

# Commonwealth War Graves at St Nicholas Bathampton Leaflet



Please take this **free** leaflet

or view online at

[www.stnicholasbathampton.org.uk](http://www.stnicholasbathampton.org.uk)

At this location there are  
Commonwealth  
War Graves  
[www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)

If you have entered the Church directly from the canal you will have noticed the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) sign affixed to the Churchyard wall. This sign was erected to indicate that there are 6 graves in the CWGC's register in the Churchyard. Before you locate these graves it is important to understand the role of the CWGC. This organisation owes its existence to the vision and determination of Sir Fabian Ware, who whilst neither a soldier nor a politician, was nevertheless well placed to respond to the public's reaction to the enormous losses in the First World War. As the commander of a mobile unit of the British Red Cross he was greatly affected by the sheer number of casualties and he felt driven to find a way to ensure the final resting places of the dead would not be lost forever. Under his leadership, his unit began recording and marking all the graves they could find. By the time the First World War had entered its second year, their work was given official recognition by the War Office and incorporated into the British Army as the Graves Registration Commission.

Sir Fabian was keen that the spirit of Imperial cooperation evident in the war was reflected in the work of his organisation. Encouraged by the Prince of Wales, he submitted a memorandum to the Imperial War Conference. In May 1917, the Imperial War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter, with the Prince serving as President and Sir Fabian as Vice-Chairman. The Commission's work began in earnest in 1918, after the end of the First World War. Once land for cemeteries and memorials had been guaranteed, the enormous task of recording the details of the dead began. By 1918, some 587,000 graves had been identified

with a further 559,000 casualties registered as having no known grave.

The Commission set the highest standards for all its work. Rudyard Kipling was tasked as literary advisor and was responsible for advising on inscriptions. The key principle, still upheld today is that of equality. In death, all are marked with the same headstone and the layout is unchanging. Whilst loved ones could (for a fee) inscribe a short commemoration at the foot of the headstone, the overall effect was one of uniformity, and regardless of rank, equality in the face of God. Most people believe that all the Commonwealth War Graves are abroad, in fact over 308,000 Commonwealth World War Dead are actually commemorated in the United Kingdom. Their graves and memorials can be found in 13,000 different locations. This is the highest total of World War commemorations in any country, other than France. In contrast to the military cemeteries familiar to many along the Western Front in France and Belgium, many war graves are found within larger burial grounds scattered across the country, including our church of St Nicholas here in Bathampton. Note that these 6 do not conform to the uniformity of grave that is synonymous with the work of the CWGC rather that they conform to the wishes of their respective family. There are in fact, 6,000 Church of England sites containing war graves.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission contacted the Church of St Nicholas in 2019 as they wished both to increase the awareness of war graves in local areas and to remind the public that they need not have to travel abroad to find Commonwealth commemorations. We The PCC were delighted to endorse this proposal and we hope that using the photographs in this leaflet as a visual guide, you will be able to easily locate the 6 CWG registered graves. The sign was erected and will be maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The following are recorded by the Commission as being buried in our Churchyard. Please note that some of the directions are given using the points of the compass. To orientate you the canal lies to the South of the Church and the George Inn is to the West

**BREWER, Ivan Victor**

Battery Quartermaster Sergeant

Number 13167

Died 07/05/1918 aged 32 years

Royal Garrison Artillery

Plot C190

Grave is located close to the black Victorian lamppost to the east of the Churchyard. The inscription on the grave is obscured.



**GARDNER, Bryan George**

Ordinary Seaman

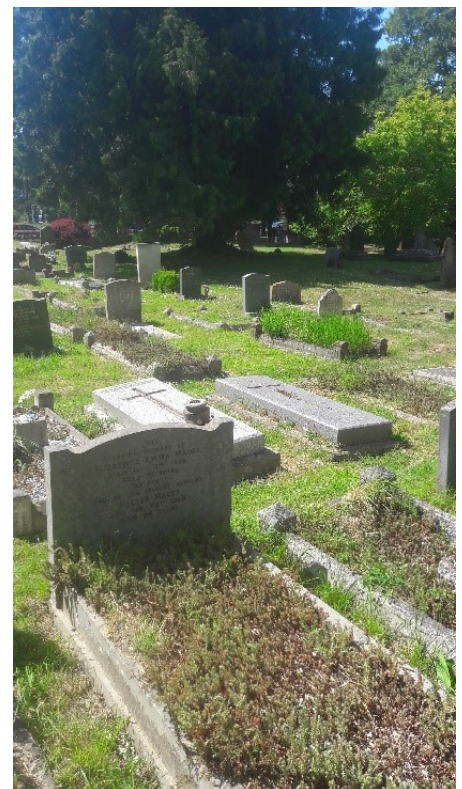
Number JX545634

Died 31/03/1944 aged 18 years

Royal Navy

Plot D44 South of Tower

With your back to the main Church entrance head due South past the large Yew tree.



**HARWOOD, Ivy Anne**

Private

Number W/33578

Died 20/05/1943 aged 23 years

Auxiliary Territorial Service

Plot D36 South West part of Churchyard

Opposite the George Inn.



**JORDAN, Richard Avary Arthur Young**

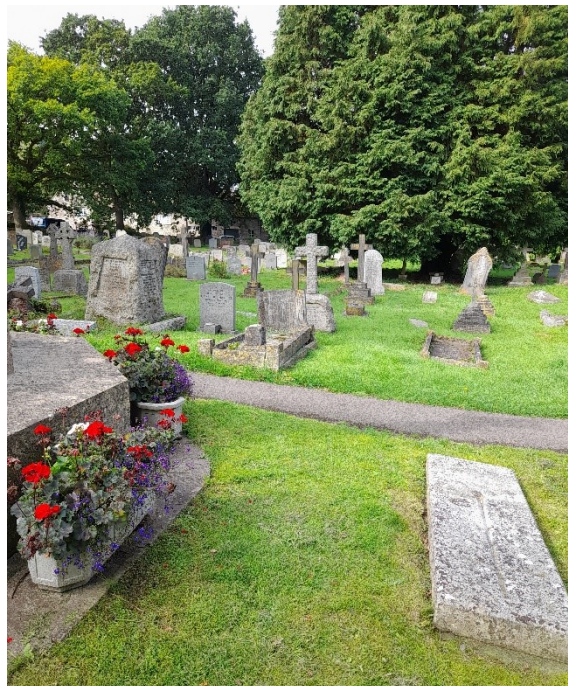
Major

Died 14/06/1920 aged 54 years

King's Shropshire Light Infantry

Plot D35 South West part of Churchyard

With your back to the Coronation commemorative Cross look West towards the George Inn. Grave lies in line with the Cross.



**NOAD, Richard Harold John**

Sergeant

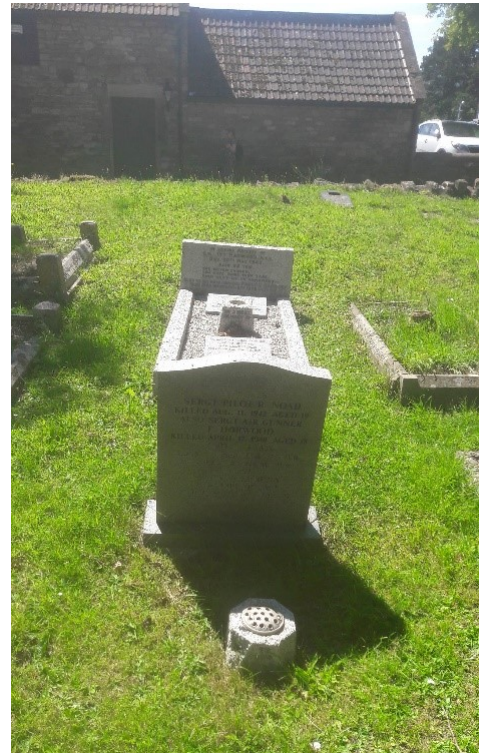
Number 1313945

Died 11/08/1942 aged 19 years

Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Plot D35 South West part of Churchyard

Grave is opposite the George Inn.



**VIAN, Sylvia Helen**

Sister

Number 213154

Died 16/10/1941 age not recorded

Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service

Plot B234 South East part of Church Tower

Grave lies beside the Coronation commemorative Cross.





**St Nicholas Church**  
**Church Close, Bathampton, BA2 6TU**  
**[www.stnicholasbathampton.org.uk](http://www.stnicholasbathampton.org.uk)**