

# Grange Road Cemetery

Grange Road, Gillingham, Kent

In 1066, the village of Gillingham was gifted to the half-brother of William the Conqueror.

Odo of Bayeux built the church of St Mary Magdalene, the oldest church in Gillingham.

It served this cemetery from 1867 until 1973 when the site was largely cleared of memorials to provide a community open space for the local population.

The town has always maintained a strong connection with the Military. The Royal Engineers Museum holds one of the most impressive military collections. It includes the regalia worn by Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War from 1914 until he was killed in 1916 by a German mine whilst sailing to Russia on HMS Hampshire.

The Royal Navy has also been in the area for over four hundred years.

Private Ridley was the only First World War Canadian to be buried here. Along with eighteen other servicemen he is now remembered on a Special Memorial erected at the Woodlands Road Cemetery.



The former Grange Road Cemetery. All of the War Grave headstones, but not the remains, were removed to the Gillingham Woodlands Road Cemetery.

## Pte William Frederick Ridley

Serial No: 141535

b. 7 April 1887

New Brompton, Gillingham, Kent, England

Machinist

Enlisted: 28 July 1915

at: Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

4<sup>th</sup> Bn Canadian Infantry –

Central Ontario Regiment

Married

Wife: Lee Edith Ridley

(née: Wass, married: 5 June 1909,

at: Barton Township, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada)

23 Edinburgh Avenue,

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Parents: John & Elizabeth Ann Ridley

(née: Brown, married: June 1875,

at: North Aylesford, Kent, England)

Gillingham, Kent, England

Religion: Church of England

Died: 30 November 1916

Cause: Wounds to head, hand & right leg

Place: 2<sup>nd</sup> London General Hospital,

Chelsea, London, England

UK death reference: Oct – Dec 1916

Chelsea 1a : 510 Age: 29

LAC reference: 8272 – 36



Grave reference: Special Memorial

**Inscription reads:**

***Rest in peace  
Wife and children***

Sons

(both born: Hamilton, Ontario, Canada)

John Harold Ridley (1910 – 1980)

Wilfred Arthur Ridley (1915 – 1995)



**Special Memorial at  
Woodlands Road Cemetery,  
Gillingham, England**

Right: The original 1916 wooden grave marker at  
Grange Road Cemetery, Gillingham, Kent.

(Pictures courtesy of Ted Ridley, Grandson, Ontario, Canada)



Private Ridley in uniform

