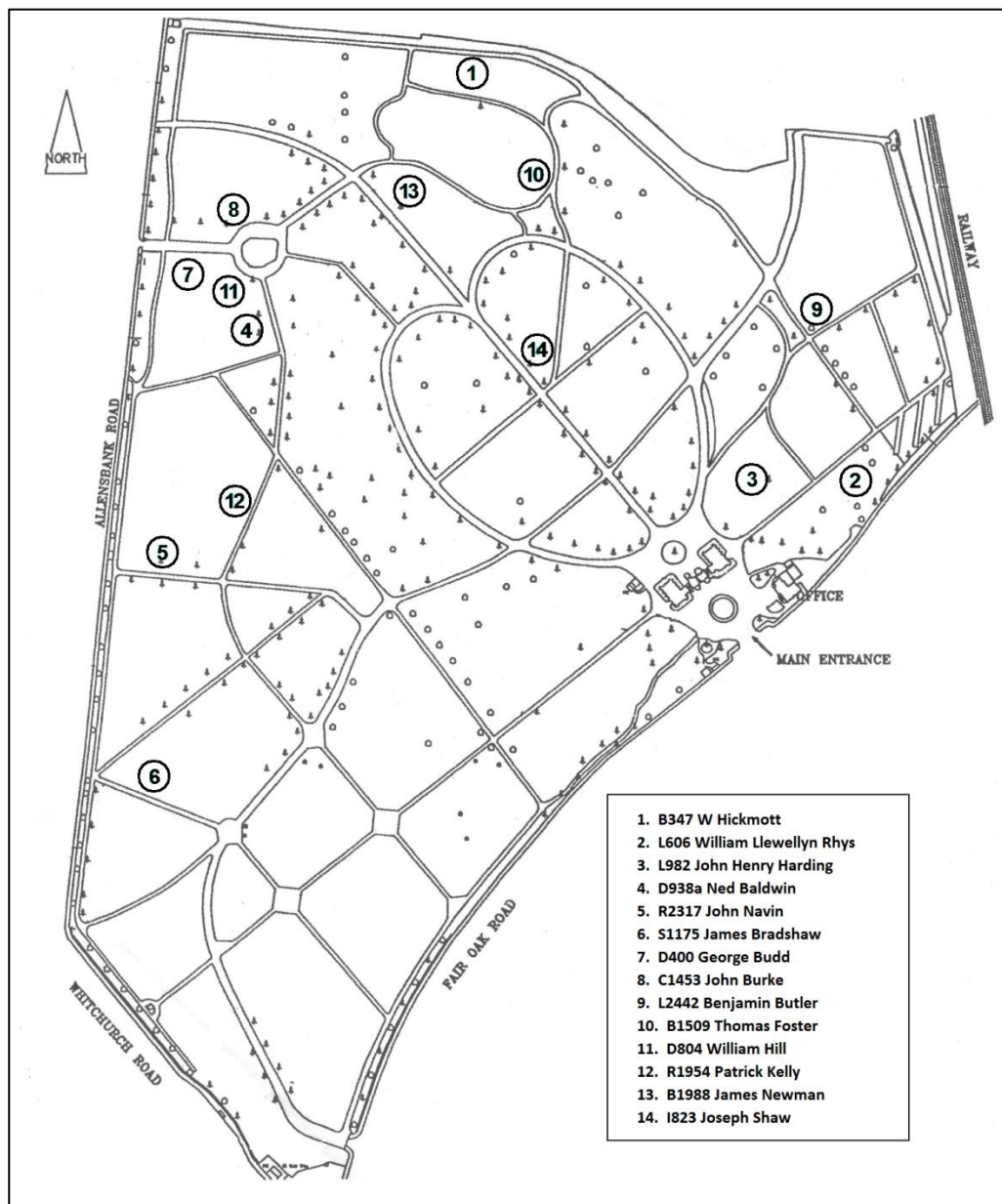


# **THE CRIMEAN WAR in CATHAYS CEMETERY**



**The Friends of Cathays Cemetery**





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# Introduction

Many wars and skirmishes took place to forge the British Empire for Queen Victoria. Cardiff gave many of its men to aid this expansion on foreign soil. Many of these men returned as veterans to be honoured on their deaths by being given military funerals with comrades in arms being present at the graveside and a Union Jack covering the coffin. Some were not so lucky and were not brought home but honoured in their own right by a mention on the family memorial. Others remain in unmarked graves.

## The Crimean War 1853-56

The Crimean War was the conflict that the Russian Empire lost to an alliance of the Ottoman Empire, France, Britain and Sardinia over the rights of Christian minorities in the Holy Land. The French promoted the rights of Roman Catholics, while Russia promoted those of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The longer-term causes involved the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the unwillingness of Britain and France to allow Russia to gain territory and power at Ottoman expense.

Having obtained promises of support from France and Britain, the Ottomans declared war on Russia in October 1853. The War started in the Balkans in July 1853, when Russian troops occupied the Danubian Principalities. The Ottomans under Omar Pasha, fought a strong defensive campaign. However, a Turkish attempt to reinforce the fort town of Kars in eastern Anatolia, which had been under siege, was destroyed by a Russian fleet at Sinop.

Fearing an Ottoman collapse, France and Britain rushed forces to Gallipoli. The allied force decided to attack Russia's main naval base in the Black Sea at Sevastopol on the Crimean peninsula.

After the successful **Battle of the Alma**, 20 September 1854, the Allies marched their way south of Sevastopol.

The Russians counterattacked on at the **Battle of Balaklava**, 25 October 1854. It is little known that this included the 4 cavalry charges, including the Charge of the Heavy Brigade, and the legendary "**Charge of the Light Brigade**"

which demonstrates that the war quickly became an iconic symbol of logistical, medical and tactical failures and mismanagement.

A second counterattack, at the **Battle of Inkerman**, 5 November 1854, ended in stalemate. The way was open for the Siege of the port of Sevastopol, which fell after eleven months.

Russia sued for peace in March 1856. The War was growing increasingly unpopular at home and The Treaty of Paris was signed on 30 March 1856, to end the war. It stopped Russia from basing warships in the Black Sea. The Ottoman states of Wallachia and Moldavia became largely independent and Christians were granted a degree of official equality in these States. The Orthodox Church regained control of the Christian churches in dispute.

## The Charge of the Heavy Brigade



The Heavy Brigade, a formation of Dragoon Guards and Dragoons, was a British heavy cavalry unit commanded by General Sir James York Scarlett at the Battle of Balaclava. The men were equipped with metal helmets and armed with cavalry swords for close combat. They were intended as the primary British shock force, leading frontal charges in order to break enemy lines. The Heavy Brigade was made up of the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, the 5th

Dragoon Guards, the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons and the Scots Greys. The Brigade made a gallant uphill charge to defeat a superior force of onrushing Russian cavalry, under the Russian commander Ryzhov, an amazing instance of the triumph of the individual skill of the Victorian British soldier, as well as of British discipline and unit cohesion.

## **1 W Hickmott**

### **Plot B347**

Sergeant W Hickmott, (unmarked grave - Plot B347), died 1st February 1897 at the age of 73. **He took part in the Charge of the Heavy Brigade** and served in the army for 26 years and lived in 68 Adam Street. His funeral was attended by the band of the Welsh Regiment and a detachment of Engineers. His polished oak coffin was draped in a Union Jack and a yellow flowered wreath from the Inniskilling Dragoons. A wreath from the Welsh depot and a sword and helmet was also added.

## **The Charge of the Light Brigade**

The Charge of the Light Brigade was a failed military action involving the British light cavalry led by Lord Cardigan against Russian forces during the **Battle of Balaklava** on 25 October 1854 in the Crimean War. Lord Raglan had intended to send the Light Brigade to prevent the Russians from removing captured guns from overrun Turkish positions, a task for which the light cavalry were well-suited. However, there was miscommunication in the chain of command and the Light Brigade was instead sent on a frontal assault against a different artillery battery, one well-prepared with excellent fields of defensive fire. The Light Brigade reached the battery under withering direct fire and scattered some of the gunners, but they were forced to retreat immediately, and the assault ended with very high British casualties and no decisive gains.

The events were the subject of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's narrative poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (1854), published just six weeks after the event. Its lines emphasise the valour of the cavalry in bravely carrying out their orders, regardless of the nearly inevitable outcome. Responsibility for the miscommunication has remained controversial, as the order was vague and

Captain Louis Nolan delivered the written orders with some verbal interpretation, then died in the first minute of the assault.

The charge was made by the Light Brigade of the British cavalry, which consisted of the 4th and 13th Light Dragoons, the 17th Lancers, and the 8th and 11th Hussars, under the command of Major General James Brudenell, 7th Earl of Cardigan.



The Light Brigade was the British light cavalry force. It mounted light, fast horses which were unarmoured. The men were armed with lances and sabres. Optimized for maximum mobility and speed, they were intended for reconnaissance and skirmishing. They were also ideal for cutting down infantry and artillery units as they attempted to retreat.

Overall command of the British cavalry resided with Lieutenant General George Bingham, 3rd Earl of Lucan. Cardigan and Lucan were brothers-in-law who disliked each other intensely. Lucan received an order from the army commander Lord Raglan stating: "Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, follow the enemy, and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns. Troop horse artillery may accompany. French cavalry is on your left. Immediate." Raglan wanted the light cavalry to prevent the Russians from successfully withdrawing the naval guns from the redoubts they had captured on the reverse side of the Causeway Heights, the hill forming the south side of the valley. This was an optimal task for the Light Brigade, as their superior speed would ensure the Russians would be forced to either quickly



abandon the cumbersome guns or be cut down en masse while they attempted to flee with them.

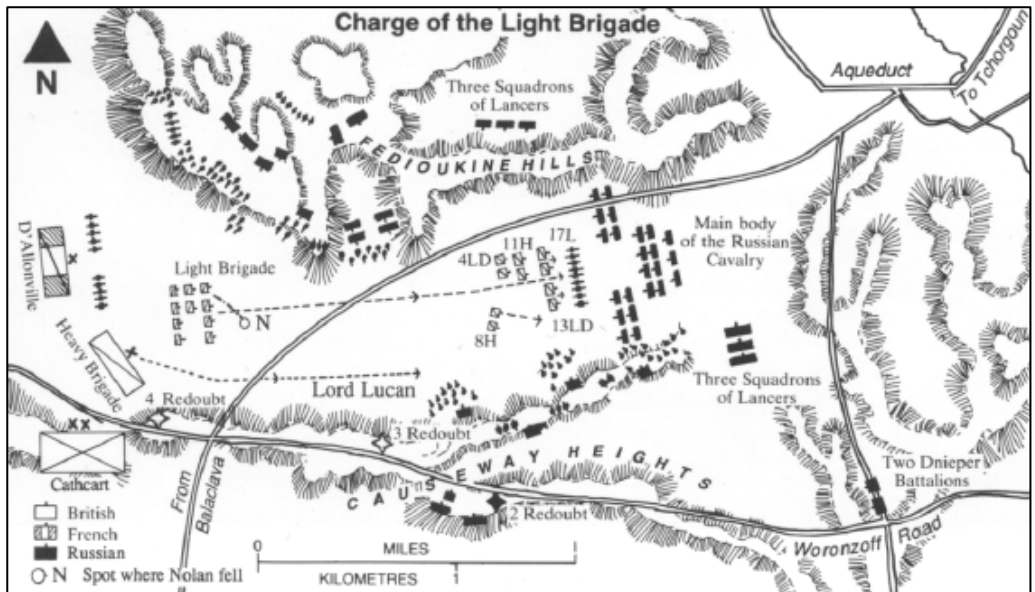
Raglan could see what was happening from his high vantage point on the west side of the valley. However, the lie of the land around Lucan and the cavalry prevented him from seeing the Russians' efforts to remove the guns from the redoubts and retreat.

The order was drafted by Brigadier Richard Airey and carried by Captain Louis Nolan. Nolan carried the further oral instruction that the cavalry was to attack immediately. When Lucan asked what guns were referred to, Nolan is said to have indicated with a wide sweep of his arm—not the causeway redoubts—but the mass of Russian guns in a redoubt at the end of the valley, around a mile away. His reasons for the misdirection are unknown because he was killed in the ensuing battle.

In response to the order, Lucan instructed Cardigan to lead his command of about 670 troopers of the Light Brigade straight into the valley between the Fedyukhin Heights and the Causeway Heights. In his poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (1854), Tennyson dubbed this hollow "The Valley of Death".

The opposing Russian forces were commanded by Pavel Liprandi and included approximately 20 battalions of infantry supported by over 50 artillery pieces. These forces were deployed on both sides and at the opposite end of the valley.

Lucan himself was to follow with the Heavy Brigade. Although the Heavy Brigade was better armoured and intended for frontal assaults on infantry positions, neither force was remotely equipped for a frontal assault on a fully dug-in and alerted artillery, much less one with an excellent line of sight over a mile in length and supported on two sides by artillery batteries providing enfilading fire from elevated ground. The semi-suicidal nature of this charge was surely evident to the troopers of the Light Brigade, but if there was any objection to the orders, it was not recorded.



The brigade was not completely destroyed, but did suffer terribly, with 118 men killed, 127 wounded, and about 60 taken prisoner. After regrouping, only 195 men were still with horses. The futility of the action and its reckless bravery prompted the French Marshal Pierre Bosquet to state: "It is magnificent, but it is not war." The Russian commanders are said to have initially believed that the British soldiers must have been drunk.

The reputation of the British cavalry was significantly enhanced as a result of the charge, though the same cannot be said for their commanders.

Slow communications meant that news of the disaster did not reach the British public until three weeks after the action. Raglan blamed Lucan for the charge, claiming that "from some misconception of the order to advance, the Lieutenant-General (Lucan) considered that he was bound to attack at all hazards, and he accordingly ordered Major-General the Earl of Cardigan to move forward with the Light Brigade." Lucan was furious at being made a scapegoat. Cardigan, who had merely obeyed orders, blamed Lucan for giving those orders. Cardigan returned home a hero and was promoted to Inspector General of the Cavalry. Lucan blamed Raglan and his deceased aide-de-camp Captain Nolan, who had been the actual deliverer of the disputed order.

In October 1875, survivors of the charge met at the Alexandra Palace in London to celebrate its 21st anniversary. The celebrations were fully reported in the Illustrated London News of 30 October 1875. Tennyson was invited, but

could not attend. Lucan, the senior commander surviving, was not present, but attended a separate celebration, held later in the day, with other senior officers at the fashionable Willis's Rooms, St James's Square. Reunion dinners were held for a number of years.

## **2 William Llewellyn Rhys**

### **Plot L 606**

Memorial recalls the Charge of the Light Brigade on 25 October 1854 of which Llewellyn Rhys may have been a survivor. Born in the Parish of Llantisant, son of a vicar, he was a draper by trade. He enlisted as a Private to the 11th Hussars on 2nd December 1850, regimental number 1498. It seems he had Chronic Ulceration of the left leg, resulting from Scurvy on his voyage to the Crimea in the spring of 1854, for which he was in Hospital at Sutari for 6 months and thence invalided home in June 1855. He was awarded the following medals: Alma - Balaclava - Inkerman - Sebastopol which were sold at Debenhams on 28 June 1901. He was promoted to a troop sergeant-major on 8th January 1857 but was demoted back to Private on 18th March 1858 and transferred to the 18th Hussars as a troop Sergeant-Major by 31st March 1858. Going absence without leave he was again reduced to a Private on 2nd March 1859. He was released from the 18th Hussars on 25th April 1861. He was eventually released at Chatham as unfit for service from the army on 6 August 1861. He is then believed to have travelled to the USA and joined in the Civil War. Upon returning to Cardiff he is believed to have become the Chief Accountant at Insole & Son, Shipping and is quoted in the Illustrated London News of 30th October 1875 to have attended a dinner of the 11th Hussars as a survivor of the Charge of the Light Brigade. He married sometime in April-June 1876 to Jane Gribble Davies at Cardiff. He died in Philadelphia Road, Porthcawl on 15th May 1881, aged 51. At the time he was residing at 22 Dumfries Place, Cardiff, Parish of St Johns with his wife.

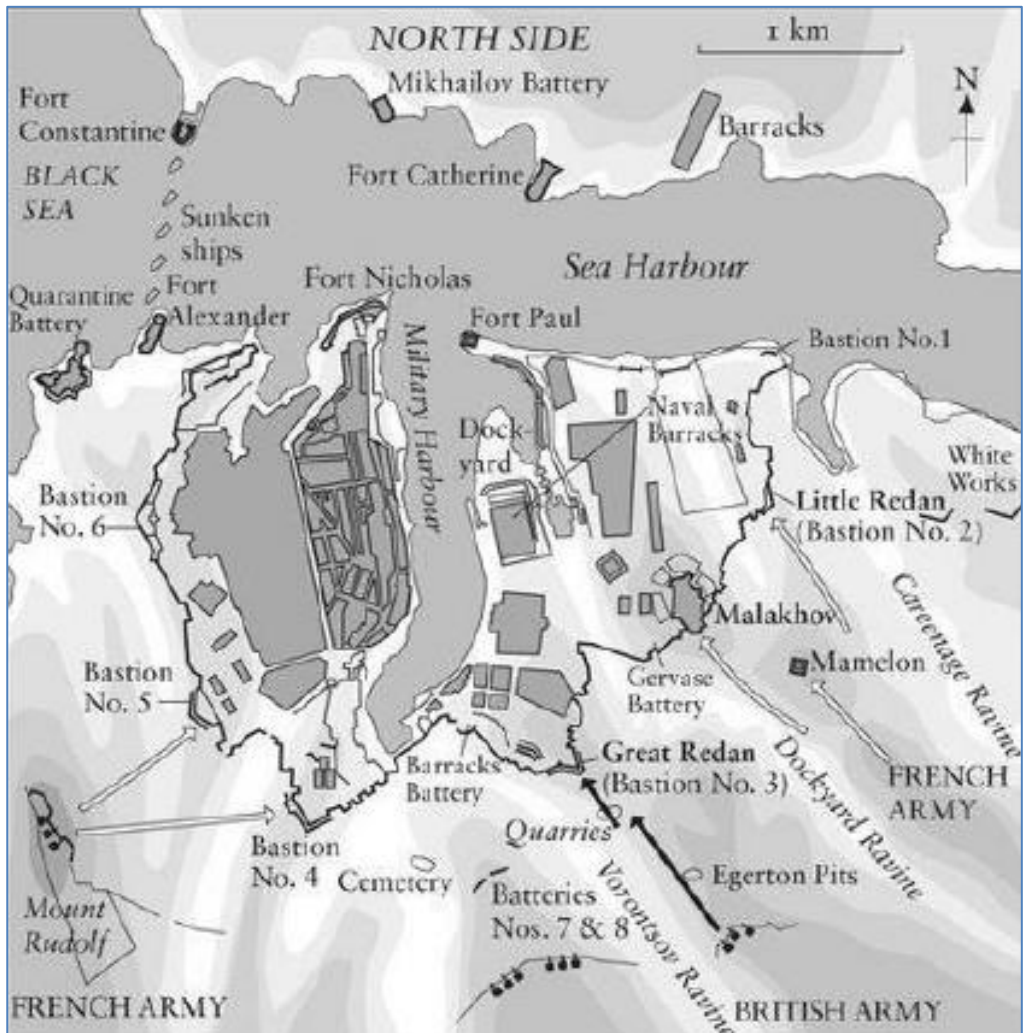
### 3 John Henry Harding Plot L982

John was a Somerset lad and enlisted in Bath in 1850 at the age of 17. A Crimean Veteran of the 13<sup>th</sup> Light Dragoons, **he took part in the Charge of the Light Brigade**. He served as a Private at Alma, Balaclava, Inkerman and Sebastopol and was discharged "time served" in 1863. His first children were born in Shrewsbury, but he came to Cardiff around 1870, where his father and brother already lived. Before long, he was licensee of the "Military Canteen" in what is now City Road, close to Longcross Barracks. This was soon vacated for new Maindy Barracks and John seems to have struggled thereafter: he then ran the Alexandra (sort of club) in what is now Wyverne Road - not a success and he died in Minny Street almost destitute in 1886, aged 54. Buried with son, who had died in infancy, and his wife, who had died just a few weeks earlier. But he had a grand send off: funeral procession headed by 70 men of Welch Regiment.



*John Henry Harding Dedication Ceremony - 23 November 2021*

## Battle of the Great Redan



Russia attacked the Ottoman Empire in 1853, aiming for territorial aggrandisement, but their invasion was repulsed. In early 1854 the British and French governments issued an ultimatum to Russia that they should cease their aggression against the Ottomans, but this was refused, resulting in a state of war existing between these states. The Franco-British navies entered the Black Sea with the intent of destroying the Russian fleet. After destroying the secondary naval base at Odessa their attention turned to the main Russian base at Sevastopol.



Landing at Eupatoria, the allies swept aside the Russian army at the Battle of the Alma. The allies then marched to Sevastopol and invested it. Russian attempts to break the siege failed, and the French refused to make aggressive movements against the Russian fortifications, even refusing to attack after the "second bombardment". This changed on 16 May 1855 when Pélissier assumed command of the French Army, and agreed with Lord Raglan that the Russian fortifications should be assaulted.

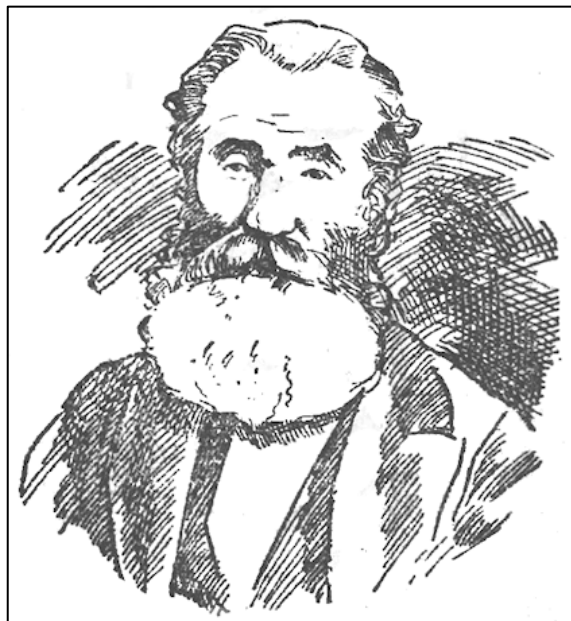
This led to three allied offensives in the summer of 1855, the last of which overwhelmed the Russian defences. First Offensive, 6–9 June 1855, Second Offensive, 17–18 June 1855 and the final assault, 7–9 September 1855.

The Russians finally exploded their magazines and retreated from the Great Redan, which was then occupied by the Highlanders. The Siege of Sevastopol was over, and the Russian Black Sea Fleet annihilated.



*The Russians evacuating Sevastopol on the night of 8 September 1855.*

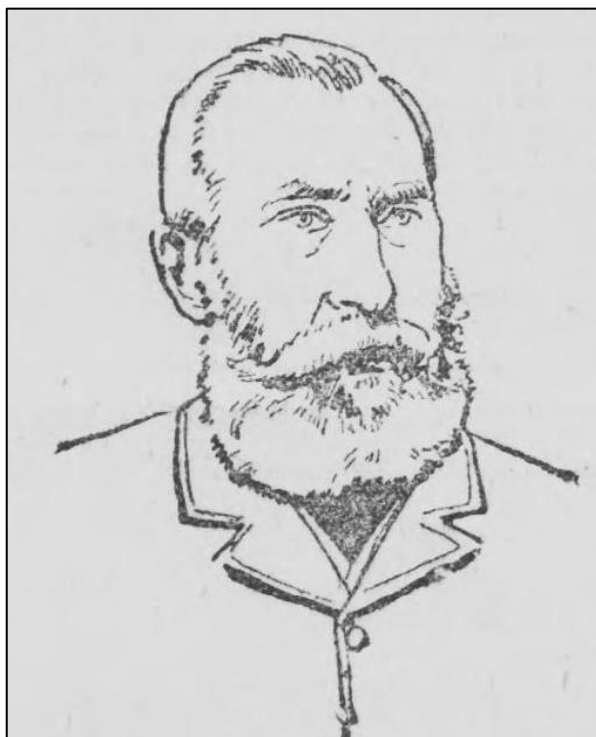
## 4 Edward (Ned) Baldwin Plot D938a



Edward (Ned) Baldwin of 5 David Street, died 6 April 1895, aged 69 (unmarked grave - Plot D938a). He joined the 31st Regiment in 1844 in Punjab. He took part in the Sutlej campaign under Sir Harry Smith and Lord Gough, being present at three battles, Ferozeshah, Aliwah and Sobraon in the Sikh War. In 1849 he served in Ireland and in May 1855 under Sir John Pennyfeather went to the Crimea and fought in the attack on the Quarries, and **assault on the Redan** on 7th June, followed by the storming of Sebastopol on 8th September. He received a Sutlej medal, Crimea medal and a Turkish medal. He was then employed by the Bute Docks Company for 27 years.

## 5 John Navin Plot R2317

Buried in Cathays 19th November 1901, employed as a coal merchant in Thesiger Street, Cathays. He enlisted in the 41st Regiment in 1849 in Cork at the age of 19. In 1851 he embarked for the Mediterranean and on the outbreak of the Crimean War, left Malta on 10th April 1854, with the regiment. He served in Bulgaria and fought at the Battle of Alma, and was present at the taking of Balaclava. He took part in a sortie at the Battle of Inkermann, and was **present at the storming of the Redan**. He obtained the Crimean Medal with 3 clasps, the Turkish medal and a Good-conduct medal. Afterwards he served in the East and West Indies with the Regiment. He was finally discharged in 1850 at Cork.





# The Crimea Medal

The Crimea Medal was a campaign medal approved on 15 December 1854, for issue to officers and men of British units (land and naval) which fought in the Crimean War of 1854–56 against Russia. The medal was awarded with the British version of the Turkish Crimea Medal, but when a consignment of these were lost at sea, some troops were received the Sardinian version.

Most medals were awarded unnamed, but could be returned for naming free of Charge. The medal is notable for its unusually ornate clasps. Each is in the form of an oak leaf with an acorn at each end, a style not used on any other British medal. The ornate, floriated, swivelling suspender is also unique to the Crimea Medal.

## Clasps and eligibility

Five clasps were authorised:

**Alma** – for the battle of 20 September 1854.

**Balaklava** – for the battle of 25 October 1854.

**Inkerman** – for the battle of 5 November 1854.

**Sebastopol** – for the siege that lasted from 11 September 1854 to 9 September 1855. Anyone who received the Balaklava or Inkerman clasps was also awarded this clasp.

**Azoff** – for the Naval expedition in the Sea of Azoff from 25 May to 22 September 1855. It was awarded only to Royal Navy personnel.

The Alma and Inkerman clasps were authorised in December 1854 at the same time as the medal, with that for Balaklava on 23 February 1855, Sebastopol on 13 October 1855 and Azoff on 2 May 1856. No person received more than four clasps.

The medal was awarded to the next of kin of those who died during the campaign. Troops who landed in the Crimea after 9 September 1855, the day Sebastopol fell, did not receive the medal unless they had been engaged against the enemy after that date.

The medal was issued to Turkish, and to a limited number of French forces who served in the Crimea, unofficial French clasps being sometimes added in

addition to the British clasps, including:

**Tchernaiia** – for the battle of August 16, 1855.

**Traktir** – alternate clasp for the bars the Battle of the Tchernaiia.

**Mer d'Azoff** – for the Navy missions in the Sea of Azoff from 25 May to 22 November 1855.

**Malakof** – for the battle of 8 September 1855.

## **Men of the Crimean War**

### **6 James Bradshaw Plot S1175**

Born in 1828 and a haulier by trade. He was a Private of the 68th Light Infantry, who died 3rd April 1908 at the age of 80. He resided at 32 Radnor Road, Canton. He served in the Crimea and Maori Campaigns, obtaining 4 bars for Alma, Balaclava, Inkerman and Sevastopol. He possessed a Turkish Crimean medal and New Zealand Campaign medal.

### **7 George Budd Plot D400**

George Budd of 33 Tyndall Street, Cardiff died aged 59, buried at Cathays Cemetery 19th March 1894 (unmarked grave - Plot D400). Joined the 3rd Buffs (East Kent Regiment) in 1846. His coffin was covered with a Union Jack and followed by a number of his comrades. He had carried the scaling ladders at the sortie of 18th June 1855 at Sebastopol and was in a working party burying the dead after the battle.

## **8 John Burke**

### **Plot C1453**

John passed away June 1894, aged 59. He was a Colour Serjeant, of the 46th Light Infantry and a Crimean veteran. He left a widow and a son William. The coffin was covered in a Union Jack and the body was carried on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1894, from 9 Norman Street, Cathays to the Cemetery by 6 colour-sergeants from the Depot. The funeral was attended by the Regiment Band. Rev Father Gibbon officiated.

## **9 Benjamin Butler**

### **Plot L2442**



A Crimean Veteran. Corporal of the 7th Fusiliers. Born in Shrivenham, Gloucestershire, having been a resident of Cardiff for over 40 years. He enlisted on 1st December 1884 for active service abroad. He had 3 medals: Sebastopol with one bar, the Turkish & Indian Mutiny. He was buried in Cathays 22 November 1909 of 29 Railway Street at the age of 76.

## **10 Thomas Foster**

### **Plot B1509**

Passed away, aged 67, 28th August 1906, he had obtained the rank of Sergeant, 41st (Welch) Regiment of Foot. He lived in Tewkesbury Street, Cardiff. At his funeral crowds lined Crwys & Fair Oak Roads, with over 100 men from the Barracks present, including the Depot band under Sergt-Major Acramen. The Royal Garrison Artillery and C Squadron of the Glamorgan Imperial Yeomanry were also represented. 30 other Crimean and Indian War veterans were present. The coffin was covered by a Union Jack and the service was officiated by Rev F C Fitch of St Cyprian's Church, Monthermer Road.

## **11 William Hill**

### **Plot D804**

William was a Private, of the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers who had taken part in the Crimean War. Buried 14 June 1892, aged 56, of 90 Cairns Street, Cathays. William Gibbons officiated. The funeral was attended by several Crimean War veterans. Sergeant-Major Vernon of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers represented his old regiment. Members of the Taff Vale Railway, the deceased last employer, were also present. Mr Foster, drill instructor to the Bute Docks police superintended the arrangements of the funeral.

## **12 Patrick Kelly**

### **Plot R1954**

Buried in Cathays Monday 15th January 1906 of 42 Crwys Road, Cardiff, aged 64. He served as private in the 41st Regiment in the Crimea and left 2 sons. The band played the Last Post at the graveside. He had obtained the Crimean medal and bar, the Turkish and Good-conduct medals. William Gibbons officiated over the funeral.

## 13 James Newman

### Plot B1988



James Newman, Colour-Segeant Awarded the French Legion of Honour of 2 Whitchurch Place, Cathays. Born at Trowbridge in 1831 and arriving in Malta in March 1854, joined the 62nd Regiment (Wiltshire) in the Crimea, in November 1854, at the age of 17. He served at the Siege of Sebastopol, and the attack on the Quarries in June 1855. He specifically distinguished himself by taking a rifle pit from the enemy under heavy fire. He was present at the attacks on the Redan in June & September 1855 and was wounded; losing one of his fingers and receiving a severe wound to the hip. He then joined the Canadian Rifles and later became a drill instructor. He had a family of 5 daughters and 3 sons, all 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards. He was discharged from the army in April 1890. He died and was buried in Cathays Cemetery 11 June 1901 aged 70 (Unmarked grave - Plot B1988). A number of Crimean veterans and soldiers of the Welsh Regiment attended the funeral. The French Vice-consul was also present.

## **14 Joseph Shaw**

### **Plot I823**

A Crimean veteran, buried in Cathays Wednesday 3rd November, aged 72 of 42 Rose Street. He was a Col.-Sergt of the Glamorgan Light Infantry Militia and 63rd Regiment. The funeral included the band of the 3rd Welsh Regiment under Sergt-drummer Kelly, along with 4 other Sergeants, 2 corporals and 70 men from the Depot. Funeral arrangements were carried out by QMS Geraghty, Welsh Regiment and Mr Thomas Foster, late 41st Regiment, Drill Instructor, Bute Dock Police. On the way to the Cemetery the band played Chopin's Funeral March and buglers sounded the Last Post. The coffin was covered in a Union Jack, surmounted by a helmet and sword.



