

# Recording the gravestones of St Mary's Church

Diane Parker's work recording the gravestones and monuments at St Mary's Church has continued and some of the information discovered to date is shown below:

## 1. Herbert Hillary

GREAT WAR SOLDIER - HERBERT HILLARY

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

HERBERT HILLARY

THE BELOVED AND DEVOTED SON OF

CALEB AND ROSE COY OF THIS PARISH

HE CAME FROM NEW YORK TO TAKE HIS PART

IN THE GREAT WAR 1914 ATTACHED TO THE

1ST WELSH REGIMENT, HE WAS REPORTED MISSING

AFTER AN ENGAGEMENT AT YPRES 25 MAY 1915

AGED 19 YEARS

HE LIVES FOR EVERMORE

## 2. Caleb Isaac Coy

Caleb Isaac Coy, a clerk aged 23 married Rose Weedman aged 20 on September 21, 1886 in Chelsea St Saviour in the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

By the census of 1901, they are living at Abbey Cottage Chapel Hill St Mary, Tintern. Caleb is the Caretaker at Tintern Abbey. They have six children, including Herbert Hillary Coy who is aged 5 years having been born in Tintern, during the first quarter of 1896.

The 1911 census finds Caleb and Rose living in Beaufort Cottage and they have had an additional four children. However, Herbert Hillary and his elder brother Francis Caleb are not living with the family. I cannot trace Francis in 1911, but Herbert, as a 15 year old, is employed as a Houseboy (Domestic) in the household of John G. B. J. Hildegard, of The Hall, Dunnington, York.

Following the further travels of Herbert Hillary Coy, we find that he first goes to Canada, then onto the USA. He ends up in New York and is employed as a bellboy in a hotel. Finally, after the outbreak of the First World War, he returns to the UK. He arrived in Liverpool on the White Star Dominion Line ship 'Baltic', on the 1st of January 1915. He has stated that his current permanent residence is the USA, and though he records his UK address as Beaufort House, Tintern, he states that that his future permanent residence is England!! I guess he thought that Tintern was in England.

The 1st Battalion Welsh Regiment, at the outbreak of the First World War was in Chakrata, India, part of Dehra Dun Brigade in Meerut Division. The Battalion returned to England, landing in Plymouth on 22nd December 1914. Having moved to Hursley Park, the battalion came under the

orders of and remained with 84th Brigade in 28th Division. They landed at La Havre on 18th January 1915.

I have not been able to find out when Herbert Coy joined the Welsh Regiment, but he arrived in France on 5th May 1915. He was posted as M.P.D. (Missing Presumed Dead) on 25th May 1915 having spent just 20 days at war. With no known grave, Herbert's name is engraved on the Menin Gate Memorial. Having seen the British Army WW1 Medal Roll Index Card for Herbert, he appears to have been awarded the 1915 Star and the Victory Medal.

Caleb died on 6th June 1930. He and Rose were then living in Larchgrove, Tintern. Administration of his will amounting to £435 6s 9d was granted to Rose. Rose, then of Riverside, Tintern, died on 14th May 1947 in Cleddon House, Trellech. Administration of her effects of £600 was granted to her daughter Winifred Florence Marsh, wife of Harold John Marsh.

Caleb and Rose's eldest son, Francis Caleb Coy, born 10th April 1889, joined the Great Western Railway in 1904 as a Lads Clerk in the Goods department in Cardiff Station. His annual salary of £20 increases by £10 per year until he is earning £60 per annum in 1908. After that he transfers to the Clerks Register, presumably still in Cardiff, as in the 1911 census he is a boarder living in Claude Road, Roath, Cardiff. When we next find a record of him he is in the R.A.M.C., entering into service on 11th August 1915.

In June 1920 in St George's, Hanover Square, London, Francis married Isobel Grant. Then, in 1923, we find him on board the P&O S N Co.'s ship 'China' leaving on 19th October. He gave his address Beaufort Cottage, Tintern, and was en route for Bombay to join the Indian Army. There is no record of his wife sailing with him. Francis is then listed living at 17a Pierrepont Road, Acton, Middlesex, in the Electoral Register. Finally we find that Francis died in 1978 whilst living in Ross on Wye.

Caleb and Rose's second son, Percival William, was born on 17th Feb 1891 in Windsor, Berks. There is a reference to Percival being a Canadian soldier during the Great War, but I am currently unable to access any details. However this seem incompatible with the fact that on 4th April 1918 Percival married Lily Frost in St Augustine's Parish Church, Highbury, Islington, London. His address is given as Beaufort House, Tintern and his occupation is 'Civil Service'. Percival died during Mar quarter 1975 in Newport, Gwent. Lily died in 1981 in Gwent.

Beatrice Gladys, known as Cissie was born 1893 in St George, Hanover Sq, London. She married Silas Richards during Sept quarter 1929. They lived together in Nurton Cottage, Tintern until her death in Sept Q 1931.

After marrying again to Dorothy Hicks in 1934, Silas died in 1963.

Florence Winifred was born in Tintern in 1899. We find two records for her. On 5th Aug 1938, she leaves from Southampton, bound for Canada. Then in Sept Q 1943 she married a Mr Marsh in Oundle, Northants.

Maud May was born in 1900 in Tintern. She married in 1924 a Mr Box in Cardiff. We then find her death in 1980 in South Glamorgan (presumably Cardiff).

The only thing we know about Thomas Edward is that he was born in Tintern in the Dec Q 1903. Also this applies to Evelyn Mary who was born in 1906, Phyllis Dorothy, born in 1908, though with Grace Irene, born 20th June 1910, we also know that she died in 1974 in Wellingborough, Northants, apparently unmarried.

There are also records of two further children of Caleb and Rose. Blanch Annie Rose was 4 years old when she was buried on the 1st January 1898 and George was just 4 weeks when he was buried on 14th April 1905, both in St Mary's Churchyard, Chapel Hill.

## **Reflections**

My first reflection on what I have learned is that as the Coy family lived in Chapel Hill, Tintern, the plaque in St Michael's Church must have been originally in St Mary's, and then moved to St Michael's when St Mary's was decommissioned.

Further, this plaque appears to be the only Tintern memorial for a Great War soldier and therefore it could be considered as Tintern's War Memorial.

As apparently there were no other soldiers lost during WWI from Tintern and as Herbert H Coy was from Chapel Hill, Tintern, then it is possible that Tintern Parva could be considered a 'Thankful Village' as there appears to have been no other casualties recorded.

Secondly, I have difficulties with the phrase 'beloved and devoted son'. The fifteen year old Herbert was not living at home in the 1911 census. He was Houseboy in a household in York. At some time afterwards he travels to Canada, before moving on to New York. His only other sibling not living at home was Francis Caleb who was an adult living in Cardiff and working for Great Western Railway. In other words, a natural progression. I may be completely wrong, but I think that, though they kept in touch, Herbert and his parents were estranged and the phrase 'beloved and devoted son' was an expression of regret for the nature of their relationship.