irwin (aged 31)
- <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152134048/james-crane-irwin>

All three valiant individuals lost their lives that day, their spirits forever imprinted on the pages of history. Their sacrifices stand as a testament to the risks and challenges faced by those who took to the skies in service of their nation.

Wilfred Courtney Cunnington, a Pilot Sergeant who had embarked on his duties with bravery and determination, now rests in eternal peace, his memory enshrined in the hearts of those who remember. His age, 29, is a stark reminder of the youthfulness that war often claimed, a poignant reminder that every life cut short was a world of potential and dreams.

As I stand before his memorial, I reflect on the profound impact that a few lines of text can have, capturing the essence of a life and its untimely end. Wilfred's story joins the tapestry of history, a thread woven with the threads of countless others who made the ultimate sacrifice for a greater cause. Their legacy lives on, as does the gratitude of generations who will never forget their sacrifice.

With each passing day, the journey through history brings new chapters to light, unveiling stories that have weathered the sands of time. Among the markers of remembrance, the memorial headstone of Nathaniel and Eliza Hancock (Plot PN-K8) stood as a silent testament to a family's enduring love and sacrifice, with an inscription that echoed through the years:

Griffith Lloyd, Private, 307171, Lancashire Fusiliers.



"PEACE IN LOVING MEMORY OF NATHANIEL HANCOCK DIED JAN. 8. 1937 AGED 59 YEARS. EVER IN OUR THOUGHTS, ALSO HIS DEAR WIFE ELIZA HANCOCK DIED SEPT. 23, 1955: AGED 76 ALSO OF THEIR SON RICHARD GEORGE HANCOCK B.S.M.-RA DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE 1939-1945 EVER REMEMBERED"

This inscription held a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by this family during a time of global turmoil. The mention of their son, Richard George Hancock, who

died on active service, ignited a spark of curiosity, driving me to uncover more about his story.

And so, the journey of discovery led me to the remarkable story of Warrant Officer Class II (Battery Serjeant-Major) Richard George Hancock. His service, marked by dedication and courage, unfolded against the backdrop of World War II. Tragically, his life was cut short on the 14th of November 1942, in the sands of Egypt, amidst the fierce battles of El Alamein.

The scroll that commemorates his sacrifice reads: "This scroll commemorates Battery Serjeant-Major R. G. Hancock, Royal Regiment of Artillery, held in honour as one who served King and Country in the world war of 1939-1945 and gave his life to save mankind from tyranny. May his sacrifice help to bring the peace and freedom for which he died."

Richard George Hancock's role in the struggle against tyranny is a testament to his bravery and selflessness. He stands as a symbol of all those who served, whose sacrifices paved the path to a better future. The battles he fought were not just on distant lands; they were the embodiment of a collective effort to preserve freedom and humanity.

As I reflect on his story, I am reminded of the interconnectedness of history and how the lives of individuals intertwine with the greater narrative. The inscription on the headstone and the scroll of commemoration stands as a bridge between the past and the present, ensuring that Richard George Hancock's memory endures, and his sacrifice continues to inspire. May his legacy be a beacon of hope, reminding us of the price paid for the peace and freedom we hold dear.

I chanced upon an inconspicuous headstone, Plot (PF-C6), which soon revealed itself to be a poignant memorial that held a deeper narrative.

Griffith Lloyd, Private, 307171, Lancashire Fusiliers.

This solemn inscription piqued my curiosity, prompting me to delve further into the story of Pryce Lloyd's cherished son, Griffith. It became evident that Griffith was not laid to rest here, and my curiosity drove me to uncover more details. As I delved deeper, this is what I uncovered.

Griffith Lloyd, the cherished son of Pryce and Ellen Lloyd. A life intertwined with the land, both Griffith and his father served as Gamekeepers at Trimsaran, residing at the Keeper's Lodge before the world was plunged into conflict.



Answering the call of duty, Griffith enlisted in Kidwelly, joining the ranks of the 2/8th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers. This valiant unit was affiliated with the 197 Brigade, a crucial part of the 66th (2nd East Lancs.) Division. Their journey led them to the Western Front, a theatre of sacrifice and valour, which they reached by the 16th of March 1917. From there, they ventured to the shores of Flanders.

As the seasons shifted, September of 1917 found them stationed in Ypres, where they steadfastly participated in the harrowing Battle of Poelcapelle. With determination, they then marched southward to the Somme, a name etched in history. On the fateful 21st of March 1918, the tumultuous tempest of the German Spring Offensive swept upon them at the Battle of St Quentin. Undaunted, they held their ground, and in the subsequent westward movement, they engaged in the Actions at the Somme Crossings—a chapter where destiny would unfold for Griffith.

In the crucible of battle, Griffith sustained wounds that would ultimately claim his life. Aged just 28, he passed away on the 28th of March 1918. His final resting place is Namps-Au-Val British Cemetery, France—an eternal abode where his bravery and sacrifice remain forever enshrined.

In humble tribute, we honour Griffith Lloyd, his unwavering courage, and the legacy he bestowed upon history. May his memory be a beacon of inspiration for generations to come.

Trimsaran War Memorials

Using the information gathered in my research, I began creating a map that charts the burial locations and the places where individuals fell during the two World Wars.



<https://tinyurl.com/TWM-MAP>

"Remembering the Valour and Sacrifice of Trimsaran in Two World Wars"

The village of Trimsaran, in the Gwendraeth Valley, bore witness to the profound impact of both World Wars on its sons. The coal mining industry, integral to the village's history, reached its zenith with the onset of the Great War. The exploits of heroic men from Trimsaran are eternally commemorated on the village War Memorial, housed within the former Miners Welfare Hall, a testament to the sacrifices made in the pursuit of freedom.

I would also like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of the West Wales War Memorial Project in preserving the memory of individuals like the men listed below.

The Great War, 1914-1918:

Sidney Cobb, Private, 2219, Leicestershire Yeomanry: Sidney Cobb, born in Stevenage, hailed from a family entrenched in a life connected to nature, with his father working as a Gamekeeper. By 1911, the family had moved to Duvant, eventually settling in Keeper's Lodge, Trimsaran during the war. Sidney enlisted at Melton Mowbray into the 1/1st Battalion, Leicestershire Yeomanry. In May 1915, he joined his battalion in France, attached to the 7th Cavalry Brigade, 3rd Cavalry Division. The Battle of Loos marked Sidney's entry into the harrowing theatre of war, and tragically, on January 21, 1916, amidst the cold of the

Loos sector, Sidney laid down his life at the age of 30. His sacrifice is commemorated on the Loos Memorial in France, although his name is absent from the Trimsaran Memorial.

Samuel Ivor Dunn, Private, 32486, Devonshire Regiment: Born in Trimaran in 1900, Samuel Ivor Dunn was the son of Charles and Elizabeth Ann Dunn. The family later moved to Sheffield, where Samuel's father took up work as a labourer in a Steelwork's. Enlisting at Sheffield into the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, Samuel was subsequently transferred to the 5th Battalion, Devonshire Regiment, part of the 185 Brigade, 62nd (2nd West Riding) Division. His journey on the Western Front saw him involved in various operations, including the Battle of Arras and the Battle of Cambrai. Samuel met his end during the Battle of the Canal Du Nord on September 27, 1918, at the tender age of 18. His final resting place is in Lowrie Cemetery, Havrincourt, France, and like Sidney Cobb, Samuel's name is not inscribed on the Trimsaran Memorial.

Ivor Emanuel, Lance Corporal, 275, Welsh Guards:

Ivor Emanuel, a native of Trimsaran, epitomized the spirit of sacrifice that coursed through the veins of the village. Born to John and Mary Emanuel, Ivor married Prudence P. Richards in 1915, creating a foundation of love that would sustain him through the turbulent times ahead. Enlisting initially with the Grenadier Guards at Llanelli, he later transferred to the newly formed Welsh Guards on February 26, 1915.

The 1st Battalion of the Welsh Guards, to which Ivor belonged, landed at Havre on August 18, 1915. Attached to the 3rd Guards Brigade, Guards Division, this unit made history as it was formed in France in the same month. The baptism by fire for Ivor and his comrades came during the Battle of Loos on September 25, 1915, a pivotal engagement in the Great War. Tragically, just two days later, on September 27, 1915, Ivor Emanuel paid the ultimate

price for his courage, losing his life at the tender age of 23. His sacrifice is eternally commemorated on the Loos Memorial in France, a poignant reminder of the cost of freedom.

Charles Harries, Private, 17003, Royal Welsh Fusiliers:

Charles Harries, hailing from Rosehill, Waunyclyn, Trimsaran, demonstrated a resilience that transcended physical setbacks. The son of David and Elizabeth Harries, Charles first attempted to join the South Wales Borderers in September 1914. However, a seemingly mundane obstacle—lack of teeth—led to his discharge within three weeks. Undeterred, Charles displayed unwavering determination, promptly re-enlisting, this time with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

Posted to France on February 2, 1915, Charles joined the 1st Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, attached to the 22 Brigade, 7th Division in Flanders. His first taste of major action occurred in March 1915 at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, followed by engagements at Aubers Ridge and Festubert in May. Tragically, during the Battle of Festubert on May 21, 1915, Charles Harries fell in action at the age of 27. His memory lives on, commemorated on

the Le Touret Memorial, Richebourg L'Avoue, France, a testament to his bravery and the sacrifices made by the men of Trimsaran in the pursuit of a better world.

Charles Harries, Private, 17003, Royal Welsh Fusiliers:

Charles Harries' story is a testament to his unyielding spirit and determination. Born to David and Elizabeth Harries of Rosehill, Waunyclyn, Trimsaran, Charles initially attempted to join the South Wales Borderers, enlisting on September 2, 1914. However, fate dealt him an unexpected setback, as within three weeks, he was discharged due to being deemed physically unfit for service—his lack of teeth cited as the reason.

Undeterred by this initial setback, Charles exemplified resilience by promptly re-enlisting, this time with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Posted to France on February 2, 1915, he became a part of the 1st Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, attached to the 22 Brigade, 7th Division in Flanders. Charles faced his first major action in March 1915 at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, followed by engagements at the Battle of Aubers Ridge and Festubert in May. Tragically, during the Battle of Festubert on May 21, 1915, Charles Harries lost his life in the line of duty at the age of 27. His memory endures, commemorated on the Le Touret Memorial, Richebourg L'Avoue, France, a lasting tribute to his courage and sacrifice.

Griffith Lloyd, Private, 307171, Lancashire Fusiliers:

Griffith Lloyd's journey from Cileen, Flint, to the battlefields of World War I paints a picture of dedication and service. Born to Pryce and Ellen Lloyd, Griffith and his father served as Gamekeepers at Trimsaran, residing at the Keeper's Lodge prior to the war. Enlisting at Kidwelly into the 2/8th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers, attached to the 197 Brigade, 66th (2nd East Lancs.) Division, Griffith embarked on a path marked by duty and sacrifice.

The division moved to the Western Front by March 16, 1917, and subsequently to the Flanders Coast. In September 1917, they participated in the Battle of Poelcapelle near Ypres before moving south to the Somme. The German Spring Offensive of March 21, 1918, found the division engaged in the Battle of St Quentin, followed by actions at the Somme Crossings. It was during these intense encounters that Griffith sustained wounds.

Tragically, Griffith Lloyd succumbed to his wounds on March 28, 1918, at the age of 28. His final resting place is Namps-Au-Val British Cemetery in France, a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made by the men of Trimsaran in the crucible of war. Griffith's legacy lives on as a symbol of the resilience and courage exhibited by those who answered the call of duty during challenging times.

John Elias Morris, Private, 80265, Welsh Regiment:

In the annals of Trimsaran's sacrifice, John Elias Morris stands as a poignant example of the toll exacted by the Great War. Born to David and Mary Morris of Bryn Golen, Waun-y-clyn, Trimsaran, the Morris family had their roots in Kidwelly before the war's upheavals. John enlisted at Carmarthen into the Monmouth Regiment, later joining the 14th Battalion, Welsh Regiment, part of the revered 38th (Welsh) Division.

This division had already etched its mark in history, having been in France since December 1915, fighting at Mametz Wood in 1916 and Ypres in 1917. By late 1918, John found himself on the front lines, joining his comrades as they pushed across the River Acre in the great offensive of August 21, 1918. The ensuing days witnessed the relentless rollback of German lines, marking a pivotal phase in the war. The division's journey continued towards the Hindenburg Line, engaging in battles like Havrincourt, Epehy, and the breach of the Canal du Nord.

During the Battle of the Sambre, John Elias Morris, at just 19 years old, suffered wounds that would prove fatal. His brave spirit succumbed to the harsh realities of war on November 10, 1918, just a day before the Armistice. He found his final resting place in Caudry British Cemetery, France, a silent witness to the sacrifices made by a generation.

William Leslie Shenton, Acting Sergeant, 18731, Royal Welsh Fusiliers:

William Leslie Shenton's journey began far from Trimsaran, in Luton, Bedfordshire, in 1899. By 1911, he had found a home at Brickmakers Cottage, Trimsaran, under the care of his uncle and Aunt, William, and Mary Smith. Enlisting at Kidwelly into the 16th Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, attached to the 38th (Welsh) Division, William embarked on a path that led him to the front lines of the Western Front.

The division had made its mark at Mametz Wood and endured the brutalities of war. William's story took a tragic turn on July 31, 1917, during the Battle of Pilckem Ridge. His sacrifice is forever commemorated on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial in Belgium, a testament to the enduring memory of those who gave their lives for a cause greater than

themselves. William Leslie Shenton, an acting sergeant, left an indelible mark on the pages of Trimsaran's history, a brave soul forever remembered in the echoes of sacrifice.

William Bowen, Fusilier:

This soldier's identity remains shrouded in mystery, a poignant reminder of the countless unnamed heroes who served and sacrificed during times of conflict. The absence of specific details underscores the challenge of piecing together the stories of those who gave their all for the greater good.

Phillip Clarke, Private:

The lack of identifiable information leaves a void in the narrative of Private Phillip Clarke. His story, like many others, is lost to the passage of time, a poignant symbol of the sacrifices made by countless individuals whose names may remain unknown but whose contributions are forever etched in the collective memory of the nation.

William George Cunnington, Sergeant (Pilot), 740754, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve:

William George Cunnington's tale unfolds against the backdrop of the skies during World War II. Serving as a Sergeant (Pilot) with 607 Squadron, his journey began in the early stages of the conflict, flying Hawker Hurricanes over France during the Battle of France and later in

the Battle of Britain. Transferring to 261 Squadron, dedicated to the defence of Malta, William faced the perils of aerial combat.

His final mission, on November 16, 1940, ended with his failure to return, marking him as one of the fallen. Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey, William George Cunnington's sacrifice is a testament to the courage and valour exhibited by the airmen who fought to protect freedom in the skies.

William Dennis Dixon, Sergeant (Air Gunner), 1835971, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve:

The skies of World War II claimed another hero in the form of Sergeant William Dennis Dixon. Serving as an air gunner with 50 Squadron, Royal Air Force, he flew aboard the Avro Lancaster III during a mission over Mailly-le-Camp. Shot down on May 3, 1944, the Lancaster, bearing the serial number LM480, crashed near St. Mesmin.

Among the seven men who lost their lives in the crash, William was buried alongside his comrades in St. Mesmin New Communal Cemetery, France. His story, intertwined with the horrors of war, reflects the sacrifices made by the aircrew who faced the dangers of the night skies.

William Samuel Gwyn Edwards, Gunner, 933179, Royal Artillery:

Gunner William Samuel Gwyn Edwards, son of Thomas and Lily Edwards of Trimsaran, served with the 9th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, part of the 20th Indian Division.

Deployed to Assam, Burma, and Indo China, the division distinguished itself during the Defence of the Imphal plain in the spring and summer of 1944.

On June 11, 1944, William lost his life in the service of his country. Buried in Imphal War Cemetery, India, his sacrifice remains unacknowledged on the Trimsaran Memorial, highlighting the often-overlooked contributions of those who served in distant theatres of war.

Victor Emanuel, Sergeant, 563099, Royal Air Force:

Victor Emanuel's story intertwines with family legacy and sacrifice. Born to Thomas and Florence Emily Elizabeth Emanuel of Myneddygarreg, Victor's father, a Royal Marines veteran of World War I, witnessed the horrors of conflict. Tragically, Victor's uncle, Ivor Emanuel, fell at Loos in 1915. The echoes of service and sacrifice reverberated through the family.

Victor himself married Eileen Muriel Hages in Wiltshire in 1938 while stationed locally with the Royal Air Force. As war loomed, he served with 61 Squadron, RAF, a bomber squadron equipped with the Handley Page Hampden. The squadron participated in historic events, including the first bombing raid on a German land target, striking Hornum on March 19, 1940.

On April 15, 1940, Victor, part of the crew of Hampden Mk1, Serial L4113, embarked on a mission to lay mines in the Elbe estuary. Tragically, the aircraft failed to return, and Victor, along with his fellow crewmen, was presumed lost at sea. Commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey, Victor Emanuel's sacrifice, though not locally acknowledged, is etched in the history of those who served in the RAF during the tumultuous days of World War II.

Keri Evans, Lance Corporal, 23343324, Royal Military Police:

Keri Evans, born on August 6, 1934, was the son of Alwyn and Katherine M. Evans of Maesybryn, Trimsaran. Serving as a Lance Corporal with the Royal Military Police, Keri met a tragic end in a motor accident in Germany on June 20, 1958. His Jeep crash claimed his life, and at the age of 23, Keri was laid to rest in Sardis Congregational Chapel yard, a solemn return to his Welsh roots.

Richard Lewis Evans, Fusilier, 4197438, Royal Welch Fusiliers:

Richard Lewis Evans, son of James and Hannah Evans of Kidwelly, served with the 1st Battalion, Royal Welch Fusiliers. The battalion played a pivotal role in the Dunkirk evacuation in May 1940 before being dispatched to the Far East, participating in campaigns in India and Burma.

On May 5, 1944, in the heart of the Burma campaign, Richard lost his life at the age of 26. His final resting place is the Kohima War Cemetery in Burma, a poignant tribute to his

sacrifice in a theatre of war far from home. Richard Lewis Evans, like so many others, remains eternally remembered for his service and commitment in the defence of freedom.

Russell Fokes, Rifleman, 5338931, Rifle Brigade:

Russell Fokes, born on January 7, 1918, to Stanley Theodore Fokes and Florence Fokes (nee Lewis) of Trimaran, embarked on a journey that would take him far from his Welsh home. Working as a tin shearer in Slough prior to the war, he enlisted soon after its outbreak. Russell became a Rifleman in the 1st Battalion, Rifle Brigade, a unit with a rich history and a key role in various campaigns.

The battalion underwent significant transformations, participating in the North African Campaign and the invasion of Italy before being recalled to England in January 1944 for preparations leading to the Normandy Landings. Russell landed on the Normandy beaches on June 6, 1944, part of the battalion engaged in breaking out from the beachhead. His life was cut short during heavy fighting near Falaise on July 29, 1944. Originally buried in Mondeville, he was later reinterred in Ranville War Cemetery, France. Russell Fokes, at 26 years old, stands as a symbol of sacrifice in the fight for liberation.

Leonard Frater, Fusilier, 14200801, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers:

Leonard Frater, a Fusilier with the 6th Battalion, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, played his part in the North African campaign and the invasion of Italy. His life met a tragic end on November

29, 1943, during an assault on a ridge overlooking the Sangro River. At just 20 years old, Leonard was laid to rest in Sangro River War Cemetery, Italy, a poignant testament to the sacrifices made during the Italian campaign.

Osmond Glyndwr Guest, Rifleman, 4208565, Cameronians:

Osmond Glyndwr Guest, a Rifleman with the 1st Battalion, Cameronians, became part of the legendary Chindits, a force that played a crucial role in taking the fight to the Japanese in Burma. His service in the Far East included the defence of India. Tragically, Osmond's life was cut short in India on June 17, 1943, at the young age of 20. He found his final resting place in Kirkee War Cemetery, India, a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made in the theatre of war far from home.

John James Hurley, Private, 33298, Welch Regiment:

John James Hurley's life unfolded amidst the trials of war and personal loss. Born on April 9, 1899, and adopted by Ada Thompson after the death of his widowed mother, he served during the Great War. After marrying Susan Booth in 1920, they made their home in Trimaran, where John worked as a builder's labourer. Likely a member of the Territorial Army, he re-enlisted into the Welch Regiment soon after the outbreak of World War II.

Tragically, John died on active service in Cheshire on December 9, 1941, at the age of 44. He was laid to rest in Chester (Overleigh) Cemetery, alongside his wife Susan, who had passed away in Llanelli in 1940 at the age of 37. Despite his service and sacrifice, John James Hurley is not commemorated on the Trimaran War Memorial, a poignant reminder of the personal toll war exacts on individuals and their families.

Joseph Vincent Hutchings, Captain, 184115, Somerset Light Infantry:

Captain Joseph Vincent Hutchings, son of William and Miriam Hutchings of Cloverdale, Trimsaran, served with the Somerset Light Infantry. His life was dedicated to the service of his country, and he paid the ultimate sacrifice on June 9, 1944, at the age of 32. Captain Hutchings found his final resting place in Trimaran (Sardis) Independent Chapel yard, a hallowed ground where the community honours his memory and the sacrifices made by local heroes.

Evan Esmond James, Craftsman, 23338702, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers:

Evan Esmond James, born on July 27, 1936, served with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. Tragically, on May 1, 1957, Evan was one of 35 people on board a Vickers Viking aircraft at Blackbushe Airport destined for Libya. The aircraft encountered engine failure on take-off and crashed while attempting to land. Evan, just 20 years old, lost his life in the accident. His body was brought home and laid to rest at Tabernacle Chapel Trimsaran. The crash was attributed, possibly harshly, to the failure of the pilot to maintain a safe altitude following the engine failure.

Oliver Jones, Private, 3963311, Welch Regiment:

Oliver Jones, son of William and Margaret Jones, and husband of Gladwen Jones of Burry Port, served with the 4th Battalion, Welch Regiment, the Carmarthenshire Territorial Battalion. He tragically lost his life at sea during training on July 2, 1940, at the age of 36. Oliver is commemorated on the Brookwood Memorial in Surrey, a solemn tribute to those lost during wartime training.

William John Lloyd, Able Seaman, C/JX 198531, Royal Navy:

Aboard H.M.S. Curacoa, a Ceres group C-class light cruiser, William John Lloyd served with the Royal Navy during World War II. Tragically, on October 2, 1942, while escorting the RMS Queen Mary, the cruiser was involved in a collision, leading to its sinking and the loss of over 200 lives. William, aged 25, is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial in Kent.

Alun Rees, Sergeant, 1316996, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve:

Serving with 9 Squadron, Royal Air Force, Alun Rees, son of Thomas John and Lily Rees of Trimaran, was a Sergeant in a heavy bomber squadron equipped with the Avro Lancaster I. He lost his life during a raid on January 14, 1943, at the age of 19. Alun is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey.

Robert Charles Santley, Flight Sergeant, 566738, Royal Air Force:

Born in 1917, Robert Charles Santley served as a pilot with 253 Squadron, Royal Air Force. Engaging in the Battle of Britain and convoy patrols, he was tragically killed on August 27, 1942. Robert is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey.

Bernard William Susans, Fusilier, 3970325, Royal Welch Fusiliers:

Bernard William Susans, son of Bertram and Valentine Ada Beatrice Susans, served with the 1st Battalion, Royal Welch Fusiliers. Engaged in the Battle of Kohima, he lost his life on May 28, 1944, at the age of 21. Bernard is commemorated on the Rangoon Memorial in Myanmar. His sacrifice is remembered as part of the global struggle against the Axis powers during World War II.

Rees Owen Thomas, Private, 3971772, Welch Regiment:

Rees Owen Thomas, son of William and Margaretta Thomas, hailed from Trimaran and served with the 2nd Battalion, Welch Regiment. Engaged in the Burma campaign, Rees lost his life in India on April 30, 1941, at the age of 28. His final resting place is in Kirkee War Cemetery, India, a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made during the global conflict.

Evan Gethin John Williams, Greaser, Merchant Navy:

Evan Gethin John Williams, son of William and Elizabeth Williams, served in the Merchant Navy aboard the M.V. Tower Grange. Unfortunately, on November 18, 1942, the ship fell victim to a German submarine, U-154, torpedoed and sunk about 200 miles East of

Cayenne. Evan, a mere 16 years old, was among the six men lost in the sinking. His memory lives on at the Tower Hill Memorial in London.

Ivor Verdon Willyeo, Sapper, 2074896, Royal Engineers:

Ivor Verdon Willyeo, born in 1916, was the son of James Edwin Willyeo and Lavinia Willyeo (nee Curtis). In 1940, he married Phyllis Gwenllian Calford of Brynawel, Trimaran. Ivor, a bomb disposal expert with 10 Bomb Disposal Company, Royal Engineers, lost his life in action at Barrow-in-Furness on March 10, 1944, likely while carrying out bomb disposal work. The remains of the 27-year-old were laid to rest in St. John's Churchyard, Skewen. His widow, Phyllis, sadly passed away in 1946, also at the age of 27. Although not named on the Trimaran Memorial, Ivor's service and sacrifice are remembered.

I decided to create a Virtual Cemetery for the Trimsaran district on Findagrave. During this process, I delved into the history of each memorial, discovering that several were connected to my family. This article compiles the results of my research.

<https://tinyurl.com/Trimsaran-War-Memorials>

Kidwelly Memorials

In completing the Trimsaran Memorials project, I felt it was only fitting to document all the servicemen memorialised there. To ensure their stories are preserved and easily accessible, I compiled a Virtual Cemetery for them on Findagrave.

<https://tinyurl.com/Kidwelly-War-Memorials>

The next chapter in this journey began when I met Seimon Pugh Jones, a historian with a mobile Military Museum. I assisted him with a display at the Parc-y-Bocs Centre in Kidwelly.



It was here that I learned about three ongoing projects: the RAF Polish 316 Squadron Memorial, the Dafen War Memorial Llanelli project, and the Penrhyn Farm Martin B-26 Marauder Plane Crash of 1943.

I decided to help document the servicemen involved to honour their memory. I made a separate listing for the Polish Squadron members who were laid to rest at St. Illtyd Church in Pembrey, as they were stationed at the Pembrey Airfield during WWII. Additionally, I researched the other War Memorials located there.

Penrhyn Farm Martin B-26 Marauder Plane Crash 1943

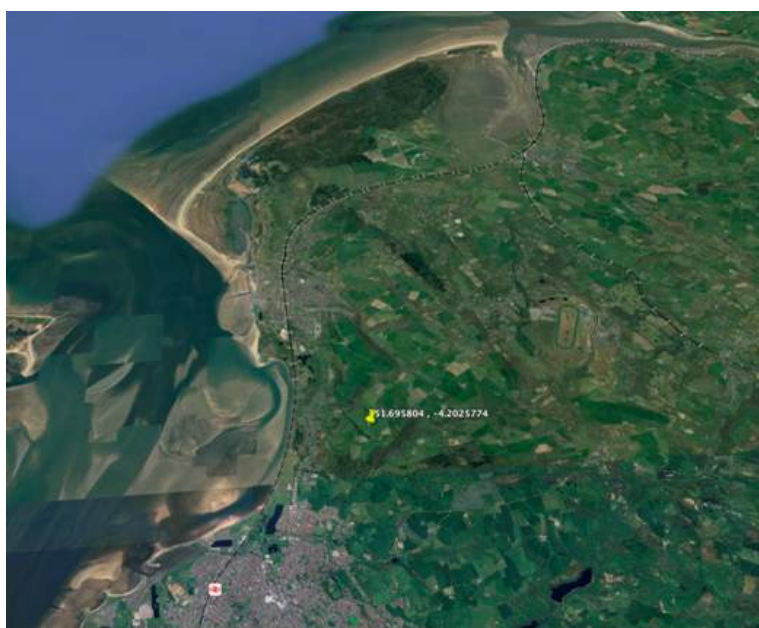
The aircraft named MI LAINE was caught in thick fog on 4 June 1943 and was descending to find a place to land. It flew into a hay barn at Penrhyn Farm at Pwll, near Llanelli, and exploded. The report compiled on the incident noted that the B-26 was on a squadron transfer flight from Port Lyautey, Morocco, to St Eval when it crashed three miles southeast of RAF Pembrey at 16:15 hours. The plane was assigned to VIII AFBC, 322nd Bomb Group, 449th Bomb Squadron.



The weather ceiling and visibility were both zero, with a solid overcast and light rain. Investigators summarized the cause of the loss as an instrument let-down over hills with clouds in unfamiliar territory, with no radio or blind approach facilities available.

The aircraft was flying level at quite a high speed when it hit a tree with its left engine, then struck a hayrick with its right engine, glanced off a bank, shed the left outboard wing panel and the left horizontal stabilizer, and dropped over a second bank on the other side of the field, dropping the left engine near the bank. It then crashed in the centre of the field, bursting into flames.

The path of the main parts of the plane could be clearly followed. None of the control pedestal could be found to allow a check of the control positions.



The recommendations from the investigation included the following:

1. Flight approval should be given by Combined Control at Gloucester.
2. All aircraft should be provided with maps of the UK and Ireland with all airfields and landing strips marked on them.
3. Flights should only take off in very good weather if they are relying on the lead aircraft with the only radio operators and navigators on board.

Three of the aircrew were identified from their identity disks, and the fourth was identified from papers he was carrying.

The crew members who perished were:

- **Lt John Reiss**, Pilot
- **Lt Eugene Carby**, Navigator
- **Sgt Raymond Shoemaker**, Engineer
- **Lt William Shoop**, Passenger

Lieutenant John Reiss, Pilot

Name: Lieutenant John Reiss **Hometown:** Corpus Christi, Nueces County, Texas **Date of Birth:** 1920

Date of Enlistment: January 19, 1942

Place of Enlistment: Houston, Texas

Service Branch: U.S. Army Air Forces

Service Number: O-664658

Unit: 449th Bomber Squadron, 322nd Bomber Group, Medium

Aircraft: Martin B-26 Marauder, named "Mi Laine"

Last Mission: June 4, 1943, Penrhyn Farm, Pwll, Wales

Lieutenant John Reiss was born in 1920 in Corpus Christi, Nueces County, Texas. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces on January 19, 1942, in Houston, Texas, demonstrating a commitment to serve his country during a time of global conflict.

As a member of the 449th Bomber Squadron, 322nd Bomber Group, Medium, Lieutenant Reiss served as a crew member on the Martin B-26 Marauder medium bomber, an aircraft known for its speed and heavy armament. His plane, named "Mi Laine," was part of the U.S. Eighth Air Force, which played a crucial role in the Allied bombing campaigns over Europe during World War II.

On June 4, 1943, during a transfer flight from Port Lyautey, Morocco, to St Eval, the B-26 Marauder encountered severe weather conditions and thick fog. While attempting to find a place to land, the aircraft tragically crash-landed at Penrhyn Farm, Pwll, near Llanelli, Wales. The crash resulted in the loss of all crew members on board, including Lieutenant John Reiss.

Lieutenant Reiss's service and sacrifice are remembered as a part of the broader efforts of the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II. His bravery and dedication to duty exemplify the courage of those who served in the most challenging circumstances.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56293661/john-w-reiss>

Lieutenant Eugene Manning Carby, Navigator

Name: Lieutenant Eugene Manning Carby

Role: Navigator

Date of Birth: 1922

Service Branch: U.S. Army Air Forces

Unit: 449th Bomber Squadron, 322nd Bomber Group, 9th Air Force **Aircraft:** Martin B-26 Marauder, named "Mi Laine"

Last Mission: June 4, 1943, near RAF Pembrey, Wales

Lieutenant Eugene Manning Carby was born in 1922 and served as a navigator on the Martin B-26 Marauder medium bombers with the 449th Bomber Squadron, 322nd Bomber Group, 9th Air Force. The B-26 Marauder, known for its speed and heavy armament, played a significant role in the U.S. Eighth Air Force's bombing campaigns over Europe during World War II.

On June 4, 1943, during a squadron transfer flight from Port Lyautey, Morocco, to St Eval, the B-26 Marauder, carrying Lieutenant Carby, encountered severe weather conditions and thick fog. The aircraft, named "Mi Laine," was navigating through these challenging conditions when it tragically crashed three miles southeast of RAF Pembrey, near Penrhyn Farm, Pwll, Wales. The crash resulted in the loss of all crew members on board.

Lieutenant Carby's service and sacrifice are honoured as part of the collective efforts of the U.S. Army Air Forces during the war. His role as a navigator was crucial in ensuring the success of numerous missions, and his bravery in the face of adversity exemplifies the courage and dedication of those who served during World War II.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/202854355/eugene-manning-carby>

Technical Sergeant Raymond John Shoemaker

Name: Technical Sergeant Raymond John Shoemaker

Date of Birth: August 17, 1913

Place of Birth: Mertztown, Berks County, Pennsylvania, USA

Service Branch: U.S. Army Air Forces

Unit: 449th Bomb Squadron, 322nd Bombardment Group

Aircraft: Martin B-26 Marauder, named "Mi Laine"

Date of Death: June 4, 1943 (aged 29) **Place of Death:** Wales

Technical Sergeant Raymond John Shoemaker was born on August 17, 1913, in Mertztown, Berks County, Pennsylvania. He served with the 449th Bomb Squadron, 322nd Bombardment Group, of the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II.

On June 4, 1943, Sergeant Shoemaker was a crew member on a Martin B-26 Marauder medium bomber, named "Mi Laine," which was on a squadron transfer flight from Port Lyautey, Morocco, to St Eval. The aircraft, part of the U.S. Eighth Air Force, encountered severe weather conditions and thick fog. While attempting to find a place to land, the B-26 tragically crashed three miles southeast of RAF Pembrey, near Penrhyn Farm, Pwll, Wales. The crash resulted in the loss of all crew members on board, including Sergeant Shoemaker.

Sergeant Shoemaker's dedication and service are remembered as part of the broader efforts of the U.S. Army Air Forces during the war. His role and sacrifice, along with his fellow crew members, are honoured for their contributions to the Allied war effort and their bravery in the face of adversity.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/40704568/raymond-john-shoemaker>

This tragic event highlights the significant dangers faced by WWII aircrews, especially under adverse weather conditions and with limited navigation aids. The sacrifices made by these servicemen are a poignant reminder of the perils of wartime aviation.

Martin B-26 Marauder

In 1939, the Martin B-26 Marauder was built in parallel with the North American B-25 Mitchell. However, while the B-25 was known for its docile handling, the B-26 was quite the opposite. Built for speed, the B-26 was a highly strung and unforgiving airplane that required the most experienced pilots to handle it effectively. It had the highest wing loading of any American World War II airplane at 56 lbs/ft²—40% higher than that of the B-25. While such wing loading is now standard in the industry, World War II aircraft lacked the sophisticated automatic braking and propeller feathering systems available today, increasing the likelihood of accidents.



The B-26 was rushed into service, overloaded with equipment without a corresponding increase in power, and assigned to low-level ground attack missions for which it was not designed. It experienced engine and propeller failures beyond Martin's control, contributing to its poor reputation. Its overloaded wing made it susceptible to flak and limited its ability to sustain battle damage. The aircraft suffered badly on low-level missions, but its performance improved significantly when used as a medium-level bomber, the role it was originally designed for. After initial mechanical issues were resolved and pilots received better training, its loss rate diminished to levels comparable to other aircraft in service.

Engineer Peyton M. Magruder of the Glenn L. Martin Company designed the B-26 with a near-perfect streamlined fuselage, except for the stepped windshield. It had a shorter wing to achieve a higher maximum speed, but this came with trade-offs. The landing approach speed was much higher than most pilots were accustomed to, and the short wing reduced its durability in combat.

For unwary pilots, the B-26 could be a death-trap. Hastily entered service to meet wartime demands, it was often flown by inexperienced pilots. It earned nicknames such as the Widow Maker, the Baltimore Whore, the Flying Prostitute (because it had no visible means of support), and One a Day in Tampa Bay, the latter after 15 crashes in a single 30-day period. With a landing speed of 140 mph (225 km/h), it was too much airplane for novices to handle.

Manufacturing and Specifications of the Martin B-26 Marauder "Mi Laine"

Manufacturing:

The Martin B-26 Marauder, including the "Mi Laine," was manufactured by the Glenn L. Martin Company. The production of the B-26 Marauder began in 1941 at the Martin plant located in Middle River, Maryland. The aircraft was designed by engineer Peyton M. Magruder and was intended to be a high-speed medium bomber.

Specifications:

General Characteristics:

- **Crew:** 7 (Pilot, Co-Pilot, Navigator/Bombardier, Radio Operator, and 3 Gunners)
- **Length:** 56 ft 1 in (17.12 m)
- **Wingspan:** 71 ft 0 in (21.64 m)
- **Height:** 21 ft 6 in (6.55 m)
- **Wing Area:** 658 sq ft (61.13 m²)
- **Empty Weight:** 24,000 lb (10,886 kg)
- **Max Take-off Weight:** 37,000 lb (16,783 kg)

Performance:

- **Maximum Speed:** 282 mph (454 km/h) at 15,000 ft (4,572 m)
- **Cruising Speed:** 214 mph (344 km/h)
- **Range:** 1,150 miles (1,850 km)
- **Service Ceiling:** 21,700 ft (6,615 m)
- **Rate of Climb:** 2,130 ft/min (10.8 m/s) **Powerplant:**

- **Engines:** 2 × Pratt & Whitney R-2800-5 Double Wasp 18-cylinder radial engines
- **Power Output:** 1,850 hp (1,379 kW) each **Armament:**

- **Guns:**

- o 12 × .50 in (12.7 mm) Browning M2 machine guns
- o Nose turret: 2 guns.
- o Dorsal turret: 2 guns.
- o Tail turret: 2 guns
- o Waist positions: 2 guns each side
- o Forward-firing in the nose: 2 guns

- **Bomb Load:** Up to 4,000 lb (1,814 kg) of bombs

Design Features:

- **High Wing Loading:** The B-26 had a high wing loading of 56 lb/ft², which required careful handling, especially during take-off and landing.
- **Streamlined Fuselage:** Designed for speed, the B-26 had a streamlined fuselage, contributing to its high maximum speed.
- **Short Wingspan:** The shorter wingspan allowed for higher speeds but required higher landing speeds, making it more challenging to fly.

Operational Use: The B-26 Marauder was primarily used in medium-level bombing missions. It faced initial challenges with mechanical reliability and a reputation for being difficult to fly. However, once these issues were addressed and pilot training improved, the B-26 proved to be an effective and reliable bomber with a lower loss rate compared to other aircraft.

The "Mi Laine," like other B-26 Marauders, was part of the U.S. Eighth Air Force's efforts during World War II, contributing to strategic bombing campaigns in Europe. Despite its initial teething problems, the B-26 Marauder earned a respectable place in aviation history for its performance and versatility in combat.

Martin Marauder's Last Mission By Fred Lyne March 1988

In early January 1943, world powers met at Casablanca, North Africa, to discuss ways of ending World War II. The main discussion centred on the proposed strategic bombing of Germany and occupied Europe. A combined bomber offensive, involving Bomber Command and the United States 8th Air Force, was created to conduct a series of raids aimed at the heart of the Third Reich. Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris believed that area bombing of war-torn Europe would bring about an early end to the war by targeting German industries and demoralizing the German people.

Bomber Harris's primary concern was the shortage of aircraft, especially bombers, and trained crews. After the Italians and Germans were cleared from North Africa, surplus aircraft became available, making their deployment to other theatres of war immediately important. RAF Pembrey was expecting the arrival of aircraft from North Africa. One such aircraft was a Martin B-26B Marauder medium bomber being ferried in by a crew of four. Normally, a Marauder would have a complement of seven: two pilots, one navigator, one radio operator, three gunners, and one flight engineer. However, this aircraft had only three officers and one staff sergeant, all American.

The B-26B Marauder was a sizable aircraft, with a wingspan of 71 feet and a length of 58 feet 3 inches. It was powered by two Wright radial engines, capable of producing a top speed of 282 mph and a range of 1,150 miles at 214 mph.

The weather at RAF Pembrey was poor, with the mountain range enveloped in a thick, wet mist. Visual navigation from 500 feet was difficult. Ground control at RAF Pembrey made radio contact with the aircraft sometime between 1400 and 1500 hours (2:00 pm - 3:00 pm). At this time, the aircraft was flying on an east-southeast course somewhere above the A484 road from Trimsaran to Llanelli.

Receiving the new course over the radio, the aircraft banked to starboard, bringing it dangerously low and directly over Penrhyn Farm. Penrhyn Farm, on June 4, 1943, was managed by Mr. and Mrs. Griffith Bonnell, along with their son Hugh and daughter Katie. Preparations were underway for afternoon milking when the drone of the aircraft turned into a frightening nightmare. Katie (now Mrs. Evnon) recalls the event vividly over forty-four years later:

"The weather was very bad; it was foggy and wet. We had just started our milking when there was this terrific crashing noise. I rushed out from the milking shed to see what had happened. The first thing I noticed was that the hay shed had been completely demolished, with its railway girder frame uprooted, badly twisted, and in places sheared by the forceful impact of a crashing aircraft."

Seeing three dead crew members, Mrs. Bonnell assumed that was the total, but the following day a fourth crew member was found further in the field behind a hedge.

At this time, Hugh pedalled down to Pwll Police Station to report the accident. Later, just after the crash, Katie noticed the fields were littered with aircraft parts, emergency food rations, towels, suitcases, clothes, and among other things, a yellow rubber dinghy. The aircraft had completely disintegrated on impact, with its grisly remains spread not only over Penrhyn Farm property but also that of Barclay Farm. One of the engines had careered on and came to rest close to Pant Farm, some 300 yards from the point of impact.

Within the hour, the area was attended by crash tenders and other services of the RAF, including civil police, ambulances, and local fire rangers. RAF personnel stayed at Penrhyn Farm, using an outbuilding from which they conducted their investigation into the crash. When the RAF completed their investigation in June 1943, the aircraft remains were removed and the area restored. The dead crew were conveyed to Cambridge, and it is believed from there to the United States. Two years later, the American government sent compensation to Mr. and Mrs. Bonnell for the damage caused to their property.

Receiving permission from the farmers concerned, I visited the site of the crash to see the area first-hand. Viewing the hay shed, which had been rebuilt, and the high bank and hedge where the Marauder had made its impact all those years ago, one would never have guessed that anything had ever happened there. Inspection with the help of a metal detector showed that a considerable amount of metal remained in the ground. The crash of the aircraft had carried pieces of the fuselage in the intended direction of travel, scattering its broken assemblies over several fields.

Through the bare soil of a stubble field protruded a stainless-steel hose clamp with the maker's name, "Witten Mfg Co., Chicago, USA." Further on and closer to the hedge, exposed pieces of plexiglass glinted in the sun. Ammunition of various calibres, some of which had exploded on impact, came to light. The bases of these brass shells displayed letters and numbers: "RA41," meaning made by the Remington Arms Company, USA, 1941; "DM43," Des Moines Plant, USA, 1943; and "SL42," St. Louis Ordnance Plant, USA, 1942. This ammunition, along with .30 calibre rounds, was used in the aircraft's machine guns. The .45 calibre ammunition was for the personal arms that most American air crews carried. Other items found included instrument dials, one displaying instructions on how to increase and decrease the RPM of an engine's propellers, another from an onboard camera made by "Universal Camera Corp., New York, USA, 1942."

Just below the surface in another field were two brass uniform buckles, some engine spark plugs torn from engines as they careered across the fields, including some unused spark plugs still in their protective plastic covers, probably carried as spares. A small parachute, a socket set, a bomb, an Elgin chronoscope minus its glass and hands, and many other items were also found.

Future farming generations in this area may wonder about the metal pieces that the plough turns up, not knowing about the World War II plane crash or the airmen who came from afar only to die on a lonely Welsh mountaintop.

Today, Penrhyn Farm is managed by Mr. R. Evans and his son Wyn. Barclay Farm is owned and managed by Mr. and Mrs. B. Samuel of Ty-Gwyn Farm. Pant was farmed during the war years by Mr. Jack Evans, now retired and living in Pwll-Llanelli.

The Polish Fighter Squadron 316 Memorial Project

The Polish Fighter Squadron 316 project is a tribute to the 316 "City of Warsaw" Polish Fighter Squadron, honouring the bravery and sacrifices of the Polish pilots who fought for the Allies during World War II. Formed on February 15, 1941, at RAF Pembrey in Wales, the squadron was initially equipped with Hurricanes and later transitioned to Spitfires and Mustangs.

The 316 Squadron played a significant role in defensive and offensive operations. Initially, they conducted defensive patrols over southwest England, then later engaged in sweeps over northern France. By October 1941, they had upgraded to Spitfires and relocated to RAF Northolt. Throughout the war, they participated in numerous critical missions, including fighter-bomber and escort missions, and operated against V-1 flying bombs along the South coast.

The project, spearheaded by enthusiasts and historians, aims to compile, and preserve detailed information about the squadron and its personnel. Over the past fifteen years, the project has been collecting and archiving various documents, photographs, and personal accounts, gradually piecing together the squadron's comprehensive history, particularly focusing on its activities during the spring of 1941.

History of No. 316 Squadron

No. 316 "City of Warsaw" Polish Fighter Squadron (Polish: 316 Dywizjon Myśliwski "Warszawski") was formed in Great Britain as part of an agreement between the Polish Government in Exile and the United Kingdom in 1941. This squadron was one of several Polish fighter squadrons that fought alongside the Royal Air Force during World War II, highlighting the strong collaboration between the Polish forces in exile and the British military.

Formation and Early Operations:

- February 15, 1941:

The squadron was established at RAF Pembrey in Wales, initially equipped with Hawker Hurricanes. The Polish pilots, many of whom had escaped from Nazi-occupied Europe, were tasked with defensive duties over southwest England.

• Initial Equipment:

Flying Hurricane fighters, they defended against potential Luftwaffe attacks, protecting key installations and civilian areas.

Transition to Offensive Operations:

- Mid-1941:

The squadron upgraded to Hurricane IIs and began offensive sweeps over northern France, engaging enemy aircraft and disrupting German operations.

- October 1941:

Transitioning to the more advanced Supermarine Spitfires, No.316 Squadron moved to RAF Northolt. This move marked the beginning of their participation in more aggressive offensive missions over occupied Europe.

Further Developments and Relocations:

- July 1942:

The squadron was transferred to Yorkshire, continuing offensive operations from the north of England.

- March 1943:

Returning to southern England, they resumed intensive offensive operations, contributing significantly to the air war effort over Europe.

Final War Years:

- April 1944:

Equipped with North American P-51 Mustangs, the squadron relocated to East Anglia. The Mustangs, known for their long range and versatility, allowed the squadron to conduct crucial fighter-bomber and escort missions in preparation for the D-Day landings.

- July 1944:

Redeployed to the South coast, No. 316 Squadron countered the threat of V-1 flying bombs, intercepting these early cruise missiles before they could reach their targets.

- October 1944 –

End of War: The squadron resumed escort duties, protecting Allied bombers on raids deep into Germany and occupied Europe until the war's end.

Disbandment:

- December 11, 1946: After a distinguished service record, No. 316 Squadron was disbanded. The squadron's Polish airmen, through their bravery and skill, made substantial contributions to the Allied victory in Europe.

Legacy and Recognition

The history of No. 316 Squadron stands as a testament to the courage and dedication of Polish pilots who fought alongside the Allies during World War II. From defensive patrols over England to offensive missions across Europe, their efforts were crucial in the fight against the Axis powers. The squadron's legacy is preserved through historical projects and commemorations, ensuring their heroism is remembered.

Bohdan Anders

Bohdan Anders was born on February 27, 1918, in Poznań, Poland. With a strong sense of duty to his homeland, Anders joined the Polish Air Force, demonstrating exceptional skill and bravery. His service began in Poland, where he likely saw the early stages of World War II unfold, witnessing the invasion of his country by German forces.



After the fall of Poland, many Polish airmen, including Anders, made their way to France to continue the fight against the Axis powers. In France, Anders continued to hone his skills as a pilot, contributing to the efforts of the Allied forces. However, the rapid advance of German troops soon forced him and his fellow Polish aviators to seek refuge in Great Britain.

In Great Britain, Anders joined the Royal Air Force (RAF), which welcomed Polish pilots who had escaped the fall of their homeland. He became a member of the famed No. 303 "Tadeusz Kościuszko" Polish Fighter Squadron. This squadron gained

a legendary reputation during the Battle of Britain for its remarkable effectiveness and bravery. As part of No. 303 Squadron, Anders flew numerous sorties, defending Britain against the Luftwaffe and contributing to the eventual Allied victory in the Battle of Britain.

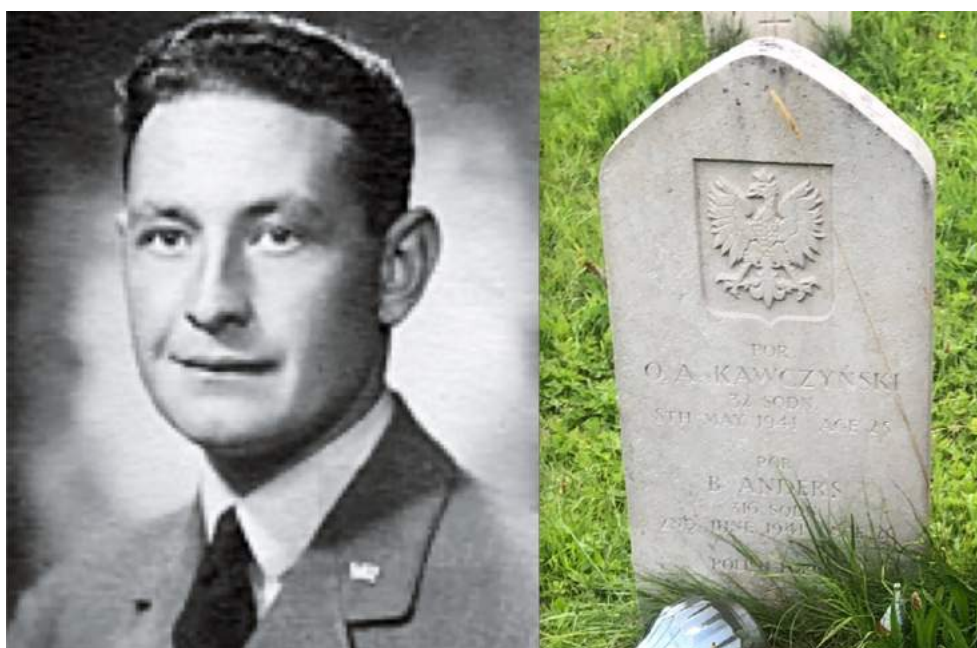
Later, Anders was transferred to No. 316 "City of Warsaw" Polish Fighter Squadron. This squadron, named to honour the capital of their occupied homeland, continued to fight valiantly in various operations over Europe. Anders' skills and dedication as a pilot were critical to the squadron's successes.

Tragically, Bohdan Anders' promising career was cut short on June 2, 1941. While flying a Miles Magister, serial R1838, from 316 Squadron, he struck a barrage balloon cable near Malpas, Newport Gwent. The collision was fatal, and Anders perished in the incident.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/228015059/bogdan-anders>

Olech Antoni Kawczyński

Olech Antoni Kawczyński was born on February 20, 1916, in Wudzyn, Poland. His early life in Poland was marked by a strong sense of duty and patriotism, leading him to join the Polish Army, where he rose to the rank of Lieutenant. With the outbreak of World War II and the subsequent invasion of Poland, Kawczyński, like many of his compatriots, found himself compelled to continue the fight beyond his homeland's borders.



After Poland's fall, Kawczyński made his way to Great Britain, where the Royal Air Force (RAF) was integrating experienced Polish pilots into its ranks. Kawczyński

joined the RAF and served with distinction as a Pilot Officer, initially with No. 32 Squadron. His skills as a pilot were critical in the defence of Britain, contributing to the efforts to thwart the Luftwaffe's relentless attacks.

Kawczyński later transferred to No. 79 Squadron, continuing his brave service in the skies. No. 79 Squadron was actively involved in various operations, and Kawczyński's role as a pilot was vital to the squadron's missions. His aircraft, a Hawker Hurricane,

was a formidable fighter that played a key role in the RAF's defensive and offensive operations.

Tragically, Olech Antoni Kawczyński's service was cut short on May 8, 1941. While on target practice over Cefn Sidan Beach, his Hawker Hurricane, Serial Z2324, crashed, resulting in his untimely death. The exact circumstances of the crash remain a poignant reminder of the perils faced by those who took to the skies in defence of freedom.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/228015273/olech-antoni-kawczynski>

Jacek Zygmund Fran Kinel.

Jacek Zygmunt Fran Kinel was born on March 28, 1924, in Bydgoszcz, Poland. Despite his young age, Kinel's early life was profoundly impacted by the onset of World War II. Driven by a strong sense of duty to his homeland, he joined the fight against the Axis powers, a decision that would lead him far from his native land.



As the war progressed, Kinel joined the Royal Air Force (RAF), a common path for many Polish airmen who had escaped the fall of Poland. His dedication and skill earned him the rank of Sergeant Pilot, and he was assigned to the 1st Air Gunnery School in Pembrey, Wales. This school was crucial in training airmen in the essential skills of aerial gunnery, which were vital for the success of bombing missions and air combat.

Tragically, Sergeant Pilot Jacek Kinel's promising career was cut short on May 8, 1944 at Cwrt Malle Farm. The specific circumstances of his death remain a sombre testament to the dangers faced by those who served in training as well as in combat. The rigorous training regimes and the ever-present risk of accidents meant that even those not on the front lines were exposed to significant peril.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/228015344/jacek-zygmund-f-kinel>

Waclaw Oyrzanowski

Waclaw Oyrzanowski was born on September 18, 1903, in Zawady, Poland. His early years were marked by a dedication to his country, which led him to join the Polish Air Force. With the outbreak of World War II and the invasion of Poland, Oyrzanowski's journey took him across Europe as he continued to serve with unwavering commitment.



Following Poland's fall, Oyrzanowski, like many Polish airmen, made his way to Great Britain. Here, he joined the Royal Air Force (RAF), where his expertise as a mechanic became invaluable. Oyrzanowski initially served with No. 302 "Poznański" Polish

Fighter Squadron, a unit renowned for its bravery and effectiveness in aerial combat. His skills were critical in maintaining the squadron's aircraft, ensuring they were always ready for their vital missions.

Oyrzanowski later transferred to No. 307 "Lwowskie Puchacze" Night Fighter Squadron, another distinguished Polish squadron within the RAF. The squadron specialized in night-time operations, defending Britain from enemy bombers under the cover of darkness. Oyrzanowski's role as a senior mechanic was crucial in keeping the squadron's planes operational and combat ready.

On June 27, 1943, while serving as a mechanic aboard a Mosquito, Serial DD644, piloted by Kaptain Roman Grzanka, Oyrzanowski was fatally wounded in a crash at Pennard on the Gower. Despite the best efforts to save him, Waclaw Oyrzanowski succumbed to his injuries the following day, June 28, 1943. This tragic incident underscores the constant dangers faced by airmen and support crews, not just in combat but also during training and operational flights.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/228015429/waclaw-oyrzanowski>

Roman Grzanka - The Legendary One-Legged Pilot

Roman Grzanka was born on February 8, 1903, in Ujma Duża, Poland. His early life was marked by a strong sense of duty and adventure, leading him to join the Polish Air Force. Grzanka quickly distinguished himself as a talented pilot, demonstrating exceptional skill and determination.



With the outbreak of World War II and the invasion of Poland, Grzanka, like many of his compatriots, continued the fight beyond his homeland. He served with distinction

in Poland, and after the fall of his country, he moved to France, where he continued to combat the Axis forces. Eventually, Grzanka found his way to Great Britain, where his experience and bravery were highly valued.

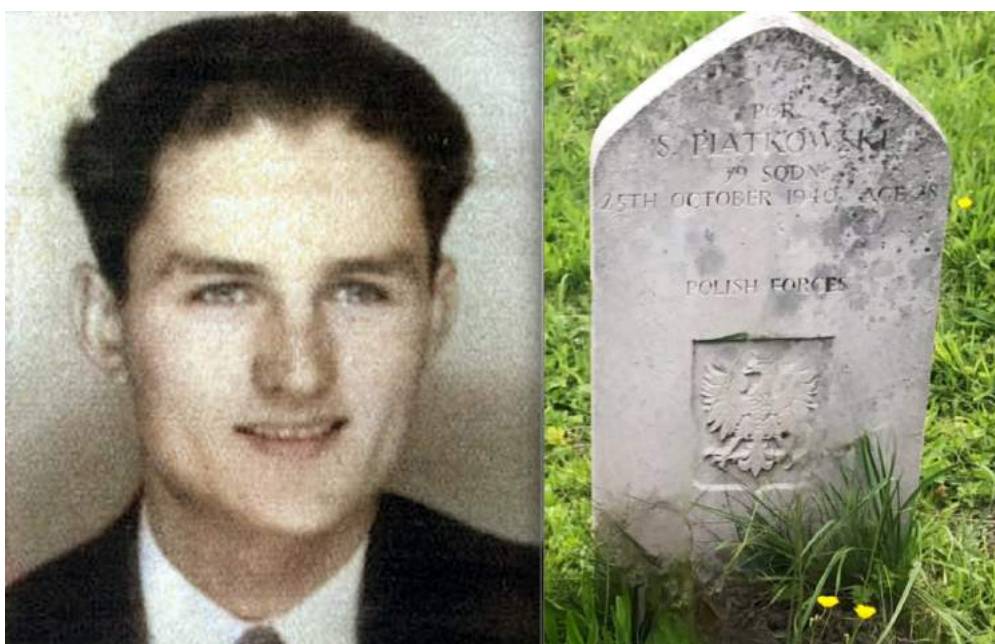
In Great Britain, Grzanka joined the Royal Air Force (RAF), where he became a member of No. 307 "Lwowskie Puchacze" Polish Night Fighter Squadron. This squadron was renowned for its effectiveness in night-time operations, defending Britain from enemy bombers under the cover of darkness. Despite losing a leg, Grzanka's determination and skill allowed him to continue flying, earning him a legendary status as a one-legged pilot.

On June 27, 1943, Grzanka was piloting a Mosquito, Serial DD644, based at RAF Fairwood Common. Tragically, the aircraft crashed at Pennard on the Gower, resulting in Grzanka's death. His co-pilot, Sergeant Mechanic Waclaw Oyrzanowski, succumbed to his injuries the following day. The loss of these brave airmen was a significant blow to their squadron and to the broader war effort.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/228015146/roman-grzanka>

Stanisław Piątkowski

Stanisław Piątkowski was born on May 1, 1912, in Jaroszówka, Poland. From a young age, Piątkowski demonstrated a strong sense of duty and a passion for aviation, leading him to join the Polish Air Force. His dedication and skill as a pilot were evident early in his career, earning him the rank of Lieutenant.



With the outbreak of World War II and the subsequent invasion of Poland, Piątkowski, like many Polish airmen, sought to continue the fight against the Axis

powers. He made his way to Great Britain, where he joined the Royal Air Force (RAF). His experience and bravery were a valuable addition to the RAF, and he was assigned to No. 79 Squadron.

No. 79 Squadron was an essential part of the RAF's efforts during the Battle of Britain. The squadron was equipped with Hawker Hurricanes, a key fighter aircraft in the defence of Britain. As a Pilot Officer in No. 79 Squadron, Piątkowski participated in numerous patrols and combat missions, contributing to the squadron's valiant efforts to repel the Luftwaffe and protect British skies.

On October 25, 1940, after a routine patrol over Linney Head, Piątkowski tragically crashed his Hurricane, Serial N2728, near Carew Cheriton. The circumstances of the crash underline the constant dangers faced by fighter pilots, both in combat and during routine operations. Piątkowski's untimely death was a significant loss to his squadron and to the broader war effort.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/227995950/stanislaw-piatkowski>

Stanislaw Waldemar Szmejl

Stan Szmejl's early life in Poland born May 6 1913 was marked by a profound sense of duty and a passion for aviation. His commitment to his country and his desire to serve led him to join the Polish Air Force, where he trained and developed his skills as a pilot.



With the outbreak of World War II and the subsequent invasion of Poland, Szmejl, like many Polish airmen, sought to continue the fight against the Axis powers. He made his way to Great Britain, where the Royal Air Force (RAF) was integrating experienced Polish pilots into its ranks. Szmejl joined the RAF and was assigned to No. 79 Squadron, a unit known for its valour and effectiveness in combat.

No. 79 Squadron played a crucial role in the defence of Britain, flying Hawker Hurricanes, one of the most important fighter aircraft of the war. As a Flying Officer (Pilot) in No. 79 Squadron, Szmejl participated in numerous patrols and combat missions. His bravery and skill were vital to the squadron's efforts to protect British skies from enemy incursions.

Tragically, Stan Szmejl's service was cut short on June 26, 1941, Flew Hurricane into cliff in bad visibility on convoy patrol at Freshwater East, Pembrokeshire. The circumstances of his death are a poignant reminder of the constant dangers faced by fighter pilots during the war. Whether in combat or training, these pilots faced significant risks, and their sacrifice was immense.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/207494665/stanislaw-waldemar-szmejl>

Leon Jan Watorowski

Leon Jan Watorowski served with distinction in the Polish Air Force during World War II, specifically with 317 Squadron. This squadron, part of the Polish Air Force in exile, played a vital role in the defense of Britain during the Battle of Britain and later participated in offensive operations across Europe.



Watorowski's duties as a pilot included escorting bombers, conducting reconnaissance missions, and engaging enemy aircraft in aerial combat. His bravery and skill in the cockpit were instrumental in the squadron's successes and in ensuring the safety of Allied forces. Tragically, he died at the age of 24 on December 8, 1944, while piloting Supermarine Spitfire LF.IX, nr. MK986. He was killed during a training flight in a mid-air collision over Port Talbot.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/228057238/leon-jan-watorowski>

Tadeusz Blach

Tadeusz Blach was born on November 20, 1915, in Warsaw Poland, he rose to the rank of Lieutenant Pilot, serving with honour in the esteemed 308 Squadron fighter pilot. 76689 PAF Age 22.



His missions were not without peril, and it was during a routine training flight in a Spitfire IIb (P8676 ZF-H) that his life was claimed. On August 9, 1941, the engine of his aircraft is believed to have stalled at low altitude, causing it to dive into the ground at Ruislip, Middlesex.

Though his final resting place is in St. Clears, his spirit soars among the clouds, forever remembered for his selfless sacrifice and unwavering devotion to duty. Tadeusz Blach remains an enduring symbol of valour and heroism, inspiring future generations to cherish the gift of freedom secured through his bravery.

The Polish Servicemen story is a poignant reminder of the contributions and sacrifices of Polish airmen who served with the RAF. Their commitment and valour were instrumental in the Allied efforts to secure victory, and their legacy continues to inspire future generations.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/164064464/tadeusz-blach>

The Dafen War Memorials

The Great War, 1914-1918

Thanks to the West Wales War Memorial Project for the following Data for their great work.

Daniel Davies, Private, 13369, Royal Welsh Fusiliers

Daniel Davies's journey through the war reflects the harsh realities faced by soldiers during World War I. Born to Thomas and Mary Davies of the Grist, Laugharne, Daniel had established a life in Llanelli before the war, where he worked for several years. His commitment to his country led him to enlist in the 8th (Service) Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, stationed in Llanelli and attached to the 40th Brigade of the 13th (Western) Division.

In July 1915, the division received orders to embark for the Gallipoli peninsula. Daniel joined the battalion as part of a reinforcement batch, arriving on Gallipoli on 15 October 1915. The campaign in Gallipoli was characterized by intense fighting in difficult terrain against determined Turkish defenders.

Following the evacuation from Gallipoli in January 1916, the 8th RWF was redeployed to Egypt before being dispatched to Mesopotamia to participate in the campaign against the Turkish army. In April 1916, Daniel and his comrades engaged in fierce combat, pushing the Turks back through key locations such as Falahiyeh, Sannaiyat, Beit Aieesa, and Abu Roman Mounds. Despite facing savage Turkish counterattacks, the battalion held its ground, demonstrating remarkable resilience and courage.

Tragically, during this period of intense fighting, Daniel fell victim to a German sniper's bullet, sustaining a serious wound to his back. He was swiftly evacuated to a hospital in India, where surgeons attempted to save his life by removing the bullet. However, despite their efforts, Daniel's injuries proved fatal, and he passed away on 10 May 1916, leaving behind a grieving wife, Malvina, and their six children.

Daniel's sacrifice and bravery are honoured and commemorated, serving as a poignant reminder of the human cost of war. Though he may have fallen far from home, his memory lives on, a testament to his courage and dedication to duty.

Herbert Ronald Evans, Acting Sergeant, C/1238, King's Royal Rifle Corps

Herbert was the son of Thomas and Elizabeth Evans of 8, Nevil's Terrace, Dafen. He was a tin worker before the war and enlisted in Llanelli into the King's Royal Rifle Corps. Herbert was later transferred to the King's African Rifles and died of sickness in East Africa on 24 April 1918. He was 30 years old and is buried at Pemba Cemetery, Mozambique.

Joseph Evans, Private, L/15904, Middlesex Regiment

Joseph, a resident of Penywaer, Dafen, made the courageous decision to enlist in the Royal Hussars, demonstrating his commitment to serve his country during World War I. His initial service with the Royal Hussars likely exposed him to the rigors of military life and provided him with training in preparation for combat.

However, Joseph's path in the military took a significant turn when he later transferred into the 1st Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. This transfer might have been influenced by various factors such as operational needs, personal preferences, or reassignment based on skills and experience. The 1st Battalion, Middlesex Regiment, was already actively engaged in the conflict by the time of Joseph's transfer.

The 1st Battalion, Middlesex Regiment, played a pivotal role in the early stages of the war, landing at Havre as part of Lines of Communication (L. of C.) Troops on 11 August 1914. As the war progressed, they underwent several reassignments and changes in divisional attachments, reflecting the dynamic nature of military operations during this period.

By 25 September 1915, Joseph found himself in the midst of the intense Battle of Loos, near Cambin. This pivotal engagement marked the opening assault of the larger Battle of Loos, a significant offensive on the Western Front. The bravery and sacrifice of soldiers like Joseph were crucial in these battles, as they fought valiantly against entrenched enemy positions and endured the hardships of trench warfare.

Tragically, Joseph lost his life in the heat of battle on that fateful day. His sacrifice is commemorated at Cambin Churchyard Extension in France, where he was laid to rest among his comrades. Despite his ultimate sacrifice, Joseph's name is not listed on the memorial, underscoring the profound impact of his loss on his family, community, and nation.

Joseph Harries, Private, 33742, Welsh Regiment

Joseph was the son of Josiah and Mary Harries, of St. David's Cottages, Incline, Dafen, Llanelli. He enlisted there into the 9th Battalion, Welsh Regiment, which was attached to the 58th Brigade, 19th (Western) Division. The Division crossed to France between 11 and 21 July 1915, moving to positions near Loos. The Division fought during the opening attack of the Battle of Loos and then moved to the Somme, where they took part in the second wave of the attack on Ovillers-La Boisselle on 1 July, capturing the village at heavy cost, and fought through the Somme Battles of Pozières and the Ancre in 1916. They then moved north to Ypres, taking part in the Battle of Messines, where Joseph was wounded. He died of wounds on 8 June 1917, aged just 20, and is buried at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium. His brothers Josiah and William also fell.

Josiah Harries, Private, 5728, Royal Warwickshire Regiment

Josiah was the son of Josiah and Mary Harries, of St. David's Cottages, Incline, Dafen. He enlisted at Llanelli into the Welsh Regiment but later transferred into the 2/7th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, which was part of the 182nd Brigade, 61st (2nd South Midland) Division. This Second Line Territorial Division was formed in January 1915, composed of the Home Service units of the associated First Line 48th (South Midland) Division. Men of the First Line who did not undertake the Imperial Service Obligation were transferred to these units. Early clothing and equipment for these men was haphazard, to say the least. Many had to train in civilian clothes, and it was only between November 1915 and March 1916 that proper equipment was received. The battalion moved to and trained in the Chelmsford area from April 1915, moving on to Salisbury Plain in January 1916. The introduction of the Military Service Act 1916 cleared the way for the Second Line units to be sent overseas, and the Division entrained for the Western Front on 21 May 1916, moving to positions at Fromelles. The first major action in which the Division was engaged turned out to be a disaster. An attack was made on 19 July 1916 at Fromelles, a subsidiary action to the much larger battle taking place further south on the Somme. The Division suffered very heavy casualties for no significant gain, and no enemy reserves were diverted from the Somme. Josiah was killed in action here on 17 July 1916, aged 24, and is buried at Laventie Military Cemetery, La Gorgue, France. His brothers Joseph and William also fell.

William John Harries, Private, 21539, South Wales Borderers

William was the son of Josiah and Mary Harries, of St. David's Cottages, Incline, Dafen, Llanelli. He enlisted into the 11th Battalion, South Wales Borderers, which was attached to the 115th Brigade, 38th (Welsh) Division. The Division had landed in France during December 1915 and spent their first winter in the trenches near Armentières. In June they marched south to the Somme, where they were tasked with the capture of Mametz Wood. The attack on the wood began on 7 July but met with fierce resistance, and it took until 11 July to clear the wood. William was killed during

the first attack on the wood, on 7 July 1916. He is buried at Flatiron Copse Cemetery, Mametz, France. His brothers Joseph and Josiah also fell.

Brinley Thomas Hughes, Wireless Operator, Mercantile Marine

Brinley was the only son of Thomas and Mary Hughes (née Williams), of 11, Havard Road, Llanelli. He served as a wireless operator aboard the SS Leasowe Castle. The ship had been built for a Greek company but was taken over by the British government in 1917 due to the war. Soon after going into service, she was torpedoed off Gibraltar on 20 April 1917 but managed to reach port, where she was repaired. On 27 May 1917, she was in convoy from Egypt to Marseilles when she was torpedoed and sunk 104 miles off Alexandria. She was carrying 3,000 troops at the time. Brinley was one of ninety-two people who drowned aboard her that day. He was 22 years old and is commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial, London.

Frank Mason Jenkins, MM, Lance Sergeant, 12903, Royal Welsh Fusiliers

Frank was the son of Thomas and Mary Ann Jenkins, of 4, Nevill's Terrace, Dafen. He enlisted at Llanelli into the 9th Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, which were part of 58 Brigade, 19th (Western) Division. The Division crossed to France in July 1915 and moved to positions near Loos. The Division fought during the opening attack of the Battle of Loos and then moved to the Somme, where they took part in the second wave of the attack on Ovillers-La Boiselle on 1 July, capturing the village at heavy cost. They fought through the Somme Battles of Pozières and the Ancre in 1916, then moved north to Ypres, taking part in the Battle of Messines, and fought on the Menin Road and at Polygon Wood before moving up to Broodseinde, Poelcapelle, and Passchendaele Village itself. In 1918, they were caught up in the German Spring Offensive near St. Quentin, suffering terrible casualties, and fought at the Battle of Bapaume. They moved to Ypres but were caught up in the German attack at Messines, Bailleul, and Kemmel. Frank was wounded in Flanders and died on 8 May 1918, aged 27. He is buried at Poperinghe New Military Cemetery, Belgium.

Frederick John, Private, 43608, Welsh Regiment

Frederick was born at Bancyfelin, the son of William and Adalide John. William had been the Station Master there before moving the family to Sarnau, 3, Whitley Road, Loughor. Frederick enlisted at Llanelli into the Welsh Regiment and at some time in 1916 was posted to France, joining the 16th Battalion, Welsh Regiment, which was attached to 115 Brigade, 38th (Welsh) Division. The Division had been in France since December 1915 and had spent their first winter in the trenches near Armentières. In June, they marched south to the Somme, where they were tasked with the capture of Mametz Wood. The attack began on 7 July but met with fierce resistance, and it took until 12 July to clear the wood. The Division suffered terrible casualties at Mametz and were taken out of the line and moved to Ypres to rebuild. Here they fought at Pilckem and Langemarck, where Frederick was killed on 27 August 1917, aged 24. He

is remembered on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Belgium, and on the headstone of his parents' grave at Box Cemetery, Llanelli.

David John Morgan, Gunner, 2187, Royal Field Artillery

David was the son of Thomas and Hannah Morgan, of Gwynfryn, Dafen. He enlisted at Carmarthen into the Royal Field Artillery and was posted to their D Battery, 119th Brigade, which was attached to the 24th Division. They moved to France in August 1915 and marched to positions near Loos, where they took up reserve positions for the main Battle of Loos. The Division was sent into battle on 26 September 1915 at Loos and suffered terrible casualties. In 1916, it took part in the Battle of the Somme before moving north of Arras in early 1917. In April and May 1917, the division fought at the Battle of Vimy alongside the Canadian Corps, and in June, they moved to positions south of Ypres, fighting during the Battle of Messines. After the successful capture of Messines Ridge, the Division moved further north and fought at the Battles of Pilckem and Langemarck during Third Ypres. The Division then moved to positions north of St. Quentin over the winter of 1917/18, and was there when the German Spring Offensive was launched on 21 March 1918, defending the Village of Le Verguier before retreating back. It was moved north to Flanders to rest but was hit by the German offensive on the Lys, taking part in the Battle of Kemmel. The Division rested for a period after this and took part in the final offensives of the war, at the Battle of Cambrai, and the Pursuit to the Selle. David was wounded here and died soon after on 12 September 1918. He was 30 years old and is buried at Arneke British Cemetery, France.

Albert Edward Morris, Sergeant, 11661, Royal Welsh Fusiliers

Albert, known as Bert, was the son of William Edward Morris and Honora Morris, of 1, North Terrace, Dafen. He enlisted at Llanelli on 14 August 1914 into the 8th Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, attached to 40 Brigade, 13th (Western) Division. On 13 June 1915, the Division sailed for Alexandria, then moved to Mudros, preparing to land on Gallipoli from 6 July 1915, relieving the 29th Division. The Division landed at ANZAC Cove from 3 August 1915, taking part in the Battles of Sari Bair, Russell's Top, and Hill 60, ANZAC. Soon afterwards, the Division was transferred from ANZAC to Suvla Bay and was evacuated from Suvla on 19 December 1915. The infantry moved after a week's rest to the Helles bridgehead, where they faced the last Turkish attacks at Helles. On 8 January 1916, the Division was evacuated from Helles and by 31 January was concentrated at Port Said, where they held forward posts in the Suez Canal defenses. On 12 February 1916, the Division began to move to Mesopotamia to strengthen the force being assembled for the relief of the besieged garrison at Kut al Amara. By 27 March, the Division had assembled near Sheikh Saad and came under orders of the Tigris Corps, then took part in the attempts to relieve Kut. Albert was killed in action here on 5 April 1916, aged 28, and is remembered on the Basra Memorial, Iraq.

William Nunian, Private, 535001, London Regiment

William was the son of John and Margaret Nunian, of 31, Swansea Road, Llanelli. He worked as a clerk in London prior to enlisting at Hampstead on 15 June 1916 into the 15th Battalion (Civil Service Rifles), London Regiment. On 2 July 1917, he was posted to the 1st/12th Battalion, London Regiment (The Rangers), which was attached to 168 Brigade, 56th Division. The Division had fought at the diversionary attack on Gommecourt, then at Ginchy, Flers, and Morval, where they captured Combles. They wintered on the Somme and followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line in March 1917 before fighting in the Battle of Arras. They then moved to Ypres, where they fought at Langemarck, and William saw his first battle. In October, they moved south and fought at the Battle of Cambrai, where William was killed on 27 November 1917. He was 19 years old and is remembered on the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, France. He is also remembered on his parents' grave at Box Cemetery, Llanelli.

Cyrus Price, Private, 31167, Royal Welsh Fusiliers

Cyrus was the son of Thomas and Margaret Price, of Nyth y Drew, Dafen. Cyrus was a tinsmith prior to the war and enlisted at Swansea on 1 September 1914 into the Royal Garrison Artillery. On 5 June 1915, he was transferred to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and landed in France on 29 September 1915, where he was attached to the 2nd Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, who by this time were attached to 19 Brigade, 33rd Division. Cyrus was wounded at Cuinchy on 25 April 1916 and, after a spell in hospital, re-joined the battalion in time for the infamous explosion of the Red Dragon mine on 22 June 1916. The battalion lost many men killed during the explosion and the resulting German attack, and the following month moved to the Somme. Cyrus was killed in action during the attack on High Wood on 20 July 1916, aged 21. He has no known grave and is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial, France. His father had died just days before news of Cyrus's death was received by his mother, and the telegraph was handed to her as the funeral cortege was assembling.

Lewis Watkins, Private, 3237, Welsh Guards

Lewis was the son of William and Emma Watkins, of 67, Trosnant, Pontypool, Monmouth. He resided at Dafen before the war, working as a Furnaceman in one of the local tinworks, and enlisted at Llanelli into the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards. The battalion was attached to 3 Brigade, Guards Division. They saw their first action at the Battle of Loos on 25 September 1915, followed by subsequent engagements, including the Battle of Flers-Courcelette and the Battle of Morval during the Somme offensive in 1916. In 1917, they participated in the Battle of Pilckem, the Battle of the Menin Road, the Battle of Poelcapelle, and the First Battle of Passchendaele. Lewis

was killed in action during the Battle of Cambrai on 1 December 1917, aged 34. He has no known grave and is remembered on the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, France.

William Whitehouse, Private, 15735, Worcestershire Regiment

William was born in West Bromwich, the son of William and Sarah Ann Whitehouse. The family later moved to Havard Road, Llanelli, where William enlisted into the 10th Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment. Attached to 57 Brigade, 19th (Western) Division, the battalion crossed to France in July 1915 and moved to positions near Loos. William tragically died there on 6 August 1915, at the young age of 19. He is buried at Merville Communal Cemetery, France.

Daniel George Williams, Private, 12525, Royal Welsh Fusiliers

Daniel, son of John and Margaretta Williams of Incline Row, Dafen, enlisted at Tonypany into the 8th Battalion, Welsh Regiment, attached to 40 Brigade, 13th (Western) Division. Landing on Gallipoli in July 1915, Daniel participated in the Battle of Sari Bair. He was killed in action on 11 August 1915, aged 29. With no known grave, he is remembered on the Helles Memorial, Gallipoli. Daniel is not named on the memorial.

John Williams, Private, 38530, South Wales Borderers

Born in Burry Port, John was the son of David and Margaret Williams. Enlisting at Llanelli into the 12th Battalion, South Wales Borderers, he served with the 119 Brigade, 40th (Bantam) Division. Engaged in various battles including the Battle of Cambrai, John was killed in action on 25 November 1917, aged 18. He has no known grave and is remembered on the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, France.

World War II Casualties from Dafen (Including Unidentified Individuals)

Brynmor Evans, Guardsman, 2734644, Welsh Guards

Brynmor was the son of Isaac and Christina Evans of Dafen and served with the 3rd Battalion, Welsh Guards. The battalion was formed in October 1941 and moved to North Africa in February 1943. Brynmor was killed during their first major engagement, at the Fondouk Gap, on 10 April 1943. He was 22 years old and is buried at Enfidaville War Cemetery, Tunisia.

Thomas Alfred Harries, Private, 3973583, Army Air Corps

Thomas was the son of Thomas and Florance Harries of Llanelly, and the husband of Irene Harries of Llanelly. He served with the Army Air Corps, which was formed in 1942 from Commando personnel. Thomas possibly served during the Airborne offensive at Normandy on D-Day, but no specific details of his service are forthcoming. He died because of his service on 19 July 1945, aged 22, and is buried at Llanelli (Box) Cemetery.

Colin Hawley Harris, Corporal, 319277, Royal Armoured Corps

Colin was the son of Albert and Gladys Harris of Llanelly, and the husband of Matilda Harris of Dafen. He served with the 16th/5th Lancers, which was part of the Royal Armoured Corps. The Lancers were attached to the 6th Armoured Division and fought in North Africa. Colin was killed during the Battle of the Kasserine Pass on 20 February 1943, when the 6th Armoured Division was rushing to the assistance of the beleaguered American II Corps. He was 24 years old and is buried at Enfidaville War Cemetery, Tunisia. Colin is not commemorated at Dafen.

David John Jones, Private, 3962655, Welch Regiment

David was the son of Millie Jones of Dafen and served with the local Territorial unit, the 4th Battalion, Welch Regiment. The battalion formed part of the 53rd (Welsh) Division and spent the first five years of the war on home service, spending a lot of time training in Northern Ireland. It landed in Normandy after D-Day, then took part in the breakout from the Normandy Beach-head. David was killed during Operation Bluecoat on 2 August 1944. He was 24 years old and is commemorated on the Bayeux Memorial, France.

Maldwyn Herbert Lee, Leading Aircraftman, 1316626, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Maldwyn was the son of David and Alice Lee and the husband of Margaret J. Lee of Dafen. He served with the Royal Air Force at Malta. Maldwyn died, probably in an air crash into the sea, on 19 June 1944. He was 28 years old and is commemorated on the Malta Memorial, Malta. Maldwyn is not named on the Dafen Memorial.

Austin Cecil Lovering, Home Guard

Austin was the son of George and Agnes Lovering, of 1 Charles Street, Marble Hall, and the husband of Marie Lovering, of Llys Gwyn, Baynelli Villas, Dafen. He served as an F.A.P. member of the Home Guard and was injured during an air raid on 25 September 1940, at Richard Thomas' Steel Works. He died at Llanelly Hospital on 26 September 1940, aged 35, and is buried at Llanelli. Austin is not named on the Dafen Memorial.

Harold John MacLean, Telegraphist, D/JX 211871, Royal Navy

Harold was the son of Mr. and Mrs. R. MacLean of Dafen and served with the Royal Navy aboard HM Yacht Rosabelle. She had been purchased into the RN in September 1939 as an armed boarding vessel and operated in the Mediterranean. Harold died when Rosabelle was sunk by the German submarine U-374 off Gibraltar on 11 December 1941. He was 20 years old and is commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial, Devon.

Harry Morgan, Able Seaman, C/JX 185145, Royal Navy

Harry was the son of Daniel and Alice Morgan and the husband of Phyllis Doreen

Morgan of Dafen. He served with the Royal Navy aboard HMS Avenger, which was an American lend-lease aircraft carrier. She was commissioned on 2 March 1942 and served with Convoy PQ 18 before participating in Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa. Harry was one of 538 men who died when Avenger was sunk by the German submarine U-155, as she was heading back from Africa to the Clyde on 15 November 1942. Harry was 25 years old and is commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial, Kent. Harry is not named on the Dafen Memorial.

Hugh Vaughan Morgan, Leading Aircraftman, 1709011, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Hugh was the son of Thomas and Jane Morgan of Llanelly and served with the Royal Air Force. The squadron that he served with is not recorded, but Hugh died on 20 September 1945, and is buried at Cambrai (Route Des Solesmes) Communal Cemetery, France. He was 22 years old.

Ernest Thomas Rees, MID, Sergeant (Cadet Pilot), 524559, Royal Air Force

Ernest was the son of Ernest Graham and Lucie Rees, and the husband of Peggy Rees, of Dafen. Ernest was training as a pilot in Zimbabwe when he was killed in an air crash on 14 May 1943. He was 27 years old and is buried at Harare (Pioneer) Cemetery, Zimbabwe. At some time during the war, Ernest was Mentioned in Despatches. Ernest is not named on the Dafen Memorial.

David Stanley Richards, Flight Sergeant (W.Op./Air Gnr.), 1314457, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

David was the son of William Emrys and Annie Richards of Llanelly, and the husband of Elma Doreen Richards of Llanelly. He served as a Wireless Operator/ Air Gunner with 207 Squadron, Royal Air Force, which was equipped with the Avro Lancaster I, based at RAF Spilsby. David died when his Lancaster was shot down over Germany during a raid on the morning of 12 September 1944. He was 21 years old and is buried alongside his fellow crewmen at Durnbach War Cemetery, Germany.

Mervyn John Rees Ryan, Sergeant, 1386032, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Mervyn was the son of David Ryan, and of Esther Mary Ryan, of Llanelly, and served with the Royal Air Force. Mervyn trained as a pilot aboard an Airspeed Oxford at Alberta, Canada, before returning to Britain to take up a posting. Mervyn was reported as missing on 12 July 1943. It was not until May 1944 that he was reported as being believed killed on that date. He was 21 years old and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey.

Harry Verdun Simon, Sergeant, 3962637, Welch Regiment

Harry was the son of William and Roseanna Simon of Dafen. He served with the 4th Battalion, Welch Regiment, which was the local Territorial battalion, attached to the 53rd (Welsh) Division. Harry married Iris Joyce Hille of Belmont, Kent while the

battalion was based there in 1943. The division landed in Normandy at the end of June 1944 and took part in the breakout from the Normandy beachhead and the subsequent drive through northern France into Belgium and Holland. Harry was killed during the clearing of Oosterhout on 11 October 1944, aged 28. He is buried at Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery, Netherlands.

Ronald James Thompson, Private, 14541770, The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey)

Ronald was the son of William John and Mary Ann Thompson, of Llanelly, and the husband of Catherine Hilda Thompson, of Dafen. He served with the 2/5th Battalion, Queen's Royal Regiment. Ronald initially fought during the North African campaign. The battalion then took part in the invasion of Italy in 1943. Ronald was killed in action in Italy on 18 January 1944. He was 23 years old and is buried at Minturno War Cemetery, Italy.

Leslie Williams, Gunner, 2036598, Royal Artillery

Leslie was the son of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Williams of Dafen, and the husband of Margaret Williams, of Freckleton, Lancashire. He served with 216 Battery, 70 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery. The battery fought in India during the war, and it was there that Leslie was killed on 17 May 1943. He was 24 years old and is buried at Kirkee War Cemetery, India.

Individuals Not Yet Identified

- **J. Bevan**
- **E. Jones**
- **G. Jones**
- **O. Lewis**
- **R. Morgan**
- **J.Thomas**

<https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/1844621>

St Illty's War Memorials

The cemetery of St Illtyd's Church includes notable war memorials, especially dedicated to airmen of various nationalities who lost their lives during World War II. These memorials honour the bravery and sacrifice of those who served in the Royal Air Force and other Allied air forces.



• Commonwealth War Graves:

The cemetery contains the graves of several Commonwealth airmen. These graves are marked with the distinctive Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstones, commemorating those who served and died far from their homes.

• International Airmen:

Among those buried are airmen from various nationalities, reflecting the international cooperation and shared sacrifices of the Allied forces during the war. The memorials serve as a poignant reminder of the global nature of the conflict and the diverse backgrounds of those who fought together.

St Illtyd's Church in Pembrey stands as a monument to history, commemorating not only local and maritime tragedies but also the valiant efforts of those who fought in World War II. An integral part of its memorials is dedicated to the members of RAF Polish Fighter Squadron 316, a testament to the international collaboration and sacrifices made during the war.

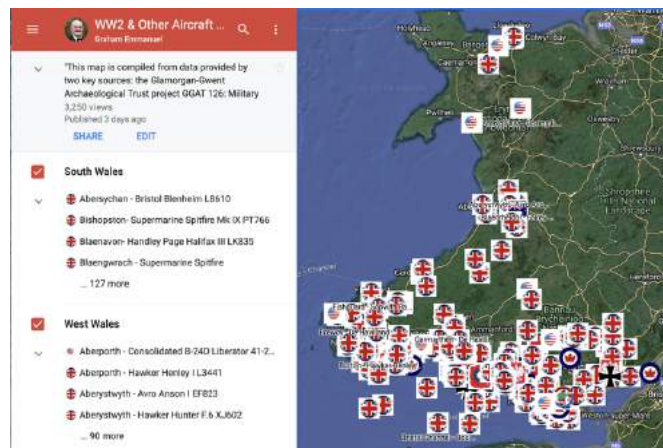
<https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/1843717>

St Illtyd's Church, with its historical memorials, stands as a silent witness to the past. The inclusion of RAF Polish Fighter Squadron 316 in its commemorations reflects the church's role in honouring those who have served and sacrificed, whether they were lost at sea or in the skies above.

As visitors walk through the church and its grounds, they are reminded of the bravery and sacrifice of individuals from various nationalities who came together during World War II. The memorials at St Illtyd's Church ensure that the stories of these heroic airmen, along with the victims of maritime tragedies, are remembered and honoured for generations to come.

WW2 Plane Crash Locations Map of Wales

"This map is compiled from data provided by two key sources: the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust project GGAT 126: Military Aircraft Crash sites in South Wales (March 2013) and the Polish Fighter Squadron 316 Project in Llanelli. Together, these sources offer comprehensive information on military aircraft crash sites in South Wales, providing valuable insights into the region's aviation history and the impact of conflict on its landscape." The Link is an interactive data link to the crash sites shown and is automatically updated when others are added.



To view the map, please click the link below.

<https://tinyurl.com/WW2-SW-CS>

WW2 Plane Crash Memorials Virtual Cemetery

The map above allowed me to document and research each crew member who lost their life in these events and to find out where they were laid to rest. Below is a link to their memorials, which will automatically update as I continue to work on them.

<https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/1834844>

This honours the memory of fallen servicemen during WW2 who served in the RAF of various nationality including some of the German Aircrew.

The Royal British Legion Kidwelly

War Memorial - Century of Remembrance



The Kidwelly War Memorial, which will celebrate its 100th anniversary soon, was unveiled on May 31, 1924. It commemorates the local men who lost their lives in the First and Second World Wars. The memorial is located on New Street in Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire, and is a prominent landmark in the town.

Designed by Glendinning Moxham, a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects from Swansea, the memorial features a statue of a soldier with a reversed rifle atop a tall plinth. The plinth, made of Portland stone, is adorned with Greek key motifs and a laurel wreath in relief, bearing plaques with the names of the fallen soldiers.

Among those honoured on the memorial are notable stories such as the three Hughes brothers—David, Samuel, and William—who all died within a year during WWI. Additionally, Royal Marine Delwyn Davies, who drowned in 1943 after a storm off the Pembrokeshire coast, is also remembered.

The Hughes Brothers: Stories of Sacrifice

Among the names inscribed on the Kidwelly War Memorial are those of the Hughes brothers—William, Samuel, and David—whose stories of service and sacrifice highlight the profound personal impacts of global conflicts.

William Henry Hughes

Private William Henry Hughes, born in Kidwelly in 1886, was the eldest of the Hughes brothers. At the outbreak of World War I, William enlisted in the Gloucestershire Regiment and later transferred to the 5th Battalion, Machine Gun Corps. His division played a significant role in the Somme Offensive, enduring fierce battles at High Wood, Guillemont, and Le Transloy. Tragically, William was killed in action on April 16, 1917, during the Battle of Vimy, and he is commemorated at the Bois-Carre British Cemetery in Thelus, France.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56183210/william-henry-hughes>

Samuel Hughes

Private Samuel Hughes, born in 1891, enlisted in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and served with the 8th Battalion. Samuel's division saw extensive action in Gallipoli, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. After falling ill, Samuel returned home but succumbed to sickness on March 12, 1918. He is buried in the Kidwelly St. Mary Churchyard, where his service and sacrifice are remembered.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/211538467/samuel-hughes>

David Hughes

Private David Hughes, born in 1888, served with the 2nd Battalion, South Wales Borderers. His battalion initially fought in China before joining the Western Front via Gallipoli and Egypt. David was killed in action on April 6, 1916, during his battalion's first spell in the trenches in France. He is buried at the Mesnil Ridge Cemetery in Mesnil Martinsart, France.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/58988842/d-hughes>

Delwyn Davies: A WWII Tragedy

Marine Delwyn Davies, from Llansaint, served with the Royal Marines during World War II. On April 25, 1943, Delwyn was aboard H.M. Landing Craft Gun (L.C.G.) 15 during a tragic incident off the coast of Pembrokeshire. A severe storm caused the landing crafts to sink, resulting in the loss of all hands. Delwyn, only 18 years old, was among those who perished. His body was recovered and buried at Llansaint (Seion) Calvinistic Methodist Cemetery

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/261764729/delwyn-davies>

A Legacy of Bravery

The Kidwelly War Memorial not only commemorates the fallen but also serves as a reminder of the personal stories of bravery and sacrifice that underpin historical conflicts. The Hughes brothers and Delwyn Davies represent the countless families affected by war; their memories preserved in the community's collective heart. The memorial's 100th anniversary is an opportunity to honour these stories and reflect on the enduring legacy of those who gave their lives for future generations.

Preservation and Community Efforts

The Kidwelly War Memorial was refurbished in 2001 by the Kidwelly Town Council, ensuring its preservation for future generations. The memorial is also listed as a Grade II building, recognized for its historical and architectural significance.

In writing about the Kidwelly War Memorial's centenary, it's essential to honour these individual stories, shedding light on the personal sacrifices that collectively shape our understanding of history and remembrance.

Kidwelly Town Crucial Role in D-Day Preparations

American Forces Gear Up for Operation Overlord

Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire - As the world commemorates the 80th anniversary of D-Day, it is essential to remember the vital preparations that took place far from the beaches of Normandy. The small town of Kidwelly in Carmarthenshire played a significant role in the lead-up to Operation Overlord, hosting American forces as they readied themselves for the monumental invasion that would turn the tide of World War II.

In the months leading up to June 6, 1944, Kidwelly and its surrounding areas became temporary homes to thousands of American soldiers. These troops, part of the extensive build-up for the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe, were billeted in various locations around the town. Local fields, barns, and community halls were transformed into makeshift barracks and training grounds, while the soldiers prepared for the most significant military operation in history.



Broomhill House

The arrival of the American forces brought a unique dynamic to Kidwelly. The town, which had been relatively untouched by the direct impacts of the war, suddenly found itself at the heart of a crucial military effort. The presence of the soldiers was a constant reminder of the impending invasion and the critical role that Kidwelly would play in its success.

The preparations in Kidwelly were comprehensive and intense. Soldiers engaged in rigorous physical training, honing their skills in marksmanship, tactics, and amphibious operations. The surrounding countryside, with its diverse terrain, provided an ideal setting for the kind of exercises that would be crucial during the landings in Normandy. Training also included the use of mock-ups and simulations to prepare troops for the specific challenges they would face on the beaches of France.

Beyond the physical preparations, the presence of American forces in Kidwelly also required extensive logistical support. Supplies had to be stored and transported, equipment maintained, and communication lines established. The local population played a crucial role in supporting these efforts, often interacting with the soldiers, and providing hospitality. The bond between the American troops and the people of Kidwelly grew strong, creating a sense of camaraderie and mutual respect.

Despite the secrecy surrounding the specifics of Operation Overlord, the townspeople were aware that something monumental was underway. The increased military activity, combined with the presence of high-ranking officers and the visible build-up of men and material, left little doubt that a significant operation was imminent.

On the eve of D-Day, the tension in Kidwelly was palpable. Soldiers wrote letters home, polished their gear, and steeled themselves for the daunting task ahead. The local community, too, felt the weight of the moment, understanding that the success of the invasion could hinge on the readiness of the troops that had been among them.

As the American forces departed Kidwelly for the south coast of England and then across the English Channel to Normandy, the town's role in the grander scheme of the war became clear. The rigorous training and preparation conducted in Kidwelly contributed to the success of the D-Day landings, a pivotal moment in the fight against Nazi tyranny.

Today, as we reflect on the bravery and sacrifice of those who stormed the beaches of Normandy, we also remember the critical contributions of places like Kidwelly. The town's support and the training it facilitated were integral to the success of Operation Overlord. The legacy of this period remains a proud part of Kidwelly's history, a testament to the town's role in one of the most significant military campaigns of the 20th century.

St Mary's Church Care Cheriton War Memorials

St Mary's Church, located in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales, stands as a significant historical and architectural monument. Nestled within a raised, rectilinear churchyard, the site reveals traces of its early medieval origins. The remnants of an ancient boundary are discernible as an earthwork in the north-west corner of the churchyard, hinting at the church's longstanding presence.



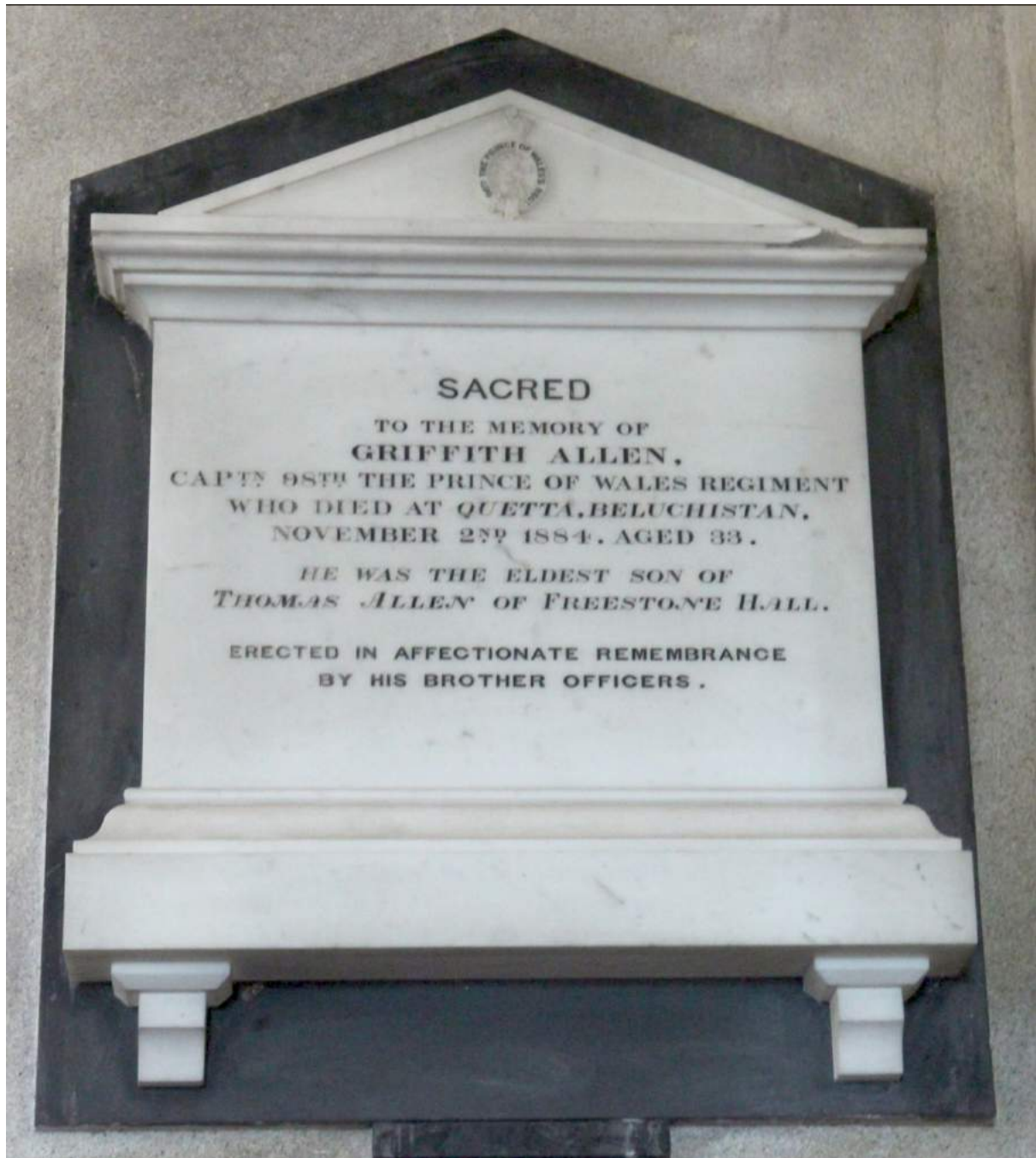
Within the grounds of St. Mary's Church Cemetery lie the resting places and memorials dedicated to honouring the courageous men who sacrificed their lives during World War II and other campaigns.

Their bravery and selflessness have safeguarded the freedoms we cherish today. Though they have passed on, their legacy of valour and commitment to duty endures. We remain deeply grateful for their service and will forever commemorate the profound impact of their sacrifice on our lives and our world.

St. Mary's Church is located adjacent to the old Carew Cheriton Air Base, where the RAF operated. Casualties from this base were interred in the churchyard.

St Mary's Church War Memorials.

Captain Griffith Allen (1851-1884) 



SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF GRIFFITH ALLEN, CAPTAIN 98TH THE PRINCE OF WALES
REGIMENT, WHO DIED AT QUETTA, BELUCHISTAN, NOVEMBER 2, 1884. AGED 33.
HE WAS THE ELDEST SON OF THOMAS ALLEN OF FREESTONE HALL.
ERECTED IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE BY HIS BROTHER OFFICERS.

Born in 1851, Griffith Allen dedicated his life to military service with the 98th The Prince of Wales's Regiment, stationed in Quetta, Baluchistan, a pivotal outpost of the British Empire in South Asia during the Great Game era.

His duties included maintaining security and order in the region, patrolling borders to safeguard British interests against neighbouring Afghanistan and Iran, conducting rigorous training exercises to uphold readiness, and contributing to the construction and maintenance of vital military infrastructure.

His steadfast commitment extended beyond military operations to diplomatic engagements with local authorities and tribes, crucial in managing regional relations amidst the strategic rivalry with the Russian Empire in Central Asia.

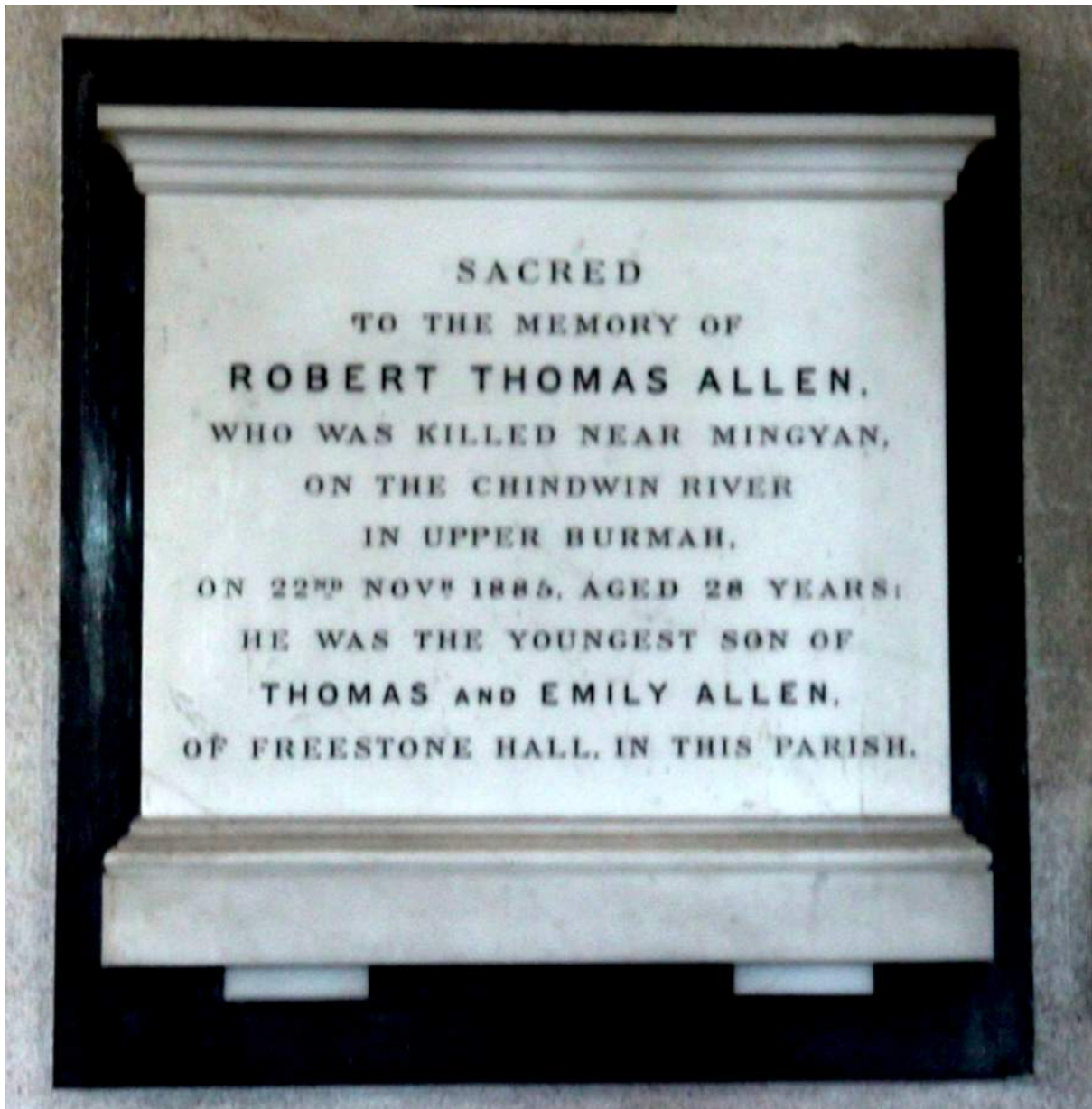
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/242822896/griffith-allen>

His brother Robert Thomas Allen also died on November 22, 1885, at the age of 28.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/242804585/robert-thomas-allen>

He was killed near Mingyan on the Chindwin River in Upper Burma. His death occurred during a perilous time when British forces were engaged in securing the river and advancing towards strategic locations such as Mandalay.

Robert Thomas Allen (1857 – 1885) 🇬🇧



Robert Thomas Allen was born in 1857, the youngest son of Thomas and Emily Allen of Freestone Hall, located in a parish in England. He grew up in a family with deep roots in their local community, known for their strong values and dedication.

Robert joined the British Navy and became a part of the Naval Brigade, a specialised unit formed from sailors and marines of the Royal Navy. His service was distinguished by his participation in the Third Anglo-Burmese War, a significant conflict that ultimately led to the British annexation of Burma.

The war began on November 14, 1885, between the British Empire and the Burmese Kingdom. The Naval Brigade played a critical role, providing artillery support, operating machine guns, and engaging in direct combat. The Brigade's responsibilities included patrolling the Chindwin River, securing key strategic points, and ensuring safe passage for British forces.

On November 22, 1885, at the age of 28, Robert Thomas Allen was killed near Mingyan on the Chindwin River in Upper Burma. His death occurred during a perilous time when British forces were engaged in securing the river and advancing towards strategic locations such as Mandalay. The memorial erected in his honour at his parish church serves as a testament to his bravery and sacrifice.

Robert's involvement in the Third Anglo-Burmese War highlights the dangerous and crucial role of the Naval Brigade in riverine warfare, logistical support, and direct combat. His sacrifice is remembered as part of the broader British military efforts that led to the annexation of Burma on January 1, 1886.

Robert Thomas Allen's memory is preserved with a dedicated memorial in his parish church, where his bravery and service are honoured. The inscription reads:

SACRED
TO THE MEMORY OF
ROBERT THOMAS ALLEN
WHO WAS KILLED NEAR MINGYAN,
ON THE CHINDWIN RIVER IN UPPER BURMAH,
ON 22 NOVEMBER 1885, AGED 28 YEARS.
HE WAS THE YOUNGEST SON OF
THOMAS AND EMILY ALLEN,
OF FREESTONE HALL, IN THIS PARISH.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/242804585/robert-thomas-allen>

Robert was brother to Captain Griffith Allen (1851-1884 who also has a memorial in the Church who was serving with with 98th The Prince of Wales Regiment in Quetta, Baluchistan.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/242822896/griffith-allen>

Pilot Officer Anthony Leon Victor "The Ant" Barnes (1918 - 1940) 🇬🇧



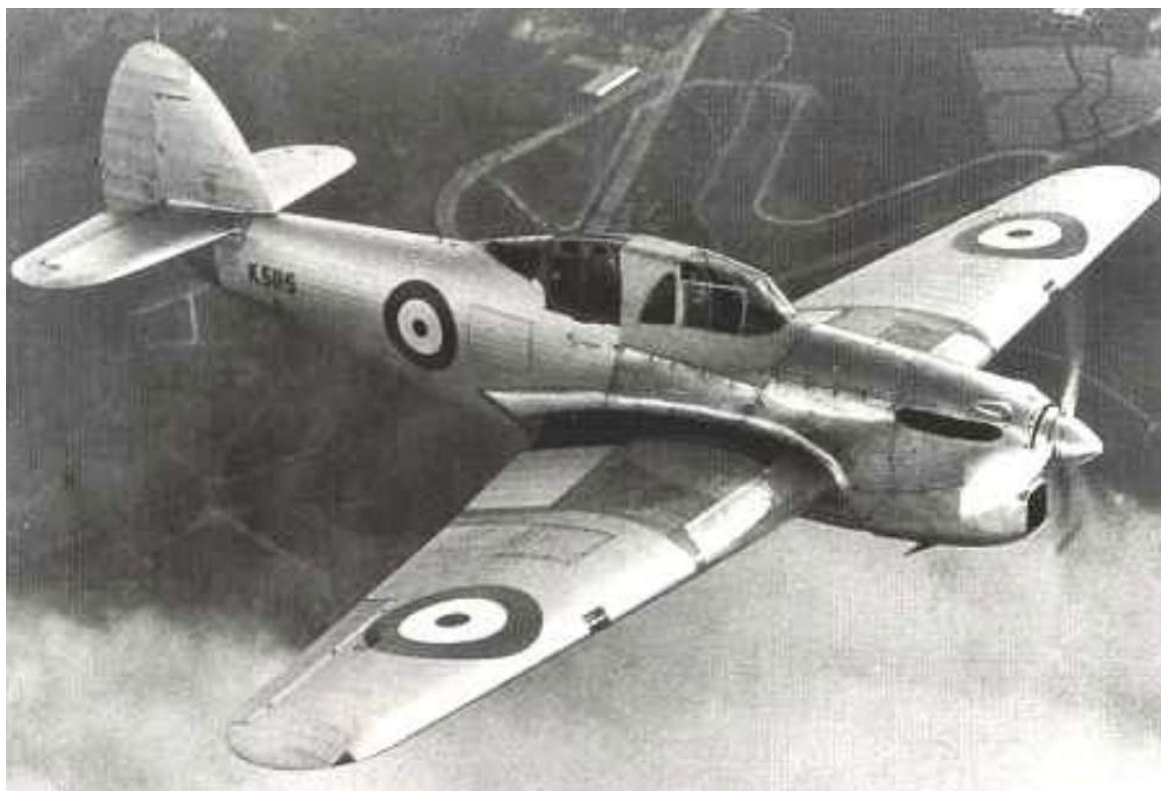
Anthony Leon Victor Barnes, affectionately known as "The Ant," was born on October 2, 1918, in Muswell Hill, a suburb in the London Borough of Haringey, Greater London, England. He grew up in a period marked by significant social and political changes, which undoubtedly influenced his decision to join the military.

Barnes enlisted in the Royal Air Force, where he earned the rank of Pilot Officer (service number 40071). He served with B Flight, 1 Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit stationed at RAF Carew Cheriton in Pembrokeshire, Wales. This unit was responsible for simulating aerial attacks to help train anti-aircraft gunners, a crucial role in the defence strategy of the time.

On April 23, 1940, at the young age of 21, Pilot Officer Barnes tragically lost his life when the aircraft he was piloting, a Hawker Henley (L3427), crashed near Nash Villa in Pembroke Dock, Dyfed. The crash also claimed the life of his Observer/Navigator, Sergeant Richard Edmund Wilson.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593567/richard-edmund-wilson>

The incident marked a sombre day for the Royal Air Force and all who knew Barnes.



At the time of his death, Barnes was a resident of 30 Sandown Road, Edgbaston. His loss was deeply felt by his family, friends, and colleagues. He was laid to rest in St. Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales, where his grave serves as a poignant reminder of his service and sacrifice.

Pilot Officer Anthony Leon Victor Barnes is remembered for his dedication to his duty and his contributions to the Royal Air Force during a critical period in history. His legacy lives on through the memories of those who knew him and the records that honour his service.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593554/anthony-leon_victor-barnes

Pilot Officer Howard Earl Dabbs (1922 - 1942) 

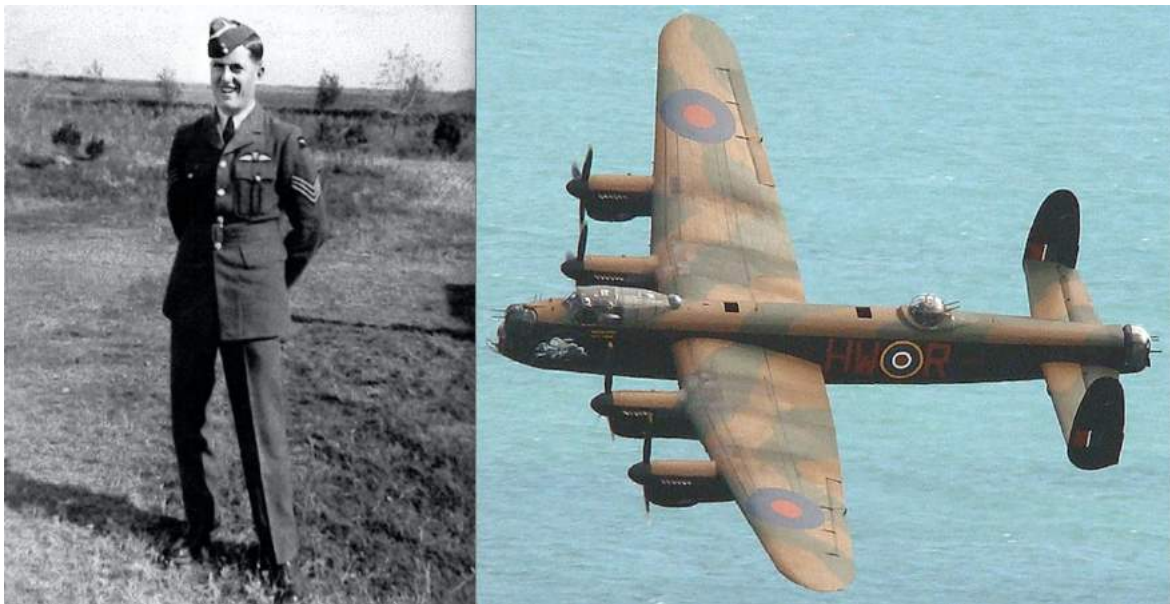


Howard Earl Dabbs was born on April 28, 1922, in Forestburg, Wainwright Census Division, Alberta, Canada. He was the son of William L. Dabbs and Florence D. Dabbs, of Daysland, Alberta. Growing up in the prairies of Alberta, Howard displayed a sense of adventure and dedication that would later define his military career.

Howard enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, demonstrating his commitment to serve his country during a time of global conflict. He was posted to the 101 Squadron of the Royal Air

Force, based at Holme Upon Spalding Moor. As an experienced pilot, he flew in eight raids in Wellington bombers and an additional four in Lancaster bombers.

Howard's exceptional skills and bravery earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross (D.F.C.), which was awarded just four days before his final mission. The citation, published in the London Gazette on December 15, 1942, commended his courageous actions during a mission to Frankfurt. Despite being hit by anti-aircraft fire and losing one of the aircraft's engines while held in a cone of searchlights, he managed to fly on to the target. Although the bomb release mechanism was unserviceable, he skilfully navigated his damaged aircraft back to the UK without the assistance of wireless aids and made a masterly landing in poor visibility, carrying a full bomb load. His determination and airmanship under adverse circumstances were praised as exemplary.



Tragically, on the night of December 6, 1942, Howard took off in his Lancaster, Serial ED322, on a mission to Mannheim. During the return leg on the following morning, the aircraft became lost over the Pembrokeshire coast and crashed into the sea off Tenby, resulting in the loss of the entire crew.

The crew members who perished alongside Pilot Officer Dabbs were:-

Flight Sergeant Leonard Roy Anderson

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15244454/leonard-roy-anderson>

Sergeant Stefan Franchuk

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15252889/stefan-franchuk>

Sergeant James Hughes

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/32503945/james-hughes>

Sergeant Robert John Middleton

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593560/robert-john-middleton>

Flight Sergeant Robert Gordon Smith

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593564/robert-gordon-smith>

Sergeant William Thomas Warren

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15265716/william-thomas-warren>

Howard Earl Dabbs was only 20 years old at the time of his death. He is buried in St. Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales, where his grave serves as a poignant reminder of his bravery and sacrifice.

Pilot Officer Howard Earl Dabbs is remembered for his skill, courage, and dedication to duty. His legacy lives on through the Distinguished Flying Cross awarded for his gallant efforts and the memories held by his family, comrades, and countrymen. His service and ultimate sacrifice are honoured and commemorated, reflecting the highest ideals of the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Royal Air Force.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593555/howard-earl-dabbs>

Private Osborne William Griffiths (1881 - 1915) 



Osborne William Griffiths was born in 1881, the son of George Llewellyn Griffiths and Edith A. Griffiths of Pembroke. Prior to the outbreak of World War I, Osborne lived in Carew, Pembrokeshire. Motivated by a sense of duty, he enlisted at Hayward's Heath

into the prestigious Coldstream Guards, one of the oldest and most distinguished regiments in the British Army.

Osborne was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards, which was part of the 4th (Guards) Brigade, 2nd Division. This division was among the first to be deployed to France at the outbreak of the war in 1914, participating in the early and critical Battle of Mons and the subsequent retreat to the Aisne. The Coldstream Guards were renowned for their bravery and were often at the forefront of the fighting in France.

On August 20, 1915, the 3rd Battalion transferred to the 1st (Guards) Brigade, Guards Division. Shortly thereafter, they took part in the Battle of Loos, which began on September 25, 1915. This battle was one of the largest British offensives mounted on the Western Front during the war. It was during this fierce and intense fighting that Osborne was wounded on September 30, 1915.

Following his injury, Osborne was evacuated back to the UK for medical treatment. Despite the efforts to save him, he succumbed to his wounds on November 16, 1915, at the age of 34. His death was a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made by so many during the Great War.

Private Osborne William Griffiths is buried in St. Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His grave stands as a testament to his bravery and the ultimate sacrifice he made for his country.

His memory is honoured and preserved by his family, his comrades in the Coldstream Guards, and the community of Carew. His service during a pivotal moment in history exemplifies the courage and dedication of the soldiers who fought in World War I.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/215360663/osborne-w-griffiths>

Flying Officer Charles Warner Jackson (1919 - 1943) 🇨🇦



Charles Warner Jackson was born in 1919, the son of John Warner Jackson and Ella Eugene Jackson of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. He grew up in a supportive family environment that instilled in him a sense of duty and service.

Charles enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force, earning the rank of Flying Officer (service number J/20125). He served as a pilot with the 420 Squadron of the Royal Air Force, a unit known for its bravery and skill in conducting bombing raids over enemy territory during World War II.

On April 11, 1943, during a mission against Frankfurt, Charles' aircraft, a Wellington Mk X (HE422), encountered difficulties. The aircraft became lost and low on fuel upon its return leg near the coast of South Wales. Demonstrating remarkable presence of mind and concern for his crew, Charles ordered them to bail out near Tenby, South Wales, ensuring their safety first. After setting the aircraft on autopilot, he followed suit and bailed out himself. Tragically, Charles landed in Carmarthen Bay and drowned, sacrificing his life to save his fellow crew members. He was 24 years old at the time of his death.

Flying Officer Charles Warner Jackson is buried in St. Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. The inscription on his grave reads:

"Flying Officer C.W. Jackson Pilot Royal Canadian Air Force 11th April 1943 Aged 24 †
Greater Love Hath No Man Than This, That A Man Lay Down His Life for His Friends"

This epitaph reflects his ultimate sacrifice and the profound respect and admiration held for him by those who knew him and by the broader military community.



Charles Warner Jackson's legacy is one of courage, selflessness, and dedication. He is remembered not only for his service and sacrifice but also for the valour he displayed in the face of peril. His story stands as a testament to the bravery of the pilots of the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Royal Air Force during World War II, exemplifying the highest ideals of military service.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593556/charles-warner-jackson>

Kapral Zenon Jurewicz (1918 - 1944) 



Zenon Jurewicz was born on December 4, 1918, in Górkki-Izabelin, located in the Grójec County of the Masovian Voivodeship, Poland. He grew up in a Poland deeply influenced by its rich history and cultural heritage. With the outbreak of World War II, Zenon felt a strong sense of duty to defend his homeland and joined the Polish Air Force, where he attained the rank of Kapral (equivalent to Sergeant).

During the war, Zenon served with the Royal Air Force (RAF) as part of the 595 Squadron, a unit based at RAF Aberporth in Ceredigion, Wales. The squadron was primarily involved in anti-aircraft co-operation duties, providing training and support for ground-based defences, which was crucial for the war effort.

Tragically, on July 4, 1944, Zenon was fatally injured when the Hawker Hurricane Mk IV (serial number LB650) he was piloting crashed in Pembrokeshire, Wales. His dedication to his duty and his bravery were evident as he served far from his homeland, fighting alongside the Allies.

Zenon Jurewicz was laid to rest on July 7, 1944, in St. Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His grave stands as a testament to his sacrifice and the international effort to combat tyranny during World War II.



Zenon Jurewicz's life and service are remembered with great respect and honour. His journey from Górkki-Izabelin in Poland to the skies over Wales is a poignant reminder of the global nature of the struggle during World War II and the many who gave their lives in the pursuit of freedom and peace. His legacy is preserved in the hearts of those who remember his bravery and dedication.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593557/zenon-jurewicz>

Kapral Jerzy Kontny (1916 - 1941) 🇵🇱



Jerzy Kontny was born on October 2, 1916, in Katowice, a vibrant city in the Silesian Voivodeship of Poland. Growing up in a nation with a proud military tradition, Jerzy was inspired to serve his country and pursue a career in aviation.

During World War II, Jerzy Kontny served with the Polish Air Force and held the rank of Kapral (Corporal). As a skilled pilot, he joined the Royal Air Force, integrating into the Allied forces fighting against the Axis powers. Jerzy was assigned to No. 1 Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit (AACU), a unit tasked with simulating enemy attacks to train anti-aircraft gunners, a crucial role in the air defence strategy of the time.



On July 18, 1941, at the age of 24, Jerzy Kontny tragically lost his life during a training flight. He was piloting a de Havilland Tiger Moth Mk II (T8207) when the aircraft crashed, resulting in the deaths of both Jerzy and Aircraftman 2nd Class Roy Secker who is buried at St Lukes Churchyard Kirklees West Yorkshire:-

Aircraftman 2nd Class Roy Secker.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/163834781/roy-secker>

The accident was a poignant reminder of the dangers faced by those who trained and prepared others for combat.

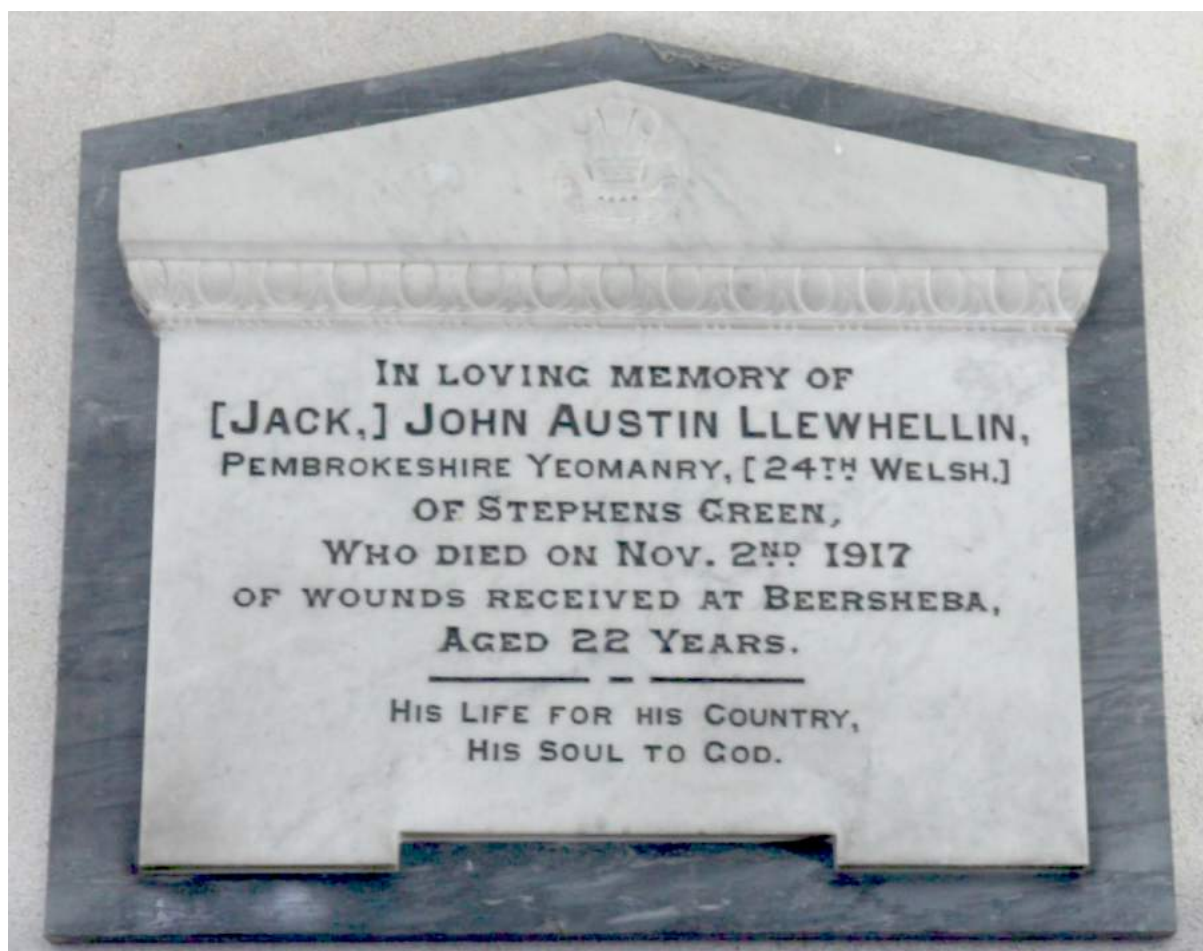
Kapral Jerzy Kontny was buried in St. Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. The inscription on his grave honours his service and sacrifice:

"Kpl J. Kontny 1.A.A.C.U. 18th July 1941 Age 24 Polish Forces"

Jerzy Kontny's life and service symbolize the bravery and dedication of the many Polish airmen who fought alongside the Allies during World War II. His commitment to his duty, even in the face of great personal risk, exemplifies the spirit of cooperation and sacrifice that was vital to the war effort. Jerzy's legacy endures in the memories of those who honour the contributions of Polish forces during this pivotal period in history.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593558/jerzy-kontny>

John Austin Llewellyn (1895-1917) 



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
[JACK,] JOHN AUSTIN LLEWHELLIN,
PEMBROKESHIRE YEOMANRY, [24TH WELSH.]
OF STEPHENS GREEN,
WHO DIED ON NOV. 2ND 1917
OF WOUNDS RECEIVED AT BEERSHEBA,
AGED 22 YEARS.
HIS LIFE FOR HIS COUNTRY,
HIS SOUL TO GOD.

John Austin Llewellyn, a valiant member of the Pembrokeeshire Yeomanry, 24th Welsh, who sacrificed his life for his country during the First World War. Born and raised in Stephens Green, Pembrokeeshire, John, known affectionately as Jack, embodied the spirit of courage and service from a young age.

John Llewellyn served with the Pembrokeeshire Yeomanry, a unit of the British Army's Territorial Force. During the First World War, the Pembrokeeshire Yeomanry became part of the 24th (Pembroke and Glamorgan) Battalion, The Welsh Regiment, and was

deployed to the Middle East to engage in crucial campaigns against the Ottoman Empire.

One of the pivotal battles in which John fought was the Battle of Beersheba, part of the Sinai and Palestine Campaign. This battle took place on October 31, 1917, and was a significant turning point in the campaign. The Allied forces, including the British, Australian, and New Zealand troops, launched an attack on the Ottoman-held town of Beersheba. The capture of Beersheba was vital for securing a reliable water supply and for breaking the Ottoman defensive line, which stretched from Gaza to Beersheba.

During the intense fighting at Beersheba, John Llewhellin sustained severe wounds. Despite the valiant efforts of his comrades and medical personnel, he succumbed to his injuries on November 2, 1917, at the age of 22. His sacrifice was not in vain, as the successful capture of Beersheba paved the way for the eventual Allied victory in the Sinai and Palestine Campaign.

John's legacy is a testament to his unwavering bravery and dedication. The inscription on his memorial reads: "His life for his country, his soul to God." This poignant tribute reflects the profound loss felt by his family, friends, and community. His commitment to duty and ultimate sacrifice are remembered with deep respect and gratitude.

John Austin Llewhellin's name is etched in the annals of history, and his memory continues to inspire future generations. He is commemorated not only in Pembrokeshire but also in the broader narrative of those who fought and fell during the Great War, ensuring that their contributions to peace and freedom are never forgotten.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/242804591/john-austin-llewhellin>

Sergeant Francis Mervyn McCaffry (1917 - 1941) 🇳🇿



Francis Mervyn McCaffry was born in 1917 to James and Eliza McCaffry of Bunnythorpe, Wellington, New Zealand. Raised in a supportive family in the vibrant region of Wellington, Francis grew up with a strong sense of duty and adventure, which led him to join the Royal New Zealand Air Force during World War II.

Francis served as a Sergeant with the 236 Squadron of the Royal Air Force. This unit was initially part of Coastal Command and was involved in reconnaissance and anti-shipping

operations. The squadron played a crucial role in securing maritime routes and gathering vital intelligence, contributing significantly to the Allied war effort.

The 236 Squadron was part of Coastal Command and primarily flew Bristol Blenheim and later Bristol Beaufighter aircraft during their operations. These aircraft were used for reconnaissance, anti-shipping strikes, and coastal patrol missions.

Bristol Blenheim:

- A light bomber initially used for reconnaissance missions.
- It was a versatile aircraft that played multiple roles, including as a fighter and for anti-shipping strikes.



Bristol Beaufighter:

- A heavy fighter used for long-range roles, including night fighting and maritime strike operations.
- It was heavily armed with cannons, machine guns, and rockets, making it effective against shipping and submarine targets.



Given that Sergeant McCaffry served in 1941, it is likely that he flew the Bristol Blenheim or Bristol Beaufighter as part of his duties with the 236 Squadron RAF. His role would have

involved challenging missions over hostile waters, demonstrating the courage and skill required of Coastal Command aircrew during the war.

On October 23, 1941, at the age of 24, Francis Mervyn McCaffry tragically lost his life. The details surrounding his death remain sparse, but it is known that he died while serving with the Royal New Zealand Air Force, a testament to his commitment and bravery.

Sergeant Francis Mervyn McCaffry is buried in St. Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His grave serves as a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made by the airmen of the Commonwealth nations during World War II. His service and ultimate sacrifice are honoured and remembered by his family, comrades, and the community of Carew.

Francis Mervyn McCaffry's legacy is one of dedication, bravery, and sacrifice. As a member of the Royal New Zealand Air Force, he contributed to the global efforts against tyranny, embodying the spirit of cooperation and courage that defined the Allied forces during World War II. His memory endures in the hearts of those who honour the valour and service of those who fought and died for freedom.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593561/francis-mervyn-mccaffry>

SGT Jan Michels (1914-1941) 



Jan Michels was born on 15 October 1914 in Deventer, Overijssel, Netherlands. He served as a Sergeant Vlieger in the Marineluchtvaartdienst (Royal Netherlands Navy Air Service) and was stationed as a Pilot with R.A.F. Squadron 320 at R.A.F. Carew Cheriton, Wales during World War II.



Tragically, on 25 February 1941, at the age of 26, Jan Michels lost his life when the Lockheed Hudson Mk I aircraft (T9364; F - christened Ypenburg) he was piloting crashed during take-off in Pembrokeshire, Wales.

The crash also claimed the lives of

Stoker Franciscus Overdijk

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152591843/franciscus-overdijk>

Korporaal Telegrafist Cornelis Jacobus Rademaker

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593562/cornelis-jacobus-rademaker>

Luitenant-Ter-Zee Marinus Renardus van Kooij

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593565/marinus-renardus-van_kooij



Jan Michels was laid to rest at St Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His courage and sacrifice are remembered as a profound contribution to the Allied effort in World War II.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593559/jan-michels>

Flight Sergeant Robert John Middleton (1917-1942) 🇨🇦



Born on 19 August 1917 in Dundee, Scotland, Robert John Middleton served as a Flight Sergeant (sn: R/91294) in the Royal Canadian Air Force, specializing as an Air Gunner and Wireless Operator within 101 Squadron RAF during World War II.



Tragically, at the age of 25, Robert Middleton lost his life on 7 December 1942 when the Lancaster MkI aircraft (sn: ED322) he was aboard crashed in Carmarthen Bay off Tenby, Wales. The crash occurred upon the aircraft's return from a mission targeting Mannheim, Germany. Alongside him, the entire crew perished in the accident.

Formerly of 152 Oakwood Avenue, Toronto, Canada, Robert Middleton was the son of Nicoll Middleton and Mary (née McGuckin) Middleton, of Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He is interred at St Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales, where his headstone bears the poignant inscription:

Inscription:

R91294 Flight Sergeant
R.J. Middleton
Wireless Op/Air Gunner
Royal Canadian Air Force
7th December 1942 Aged 25
†
At the Going Down of The Sun
And In The Morning
We Will Remember Him
R.I.P.

Flight Sergeant Robert John Middleton's courage and sacrifice are honoured and remembered as a testament to his service to his country and the Allied cause during World War II.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593560/robert-john-middleton>

Franciscus Overdijk (1920-1941) 



Franciscus Overdijk was born on July 3, 1920, in Leiderdorp, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands. His early life was shaped by the close-knit community of Leiderdorp, where he grew up. With the onset of World War II and the subsequent German invasion of the Netherlands, Franciscus's life took a dramatic turn.

Originally serving as a Stoker in the Royal Netherlands Navy, Franciscus displayed courage and resilience. When the German forces invaded the Netherlands in May 1940, he was among the brave crew members of the Hr. Ms. Medusa who managed to escape to England. This daring escape was a testament to his determination to continue the fight against the Axis powers.



Once in England, Franciscus transitioned to the Royal Netherlands Navy Air Service (Marineluchtvaartdienst) and trained as an air gunner. He was assigned to RAF Squadron 320, a unit comprised predominantly of Dutch personnel who had fled their occupied homeland. Based at RAF Carew Cheriton in Wales, Squadron 320 played a crucial role in the Allied war effort, conducting maritime patrols and reconnaissance missions.

Tragically, on February 25, 1941, Franciscus Overdijk lost his life in a fatal aircraft accident. The Lockheed Hudson Mk I aircraft he was aboard, registered as T9364 and

christened "Ypenburg," crashed during take-off. The crash claimed the lives of all four crew members: Sergeant Vlieger Jan Michels, Korporaal Telegrafist Cornelis Jacobus Rademaker, Luitenant-Ter-Zee Marinus Renardus van Kooij, and Franciscus himself. This loss was deeply felt by their comrades and families, symbolizing the high price of the fight for freedom.



Franciscus Overdijk was laid to rest at St Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His bravery and sacrifice are honoured at this resting place, and his name is inscribed on the Leiderdorp Herdenkings monument in Kerklaan, Leiderdorp, Zuid-Holland, ensuring that his memory endures in his hometown. His legacy is a poignant reminder of the valour and dedication of those who fought for freedom during one of the darkest periods in history.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152591843/franciscus-overdijk>

Corporal Cornelis Jacobus Rademaker (1911-1941) 



Corporal Cornelis Jacobus Rademaker, born on August 16, 1911, in Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands, served with distinction as a Corporal Telegraphist in the Royal Netherlands Navy Air Service (Marineluchtvaartdienst). He was part of R.A.F. Squadron 320, which was stationed at RAF Carew Cheriton in Wales.

The outbreak of World War II and the subsequent German invasion of the Netherlands profoundly impacted Cornelis's life. In response to the occupation of their homeland, many Dutch servicemen, including Cornelis, joined the Allied forces in the United Kingdom to continue their fight against the Axis powers.

As a telegraphist, Cornelis played a critical role in maintaining communication and coordination during missions. His skills were integral to the operations of RAF Squadron 320, a unit formed by Dutch personnel operating under the Royal Air Force. This squadron was involved in a variety of missions, including maritime patrols and reconnaissance, which were vital for the Allied war effort.

On February 25, 1941, Cornelis Rademaker tragically lost his life in an aircraft accident. The Lockheed Hudson Mk I aircraft, designated T9364 and christened "Ypenburg," crashed during take-off from Pembrokeshire, Wales.



This tragic event also claimed the lives of his fellow crew members:

Sergeant Vlieger Jan Michels

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593559/jan-michels>

Stoker Franciscus Overdijk

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152591843/franciscus-overdijk>

Luitenant-Ter-Zee Marinus Renardus van Kooij

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593565/marinus-renardus-van_kooij

Cornelis was laid to rest at St Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His bravery and dedication are commemorated not only at his burial site but also on the Noordwijk Oorlogs monument located on Rembrandtweg in Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland. This monument stands as a testament to his sacrifice and that of his compatriots, ensuring that their contributions to the fight for freedom are remembered by future generations.

Corporal Cornelis Jacobus Rademaker's service and sacrifice during World War II exemplify the courage and resilience of those who fought against oppression. His legacy endures as a symbol of the enduring spirit of resistance and the pursuit of liberty.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593562/cornelis-jacobus-rademaker>

Flight Sergeant Morris Ezra Shaw (1912-1942) 🇺🇸



R77481 Flight Sergeant
M.E. Shaw
Pilot
Royal Canadian Air Force
26th August 1942 Aged 29
Who Died
For His Mother's Country

Flight Sergeant Morris Ezra Shaw, born in 1912 in Utah, USA, was a distinguished pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). Serving under Service Number R/77481, he was assigned to 152 Squadron RAF during the critical years of World War II. Before enlisting in August 1940, Morris worked in office administration in New York. He was educated at schools in Danville and Victoriaville, which laid the foundation for his disciplined and dedicated nature.

His decision to join the RCAF was driven by a deep sense of duty, as he sought to contribute to the war effort for his mother's country, reflecting his Canadian heritage. On August 26, 1942, at the age of 29, Flight Sergeant Shaw's life was tragically cut short.

He was piloting a Spitfire Mk V, serial number EP164, when it collided with another Spitfire Mk V, serial number BM368, flown by Pilot Officer George Dean Woolrich. The mid-air collision occurred off the coast of Tenby, Wales, and both aircraft crashed into the sea. While Morris Shaw's body was recovered and he was subsequently laid to rest at St Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, the body of Pilot Officer Woolrich was never found.



The official casualty list from the RCAF reported his death, noting the address of his wife, who resided at 412 Ontario Street West. Morris was the son of William Alben Shaw and Constance Edith May (née Minns) Shaw of Ogden, Utah, USA. His family and community remember him for his bravery and commitment to the Allied cause during World War II.

An inscription on his grave poignantly states: "Who Died for His Mother's Country," highlighting the personal and national significance of his sacrifice. His memory endures as a testament to the courage and dedication of those who served in the RCAF and the RAF during one of history's most challenging periods.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593563/morris-ezra-shaw>

Flight Sergeant Robert Gordon Smith (1917-1942) 



R93318 Flight Sergeant
R.G. Smith
Air Observer
Royal Canadian Air Force
7th December 1942 Aged 24
+
Greater Love
Hath No Man Than This,
That A Man Lay Down
His Life For His Friends

Flight Sergeant Robert Gordon Smith was born on February 18, 1917, in Athenry, County Galway, Ireland. The son of Robert Young Smith, an agricultural superintendent, and Mary Helen (née Wood) Smith, Robert moved to Toronto, Ontario, where he became a stock keeper. He resided at 131 Munro Street, Toronto, and his life took a significant turn when he married Isabelle Reta (née McPherson), daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Charles MacPherson. The couple were wed at Kingston Road United Church.



Driven by a sense of duty, Robert enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), where he served as an Air Observer with the rank of Flight Sergeant (Service Number: R/93318). He was assigned to 101 Squadron of the Royal Air Force (RAF), a unit renowned for its role in the strategic bombing campaigns over Europe.

On the night of December 6-7, 1942, Flight Sergeant Smith was part of a crew aboard a Lancaster Mk I, serial number ED322, on a mission targeting Mannheim, Germany. Tragically, as the aircraft was returning from the mission, it crashed in Carmarthen Bay off the coast of Tenby, Wales. The crash claimed the lives of all crew members aboard, including:



Flight Sergeant Leonard Roy Anderson

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15244454/leonard-roy-anderson>

Pilot Officer Howard Earl Dabbs

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593555/howard-earl-dabbs>

Sergeant Stefan Franchuk

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15252889/stefan-franchuk>

Sergeant James Hughes

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/32503945/james-hughes>

Sergeant Robert John Middleton

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593560/robert-john-middleton>

Sergeant William Thomas Warren

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15265716/william-thomas-warren>

The loss of the Lancaster and its crew was a sombre reminder of the perilous missions undertaken by Bomber Command during World War II. Despite the challenges and dangers, these brave airmen continued to perform their duties with unwavering courage.

Flight Sergeant Robert Gordon Smith was buried at St Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales, where he rests alongside his fellow servicemen who made the ultimate sacrifice. His commitment and bravery are also remembered by his family and community, who honour his memory and the significant role he played in the Allied war effort.

Robert's life, marked by dedication both to his family and his duty, serves as a poignant example of the personal sacrifices made during the war. His story continues to inspire, reflecting the enduring legacy of those who fought for freedom in one of history's most challenging conflicts.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593564/robert-gordon-smith>

Luitenant-Ter-Zee 2e Klasse Marinus Renardus van Kooij (1904-1941) 



Luitenant-Ter-Zee 2e Klasse (2nd Lieutenant) Marinus Renardus van Kooij was born on February 15, 1904, in Amsterdam, Noord-Holland, Netherlands. He was the son of Teuntje Andriaantje Hertoge and grew up in a country on the brink of historical upheavals. His dedication to his homeland led him to join the Royal Netherlands Navy Air Service (Marineluchtvaartdienst), where he served with distinction. Marinus van Kooij's bravery was notably recognized when he was awarded the prestigious Bronze Lion (Bronzen Leeuw), recipient number 5, on July 16, 1940. This award, given for acts of extreme bravery and leadership in battle favouring the Netherlands, was bestowed upon him for his victory in air combat on May 10, 1940, during the early stages of World War II.

With the German invasion of the Netherlands, Marinus and many of his compatriots fled to the United Kingdom to continue their fight against the Axis powers. He served as a Navigator with RAF Squadron 320, a unit composed predominantly of Dutch personnel and based at RAF Carew Cheriton in Wales. The squadron was involved in vital reconnaissance and maritime patrol missions, contributing significantly to the Allied war effort.

Tragically, on February 25, 1941, Marinus Renardus van Kooij was killed in an aircraft accident. The Lockheed Hudson Mk I, designated T9364 and christened "Ypenburg," crashed during take-off from Pembrokeshire, Wales.



The accident also claimed the lives of his fellow crew members: Sergeant Vlieger Jan Michels, Stoker Franciscus Overdijk, and Korporaal Telegrafist Cornelis Jacobus Rademaker.

Marinus van Kooij was buried with honour at St Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His grave stands as a testament to his courage and dedication, and his memory is cherished by those who knew him and by the Netherlands, the country he served so valiantly.

Marinus's legacy is further commemorated by his bearing of the Bronze Lion, reflecting his extraordinary bravery and leadership. His contributions to the war effort and his ultimate sacrifice are remembered with deep respect, symbolizing the enduring spirit of those who fought for freedom during one of the most challenging periods in history.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593565/marinus-renardus-van_kooij

Sergeant Archibald Gordon Willis (1920-1940) 



68341 Sergeant
A.G. Willis
Air Gunner
Royal Air Force

31st July 1949 Aged 20

Sergeant Archibald Gordon Willis, born in 1920 in Barham near Canterbury, Kent, England, served as an Air Gunner in the Royal Air Force. With the service number 568341, he was a member of 48 Squadron RAF, stationed at RAF Carew Cheriton in Wales. Archibald was the son of Archibald Frank Willis and Nellie Ward (née Flack) Willis of Chelsea, London.



On July 31, 1940, Sergeant Willis tragically lost his life at the young age of 20 during a supply mission on behalf of the Royal Dutch Navy. The mission took a devastating turn when his aircraft, an Avro Anson Mk I with the serial number K8829, collided with an RAF Fairey Battle, serial number N2050, during take-off.

The pilot of the Avro Anson, Flight Sergeant Sydney Pryce Tomley, also perished in the crash.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/75844433/sydney-pryce-tomley>



The collision at Carew, Pembrokeshire, was a sombre reminder of the perils faced by RAF personnel during World War II. The dedication and bravery of those like Sergeant Willis, who served in crucial roles such as air gunners, were vital to the various operations carried out by the RAF during the war.

Sergeant Archibald Gordon Willis was laid to rest at St Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His service and sacrifice are honoured at his burial site, providing a place of remembrance for his family, comrades, and future generations who reflect on the courage and dedication of those who served in the Royal Air Force during one of history's most challenging periods.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593566/archibald-gordon-willis>

Sergeant Richard Edmund Wilson (? -1940) 



Sergeant Richard Edmund Wilson served with distinction in the Royal Air Force, holding the service number 565833. As a Navigator/Observer, he was assigned to B Flight, 1 Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit, based at RAF Carew Cheriton in Wales. His role was crucial in supporting the training and operations of anti-aircraft units, ensuring they were well-prepared for the threats posed by enemy aircraft during World War II.



Tragically, on April 23, 1940, Sergeant Wilson lost his life in an aviation accident. He was aboard a Hawker Henley, serial number L3427, performing his duties as Navigator/Observer when the aircraft crashed near Nash Villa, Pembroke Dock, Dyfed.

The crash also claimed the life of the pilot, Sergeant Anthony Leon Victor Barnes.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593554/anthony-leon_victor-barnes

The sudden loss of Sergeant Wilson was a significant blow to his unit and the broader RAF community. His dedication to his duties and his role in the critical operations of the Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit are remembered and honoured.

Sergeant Richard Edmund Wilson was laid to rest at St Mary New Churchyard in Carew, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His grave serves as a lasting tribute to his service and sacrifice, ensuring that his contributions to the war effort are not forgotten. His memory, alongside that of his fellow airmen, continues to inspire and remind us of the courage and commitment of those who served during one of the most challenging periods in history.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152593567/richard-edmund-wilson>

We honour these brave men who gave their lives during World War II and other campaigns. Their courage and sacrifice have secured the freedoms we cherish today. Though they are no longer with us, their legacy of bravery and dedication to duty remains. We are eternally grateful for their service and will always remember the profound impact of their sacrifice on our lives and our world.

Conclusion

Reflecting on this journey, I'm struck by how gradually these projects have unfolded, each one leading to the next in ways I never anticipated.

What began with the Llandry Church Cemetery Project has grown into a deeper exploration of World War II's personal stories and sacrifices.

Documenting the plane crashes and researching the lives of those who perished has been a profoundly moving experience, connecting me to the past in ways I hadn't expected.

After the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings, I'm grateful I had the opportunity to share these discoveries and honour those who have been lost.

This journey, though unplanned, has enriched my understanding and appreciation of history, and I hope it offers a meaningful tribute to those who gave so much.

Thank you for joining me in this exploration and for allowing these stories to find their place in our collective memory.

Graham T Emmanuel 2024

All my work can be viewed in the Peoples Collection Wales

<https://www.peoplescollection.wales/user/50601/published-items>

