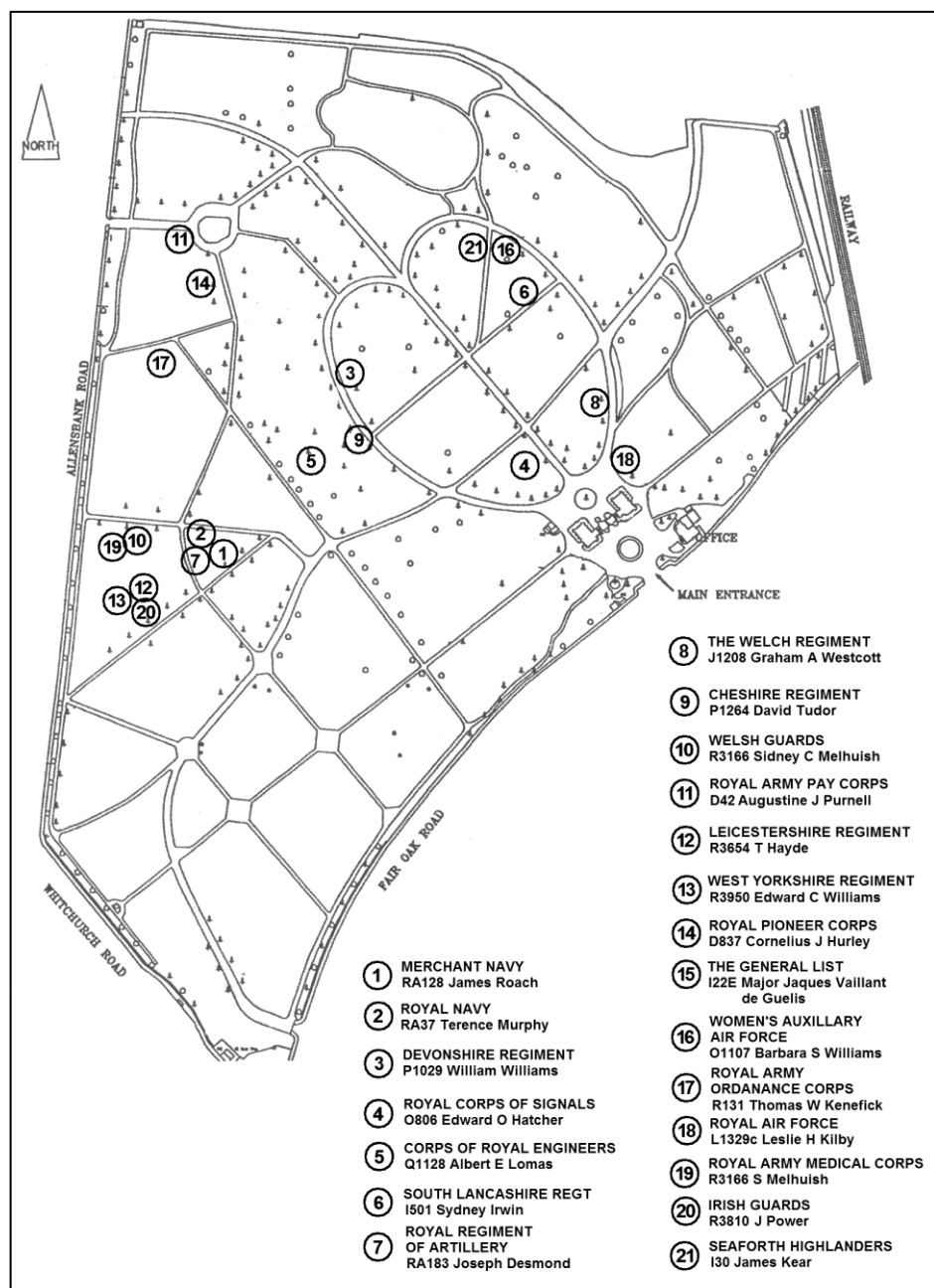


# **World War Insignia In Cathays Cemetery - A Guide**



**The Friends of Cathays Cemetery**





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# 1 Merchant Navy



The insignia of the Merchant Navy is that of the two initials "M" and "N" within a rope, which has a reef knot at the bottom. Above this is a naval crown containing the sails of ships.

Britain, as an island, was wholly dependent upon the Merchant Navy for supplies and throughout the War the Merchant Navy continued with commercial shipping. In order to avoid attacks by German U-Boat "wolf packs", the ships sailed in convoys protected by the Royal Navy.

Various Cardiff based commercial vessels were involved in World War II. The P & A Campbell Line was involved in the Dunkirk evacuations of 1940 where the paddle steamers Brighton Belle, Devonian and Brighton Queen rescued over 7,000 troops.

The William Readon Smith Line was also involved in World War II, losing over 20 vessels through enemy action. William Readon Smith is buried in Cathays Cemetery in Section P Grave No 972.

## 2 Royal Navy



The insignia of the Royal Navy as engraved on War Graves Commission headstones is that of a fouled anchor. Here the anchor's rope is wound around the anchor.

Being an island nation at war, the Royal Navy played an important role throughout the conflicts in World War I. The main problem encountered was the German U-Boat, "Untersee-boote". At the beginning of World War II the Royal Navy was involved in the Battle of the River Plate in which the German battleship the Graf Spee was sunk, which provided a great boost to British morale after earlier German successes. In 1940 the Navy was involved in the bombing of the Italian Fleet at Taranto and in the following year the Navy engaged and sunk the Bismarck, a German Battleship, with the help of Swordfish of the Fleet Air Arm launched from aircraft carriers. Throughout the war the Navy carried out convoy duties protecting the British Merchant Navy ships in the Atlantic and those in the coastal waters near Norway. The Navy was also able to evacuate 15,000 troops from Crete during 1941 under heavy bombardment.

In December 1942, Royal Marine Commandos raided Bordeaux in South West France. These "Cockleshell Heroes" were members of the Special Boat Service, who canoed into the harbour to place limpet mines, which blew up four German ships.

### 3 Devonshire Regiment



The Devonshire Regiment is said to have been formed to commemorate the defences of the city of Exeter by the county trained bands during the Civil War in the 17th century. The Regiment was raised in 1685 as the Duke of Beaufort's Musketeers, becoming the Devonshire Regiment in 1881. The badge is that of the castle of Exeter and the motto "Semper Fidelis" which means "Always Faithful".

The Regiment saw battle in Armentieres in 1914, Flanders in 1914-18 and in World War II in the landing at Porto San Veners, Italy in 1943.

The Regiment has one nickname. They are known as "The Bloody Eleventh".

## 4 Royal Corps of Signals



The emblem of the Royal Corps of Signals is Mercury, the messenger of the gods, holding a caduceus, an ancient herald's wand in his left hand. Mercury is standing on a globe and is placed within an oval stating the Regiment's name, which is ensigned with a crown. The motto of the Corps, "Certo Cito" when translated means "Swift and Sure".

The Royal Corps of Signals was formed in June 1920 with troops from the Signal Service R.E. and, in 1927, by a transfer of British officers and other ranks of the Indian Signal Corps.

The methods of communication had progressed rapidly between the two wars, especially in the field of wireless telegraphy and telephony. Horses had also been replaced by vehicles so that by 1939 the Corps was fully mechanised. Communications were vital to the success of operations and although the Corps did not receive Battle Honours their contribution to the victories of other Army units was considerable.



## 5 Corps of Royal Engineers



The Regimental insignia of the Corps of Royal Engineers features the initials of the sovereign at the time and the badge of the Most Noble Order of the Garter. These are enclosed within a Laurel wreath with the Regiment's name beneath on the scroll. The motto of the Order of the Garter "Honi soit qui mal y pense" means "Evil be to him who evil thinks".

The Royal Engineers were formed into a Corps in 1716 and evolved into their existing form in 1856.

In the Second World War the Royal Engineers built roads and bridges and lifted mines under direct fire. The use of AVRES (Armoured Vehicles Royal Engineers) allowed the Army to breach German defences. These tanks were flail tanks that exploded mines, bridging and flame-thrower tanks and "bobbin" tanks which unrolled a carpet of hessian on yielding ground for other tanks to cross.

In 1945 after VE Day Field Marshall Lord Montgomery pronounced that "sappers rose to great heights in World War II and their contribution to victory was beyond all calculation". They are known as "The Mudlarks".

## 6 South Lancashire Regiment



The South Lancashire Regiment (The Prince of Wales Volunteers) took on this name in 1881 having been raised as the Phillip's Regiment in 1717 and the 82nd Regiment in 1793. The two regiments saw action in the West Indies and in the American Civil War. After their amalgamation in 1881 the new regiment saw action in the South African Campaigns at the end of the 19th century, gaining battle honours at Ladysmith.

During World War I the Regiment played an important role in the campaigns in France and Belgium throughout the four years as well as in India and Egypt. In World War II the chief arena of action was in France and two assault battalions were selected to lead the third division onto the beach at Le Breche.

The regimental insignia of the South Lancs. is that of the Prince of Wales Plume and coronet with the words "Ich Dien" (I serve) underneath in a scroll. Below this is the sphinx and the word "Egypt". The South Lancs. are nicknamed "The Fighting Fortieth" and "The Excellers".

## 7 Royal Regiment of Artillery



The Royal Regiment of Artillery's Insignia features an old-fashioned muzzle-loading gun with the inscription "Ubique" meaning "everywhere" written above. This is ensigned by a crown and on the scroll underneath there is a second motto "Quo fas et gloria ducunt" which means "Wither right and glory lead".

The Jacobite Rebellion of 1715 saw the creation of two permanent Companies, which, in 1772, were given the title "Royal Regiment of Artillery".

By the outbreak of World War II in 1939 the Regiment was nearly fully mechanised and had taken on new responsibilities including the manning of searchlights, the operation of Radar and the formation of a Maritime Branch. The expansion of the Regiment was such that at one stage two-fifths of the British Army were Gunners.

The Gunners motto "Ubique" meaning "everywhere", was lived up to as there was no theatre of war in which this Regiment did not serve. The Regiment does not display Battle Honours.

## 8 The Welch Regiment



The insignia of the Welch Regiment features the plume of the Prince of Wales with the phrase "Ich Dien" meaning "I serve" on either side. The use of this spelling Welch was adopted in 1920 replacing the "s" with a "c".

In 1881 the 41st Foot became the 1st battalion of the Welch Regiment, with the 69th Foot becoming the 2nd. In 1719, the troops were invalids, out-patients of the Chelsea hospital in London, who carried out garrison duties, quelled disturbances and prevented smuggling with the 41st Foot becoming a marching Regiment in 1787. They are known as "The invalids" and the "Ups and Downs".

During the First World War, the Welch gained battle honours in Passchendaele (1917) and Egypt (1915-17). In the Second World War the 1st Battalion was involved in battles in Crete, Benghazi and Italy suffering such great losses that the Regiment had to re-form three times. The 2nd Battalion saw action in Burma with the 4th and 5th Battalions seeing fighting on the continent of Europe between D-Day and VE-Day.

## 9 The Cheshire Regiment



The Cheshire Regiment was raised in 1689 as the Duke of Norfolk's Regiment. Their insignia is that of acorn leaves, which are thought to commemorate their services at the Battle of Dettingen in 1743, however, there is no evidence to support the claim. The Reverend P Sumner states that the acorn sprig also has its history in the coat of arms of the colonel of the regiment, The Duke of Norfolk and in the crest of the second colonel Sir H Bellamy. Their motto "Ich Dien" means "I serve" and will be familiar to many as the motto of the Prince of Wales.

The Regiment has a number of nicknames, mainly "The lightning conductors" and "The old two twos".

They saw action in both wars gaining battle honours in Ypres in 1914 and Gallipoli in 1915. They were also involved in the North African Campaigns of 1940-1943 in World War II.

## 10 The Welsh Guards



The Regimental insignia of the Welsh Guards features a leek which is approx. 2.75 inches in height. The leek is an ancient badge of Wales and is featured in Shakespeare's King Henry V (Act IV, Scene 7) at the Battle of Agincourt on St Crispin's Day 25th October 1415. The motto "Cymru am byth" means "Wales for Ever".

The Welsh guards were formed in 1915 and Welshmen already serving in the Brigade of Guards were asked to transfer. In World War I the Regiment gained honours in the Somme (1916-1918) and Ypres (1917). In the early stages of World War II the Regiment saw action in the defence of Arras. Battalions were also sent to North Africa and Italy whilst others received specialist training for the invasion of France in June 1944. From having to retreat from Arras earlier on in the war this Regiment was the first to liberate both Arras and Brussels. Their nickname is "The Taffs".

## 11 Royal Army Pay Corps



The insignia of the Royal Army Pay Corps is that of a lion standing on a crown over a scroll inscribed with the Corp's motto, "fide et fiducia" which means "in faith and trust".

The Royal Army Pay Corps, formed in 1920, make sure that those serving in the military are paid whether this is in the field of battle or in a barracks situation. The most important features in the life of a soldier are said to be good food, cheerful comrades, effective officers, regular pay and dry feet although not necessarily in that order. No matter where a soldier may be serving, the Royal army Pay Corps ensures that he receives his pay. The corps has a number of nicknames: "The Ink Slingers" and "The Quill Drivers".

## 12 Royal Leicestershire Regiment



The Royal Leicestershire Regiment was raised in 1688 as Colonel Solomon Richards Regiment of the Foot with the name changing as a new colonel took command until 1751. In 1881 the Regiment became the Leicestershire and was not granted the name Royal until 1946 in recognition of their services. The Regiment now forms part of the Royal Anglian Regiment.

The Regiment's insignia is that of the Royal Tiger with the word "Hindoostan" in a scroll underneath. This was granted in recognition of their services in India from 1804-1823.

The Regiment's motto is "Veni et Vici" which means "I came and I conquered" which was used between 1841-1845. The Royal Leicestershire are often called "The Tigers" following their service in India and "The Lilywhites" due to the white facings on their uniforms from 1881.

The Regiment gained battle honours in the Somme in 1916 and 1918 and in Malaya in 1941-1942.



## 13 West Yorkshire Regiment



The insignia of the West Yorkshire Regiment features the White Horse of Hanover on ground with the name of the Regiment on the scroll.

The West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own) were formed in 1665 to support King James II against the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion. In 1715, due to threats on the Crown, the King's Regiments were again called into action and were granted the White Horse of Hanover as a badge.

The West Yorkshire Regiment gained Battle Honours in France and Flanders (1914-18). The Regiment was involved in the North-West European theatres of the War in 1940. Although they were mainly involved in conflicts in the Far East, for example, in Burma from 1942-1945, they also saw service in Ethiopia and North Africa from 1940-1942.

They gained Honours at the Defence of the Alamein Line in North Africa in 1940-1942 and in the Defence of Sinzweya, Imphal, Bishenpur and Sittang, located in the Far East from 1942-1945. Their nicknames include "The P.O.W's" and "The old and bold).

## 14 Royal Pioneer Corps



The regimental insignia of the Royal Pioneer Corps features a "pile" consisting of a pick, with its head downwards, placed centrally with a rifle at the front and a shovel crossing between the other two. The rifle shows the fighting aspects of the Corps whilst the pick and the shovel are the tools of the working aspects of the Regiment. On the badge there is a Laurel wreath which points downwards whilst above is a crown. The motto of the Corps, "Labor omnia vincit" means "Labour conquers all things".

The Corps, in its existing form, was established just after the outbreak of World War II and was named the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps in 1940.

The majority of tasks undertaken by the Corps included rescue and demolition work, the erection of field kitchens, and the repairing and clearing of roads. By VE-Day the Corps' number had increased to over 1,500,000 soldiers. Although the Corps took part in many operations, of special note is their work at Salerno, Anzio, North Africa and Normandy. By the sixth day of the D-Day Landings there was 231 companies, 34 Group Headquarters and 23 Pioneer and Civil Labour Units involved in the final advance into Germany.

## 15 General List



The Insignia of the General List features the Royal Crest of the Lion and Unicorn on either side of the Garter.

The General List first appeared in October 1914 as the "General list infantry for service battalions" and covers a variety of posts within the Army. This list involved those who were commissioned officers but were not assigned to any particular regiment. This list was used more in wartime to speed up the process of commissioning officers. Many of those on the General List did not wish to highlight their allegiances since many were involved with the Special Operations Executive.

## 16 Women's Auxiliary Corps



The Insignia of the Royal Air Force and the Woman's Auxiliary Air Force features an eagle in flight with its head lowered. Behind the eagle is a circle containing the motto "Per ardua ad astra" which means "Through struggle to the stars". A crown is also placed at the top of the circle.

The Woman's Auxiliary Air Force came into existence in June 1939, with the first recruit depot being established at West Drayton in October 1939. By May 1943, the number of women serving in the WAAF had increased to 182,000 and throughout the War over a quarter of a million women served in this force.

The WAAF's contribution to the victory gained in 1945 was tremendous. Their main role was one of substitution. Here the women took over the roles of airmen, releasing them for active duties. The WAAF carried out administration duties, worked as orderlies and balloon fabric workers and drove RAF mechanical transport. They were also involved in Operations Rooms and worked as radio operators and deciphered codes.

## 17 Royal Army Ordnance Corps



The badge of the Corps is the Arms of the Board of Ordnance within the Garter surmounted by the Crown. The Corps motto is "Sua tela tonanti" which means "Their weapons thundering".

In 1870, the Ordnance Corps formed part of the Army Service Corps and did not form into a separate Corps until 1881, gaining the title Royal for services in the Great War. The Royal Army Ordnance Corps supply the armed forces with whatever is needed both on the field of battle and in peacetime. These are trained soldiers who have specialised in a trade, be it the supply of food and materials or the supply of fuel and ammunition. This Corps keeps the army fighting and ready for anything. Hence their nickname "The sugar stick people".

## 18 Royal Air Force



Britain entered the First World War with 65 unarmed serviceable aircraft made of wood and wire covered with doped fabric. Pilots sat on cast iron stove lids to avoid being shot from below.

the Second World War saw the first widespread use of airpower which greatly affected both the strategies and tactics employed. The RAF was established in 1918 by merging the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Service. In World War II Coastal Command played a crucial role in the battle of the Atlantic, leading to the sinking of 184 U-Boats and the destruction of 478,000 tonnes of enemy shipping. From July-December 1940, the RAF fought the Luftwaffe for control of the air in the Battle of Britain, which prevented Hitler's planned invasion.

Bomber Command was also part of the RAF and is renowned for its role in the bombing of industrial areas of the Ruhr from 1942-1945 which culminated in the massive allied attack on Dresden in February 1945, involving 3,000 bombers. This area of Germany was also the target of the bouncing bombs used by the Dambusters.

Winston Churchill praised the contribution of the RAF, following the Battle of Britain, when he pronounced that "never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few".

## 19 Royal Army Medical Corps



The Royal Army Medical Corps was founded in 1898 by amalgamating the medical staff of officers with the medical staff of officers with the medical staff corps made up of men by Army Order 93. In 1661 Doctors from civil life accompanied troops on active service for the length of the hostilities, but after the Crimean War the army began to realise that this necessary part of the organisation needed structuring and the Army Hospital Corps was formed in 1857 which became the Medical Staff Corps in 1884.

Following the amalgamation, the new Royal Army Medical Corps was granted the motto "in arduis fidelis" which means "faithful in misfortune or adversity". In 1902 the regimental insignia was granted and is made up of the rod of Aesculapius the Greek god of medicine with a serpent with its head to the left and at the top twisted around the rod. All of this is held within a laurel wreath.

The Medical Corps are known by the following nicknames: "The Linseed Lancers", "The Pills" and "The Poultice Wallopers".

Since their formation, the Medical Corps have provided sterling service and, indeed, have been faithful in adversity.

## 20 Irish Guards



The insignia of the Irish Guards is that of an order of St Patrick's Star with a Shamrock and cross of St Patrick within a circle. The motto of the Regiment, above the inner circle is that of "Quis Separabit" meaning "Who shall separate us" whilst underneath the circle is the date the order was instituted in 1783 (MDCCLXXXIII).

The Regiment was formed by Queen Victoria under Army Order 77 in 1900 to commemorate the bravery shown by the Irish Regiments in the South African campaigns the year earlier.

The Irish Guards gained numerous battle honours throughout World War I in such battles as Mons in 1914 and Arras in 1918. The Irish Guards also fought in World War II gaining many battle honours including Italy 1943-44. The official mascot of the Guards is the Irish Wolfhound and their nickname is "Bob's Own" or "The Micks".



## 21 Seaforth Highlanders



The Seaforth Highlanders are now amalgamated into the regiment of the Queens Own Highlanders. Their insignia is that of a caboshed stag with a scroll underneath proclaiming the motto "Cuidich'N Righ" which means "Help the King".

In 1777 the Earl of Seaforth raised the 72nd Foot which in 1793 became the 78 Highland Regiment. The stag was chosen for the badge since in 1266, an infuriated stag confronted King Alex III of Scotland, while hunting in the Mar Forest. The stag charged and knocked him to the ground. His cries for help were answered by Colin Fitzgerald who severed the animal's head just behind the antlers, which is why there is no neck on the badge, and in gratitude for his services the King granted Fitzgerald the head of the stag and the motto. The first Earl of Seaforth, in 1623, was one of Colin Fitzgerald's descendants.

The Regiment gained numerous honours in both World Wars, seeing action in Ypres in 1915, 1917 and 1918 and also in Burma in World War II in 1942-44.

The Seaforth Highlanders are also known as "The MacRaes" and "The King's Men".

## **22 The Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter in 1917, and was charged with the duty to mark and maintain the graves of members of the Commonwealth's forces killed in the World War and to build memorials to those with no known burial place and to keep records and registers.

The Commission's principles are that the dead should be commemorated individually by name on a headstone or memorial, that the memorial is permanent and uniform so that no distinction is made on account of rank, race or creed. There are Commonwealth War Graves in 146 countries and the Commission are responsible for 1,694,408 commemorations.

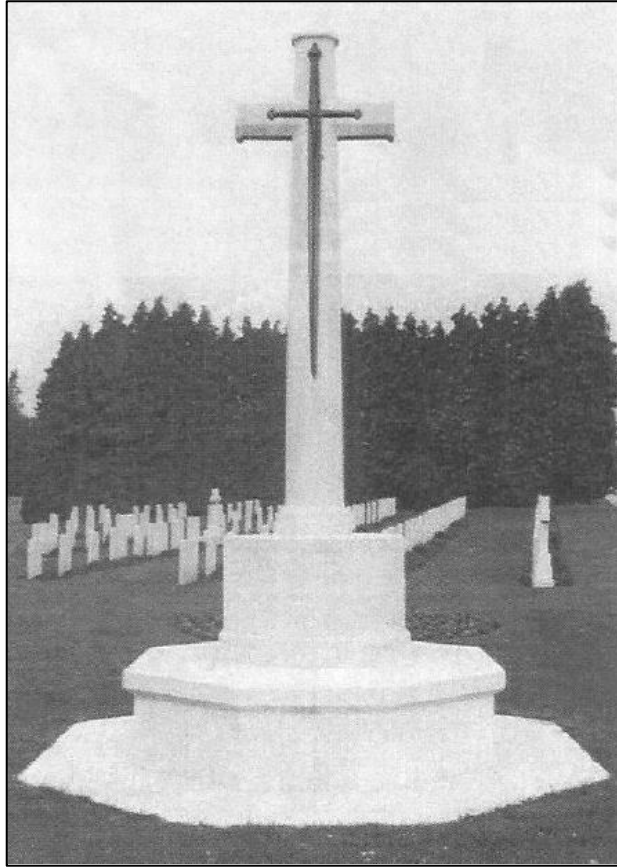
Each headstone is 2 feet 8 inches in height and is made of Portland stone. A national emblem, regimental or service badge is engraved at the top of the memorial, followed by rank, name, unit, date of death and age, with an appropriate religious emblem at the foot. There are also inscriptions on some memorials chosen by family members.

These memorials honour those who gave their lives in the Wars and are reminders of the great tragedy of war.

There are War Graves Commission headstones throughout Cardiff's cemeteries. The photo shows the War Graves Commission Cross in the new section of Cathays Cemetery in Allenbank Road, Cardiff. Here pine trees form a green background to the plot and before them are hedges of bay and fushia and a wide flower border.

Most of the dead who rest in this plot and in other parts of the cemetery, were men of Cardiff; they include soldiers of the Royal Welch Fusiliers and of the Welch Regiment, for which the city was the depot.

Graves of those killed lie in scattered positions throughout the cemeteries with some at both Western Cemetery and Pantmawr Cemetery as well as in Cathays.



War Graves Commission Cross. Cathays Cemetery section EB.



Cardiff  
Bereavement  
Services



Gwasanaethau  
Profedigaeth  
Caerdydd



Friends of  
Cathays Cemetery  
Cytfeillion Mynwent Cathays