

COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES

RESEARCHING SOMEONE FROM THE AIR FORCES WHO DIED IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR - GUIDANCE SHEET



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

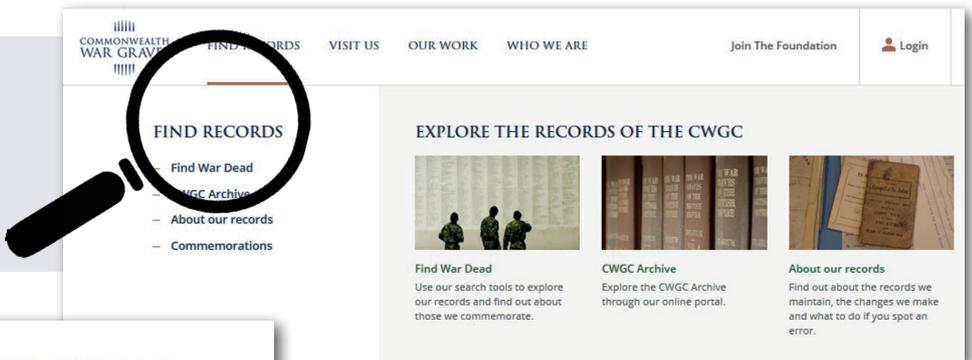
The first stage of your research starts with the **Commonwealth War Graves Commission Casualty Database**. At CWGC, we keep a record of the place of burial or commemoration of all the men and women of the Britain and Commonwealth who died in the First and Second World Wars.

STEP 1: Visit our website at www.cwgc.org



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

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



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

Last name
Enter the last name of the casualty

First name
Enter a first name

Initials
Enter initials

Service Number
Service numbers can contain numbers, letters and symbols

Regiment
Find records that relate to a particular regiment

Served with (country)
Served With

Served in (army etc.)
Served In

War
Select War

First World War Second World War

Fill in the name of the individual you are researching

Select **First World War** box



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

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

ADDITIONAL FIELDS

Select additional options to add them to your search criteria

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

+ Honours & awards
+ Additional Information

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

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

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

Name, Rank & Service No.	Unit, Regiment, Country of Service	Date of Death	Commemorated at
JOHN AIDAN LIDDELL Captain	7th Sqdn. Royal Flying Corps United Kingdom	Died 31 August 1915 27 years old	BASINGSTOKE (SOUTH VIEW OR OLD) CEMETERY E. R.C. 2257/B. United Kingdom
WILLIAM LEEFE ROBINSON Captain	Royal Air Force United Kingdom	Died 31 December 1918 23 years old	HARROW WEALD (ALL SAINTS) CHURCHYARD EXTENSION In South East part, United Kingdom
WILLIAM BARNARD RHODES-MOORHOUSE Lieutenant	2nd Sqdn. Royal Flying Corps United Kingdom	Died 27 April 1915 27 years old	PARNHAM PRIVATE CEMETERY, BEAMINSTER In the grounds of Parnham House, West of house, United Kingdom
LANOE GEORGE HAWKER Major	24th Sqdn. Royal Flying Corps United Kingdom	Died 23 November 1916 25 years old	ARRAS FLYING SERVICES MEMORIAL France
ALBERT BALL Captain	56th Sqdn. Royal Flying Corps United Kingdom	Died 07 May 1917 20 years old	ANNOEULLIN COMMUNAL CEMETERY AND GERMAN EXTENSION Grave 643. France
JAMES THOMAS BYFORD McCUDDEN Major	60 Sqdn. Royal Air Force United Kingdom	Died 09 July 1918 23 years old	WAVANS BRITISH CEMETERY B. 10. France

Be aware,

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

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

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

?

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

If known, the Additional Info can include next of kin details and address

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

MAJOR JAMES THOMAS BYFORD McCUDDEN

Regiment & Unit/Ship
Royal Air Force
60 Sqdn.

Date of Death
Died 09 July 1918
Age 23 years old

Buried or commemorated at
WAVANS BRITISH CEMETERY
B. 10.
France

Country of Service United Kingdom

Additional Info Croix de Guerre (France), Son of Amelie E. McCudden, of "Pilotchry," 37, Burton Rd., Kingston-on-Thames, and the late William McCudden. His brothers William T.J. McCudden and John Anthony McCudden also fell.

Personal Inscription FLY ON, DEAR BOY FROM THIS DARK WORLD OF STRIFE ON TO THE PROMISED LAND TO ETERNAL LIFE

Awards

Victoria Cross, Distinguished Service Order and Bar, Military Cross and Bar, Military Medal, Mentioned in Despatches

FROM THE CWGC ARCHIVES

GRAVE REGISTRATION (2)

Click to zoom in

HEADSTONE (2)

Click to zoom in

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

What are **Headstone Reports**?

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

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

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

What are **Concentration Reports**?

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

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



Did you know...?

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

BURIED AT

LIJSSENTHOEK MILITARY CEMETERY

West-Vlaanderen
Belgium

Number of casualties: 10786

[View cemetery details](#)



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



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

Enquiry Files cover a range of subjects, including:

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



Did you know...?

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

Step 3: Searching for additional information online

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

<https://astreetnearyou.org>

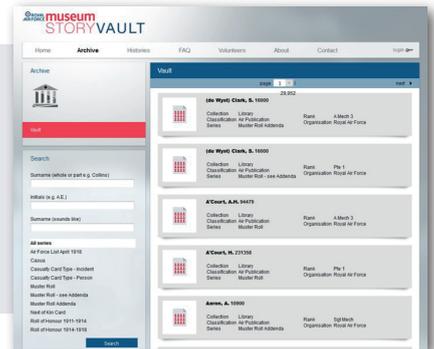


The **RAF Museum** has created a leaflet to guide you through the many resources which can help you develop your research further.

<https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/documents/Research/Research-Enquiries/e-Info-Sheet-1-WW1-personnel.pdf>

The **RAF Museum Archive** has a searchable database. Simply enter the name of the person you are researching to discover more.

http://www.rafmuseumstoryvault.org.uk/pages/raf_vault.php



• Royal Flying Corps • • People index •

I have produced a data file comprising RFC/RAF/RNAS aircrew names from a variety of documents and databases, presented in a standard format. The data file can be downloaded and browsed. This has a number of advantages over specific searches in that differences in spelling are highlighted, and there is a greater chance of obtaining all the relevant records compared to specific searches of a database.

The files comprises mainly officers and non-officer aircrew. There are generally multiple entries for each individual. It does not include rank and file unless they died in service or were employed as pilots, observers or aerial gunners. The database does not give a complete history of each individual - you can download the Military record from the AIR 76 series in the National Archives for the full service history of an Officer.

The original data contains a large number of errors and some may remain. The data is provided for information only with no warranty as to its accuracy or completeness. The combined data file can be downloaded here in comma separated or tab separated text files. Right click on the file name and specify 'Save link as...' If loading the data into a spreadsheet open the spreadsheet program first, then open the file, specifying 'text' for each column in order to avoid data corruption.

Surnames A (csv format) (txt format) 11,363 entries, version May 2019
Surnames B (csv format) (txt format) 41,980 entries, version May 2019
Surnames C (csv format) (txt format) 33,714 entries, version May 2019

Airhistory.org has a downloadable index of those who served in the Royal Flying Corps, and it contains references about where to find additional information.

http://www.airhistory.org.uk/rfc/people_index.html

The **Imperial War Museum** has created 'Tracing Your Ancestry: Royal Flying Corps and Royal Air Force', a very useful guide to help you develop your research further. It outlines other resources that are available, and how best to use them.

https://www.iwm.org.uk/sites/default/files/public-document/Tracing_Your_Ancestry_RFC_RAF.pdf

