

# ST TUDNO'S CHURCH, GREAT ORME, LLANDUDNO



**A SELF-GUIDED WALK AROUND FIRST WORLD WAR GRAVES AND MEMORIALS IN THE CHURCHYARD**

## Introduction

This self-guided walk around St. Tudno's churchyard has been developed as part of the Parish of Llandudno's commemorations of the centenary of the outbreak of the first World War.

In St. Tudno's churchyard there are four WWI War Graves, memorials to 30 other servicemen who died in that war and the grave of one VAD Nurse. This walk around the churchyard allows many of the graves or memorials to be seen from the paths indicated. The details below include the relevant inscriptions and photographs of the graves. **The churchyard ground is very uneven, so please keep to the paths.** The graves which cannot be accessed from the paths are indicated as "off path" but most should be visible from a distance. Some which are not directly adjacent to a path but which are easily seen from a path as indicated as "close to path". The Commonwealth War Graves are indicated and there is further information on these at the end of this guide.

The churchyard is a haven of peace and also a haven for wildlife. The grass has been allowed to grow to provide food and shelter for insects, to enable spring flowering wild flowers to set seed and late flowering plants to produce pollen and nectar for insects. There is also an area where pyramidal orchids grow and leaving the grass uncut during their growing season should help them to spread. A recent survey of the churchyard showed 75 species of plants growing here and as you walk around you may see a variety of plants and insects.

Additional information is included on the four men buried in the Commonwealth War Graves and is taken from articles by Vernon Morris, printed in the *Llandudno Parish Magazine* and *St. Tudno News* (newsletter of the Friends of St. Tudno's Church). With acknowledgments to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), the Canadian Archive, ancestry.co.uk, the Imperial War Museum, The National Archives, The UK National Inventory of War Memorials and the Conwy Archive Service. Further information on Trooper Jones has been provided by his great niece, Claire Wynne Hughes.

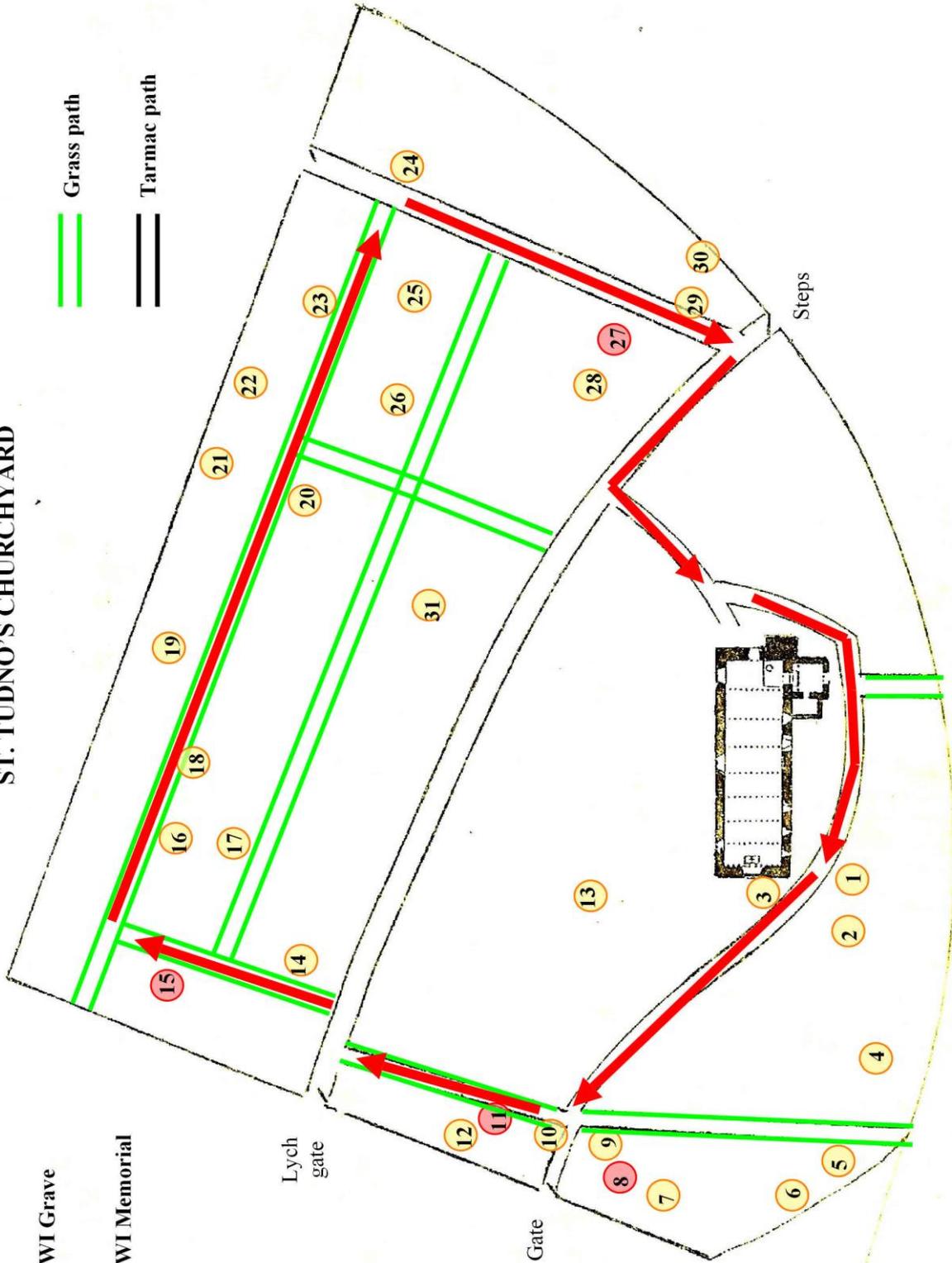
Information is also included on the VAD Nurses and is taken from an article by Christine Jones in the *St. Tudno News*.

N.B. There are further war graves in the adjacent Great Orme Cemetery, which are not covered by this tour. The cemetery is the responsibility of Conwy County Borough Council, who should be contacted for information on the graves there.

# ST. TUDNO'S CHURCHYARD

- WWI Grave
- WWI Memorial

- ▬▬ Grass path
- ▬▬ Tarmac path



Walk reference	Churchyard reference	Inscription	
1	D020	In loving memory of ... Thomas Hugh Roberts, eldest son of the above (Samuel Roberts), who fell in action in France, July 10 <sup>th</sup> , 1916 aged 31. <i>I have fought a good fight, 2 Tim, iv 7</i>	
2	D027	In loving memory of Pte. William B. Williams, 1/18 Batt. London Reg., killed in action at Ypres, May 27, 1917, aged 24. <i>Peace perfect peace.</i> (Son of William and Mary Williams, Charlton Street, Llandudno.)	
3	A170	In memorium ... Ernest Muncaster (son of Margaret Ann and Edwin Turner, Architect), born 1882. Fell in action in the Great War 1917.	
4	D076	Off path In loving memory of ... John Clayton, born April 1 <sup>st</sup> 1882. Died August 29 <sup>th</sup> , 1916. Killed in France. (Son of Elizabeth Clayton.)	
5	C001	Off path In loving memory of John Arthur Walker, Captain 10 Bn R.W.F.. The dearly loved son of John and Margaret Walker. Killed in action near Ypres, 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb. Buried Reninghelst 21 <sup>st</sup> Feb., 1916 aged 24.	

6	C035	<p>Off path          In loving memory of ... Edward Alan, son of above (Albert Henry and Sarah Thomas). Died in France Aug. 31<sup>st</sup>, 1918, aged 23.  <i>Faithful in all things.</i></p>	
7	C070	<p>Off path          In loving memory of ... Lt. Trevor A.M. Davies (son of Arthur Manning and Ada Rose Davies). Who fell in action July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1916, aged 23.</p>	
8	C033	<p>War grave, close to path          Lieutenant L.P. Graves. K.O. Scottish Borderers, 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1918.</p>	
9	C016	<p>In loving memory of Lieutenant Philip Hebdon Lecomber. Killed in action in France, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1918, in his 22<sup>nd</sup> year, son of William and Margaret Lecomber of "Dedwyddfa", Ruthin.  <i>His country called – He answered.</i></p>	
10	B011	<p>In loving memory of Lieut. Guy Everingham R.F.C.. Son in law of above (Emma and Francis Brown). Killed in an aerial flight over the "Vimy Ridge" on Easter Day, 8<sup>th</sup> April, 1917.  <i>Per Ardua ad Astra.</i></p>	

11	B015	<p>War grave          In loving memory of Richard Edward (Trooper D.H.Y.), son of William and Margaret Jones, Combermere, Deganwy Avenue, who passed away 26<sup>th</sup> April 1915, aged 22.  <i>Hedd perfaith hedd.</i></p>	
12	B008	<p>Close to path          In loving memory ... of Lan. Corp. Sydney Keigwin of the 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Sussex Reg. Died at Rouen, from wounds received in action, Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>, 1918 aged 28.  <i>Peace perfect peace.</i></p>	
13	A120	<p>Off path          In ever loving memory, the dear child(ren) of John E. and Ellen Williams, Mount Arthur, Church Walks ... Hugh Edward who fell in action, March 23, 1918, aged 29 years.</p>	
14	G293	<p>In loving memory of ... William Henry, beloved son of the above (William &amp; Catherine Davies, Bodafon Farm, Llandudno), 21<sup>st</sup> Lancers, reported missing at Benginy, Aichet-le-Grand, France, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1918, aged 22 years.</p>	
15	G144	<p>War grave          In proud and loving memory of Lieut. Norman Owen, R.A.F., killed while on flying duty, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1918, aged 24 years. (Son of David and Mary Jane Owen, Floville, Llandudno.)</p>	

16	G096	To the dear memory of ... Donald, dearly loved and only son of the above (T. Lincoln and Sarah Evans) who died of wounds, Oct 29 <sup>th</sup> , 1917 aged 23, interred in Dozinghem British Cemetery , Belgium.	
17	G203	Off path In loving memory of the beloved sons of John & Jane Hobson, Ivy Mount, Great Orme's Head, Llandudno ... Pte. John Hobson, 13 <sup>th</sup> R.W.F., killed in action June 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 1917, buried at Bard Cottage, Businghe, Belgium, aged 20 years. Pte. Evan Hobson, 14 <sup>th</sup> Gloucestershire Regt, killed in action August 21 <sup>st</sup> , 1917, buried at Emielie Villers, Laucon, France, aged 29 years. In loving memory of Pte. John Basford, Lancashire Fusiliers, the beloved husband of Elizabeth Jane Basford, , Ivy Mount, Great Orme's Head, Llandudno, who was killed in action in France, Palm Sunday, 1917, aged 26 years.	
18	G098	In loving memory of Frederick W. Jones, 5784, 1 <sup>st</sup> R.W.F., son of above (Jack and Mary Jones), killed in action May 16 <sup>th</sup> , 1915. <i>He died that others may live.</i>	
19	G028	Close to path In loving memory of ... Mervyn S. Davies, the dearly loved youngest son of the above (David and Jane C. Davies), who was killed in action in Flanders, Nov 28 <sup>th</sup> , 1917 and was interred at Passchendale, aged 22 years. <i>We feebly struggle on They in Glory stand.</i>	
20	G105	Er serchog gof ... Edward (fab o Margaret a John Hughes, 3 Cwlach St.) yr hwn a laddwyd yn y rhyfel, Awst 9, 1917, yn 29 mlwydd oed.	

21	G015	<p>Close to path          In remembrance of Lieut Bernard Dunphy R.N., who lost his life in the sinking of H.M.S. Bayano, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 1915 aged 33 years.  <i>Pro patria.</i></p>	
22	G018	<p>Close to path          Dedicated to the sacred memory of ... 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Thomas J. Owen, 8<sup>th</sup> Batt. Royal Welch Fusiliers, the last surviving son of John &amp; Margaret Owen, Avallon, died of wounds received at the Battle of the Tigris, Mesopotamia, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1917, aged 26 years.  <i>Nor blame I death because he bare the use of virtue out or earth          I know transplanted human worth will bloom to profit other where.</i></p>	
23	G079	<p>In loving memory of W.T. Williams, 17<sup>th</sup> R.W.F. Grandson of the above (William and Elizabeth Williams, Gate House), killed in action at Villers Outreaux, France, Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>, 1918, aged 37.  <i>He fought the good fight.</i></p>	
24	F023	<p>Captain James Harvey, The King's Liverpool Regt., beloved son of Mary and James Harvey, killed in action 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1915. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. William Harvey, The King's Liverpool Regt., beloved son of Mary and James Harvey, killed in action 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915.          (The smaller cross is for their brother John, who died in infancy.)</p>	
25	G164	<p>Off path          In honoured memory of Pte. John Davies Hughes, 9<sup>th</sup> R.W.F. (Jack), killed in action at Messines, France, April 1918 aged 19.  <i>Greater love hath no man Than this ...</i>          (Son of Gaynor and Robert Hughes, Ravenscliffe, Winllan Avenue, Llandudno.)</p>	

26	G190	<p>Off path  In loving memory of ... John Davies Jones, son of the above (Grace and William Jones), fell in action at France, Sept. 30, 1917, aged 26 years.</p>	
27	G315	<p>War grave  In honoured memory of Harry Lloyd Roberts, Royal Marines, who died of wounds received on the Mole at the Battle of Zeebrugge, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1918 aged 28.  <i>One crowded hour of glorious life is worth an age without a name.</i>  H.M.S. Vindictive.</p>	
28	G313	<p>Close to path  Er cof am ... Thomas John, ail fab yr uchod (John Hughes, Hayley cottage, cynt of Vine House), hwn a laddwyd yn Macedonia, Hydref 1916, yn 33 mlwydd oed.</p>	
29	F056	<p>In sacred memory of Alwyth Katrin Williams, V.A.D. Nurse 1914 – 1918, Red Cross Military Hospital, Llandudno. The only and dearly beloved daughter of the Reverend Robert and Mary Louisa Williams, Llanbedr Rectory, Talycnafn. Born Sept. 14, 1892, died Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>, 1918, a devoted daughter, sister and friend. (Died in the influenza epidemic.)</p>	
30	F058	<p>Close to path  In memory of Lieut, Bertram Lester Holme, M.A., R.W.F., who died of wounds in Mesopotamia, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1916, aged 27.</p>	

31	G300	<p>Off path</p> <p>In loving memory of ... Lce. Cpl. Robert R. Williams, D.C.M., killed in action Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1917, aged 33.</p> <p><i>Sadly missed by his father and mother.</i></p> <p>(Son of Hugh and Alice Ann Williams, Bay View Villa, Howard Road, Llandudno).</p>	
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## COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVE

### LIONEL PERCEVAL GRAVES

L P Graves died 21 December 1918, a Lieutenant in the King's Own Scottish Borderers. No further information is given on his marker of Portland stone. Lionel Perceval (Arnold) Graves, known as Perceval or Percy, was born in Dublin on 15 April 1884. He was the eldest son of Arnold Felix Graves, a Barrister at Law and famed educationalist, and Constance Graves. He was educated at King William's College on the Isle of Man. In 1894 when Percy was 10, there was a Personal Act of Parliament to dissolve the marriage of his parents.

The London Gazette around 1908 reported the progress of the bankruptcy of a Lionel Perceval (or Percy) Graves, a dealer in motor cars. This might be coincidence but census records show no other person with that name. Percy Graves was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Kent Territorial Force Royal Engineers Units (Submarine Mining School, Gillingham) from 1909 till his resignation in 1911.

On 1 October 1911, he disembarked from the Canada at Quebec having sailed from Liverpool. In September 1914, he volunteered at Valcartier for the Canadian Over-seas Expeditionary Force. He attested his next of kin as his mother of 9 Porchester Terrace, London, and his trade as an engineer. He was described as being "ruddy complexioned, blue-eyed, dark-haired, C of E, and unfit for service". Nevertheless, Percy is listed as a Private in the 16th Battalion of the Canadian Infantry Brigade. The Brigade arrived in France in 1915 and fought in France and Flanders till the armistice. How Percy became commissioned in the 9th Battalion of the KSOB is presently unclear but on 17 March 1916 he relinquished his commission of Temporary Second Lieutenant on grounds of ill health and was granted the honorary rank of Second Lieutenant. A medal roll in December 1916 gave Percy's address as a private hotel (a nursing home?) in Bournemouth.

Percy Graves died in Llandudno on 21 December 1918. There were a handful of military hospitals and nursing homes in the area and it is possible that he was in one of these. The National Probate Calendar of 1919 reported that Lionel Perceval Graves of 9 Porchester Terrace had left his effects of £139 to his brother Arnold Graves, a major in the RAF.

It seems difficult to understand why the eldest son in a prominent English / Anglo-Irish family received such a lonely demise and low-key burial. Nevertheless, having named his mother, then resident in London, as next of kin in 1914, it could be that he was estranged from his father who was enjoying a spectacular career in Ireland.

*Lieutenant L.P. Graves, K.O.  
Scottish Borderers, 21st December, 1918.*



## COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVE

### RICHARD EDWARD JONES

Richard Edward Jones was killed in action on 26th April 1915, aged 22. He was, according to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), a Private in the 24th (Pembroke and Glamorgan Yeomanry) Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers. However, in the report of his funeral in the Llandudno Advertiser, he is shown as Trooper 24th Battalion (Denbighshire Hussars Imperial Yeomanry) Royal Welsh Fusiliers. The cause of death is not know.

He was the son of William and Margaret Jones of 'Combermere', Deganwy Avenue, Llandudno. He was buried with full military honours in the family grave, with the following inscription.

*In loving memory of Richard Edward (Trooper D.H.Y.) son of William and Margaret Jones, Combermere, Deganwy Avenue, who passed away 26th April 1915, aged 22.*

Additional information has been provided by Claire Wynne Hughes, a relative of Trooper Jones. An extract from a newspaper gives an account of the funeral.

### Military Funeral at Llandudno

*The funeral of the late Richard E. Jones, of the Denbighshire Hussars, Imperial Yeomanry, and the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Jones, of "Combermere", Deganwy Avenue, Llandudno, took place at St. Tudno's Churchyard, on Friday afternoon, April 30<sup>th</sup>. The funeral, which was a public one, was one of the largest ever seen in town, and the number of floral tributes sent by sorrowing friends and relatives, and the vast number of messages of condolence received by the bereaved family, proved the undoubted popularity of the deceased and the high esteem in which the family is held, in Llandudno and elsewhere. He was buried with full military honours by the expressed wish of the deceased's Commanding Officer, and sincere thanks are due to the local military authorities for kindly volunteering to supply the necessary band, bearers, and firing party. The service throughout was of a very solemn and impressive character and was conducted in the absence of the Rector of Llandudno by the Rev. G. Williams, Rector of Corwen (uncle of the deceased), the Rev. D. Thomas-Jones, and the Rev. E. Frydlas Davies, who were assisted by the members of the St. George's Welsh Choir.*

*A beautiful wreath was sent by the Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Comrades of the deceased's Squadron, and this brief message of sympathy was received from Lord Kitchener:-*

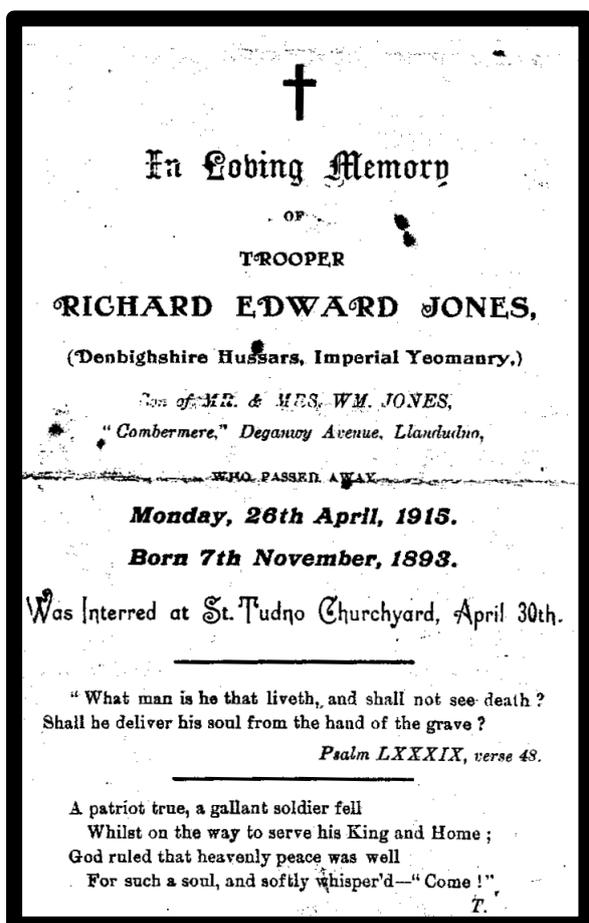
*"The King commands me to assure you of the true sympathy of His Majesty and the Queen in your sorrow."*

The Rev. D. Thomas-Jones who assisted at the funeral was at one time senior curate of Llandudno and married one of Trooper Jones's sisters.

Another newspaper reprinted an article from the "Llandudno Circular" of May 8<sup>th</sup> 1915, by W. Owen of Cystenin who watched the funeral procession. In a rather lyrical article entitled "Welsh Gleanings", from which these extracts are taken, Owen made the following observations and echoed the patriotic fervour of the earlier periods of the War.

*I was present on Friday (last week) at the funeral of Trooper R. Jones, and when the beautiful array of wreaths were being carried out of Combermere to the carriage, a blackbird perched itself on the sycamore tree in front of the house and sent forth the most heavenly notes I have ever listened to. When the coffin containing the remains of Trooper Dick Jones made its appearance the sharp order rang out, "Present Arms." The soldiers reversed arms and began their majestic slow march which sends a wave of vibration through every observer's mind. It was to the sound of this glorious strain that Trooper Dick Jones made his last march though our streets enclosed in an oaken casket – the old Druidical emblem of immortality. At the sight of this covered with the Union Jack the people uncovered their heads, the soldiers saluted, yea the wounded soldiers on crutches with perfect discipline paid their last tribute to a departed comrade; but the greatest person in the procession was not visible – "The Vital Spark" ("Y Darn o Dduw").*

*Had we the eye of faith what a glorious sight there would have been seen at St. Tudno's when the procession arrived. On every grave there stood a "Vital Spark." These spirits are watching continually over the freedom of Britain, and they urge on the boys to do and die for the freedom of humanity.*



## COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVE

### NORMAN OWEN

Norman Owen was killed whilst on flying duty on 3rd June 1918, aged 24. He was at this time a Second Lieutenant in the newly formed RAF (63 Training Squadron). He initially joined the Royal Navy Auxiliary Section (Motor Section) in October 1914. A few months later he was sent out to South Africa under Commander Locker Lampson. His services there earned him a commendation.

He returned to Britain and was then sent to the Western Front. As a result of more distinguished service he was recommended for a commission. He returned to England and went through the course at the Naval College, Greenwich. He was successful and soon gained a pilot's certificate.

The report in the Llandudno Advertiser goes into more detail about how he met his death: 'It appears that having obtained a First Class Pilot's Certificate, the deceased was sent on a Gunnery course in S. England. On the morning of June 3rd he was sent on a flight, accompanied in another machine by a comrade. He had complained to this friend of not feeling well the day before. He made no suggestion to the instructors that he was unwell before setting out. All went well until both aviators arrived over the aerodrome on their return. Just before commencing a spiral descent the deceased waved to his friend, whether as a signal or a friendly salute cannot be stated. The next moment his friend saw him fall back in his seat and the aeroplane began to fall to earth.'

He was the son of Mrs Owen and the late Mr Owen of Canton House, Lloyd Street. He was buried with full military honours on the 15th June and rests in the family grave.



*In proud and loving memory of Lieut. Norman Owen, R.A.F., killed while flying on duty, June 3rd, 1918, aged 24 years. "Per ardua ad astra"*



## COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVE

### HARRY LLOYD ROBERTS

Harry Lloyd Roberts was killed in action on 23rd April 1918, aged 28. The CWGC register shows him as a private in the Royal Marine Light Infantry attached to HMS Vindictive. The inscription on his grave reads 'Honoured Memory of Harry Lloyd Roberts, Royal Marines, died of wounds received on the Mole at the Battle of Zeebrugge, April 23rd 1918, aged 28.'

The first report of his death appeared in the Llandudno Advertiser on 27th April 1918. It reads, 'The brilliant naval exploits at Ostend, Zeebrugge claimed the life of a Llandudno man, Harry Lloyd Roberts. His mother was away from home and two uncles went to Chatham to arrange the return of the body to Llandudno.'

In the Llandudno Advertiser on the 4th May 1918 there is a comprehensive report of the funeral. In that report it shows that the body was returned on a Saturday evening and the funeral took place the following afternoon, a Sunday! There a glowing testimony to Harry in this report describing him as 'one of those intrepid volunteers who have gained immortal fame for their courageous work on the Vindictive the war vessel which, battered beyond recognition in her upper works, came back from the inferno at Zeebrugge, carrying with her the dead and wounded in as gallant an action as any inscribed on the records of the Navy.'

Harry was the eldest son of Mr Harry Roberts and Mrs Roberts, Roby House, Church Walks and grandson of Mr. Thomas Roberts, founder of the firm Messrs T Roberts, Roby House. He had been in the Llandudno Boy Scouts, a member of the Llandudno Amateur Dramatic Society and a sidesman of the Church of St. Tudno.

Harry was buried in the family grave with full military and naval honours and elected parts of the report on the funeral show what such a funeral entailed: 'The funeral was announced for half past two, but long before that hour people began to assemble in the vicinity of Roby Mount, there being many hundreds there while the Service was conducted. The Navy was represented by the Commander of Western District, Detachment of men from the Coast Guard, representatives from Lighthouse staff, The Llandudno Company of Caernarvonshire Volunteer Regiment paraded in force under Captain Strowger. Representatives from the H.Q. of the same Regiment. Lieut. J. Grosvenor Jones represented Col. Lord Mostyn. An impressive section of the cortege was that formed by wounded soldiers, of whom there were about two hundred. Several of the men were on crutches, and one of them at least marched so aided the whole way to St. Tudno's. Members of the Special Police also attended. The coffin, draped with the Union Jack, was conveyed on a Pontoon Wagon, drawn by four horses with outriders, and was followed by a Firing Party of the Royal engineers'. At the head was the Town Band, under the direction of Mr. F. L Traversi. In the same copy of the Advertiser there is a poem, A Zeebrugge Hero, dedicated to Harry Roberts, RMLI, by John Roberts 'Arwynfa' (it is not known if he was a relative). The inscription on the grave is as follows.

*In honoured memory of Harry Lloyd Roberts, Royal Marines,  
who died of wounds received on the Mole at the Battle of Zeebrugge, April 23rd, 1918, aged 28.*

*"One Crowded hour of glorious life is worth an age without a name."*

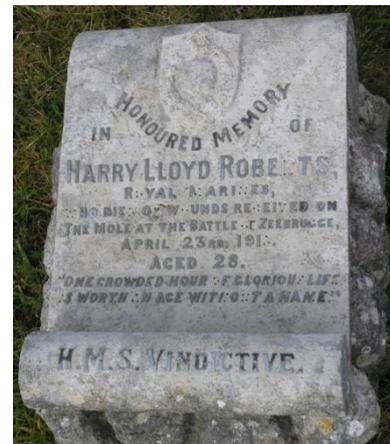
*H.M. S. Vindictive*

## **A Zeebrugge Hero**

*It was St. Georges Day 1918  
Our country at war with German spleen  
Now good St. George give help on land and sea  
To vanquish dragons and set Britain free  
A call was made for volunteers true  
A special hardy errand it was too  
Young Harry Roberts in obedience went  
Quite full of British pluck and daring bent  
When on this duty in the battle clash  
And fighting with the foe with manly dash  
He bravely fell before a deadly dart  
But not before he nobly did his part  
What excellent example he did set  
The cost was great – the sacrifice met  
The world extols his memorable deed  
The flowers of fame will spring up from this seed  
We mourn his loss, but still his glory stands  
And echoes now abroad throughout the lands  
All Britain marvels at his fine display  
The memories of this feat for years will stay  
His body rests in quaint St. Tudno's yard  
And Soldiers Guardian Angels there mount guard  
The breezes waft, his valour always spread  
Why! patriotic deeds are never dead.  
Cheer up relations – friends not mourn undue  
True fame he won – then joined the heroes queue  
His duty's done uprightly brave and well  
Reposing now in peace – eternal spell.*

by John Roberts 'Arwynfa'

Published in the "Llandudno Advertiser", 4 May, 1918.



## VAD NURSE

### ALDWYTH KATRIN WILLIAMS

Aldwyth Katrin Williams, daughter of an Anglican priest, was 22 at the beginning of the First World War and served throughout the war as a V.A.D. Nurse in a Red Cross Military Hospital in Llandudno.

After the end of the Boer War the government was concerned that medical and nursing services would not be able to cope with another war and in 1909 the War Office issued the Scheme for the Organisation of Voluntary Aid. Under this scheme, the British Red Cross was given the role of providing supplementary aid to the Territorial Forces Medical Service in the event of war. The Red Cross organised units called voluntary aid detachments (V.A.D.s) the members of which were trained in first aid and nursing. Within twelve months of the scheme's launch, there were well over 6,000 V.A.D.s. By early 1914 there were more than 1700 female and 500 male detachments and membership grew still further on the outbreak of war, when Red Cross and Auxiliary hospitals sprung up rapidly in church halls, public buildings and private houses. "Central" hospitals received patients directly from disembarkation, while auxiliary hospitals received patients from central hospitals. Auxiliary hospitals could accommodate anywhere between 10 and 100 patients and the following hospitals were listed in Llandudno:

Balmoral Hospital, Llandudno

Lady Forester Convalescent, Home Llandudno

Plas Tudno and St. Tudno Auxiliary Hospitals, Llandudno

The work of a V.A.D. Nurse could be arduous and challenging, as indicated by the following quotation. "The proportion of trained nurses in the units was small, and much of the basic work was the responsibility of the VADs – they cleaned, scrubbed and dusted, set trays, cooked breakfasts; they lit fires and boiled up coppers full of washing. They also helped to dress, undress and wash the men – which was of course a big step for young women who may never have been alone and unchaperoned with a member of the opposite sex before, other than their brothers." (Scarletfinders website).

The war was drawing to an end in autumn 1918 but a greater killer was emerging as in 1918 – 1919 an influenza pandemic swept around the globe, killing far more people than had died in the war. It has been estimated that between 20 and 40 million people died, making this a global disaster, and in one year more people died than in four years of the bubonic plague (black death) from 1347 – 1351. The influenza was highly virulent and developed rapidly. For example, the death rate from influenza and pneumonia for people aged 15 to 34 years was 20 times higher in 1918 than in previous years. (Stanford University website) .

Looking around the churchyard, many of the young people dying at this time may have been victims of influenza: one of them was 26 year old Aldwyth Williams, who died on 8 November 1918.



*In sacred memory of Aldwyth Katrin Williams, V.A.D. Nurse 1914-1918, Red Cross Military Hospital, Llandudno. The only and dearly beloved daughter of the Reverend Robert and Mary Williams, Llanbedr Rectory, Talycafn. Born Sept 14th, 1892, Died Nov 8th, 1918, a devoted daughter, sister and friend.*

Sources of information on the V.A.D.s and the influenza pandemic

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/About-us/Who-we-are/Museum-and-archives/Resources-for-researchers/Volunteers-and-personnel-records>

<http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk/173.html>

<http://virus.stanford.edu/uda/>



