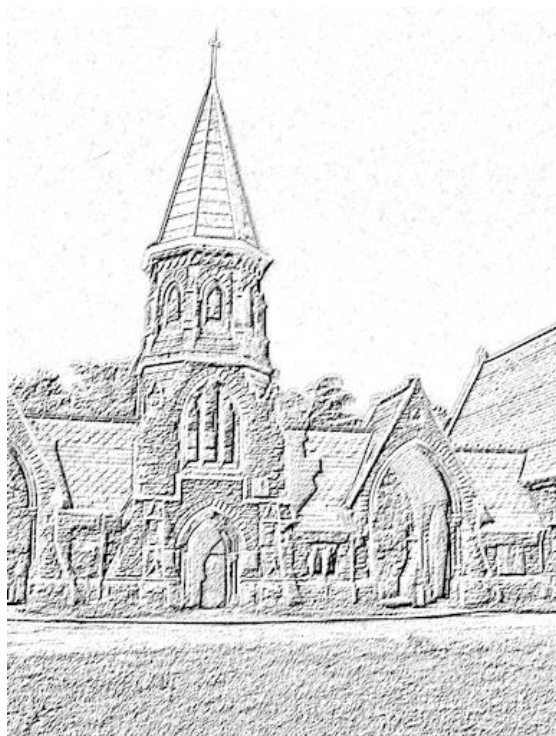
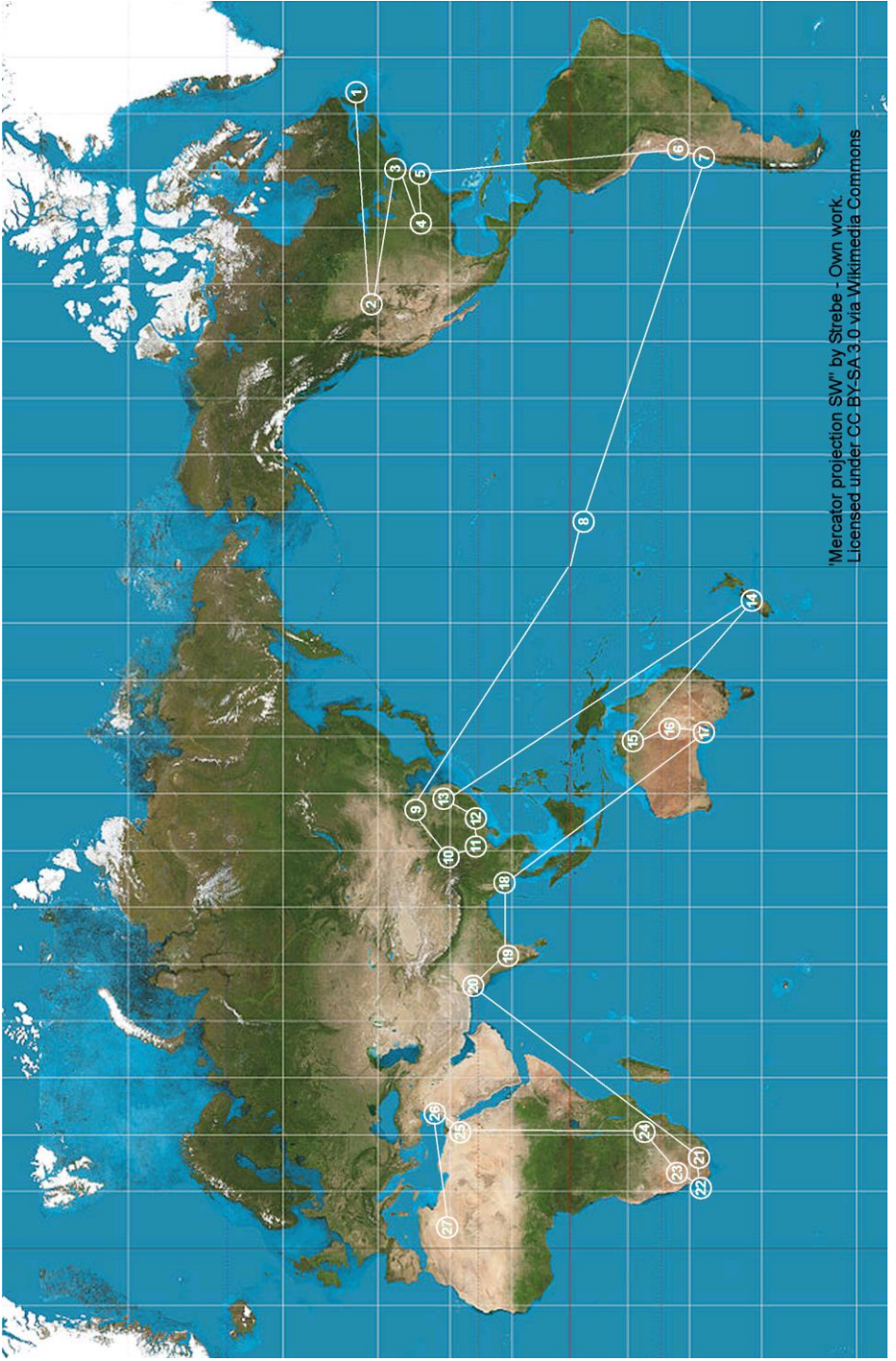


CATHAYS CEMETERY WORLD TOUR



The Friends of Cathays Cemetery



"Mercator projection SW" by Srebe - Own work.
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FORWARD

Background

At school I loved geography but hated history and have since learnt that history just lacked a physical context. I found that it helped if there was an interesting “human” story attached. It often only took a small trigger to set off my interest and Cathays Cemetery certainly throws up many triggers.

From Triggers to World Tour

Britain is a major maritime nation and Cardiff played a large part in its development. Place names on many memorials often act as a trigger to investigation, while on others, world links only emerge from further research about a person. Even more links come from the exotic planting in Cathays Cemetery and act as convenient hanger for unrelated stories!

To give some structure to unrelated tales

My Aim in this book is to head westwards around the world. Unashamedly picking some of my own favourite subjects. I also wanted to start with a bang, so our first stop is Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Gordon Hindress
Cardiff 2015

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1. Rich Family Memorial

[Section 0]





Before and after workday shrubbery clearance

The blast was the largest man-made explosion prior to the development of nuclear weapons and became the standard by which all large blasts were measured. Indeed, a report on the bombing of Hiroshima, described the explosive power of the Little Boy bomb as seven times that of the Halifax Explosion. The

comparison does not end there – look at archive pictures of the devastation and the scene looks very much like the aftermath of the atomic bombs dropped on Japan.



Halifax Explosion, Richmond district 2 days after
Courtesy of Canadian Government DND Archive

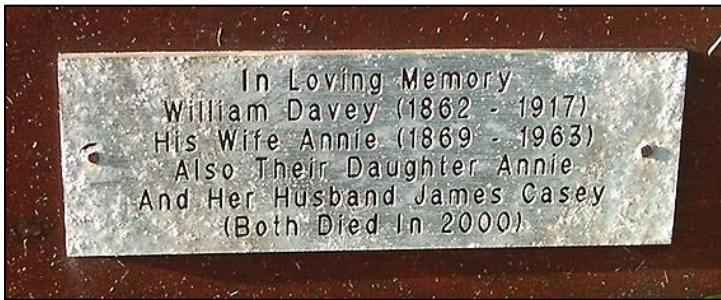
This view looks across to the Dartmouth side of the harbour and you can just see the Imo aground on the far side.

2. Davey/Casey Cross

[Section EF]



From something large to something small, we head south into the United States. This simple cross is in the New Cemetery.



There's nothing on the small plate on the cross to suggest another country, but it remembers William Davey, his wife Annie, their youngest daughter, also Annie, and her husband, James Casey.

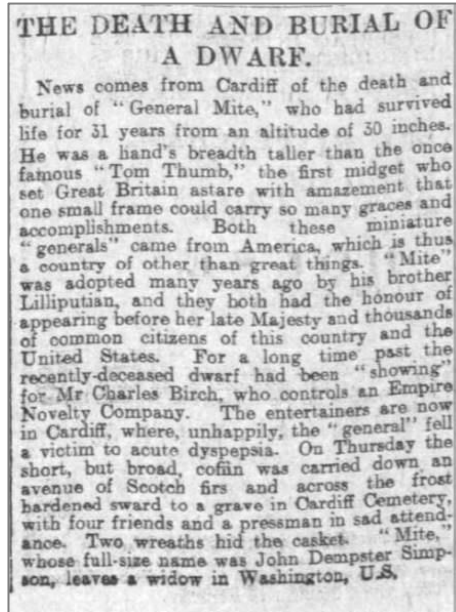
However, from a Swansea descendent of William Davey, we learnt that he was born in Tiverton Devon in 1862, went to America as an army scout and came home with a lady named Annie Gray who was born on the Blackfoot Indian reservation. In consequence, she was known locally as Blackfoot Annie. They lived at 170 Woodville Road and had ten children.

It would be nice to know more of the story. There are at least two uncertainties:

- we cannot be certain that Annie was a Blackfoot Indian (but it still makes a good story)
- as the Blackfoot territory straddled the 49th parallel, we are not sure if our link is to Canada or the USA. When the Blackfeet moved into reservations, most of them chose to settle in Alberta, so Canada appears more likely.

But we will now definitely move south across the border into the United States.

3. General Mite (John Dempster Simpson)



Cutting from Evening Telegraph 1st February 1902

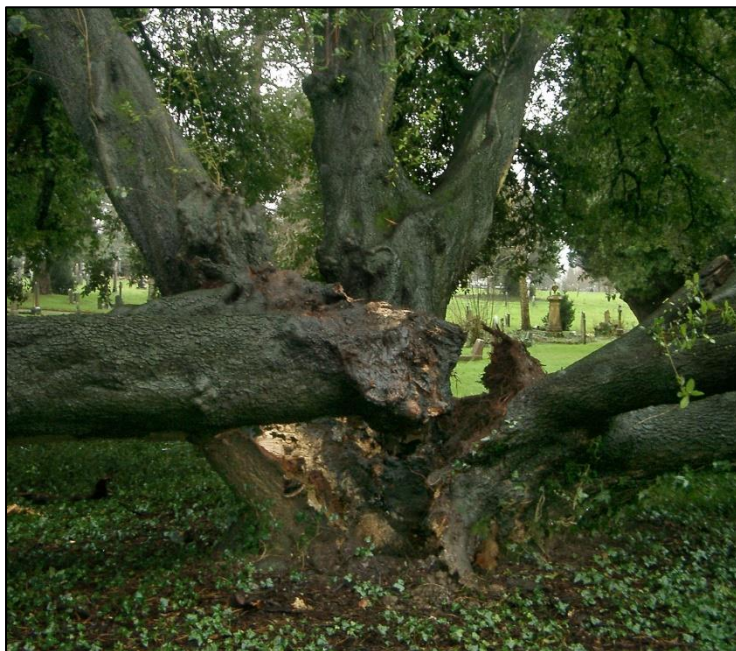
General Mite had "survived life for 31 years from an altitude of 30 inches, a hand's breadth taller than the more famous Tom Thumb", by whom he had been adopted and with whom he had toured widely in the USA and UK, including appearing before the queen.

He had been appearing in Cardiff for the Empire Novelty Company when he fell victim to acute dyspepsia – a term which, 100 years ago, could cover a multitude of problems.

It notes that the short, but wide, coffin was carried down an avenue of Scotch firs and across a frost hardened sward to the grave, with four friends and a pressman in attendance. There were only two wreaths ... but they hid the casket. A few words that paint a clear picture of this sad, lonely end.

General Mite left a widow in Washington, USA.

The cutting prompted a search for the grave, which proved to be not far from the one featured previously in Section O, but unmarked. In fact, it plotted precisely to the position occupied by what, until two years ago, was the biggest tree in the Cemetery.



The giant Holm Oak, started to fall on another frosty day.



For safety reasons all of the multiple stems had to be felled, so the only marker for the grave today is a large stump. But you do wonder if General Mite got tired of the lack of recognition, so decided to draw attention to himself.

Staying in the USA, you may be familiar with this memorial in Section L. It is that of one of our Charge of the Light Brigade representatives, William Llewellyn Rhys. Suffice to say that he had a debatable reputation, but seemed to do well for himself and ended up in a grand house in Dumfries Place. After the Crimea, he went to America to fight in Civil War: 1861-65 – finishing as a Judge-advocate.

Perhaps surprisingly, there doesn't seem to be a lot of links to the USA – or perhaps we haven't found them yet. But we have one more, rather strange one.

5. Captain Charles Bliault Memorial

[Section J]



This memorial stands on the vault of the Bliault family. It features one of the many fine angels that adorn Cathays Cemetery. He hailed from Jersey and distinguished himself in the Merchant Navy in WW1.

But where is the American connection?

Well, in 1912, he won a date race from Bussorah on the Persian Gulf to New York in the SS Turkistan. At the time, the 150,000 boxes of the fruit was the largest consignment brought in by one steamer. More importantly, by being the first ship load to arrive, he obtained the highest market price for the merchants who had entrusted him with their goods, in all about \$120,000 (\$2.5 million today). He had been racing another vessel, the Stanhope, which had left the Persian Gulf four days before him. He had to contend with a fire in one of his coal bunkers that took 12 days to extinguish and consumed 100 tons of his fuel and stood by a stricken vessel carrying pilgrims to Mecca until a ship that could take it in tow arrived. At Port Said, he was five days behind the Stanhope, making his arrival in New York more than a day ahead even more remarkable.

Bliault clearly did a lot of trade in American waters, and appeared as a defence expert witness on behalf of a Cardiff shipowner, one of whose ships had been lost off Bermuda. The argument hinged around safe loading levels for winter operation in these waters and Bliault argued on the basis of extensive experience in these waters that loading to summer marks was safe practice. Unfortunately Bliault's evidence was discredited and the defendant was found guilty and sentenced to 12 months.

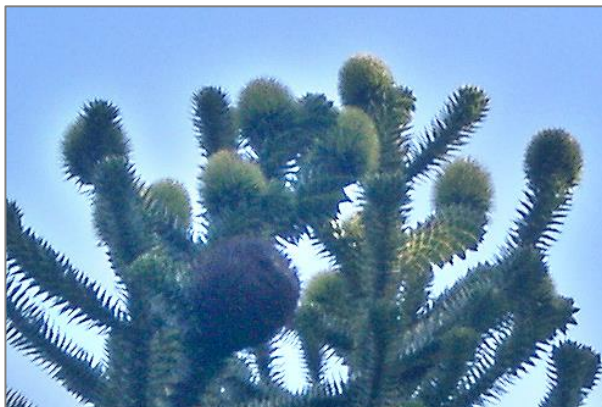
6. Monkey Puzzle Tree

[Section X]



The Monkey Puzzle (*Araucaria araucana*, to give it its proper name), looking like a giant chimney sweep's brush, is a native of the south-central Andes, typically growing above 3,000 feet. And it gives us an excuse to jump to Chile!

The tree was introduced to Britain in 1795 by Archibald Menzies, a botanist and naval surgeon. Having been served the seeds of the tree as a dessert while dining with the governor of Chile, he stowed them on board the ship, and returned to England with five healthy plants. However, it was Cornishman and star Victorian plant collector, William Lobb, who ensured that there were sufficient to satisfy the demand of the landed gentry. In 1842, he travelled to Chile, where he collected more than 3,000 seeds by shooting the cones down from the trees with a shotgun. One of this first batch of seed was taken to Pencarrow, Sir John Molesworth's Cornish estate, where Lobb's father was the estate carpenter. The proud owner showed the tree to a group of friends and one remarked that it would puzzle a monkey to climb it. The common name for the tree was born. Coincidentally, if you look closely at smaller young branches, they can appear remarkably like the prehensile tail of a monkey.



Monkey Puzzle Tree Nuts

The Monkey Puzzle is usually dioecious, having male and female cones on separate trees) though occasional individuals bear cones of both sexes. The male pollen cones expand to 8–12 cm long at pollen release, relying upon the wind for dispersion. The female seed cones mature about 18 months after pollination and are 12–20 cm diameter, holding about 200 seeds. The cones disintegrate at maturity to release the 3–4 cm long nut-like seeds.

The seeds are edible, similar to large pine nuts, though taste better roasted rather than raw. They are extensively harvested in Chile and the tree has potential to be a food crop in other areas but does not yield seeds until it is around 30–40 years old, which discourages investment in planting orchards. But yields at maturity could be immense and, once established, trees could live for 150 years or more.

The timber was once valued, resulting in over harvesting, but the tree is now on the IUCN Red List of endangered species. The tree in Cathays Cemetery is female, though we are not sure where its nearest male counterpart is. When the seeds fall, should we be planting them ... or eating them?

7. John Batchelor Memorial

[Section O]

You may recognise this headstone as the one sitting on the grave of John Batchelor, but it fits into our world tour, while we are in Chile, because one of his sons, Arthur Llewellyn, his fifth son, who died November 19th 1915 and was buried in the Protestant Cemetery Valparaiso – the main port of Chile.

Arthur Llewellyn, may be remembered locally as the co-founder, with his brother Cyril, in 1880, of Penarth RFC, which was originally known as the Batchelor XV.

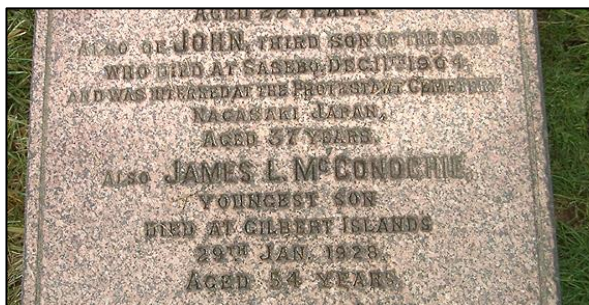


8. Charles McConochie Memorial

[Section M]



Just one grave enables us to cross the Pacific. The grave of Charles McConochie not only tells us that his large family were much travelled, but also his son James L died in the Gilbert Islands (close to the equator and the international dateline). Another son, John, a ship's engineer, is buried in Nagasaki, Japan. And leads us to ...



9. Chinese War Memorial

[Section EE]



... China

During the two World Wars commercial ships were recruited by the government for transportation. Some of these were manned by Chinese sailors and some of these were killed. With no local family to take care of their funeral arrangements, a group of local Chinese people took this upon themselves. They also had the idea of erecting a Memorial Stone to commemorate those who died in the wars and to allow relatives to visit and remember them. In the early 1960s, a site was assigned in the northern section of Cathays Cemetery for the stone, which was named 'The Grave for Deceased Chinese Friends'.

After nearly half a century, the Stone was in desperate need of repair due to weathering. With the aid of a grant from the Heritage

Lottery Fund, this unique memorial was refurbished. In 2010, completion of the refurbishment was formally recognised at a ceremony during the Ching Ming festival, one of two festivals each year (the other is Chung Yeung, in the autumn) which are traditional occasions to commemorate past loved ones.



Typical Chinese Headstone

With Chinese characters, the memorials are unmistakable, although some have English inscriptions, as well.

Ching Ming means "clear" and "bright" and the festival falls on the 106th day after the winter solstice. It is a festival to honour and pay respect to deceased ancestors and reinforces the ethic of filial piety. The whole family go to sweep the graves of their ancestors and, at this time, you may see tokens of remembrance in the form of joss paper, coins, flowers or fruit on graves. Joss paper is traditionally made from coarse bamboo paper, which feels handmade with many variances and imperfections, although rice paper is also commonly used. Traditional joss is cut into individual squares or rectangles and may be decorated with seals, stamps, pieces of contrasting paper, engraved designs or other motifs. Joss paper may also be burned in makeshift braziers. Joss incense sticks may also be burned – the remains of these can be seen between the flowers in the above picture.



Chinese Headstone with Joss Paper

In this picture you can see traditional Joss paper held on the top of the headstone by a stone.

The Chinese people have lived in Europe for more than one hundred years. With the rapid development of the shipping industry came a high demand for labour and many Chinese came to London and Liverpool to work. With a reputation for hard work, they were employed as sailors or in the engine room, kitchen or laundry room. In 1910, a shipping company in Cardiff employed many workers and sailors from Liverpool and London and three to four hundred Chinese worked in Wales at this time. Bute Street was where Chinese sailors would socialise while resting or waiting for ships. People called it 'Sailor Street' or 'China Town'. The Chinese also started opening restaurants and small grocery shops in the area, while the shipping business was booming.

10. Foxglove Tree

[Section W]



China is well represented in other ways in the cemetery – some of our most impressive trees originate from there.

I have picked out just three that have spectacular blossom in common.

This is the foxglove tree, with particularly fragrant blossom, which appears just before the leaves, so the colour is not diluted by green.

In China, where it is known as an Empress tree, an old custom is to plant it when a baby girl is born. The fast-growing tree matures when she does and, when she is eligible for marriage, the tree is cut down and carved into wooden articles for her dowry. Several Asian string instruments are made from the wood, including the Japanese koto and Korean gayageum zithers. The soft, lightweight seeds were commonly used as a packing material by Chinese porcelain exporters in the 19th century. But packing cases would often leak or burst open in transit and scatter the seeds along rail tracks.

The Foxglove Tree (*Paulownia Tomentosa*) can be coppiced annually, which will stop it flowering but, instead, it will then produce very vigorous growth with leaves up to 1 metre wide. The wood is lightweight (density 0.25 - 0.3) commensurate with a fast-growing tree, which can be harvested in as little as five years. In its native habitat the growth in its younger years is so rapid that tree growth rings are up to 8mm wide. But in the UK, where temperature is lower and winters harder, growth will be slower and invasive behaviour is unlikely. Indeed, if the temperature drops below 5C for too long no flowers will develop in Spring. Trees will flower in 8-10 years.

But the single specimen in the cemetery is frail (leaning on a headstone, and may not be with us much longer. Can I start the campaign for a replacement now?

11. Farge's Catalpa (Bean Tree)

[Section V]



Our second example is a bean tree, often, but mistakenly, referred to as an Indian Bean Tree. Some do indeed originate in India, but this is one of two specimens in the cemetery of Farge's Catalpas. One of the rarest varieties of bean tree, they originate in China and are distinguished by pale pink blossom. The blossom is, sadly, short-lived and the bean pods, up to about two feet long, replace them remarkably quickly.

12. Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron Chinense*)

[Section L]



The third example, the Chinese tulip tree, *liriodendron chinense*, is a native of central and southern China. It is similar to the American species, *liriodendron tulipifera*, but differing in having slightly larger and more deeply lobed leaves, and shorter inner petals in the flowers, which lack the orange pigment of its American cousin. The Chinese tulip tree reaches about 40 metres (130 feet) tall. That in the cemetery is around half of that – but it still makes it one of the tallest trees we have.

Unlike the other two examples, while it can have a lot of blossom, this is hidden within the leaves, with which it blends in quite well. You need to get close to it to appreciate it properly.

13. Larcombe Memorial

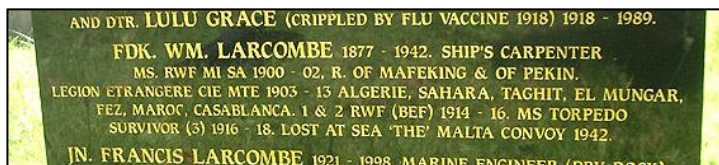
[Section S]



This memorial is a mine of family information – exceptional for a relatively modern headstone. There are close to 1200 letters engraved on it, which represents a cost of £3-4000. But you may recognise the name Larcombe, as a funeral director with offices in

Splott and Ely. So maybe he got “mates rates”, but this still represents a considerable investment.

But there is much of interest in the words – especially in the present context – so I will use it a few times!



So our Chinese reference is to the Relief of Peking, in which Frederick William Larcombe participated. Note the spelling on the headstone omits the final 'g' of Peking – there are many abbreviations throughout the engraving, which suggests some concession to cost and to help accommodate so much information.

The Boxer Uprising was anti-imperialist and took place towards the end of the Qing dynasty between 1898 and 1900. It was initiated by the Militia United in Righteousness, known in English as the "Boxers," and was motivated by proto-nationalist sentiments and opposition to foreign imperialism and associated Christian missionary activity. In 1898 conservative, anti-foreign forces won control of the Chinese government and persuaded the Boxers to drop their opposition to the Qing dynasty and unite with it in destroying the foreigners. In spite of protests by the Western powers, they and Cixi, the ruling empress dowager, continued to encourage the group. It culminated in the Boxer Rebellion, an officially supported peasant uprising, which attempted to drive all foreigners from China.

Christian missionary activities helped provoke the Boxers, who by late 1899 were openly attacking Chinese Christians and Western missionaries. By May 1900, Boxer bands were roaming the countryside around the capital, Peking. In early June a relief force of some 2,100 sailors and marines commanded by British Admiral

Edward Seymour was dispatched from the northern port of Tianjin to Peking.



Japanese Legation Quarter, Peking 1900

On June 13 the empress dowager ordered imperial forces to block the advance of the foreign troops, and the small relief column was turned back. Meanwhile, in Peking, the Boxers burned churches and foreign residences and killed suspected Chinese Christians on sight. The empress dowager ordered that all foreigners be killed. The German minister was murdered, and the other foreign ministers and their families and staff, together with hundreds of Chinese Christians, were besieged in the Legation Quarter and in the Roman Catholic cathedral in Peking. The legations (this is a picture of the Japanese one at about this time) were in a compact block just outside the walls of the Forbidden City.

On 4 August, an international force of some 19,000 troops was assembled.

The Evans family memorial allows us to make a brief call in New Zealand, although this is probably my most tenuous link to another country.

We are often indebted to people sharing their own family research with us, in this case as diverse as information about grand mansions in Newport Road, associates of the Butes, high society in the 19C, mystery ships and dirigibles.

Our contact has been a member of the Friends, Patricia Evans, who lives in Salisbury. Her husband's grandfather, Charles Evans, was buried here in 1907, coincidentally, the area that has benefited most from vegetation clearance by the Friends. Five other members of the family joined him later, including Patricia's father-in-law. No doubt her mother-in-law, Mary, would have joined them had she not emigrated to New Zealand - at the age of 92 - and, as she herself put it, "thought it better to be buried in their friendly soil". But it was Mary who had collected much of the family history information: not just the basic names, dates and places, but also a narrative, packed with anecdotes, that provides a veritable social history. Patricia's late husband did the marathon job of collating everything into a book format that runs into several chapters.

15. Australian WW1 War Graves

[Section EB]



A hop across the Tasman Sea gets to Australia. All five War Graves Commission headstones in the foreground remember Australian soldiers who died here in the First World war.



Undoubtedly, there will be poignant stories attached to all of these war graves, but I chose this one as an example because it has been recently renewed with the new standard Italian marble, with its clearer engraving.

So we can see the insignia of the Australian Imperial Force and, in this case, that the soldier was a private in the 41st Battalion Australian Infantry. As with most of the graves in this part of Cathays cemetery, it is likely that he was wounded and being treated in one of the many makeshift hospitals set up around the city at that time. We can also see that Private Olsen died in July 1918, not long before the end of the war.

16. Captain Charles Bliault Memorial

[Section J]



While we're in Australia, Captain Bliault crops up again. This time, the link is another newspaper article, perhaps surprisingly, from the Examiner, a Tasmanian paper, in December 1905. This reports the sudden death of John Thompson, aged about 30 years, a ship's officer, died suddenly on board the SS Gulistan. Mr. Thompson was a passenger on board the vessel, which was then on a voyage from London to the Persian Gulf. The master of the vessel (Captain Charles Bliault) was unable find any account of relatives among Mr. Thompson's effects, but it was believed from his conversation, that he had sisters or other relatives residing in Melbourne.

This appears to have been an attempt to trace the deceased's relatives – and it also confirms that Captain Bliault was a regular on the London to the Gulf run.

17. R G Thomas and The Cemetery Chapels



The Chapels (1905)

Courtesy of Cardiff Capital Collection

Robert George Thomas was the architect for the chapels. Born in 1820, in London, Robert went to South Australia with the first surveying teams. He may well have drawn the first map of Adelaide, in 1838. He worked for a number of employers before teaming up with William James, who hailed from Monmouthshire, in 1845. They were soon involved in the Burra Copper Mine which was to secure the future of Adelaide. With good prospects in Australia, it is not clear why the partnership decided to return to the UK, but there were promising opportunities in the fast expanding railways and James' father was County Surveyor in Monmouthshire.



Courtesy of South Australia Archives

Although they continued to work together, James became a building contractor based in Cardiff, while RGT established himself as an engineer and architect in Newport. The building designs were his successful competition entry, in conjunction with proposals for roads and general engineering works by Thomas Waring (buried in Cathays Cemetery) the Surveyor to the Board of Health. RGT also supervised the construction of the buildings.



Just to complete the circle, a descendant of R G Thomas, on a visit to Cardiff in 2010, attended the Insignia Walk and is pictured here, with his wife, outside the chapels.

18. Larcombe Memorial

[Section S]

JN. FRANCIS LARCOMBE 1921 - 1998, MARINE ENGINEER (DRY DOCK).
CPO ERA HMS LAUNCESTON CAS. & HMS VICTORIOUS BATTLE OF THE
ATLANTIC, MED., D-DAY LANDINGS, THE SURRENDER AT NORWAY,
ONTO THE PACIFIC & BURMA.

And so across the Atlantic Ocean.....

19. Trevor Williams Memorial

[Section I]



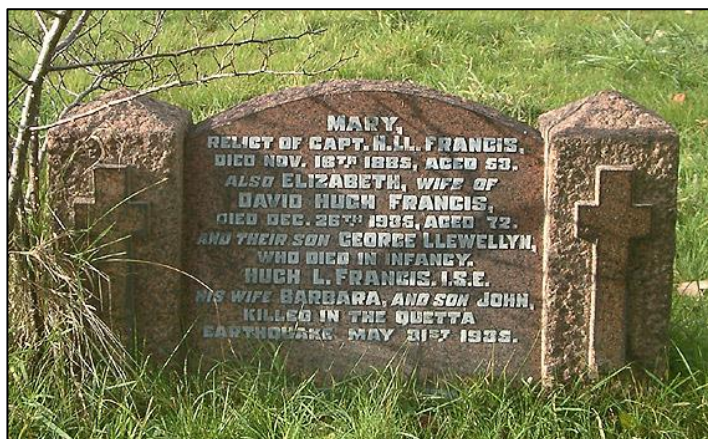
This memorial was discovered when the Friends cleared an overgrown area on a workday two years ago. While this marks the grave of Harriet and John Williams of Woodville Road and their son-in-law, it also remembers their son, Trevor. The inscription records that Trevor was a 2nd Lieutenant in the 30th Punjabis. He

died at Sukkur, India, on June 7th 1918, aged 20 years and was interred at Cantonment Cemetery, Sukkur

While Sukkur was in British India, it became part of Pakistan on partition. It was sufficiently close to the border for a significant exchange of residents, non Moslems moving into India, with Moslems on the Indian side of the border taking their places. It may be a place that you have never heard of, but it is larger than Cardiff and at the centre of a major agricultural area, where the flat lands of the Indus valley are served by a relic of colonial days, a huge dam serving a network of seven irrigation canals.

20. Francis Memorial

[Section T]



Sometimes a word on a headstone catches your eye. In this case, it was two words – Quetta Earthquake.

The inscription records the death of Hugh and Barbara Francis and their son John in the earthquake on 31st May 1935. But where is Quetta?

Quetta is in Balochistan - as before, part of British India but now part of Pakistan. At an altitude of around 5500 feet, it is Pakistan's only high altitude city, but has a population today of over a million. It is on the Bolan Pass route into Afghanistan giving it historic strategic importance – hence its size. The nearest city to it is Kandahar, in Afghanistan – a name that might be more familiar. It is in the most active seismic region in Pakistan, sitting on two major faults. The 7.7 magnitude quake in the early hours of the morning lasted for three minutes, with continuous aftershocks. With somewhere between 30000 and 60000 people killed, this ranks as one of the deadliest earthquakes to hit South Asia.



Rescue efforts in the immediate aftermath

A Regimental Journal for the 1st Battalion of the Queen's Royal Regiment based in Quetta graphically described the result: the city was razed to the ground, with corpses lying everywhere in the hot sun. Companies were given areas in which to clear the dead and injured but hardly had this commenced when they were called upon to supply fifty men (later increased to a hundred) to dig

graves in the cemetery. Europeans and Anglo-Indians were buried in the British Cemetery: all other bodies were cremated. A tent city was built to house the homeless survivors and to provide shelter for their rescuers. On 3rd June (four days later), the city was sealed. A cordon of soldiers surrounded the area, and for the next two days patrols were sent through the city clearing out anyone seen and shooting stray animals.

At the time of the quake, 1st Queen's were returning from night operations, marching along a main road. Most of the troops either sat or fell down. One officer described how, as he was lying prostrate, a large chasm opened in the earth within reach of his hand, and then slowly closed again. Within a minute, however, the battalion had recovered and resumed the march. No one realised the seriousness of the situation until after they had reached barracks at about 6.30 am and dismissed for breakfast and bed. The barracks were more or less intact although most of the damage was done in the RAF area where the barracks were destroyed and only six out of the twenty-seven machines were serviceable.

21. Edmund Savage Memorial

[Section R]

A quick jump across the Indian Ocean and we are in S. Africa in 1879. This is the grave of Edmund Savage, pictured during the dedication ceremony for the newly provided memorial on 4th June 2011. Edmund was one of the defenders of Rourke's Drift during the Zulu War.



I am just using it as a quick stepping stone to ...

22. Joseph Fish Memorial

[Section U]



Robben Island. - another of those place names that catches the eye and imagination. Although Joseph's name is inscribed, this is really a story of brothers, Joseph and James: both went to S Africa as missionaries.

The Fish family came to Cardiff from Devon and settled in Grangetown. On 28th Feb 1889 the two brothers set sail from Cardiff for Port Elizabeth with their Gospel Tent to work as itinerant missionaries. They spent the next 40 year there, mainly in the Cape Town area, with much of the time being spent working with and ministering to the lepers on Robben island. As well as being used as a prison since the late sixteenth century, the island was also used as a leper colony and asylum from 1846 to 1931. As well keeping the patients isolated, the island was thought to provide a healthy environment for a cure. There were often more than 600 patients of all races on the island, housed in wards, though some of the more well-to-do could afford private accommodation. Once there, patients were as good as in a prison, with very few returning to the mainland, Some were there for more than 30 years.

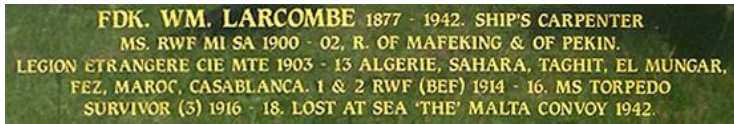
Much of their work is documented in two books written by James Fish, in the 1920's and 30s. The books may not pass the test for political correctness or even readability today, but they do give a fascinating insight into life in a leper colony.

Not much is known about their personal life – even in his book James only refers to 'my dear wife' or my sister-in-law. But it is known that James married Anna, the only daughter of a leading activist in the Afrikaans language movement – he wrote the first Afrikaans spelling and reading book for children, and is affectionately referred to as Uncle Willem. Similarly, Joseph's wife, who died in S Africa, is remembered on the stone, but not named.

The rest of the Fish family were equally religious, being involved in the community that met at the Gospel Hall, Upper Clive Street, conducting open-air meetings on dock waste land and setting up gospel halls in Penarth and Dinas Powys.

23. Larcombe Memorial

[Section S]



Back to the Larcombe memorial and, indeed, to Frederick William, who we have already met in China! This time he is involved in the Relief of Mafeking which took place in May 1900, only three months before the Relief of Peking.

The Siege of Mafeking was the most famous British action in the Second Boer War, taking place from October 1899 to May 1900, and turned Robert Baden-Powell into a national hero. The lifting of the siege was a decisive victory for the British and a crushing defeat for the Boers.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Second Boer War in 1899, Colonel (later Lord) Baden-Powell, accompanied by a handful of officers, was sent to the Cape Colony to raise two Regiments of Mounted Rifles from Rhodesia. Their aims were to resist the expected Boer invasion of Natal, draw the Boers away from the coasts to facilitate the landing of British troops, and, through a demonstrable British presence, deter the local people from siding with the Boers. Like the British government, the local politicians feared that increased military activity might provoke a Boer attack, so Baden-Powell obtained many of his own stores, organised his own transport and recruited in secret. With barely trained forces and aware of the Boers' greatly superior numbers, Baden-Powell decided that the best way to tie down Boer troops would be through defence rather than attack.



Baden-Powell and Staff at Mafeking

The Mafeking forces comprised one of the newly formed Protectorate Regiments (around 500 men), 300 from the Bechuanaland Rifles and Cape Police, and a further 300 men from the town. Even though it was supposed to be a "white man's war" Baden-Powell also armed 300 African natives. A cadet corps of boys aged 12 to 15, later to be one of the inspirations for the Scouting Movement, was also formed to act as messengers and orderlies. The recruitment of these cadets released men to fight, bringing the total engaged in the military effort to around 2000.

Work to build defences around the 6-mile (10 km) perimeter of Mafeking started on 19 September 1899; the independent Boer South African Republic declared war on 12 October and the Mafeking railway and telegraph lines were cut the same day. The siege began on 13 October. Although outnumbered by over 8,000 Boer troops, the garrison withstood the siege for 217 days, defying the predictions of the politicians on both sides. Much of this was attributable to some of the cunning military deceptions instituted by Baden-Powell. Fake landmines were laid around the town in view of the Boers: his soldiers were ordered to simulate avoiding barbed wire (non-existent) when moving between trenches: guns

and an improvised searchlight were moved around the town to increase their apparent number. Soldiers were asked to dress as women undertaking normal activities such as fetching water and sewing to disillusion the enemy. The morale of the civilian population was also given attention, and Sunday ceasefires were negotiated so that sports, competitions and theatrical performances could be held.



Mafeking Howitzer

A howitzer was built in Mafeking's railway workshops, and even an old cannon (dated 1770, it coincidentally had "B.P. & Co." engraved on the barrel) was pressed into service. Noticing the Boers had failed to remove any of the rails, Baden-Powell had an armoured train from the Mafeking rail-yard loaded with sharpshooters, sent up the rail line in a daring attack right into the heart of the Boer camp, followed by a safe return to Mafeking.

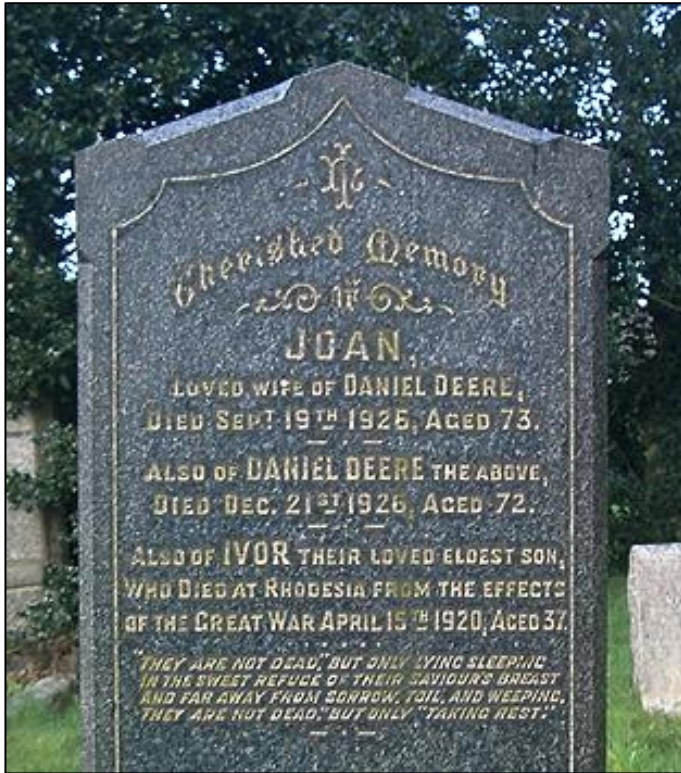
The Boers decided that the town was too heavily defended to take and on 19 November, 4000 Boers were redeployed elsewhere, but the siege remained and shelling of Mafeking continued. Aware of the approaching British relief columns, the Boers launched a final major attack early in the morning of 12 May 1900 and succeeded in

breaching the perimeter defences and setting fire to some of the town, but they were finally beaten back.

On May 16th, British forces commanded by Colonel B T Mahon broke through the Boers eight miles north of Mafeking. An advance patrol of horsemen arrived at seven o'clock in the evening, to be greeted with British sang-froid by a passer-by who said casually, "Oh yes, I heard you were knocking about." As word spread, however, the men were mobbed and cheered to the echo while the crowd sang the national anthem and "Rule Britannia". The siege was finally lifted on 17 May, when the main relieving force rode in at 3.30 am to a rapturous welcome from the excited garrison. Among the relief forces was one of Baden-Powell's brothers. The news was greeted with hysterical rejoicing in Britain after the disasters of the earlier days of the war.

The cadet corps of boys at Mafeking was later to be one of the inspirations for the Scouting Movement, which brings back to Cathays. The 4th Cardiff (St Andrews) Troop was set up in Cathays in October 1908, just five months after the first publication of Scouting for Boys. Despite its title as the 4th Cardiff, it was the first scout troop established in Wales. The name Baden-Powell is also remembered in the Tremorfa primary school that bears his name.

24. Deere Memorial



Another country that jumped out from a headstone ... and another country that has changed its name – and a lot more in the last century. We see from the memorial that . The eldest son of Joan and Daniel Deere, Ivor, died in Rhodesia from the affects of the Great War, in April 1920, aged 37.

There is probably a bigger story here, but for the moment Zimbabwe is just a convenient stop on our journey.

25. Larcombe Memorial

[Section S]



And its back to the Larcombe memorial, as we find ourselves in “Egypt and the Holy Land” with the Royal Field Artillery, in the person of William Crocker-Harris. But perhaps the most poignant words of this part of the inscription are those about his daughter Lulu Grace, that she was crippled by the flu vaccine in the year of her birth, 1918.

26. Thomas Phillips Memorial

[Section I]



It seems likely that William served in the same campaign as Capt. Thomas Glynn Llewellyn Phillips. Another workday clearance find, when the words “1st Battle of Gaza” caught the eye ... but meant

nothing to us at time. Thomas was brought up at 45 Park Place and educated Malvern College, Treforest School of Mines and University College, Cardiff. He graduated in 1913 and was articled to D. Hannah, mining engineer to Ferndale Collieries, but was also listed as a 2nd Lieut. the same year. He was promoted to Lieutenant by the time he went to the Crimea and served as Acting Captain at the landings at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli, August 1915 until evacuation. Promoted to Captain in the field in 1916 and served in this capacity with the Welsh Regiment, 5th Bn. (T.A.) Egyptian Expeditionary Force. Killed in action on Monday, 26th March 1917 at First Battle of Gaza, aged 23. Awarded M.C.

In 1917, the 1st WW wasn't going well. The new British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, was convinced that there must be a better way and there remained the glittering prize of Palestine, which was steeped in biblical history and the romance of the Crusades. If the British could snatch this jewel from the Turks' Middle Eastern crown, he argued, it would pave the way to victory. Since mid-1916, the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF), led by Lt Gen Sir Archibald Murray, had been moving east from Egypt across the Sinai desert. Initially things went well, fighting short sharp battles and confidently pursuing the retreating Turks and, in January 1917 they crossed into Palestine. Aware that he was advancing through country that had few natural resources, Murray ordered the simultaneous construction of a wire netting road, standard-gauge railway and a pipeline carrying water from Egypt, but this restricted the speed of the EEF's advance. On March 26, British and Anzac soldiers attacked the Turkish stronghold of Gaza . They started well, moving into and round Gaza. But anxiety about finding water for their horses led to a sudden loss of confidence. Murray's HQ was 50 miles away, he lost control and his troops fell back, letting victory slip through their fingers. This was the first battle in which Captain Phillips died.



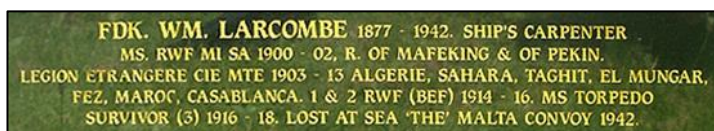
General Edmund Allenby entering Jerusalem through Jaffa Gate,
December 11th 1917

On April 17th 1917 Murray launched a renewed attack on Gaza. This second battle was a fiasco. Lloyd George decided a new commander of drive and vision was needed and General Sir Edmund Allenby was appointed with instructions to take Jerusalem before Christmas. Allenby arrived at the EEF's headquarters in Cairo on June 28th. Frontal attacks on Gaza had failed twice, so Allenby favoured an initial strike inland against the town of Beersheba, to outflank the main Turkish position and divert attention from the direct assault that would follow. Beginning on October 31st, Allenby's mounted troops swung into Beersheba in a famous charge. The next day his infantry surged forward into the Turkish trenches. By November 7th, Gaza was taken and the road to Jerusalem lay before them. But, although knocked back, the Turks fought fiercely as they withdrew. In pursuit, Allenby's men moved in two directions. One thrust pushed along the coast towards Jaffa which was taken on November 16th. Another was directed inland at Jerusalem. Acutely conscious of the need to avoid bringing Jerusalem under fire, Allenby planned to encircle the city and cut

off the Turkish garrison. The first attempt to do this at the end of November failed. But Allenby repositioned his troops and on the night of December 7th he struck again. Believing that the withdrawal of their forward positions was the start of a general retreat, the Turks moved out of the city and relinquished Jerusalem with little resistance. After the final capture of the Mount of Olives, the city fell. Conscious of the city's special meaning for three of the world's great religions, in a deliberate act of humility and respect Allenby entered Jerusalem on foot through the Jaffa Gate on December 11th. He walked to the Citadel from where he read a proclamation that made it clear he came not as a conqueror, but a liberator. Watching from the back of a nearby group of British staff officers was a small, strangely dishevelled young major. TE Lawrence had appeared at Allenby's HQ only days before the city's capture and had been invited to take part in the formal entry.

27. Larcombe Memorial

[Section S]



And we're back to Frederick Larcombe, who we met in China and South Africa. He has now joined the Foreign Legion, serving across North Africa for 10 years. The Foreign Legion conjures up conflicting ideas – was this a romantic adventure ... or was he escaping the law? Unfortunately, at the moment we know no more.

What we do know, especially when the inscription continues with service in WW1, including surviving the loss of a ship, and being lost at sea (so he is not interred here), during the main Malta relief convoy in WW2, is that this was a real adventurer, who probably deserves a book about his life.

- Only a short step gets us back home
- And I haven't even touched Europe ...

Maps & Editing by Paul D Jones
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