

MONUMENTS THAT TELL A STORY

I am looking for information about cemetery memorials that tell an interesting story, beyond the usual brief inscriptions.

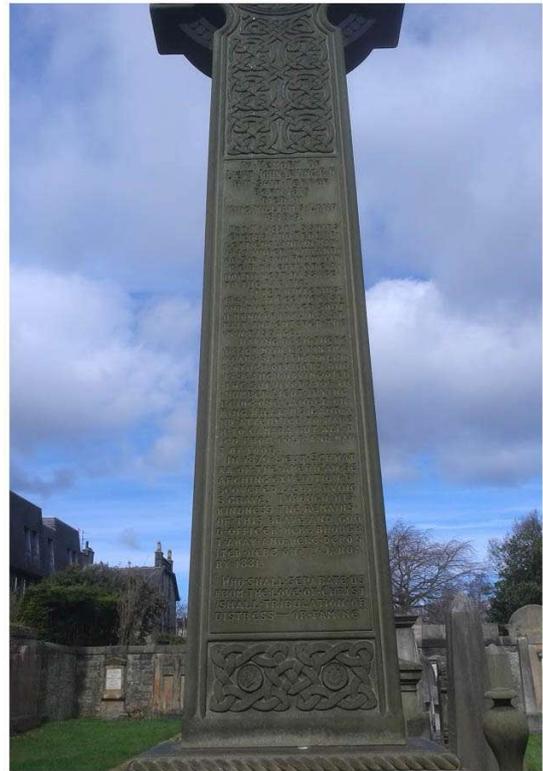
In a cemetery in Edinburgh there is a monument (right) which is fairly unremarkable in size and shape but is inscribed with an amazing story.

In memory of Lieut John Irving RN, H M Ship Terror, born 1819, died in King William's Land 1848-9.

Her Majesty's Ships Erebus and Terror left England in May 1845 under command of Sir John Franklin KGB to explore a north west passage to the Pacific. After wintering 1845-6 at Beechey Land they sailed south down Franklin Strait and entered the N W Passage.

Having been there beset with ice for two years Sir J Franklin and other officers and, 18 seamen having died, the survivors 105 in number Lieut Irving being one, landed on King William's Land and attempted to march to Canada but all died from cold and want of food.

In 1879 Lieut Schwatka of the American Searching Expedition discovered Lieut Irving's grave. Through his kindness the remains of this brave and good officer were brought away and were deposited here on 7th January 1881.



I am an independent radio producer, making programmes mainly for BBC Radio 4 and World Service. When I saw this memorial it occurred to me that if I could find some other examples in cemeteries around the UK, I could well get a radio programme commissioned about them.



And the ICCM's CEO Tim Morris has kindly told me about a headstone in Richmond cemetery (left) for a London taxi driver "with his inscription reading as if he were chatting to you in his cab". Just part of that inscription reads:

After WW2, having learned to play the trumpet & drums, I started playing in bands, made furniture, drove buses & then co-owned a cafe in Chiswick before becoming a London taxi driver in 1962 which I loved until my retirement. I was known as "Saxa" after my first cab. I appeared as a taxi driver in films such as "Ladies Who Do". I enjoyed a gin & tonic, crib, card tricks (eg four litle white balls) having an answer for everything & making people laugh. Well that's that then, I'm orf!

I'm sure there must be many more exceptional memorials and monuments in cemeteries across the UK. Please send details of any sightings to:

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