

OVERTON-DAVIES, CYRIL JOHN C J LANCE SERJEANT
1ST BN. Grenadier Guards 2614697 18.07.1944

Born Wellington Shropshire 1917: Confirmation required

From the Commonwealth War Graves Commission:

Name:	OVERTON-DAVIES, CYRIL JOHN
Initials:	C J
Nationality:	United Kingdom
Rank:	Lance Serjeant
Regiment/Service:	Grenadier Guards
Unit Text:	1st Bn.
Date of Death:	18/07/1944
Service No:	2614697
Additional information:	Son of John Harold and Lucy Overton-Davies; husband of Doris Eileen Overton-Davies, of Brookwood, Surrey.
Casualty Type:	Commonwealth War Dead
Grave/Memorial Reference:	X. D. 25.
Cemetery:	BANNEVILLE-LA-CAMPAGNE WAR CEMETERY

The Allied offensive in north-western Europe began with the Normandy landings of 6 June 1944. For the most part, the men buried at Banneville-la-Campagne War Cemetery were killed in the fighting from the second week of July 1944, when Caen was captured, to the last week in August, when the Falaise Gap had been closed and the Allied forces were preparing their advance beyond the Seine. The cemetery contains 2,170 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, 140 of them unidentified, and five Polish graves.

Taken from the Skegness Standard, dated 2nd November 2009:

http://www.skegnesstandard.co.uk/news/local/alford/find_out_what_remembrance_day_means_to_the_soldiers_1_1344338

AS the world gears up for Remembrance Day today, Wednesday, the Standard got in touch with a Second World War veteran and a serving army officer to find out what remembrance means to them.

Major John Chappell, 89, of Willoughby, returned to Normandy in October after being injured there in 1944.

He went to visit the grave of his friend Cyril Overton-Davies and to visit the places he went while taking part in Operation Goodwood as part of the war effort..

Maj Chappell, who was a member of the Grenadier Guards Armoured Division, said: "The church in Cagny was a landmark for me because it was here that we came under fire from enemy mortars following a heavy bombardment by air and sea on German positions which began at 5.30am on July 18 and lasted two-and-a-half hours.

"I remember the sky full of aircraft, wave after wave pounding enemy defences."

Maj Chappell was injured in that attack and it killed Mr Overton-Davies who is buried at the military cemetery in Banneville-La-Campagne.

He said: "I found the grave of Cyril and paid my respects to a friend who made the ultimate sacrifice, and to the other 2,165 men who rest here."

During his trip, the Major met the Mayor of Cagny and dignitaries who were honoured to meet him. He also visited the Normandy Museum in Bayeux and the British Military Museum.

On his final day, wearing his blazer, medals and beret, Maj Chappell was presented with a commemorative medallion for returning veterans by the Museum of Arromanches.

He said: "Outside the museum, people of all nationalities and ages were shaking my hand, posing with me for photographs and genuinely offered thanks.

"It was really overwhelming after all this time people still wanted to say 'thank you'. A very proud and humbling experience."

Maj Chappell stayed in the army after the war and served a total of 36 years.