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COMMONWEALTH  
WAR GRAVES  
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## RESEARCHING A FORMER COMMISSION STAFF MEMBER - GUIDANCE SHEET



This bitesize guide is designed to help you research a former Commission staff member using the **CWGC Archive Catalogue**. Firstly, you will need to decide who you will research... this might be a relative, or you may have come across an individual like one of our Principal Architects whilst browsing the archive catalogue and wish to find out more information about them.

The first stage of your research starts with the CWGC Archive Catalogue. If the staff member was employed by the Commission between 1917 and 1969, there may be a staff card for the individual listed on the online archive catalogue. The staff card provides information such as their job title(s), their dates of employment, and the area(s) or region(s) they were employed. Some of the earlier staff cards even mention an individual's military service during the First World War, including their rank, regiment, and the number of years they were on active service.

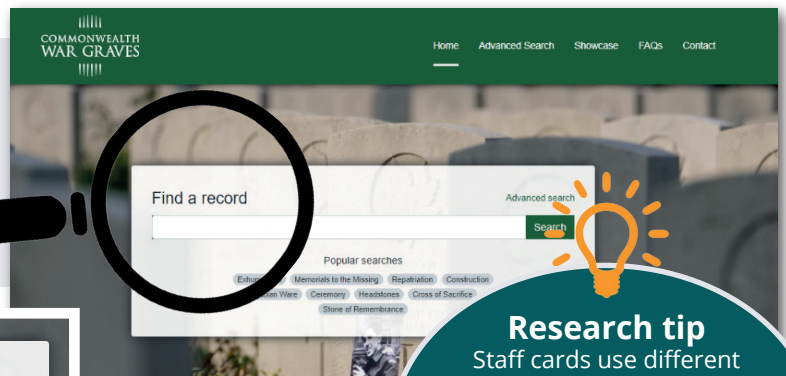
### STEP 1:

Look for a staff card on our online archive catalogue:  
<http://archive.cwgc.org/>

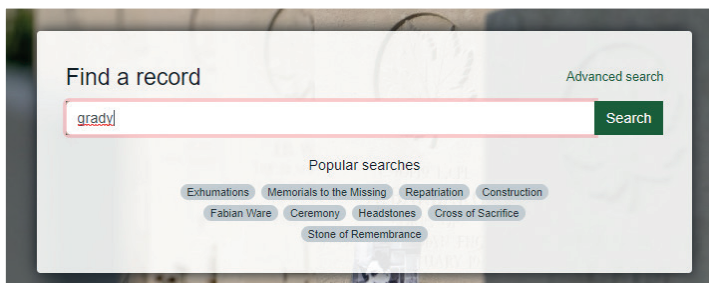


**Need help..?**  
Consult the CWGC  
Archive Catalogue  
User Guide

Start by entering the  
individual's name  
in white box under  
**'Find a record'**



**Research tip**  
Staff cards use different  
combinations of full name,  
name and initial, and initials  
only. You may have to try  
several of these to find the  
individual you are looking for.



Individuals may only be referred to by their surname in some records listed in the catalogue, so it is advisable to use only the surname to start with.

For this guide, we will be looking for a former staff member named Stephen Grady. We will start by entering "grady" in the Quick Search box as seen in the image above.

After clicking the button labelled 'Search', you will then get a list of the results...

If you have not found who you are looking for, click Refine Search to carry out a more specific enquiry.

The search results display all of the records where the search term (in this example "grady") appears in the description of the record.

The screenshot shows the CWGC search results page. A magnifying glass highlights the 'Refine Search' button. Another magnifying glass highlights a record with a thumbnail image, accompanied by a callout box that says: "Be aware, Be aware, not all records listed on the catalogue have been digitised. Look out for records with a thumbnail image visible on the search results; this will indicate that digitised material is available."

Unique ID	Title	Description	Date	File Number	Thumbnail
CWGC/2/1/362	COMMISSION MEETING No. 12 - September 1953	Minutes of the 362nd Meeting of the Commission	17/09/1953	CM 3/1/30	
CWGC/2/1/369	COMMISSION MEETING No. 13 - September 1953	Minutes of the 369th Meeting of the Commission	15/04/1954	CM 3/1/37	
CWGC/2/1/370	COMMISSION MEETING No. 14 - September 1953	Minutes of the 370th Meeting of the Commission	16/10/1958	CM 3/1/86	
CWGC/2/1/371	COMMISSION MEETING No. 15 - September 1953	Minutes of the 371st Meeting of the Commission	14/12/1961	CM 3/1/123	

Scrolling further down the page we can see that Stephen Grady has a staff card available and as there is a thumbnail image visible, this means that his record has been digitised and is available to view on the online catalogue.

CWGC/6/4/1/1/120	Grady, Stephen	Staff cards for Stephen Grady	11/03/1920 - 17/09/1946	CWGC/6/4/1/1/120	
CWGC/6/4/1/1/246	O'Grady, Owen	Staff cards for Owen O'Grady.	19/07/1919 - 31/12/1953	CWGC/6/4/1/1/246	
CWGC/6/4/1/2/2611	Grady, Francis	Staff card for Francis Grady.	02/12/1946 - 02/10/1949	CWGC/6/4/1/2/2611	
CWGC/6/4/5/59	NEW YEAR HONOURS - 1963		1963	ADD 10/1/57	

Once we have opened the catalogue entry for Stephen Grady's staff card, we can see there is lots of interesting information: it mentions when Stephen joined the Commission, that he died whilst in post in a motorcycle accident, and that his son (also called Stephen) was employed by the Commission

The **Date** field in the context of the staff cards refers to the individual's dates of employment (i.e. when they started and when they left the Commission)

CWGC - Records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

- 6 - Staff and HR
  - 4 - Staff Records
    - 1 - Staff cards
      - 1 - Staff Card - Old System

**Unique ID**  
CWGC/6/4/1/1/120

**File Number**  
CWGC/6/4/1/1/120

**Title**  
Grady, Stephen

**Description**  
Staff cards for Stephen Grady

**Content Note**  
Appointed as a Gardener's Labourer on 11 March 1920, after joining the Commission in France. Promoted to Gardener on 21 January 1921, and to Gardener Caretaker on 1 July 1927. Became a Head Gardener on 1 April 1928. Died in post as the result of a motorcycle accident on 17 September 1946. His son, also named Stephen Grady (employee number P935), was employed by the Commission from 19 May 1947 to 19 July 1984.

**Date**  
11/03/1920 - 17/09/1946

Image



If we scroll further down the page, we can see the staff card has been digitised and even includes a photograph of Stephen himself.

Name	Grady S	File No	23790
Home Address	7, Rue de la République		
Age	34	Sex	M
War Service	Gunner R.G.A. 13 years		
Pre-War Occupation	Gardener		
Employment desired	Caretaker		

SUPERANNUATION							
Name	No.	Rate	Class	Period	Amount	Notes	Remarks
Grady S	1	1/20	1	1914-1918	£10.00		
Grady S	2	1/20	1	1918-1921	£15.00		

By looking at the staff card itself, we can find even more information about Stephen, such as where he was living in France at the time, his job before the First World War, and some information about his military service where it notes that he was a Gunner in the Royal Garrison Artillery:

NAME **GRADY, Stephen. F.A.** File **23790**

ADDRESS **Chz/Veniat, Avenue Bayard, Conventines Nord France.**

Age **34** S. or M. Children **—** If demobilized **Yes.**

War Service **Gunner, R.G.A. 13 years.**

Pre-War Occupation **following Gardener.**

Employment desired **Caretaker.** Salary asked **P-88.**

Applied personally **by letter dated**

Appointed as **Gardener, Labourer.** Salary **£2.0.0** date **11.3.20**

Commenced duty **11.3.20**, Proceeded to **St. France** on **11.3.20**

**Trans to Gardener 2/1/21**

FATHER OF STGRADY P935 Commission employee from 19.5.47 to 19.7.84

Home address % Mrs Crook, 7 Hura Road, Rainwater

(45,230). Wt.25,167—42. 2000. 11/19. Gp.132. A.&E.W.

Looking through the IWGC staff cards, you will notice several abbreviations that may be unfamiliar at first. Below are some common abbreviations which appear throughout the staff cards to help you:

**A.R.I.B.A.** – Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects  
**A.T.** – Agreement Terminated  
**C.A.O.** – Chief Administrative Officer  
**C.B.E.** – Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire  
**C.E.D.** – Central European District  
**D.A.I.W.** – Deputy Assistant Inspector of Works  
**D.W.** – Director of Works  
**D.D.W.** – Deputy Director of Works  
**E.D.** – Eastern District  
**F.C.** – Finance Committee  
**F.D.** – French District  
**F.R.I.B.A.** – Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects  
**G. & C.** – Gardener (&) Caretaker  
**G.L.** – Gardener Labourer  
**H.G.** – Head Gardener  
**H.O.** – Horticultural Officer (but is also used for Head Office)  
**I.W.G.C.** – Imperial War Graves Commission  
**M.B.E.** – Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire  
**N.R.** – Northern Region  
**N.W.E.D.** – North West Europe District  
**O.B.E.** – Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire  
**P.A.** – Per Annum  
**P.M.S.** – Permanent Maintenance Staff  
**R.A.** – Royal Academician  
**R.H.Q.** – Regional Headquarters  
**R.I.B.A.** – Chartered member of the Royal Institute of British Architects  
**S.E.D.** – Southern European District  
**S.F.G.** – Sub-Foreman Gardener  
**S.W.** – South-West (Area)  
**T.S.G.** – Travelling Superintendent Gardener  
**T.G.** – Technical Grade

## Step 2:

## Explore additional resources to find out more about the individual

If we return to the search results, we see that there may be several other records listed on the catalogue where Stephen Grady is mentioned.

Below is an overview of the other types of records you will expect to find on the catalogue and the type of information they are likely to hold on former Commission staff:

### Personnel files

#### **What are they?**

Although many personnel files have since been destroyed, a few remain for some of the early Commission staff such as Sir Fabian Ware, or Principal Architects and even gardeners such as Robert Armstrong, who was murdered during the Second World War.

#### **What can they tell us about Commission staff?**

Most of the correspondence in these files concern the appointment and resignation of the staff member, but may also refer to their death and even include a photograph of the individual.

#### **Are they available to access online?**

None of the surviving personnel files have been as of yet digitised, but full catalogue descriptions exist for these files and they can be ordered for viewing in the Reading Room at the Commission's Head Office.

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### Staff Honours and Awards (CWGC/6/4/5/4)

#### **What are they?**

These files contain the staff recommendations for honours and awards as part of the New Years and Birthday Lists published annually in the Gazette.

#### **What can they tell us about Commission staff?**

Where a member of the Commission's staff has been recognised for their work and service and subsequently recommended for an honour or award, the Honours and Awards files will contain their recommendation which summarises their career with the Commission at that time and explains the reason why they were recommended for an honour or award.

#### **Are they available to access online?**

None of honours and awards files have been as of yet digitised, but catalogue descriptions list the staff members mentioned in these files. The files can be ordered for viewing in the Reading Room at the Commission's Head Office.

## **Annual Reports (CWGC/2/1)**

### **What are they?**

Annual reports of the Commission. Contents of each report generally include a list of the current Commissioners, a review of the work undertaken in the preceding year, an account of the finances of the Commission, and a statistical analysis of the number of cemeteries, memorials, graves, and commemorations maintained by the Commission. The reports may also contain information covering the final construction date of cemeteries and memorials and are often illustrated with images of sites.

### **What can they tell us about Commission staff?**

Senior Commission staff members and Commissioners are often listed in the annual reports or if there was a significant event which involved a member of the Commission's staff, these are mentioned in the annual reports. Some later editions of the Commission's Annual Report list members of the Commission's staff who had retired or passed away in during the period covered in the report.

### **Are they available to access online?**

All of the Commission's Annual Reports from 1919 to 2015 are available to access via the online catalogue in PDF format.

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## **Commission meeting minutes (CWGC/2/2)**

### **What are they?**

Minutes of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and predecessor/related organisations, including minutes of the Imperial War Graves Commission (1917-1960) and the Prince of Wales' National Committee for the Care of Soldiers Graves (1916-1917). The Commission Meeting Minutes record the discussions and decisions made by the appointed Commissioners regarding the policies and work of the Commission.

### **What can they tell us about Commission staff?**

Only the earlier Commission meeting minutes in the 1920s will list the staff appointments at the time, but throughout the whole series, particular Commission staff members are mentioned who have been bestowed an honour or award, been present at an unveiling ceremony, or have toured a particular area or region.

### **Are they available to access online?**

All the Commission's meeting minutes between 1916 and 2013 have been catalogued and digitised. The downloadable document is the final version of the Committee Meeting minutes. Additional information, including the verbatim minutes and subsidiary reports, may be available in the physical file.

## **Finance Committee meeting minutes (CWGC/4/2)**

### **What are they?**

The Finance Meeting Minutes record all financial aspects and costs incurred by the Commission during its work, including costs for cemetery and memorial construction, headstone production costs/contracts, and staff costs.

### **What can they tell us about Commission staff?**

Mostly concerned with financial business, the minutes only mention aspects like employment, remuneration or staff expenses, however, there may be other details mentioned in connection with specific Commission staff.

### **Are they available to access online?**

The Finance Committee meeting minutes have been catalogued, but they have not been digitised yet.

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## **Photographic Collection (CWGC/9)**

### **What is it?**

Collection of photographic prints and negatives from the Commission's Photographic Library. Subject matter includes photographs of cemetery and memorial sites, Commission staff, and ceremonial events.

### **What can the photographic collection tell us about Commission staff?**

Some photograph albums such as the Goodland collection depict the work and life of the early Commission staff and their families in France and Belgium, including the camps where they lived and worked or the social events they engaged in, including football, cricket and tennis tournaments.

Other images in the collection may show Commission gardeners or craftsmen at work or senior Commission staff whilst on tour.

### **Is it available to access online?**

The black and white photographic negatives and some photograph albums (such as the Goodland collection) have been digitised and are available to access via the online catalogue, but there may be other images in the collection which can only be viewed on site in the Reading Room.



Still can't find what you're  
looking for? Please contact  
**[enquiries@cwgc.org](mailto:enquiries@cwgc.org)**  
for help