

Grange

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COMMUNITY



News

www.grangetowncardiff.co.uk

Special Commemorative Edition Summer 2014

Grangetown Local History Society are proud to host a

Commemoration at the
War Memorial,
Grange Gardens
on Saturday 2nd August

World War One military static displays
are open from 1.30pm

Memorial service starts 3pm

You are cordially invited to join us



GRANGETOWN
Remembering World War I
Anniversary 1914-2014



www.grangetownwar.co.uk



Can you help with the Grangetown World War One project?

Grangetown Local History Society has been researching the names of 330 men on the memorial in Grange Gardens. It has also uncovered at least 130 others who died in World War One and who had Grangetown connections but were not included at the time the memorial was erected in 1921.

We are building an online memorial of all those who died, including not only service details but where the men lived and who they were. We hope to add more family stories and photos over the next few years and mark the 100th anniversary of each death.

The website address is www.grangetownwar.co.uk

You can find there an A-Z list of those who died; a street-by-street list and day-by-day list recording the date of each casualty so we can mark the 100th anniversaries as they pass from 1914.

If you have information, family stories or photos and would like to add them, the project can be contacted by email on grangetownwar@yahoo.co.uk. Or you can come along to the Grangetown Local History Society meetings on the first Fridays of each month (2pm) at Grangetown Library (temporarily later this year at Glamorgan Archives). You can also leave details at the library during the Grangetown WW1 exhibition, 4th-9th August. You can also follow the project on Twitter @GrangetownWW1

Did you know...

- There are more than 90 Royal Navy and Merchant Navy personnel on the memorial
- There are at least 11 sets of brothers
- The ages of those who died range from 14 to 61 They include an MP, a Welsh rugby international, a boxer, a jockey and a Cardiff City footballer
- The first Cardiff man to die in the war was Royal Navy stoker William Welton, 19, from Somerset Street, whose ship was hit in the North Sea while mine clearing on August 6th 1914
- At least 25 died after the end of the war in November 1918
- The final man to die on active service was Pioneer William Francis, 46, of Amherst Street in April 1921
- There is one woman to die on active service: Kate Miller, 27, who was serving as a civilian with Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1920, and who died of pneumonia in France.
- The Grangetown memorial was dedicated at 3pm on 7th July 1921, which coincided with the fifth anniversary of the Battle of Mametz Wood in the Somme, which saw many Welsh casualties. The memorial was paid for by public subscriptions and donations.



The 100th anniversary of the start of World War One will be marked by two events, organised by Grangetown Local History Society.

The first on **Saturday 2nd August** involves a commemoration at the war memorial in Grange Gardens.

All the armed services will be represented - we are expecting attendance from the Army, RAF St Athan, the Royal Navy represented by HMS Cambria and the 53rd Welsh Volunteers from 203 Field Hospital. Local veterans from the Merchant Navy will also be present, reflecting the loss of service suffered by men and boys on ships.

There will be static displays, including servicemen in old uniform. These start at 1.30pm followed by a service at 3pm.

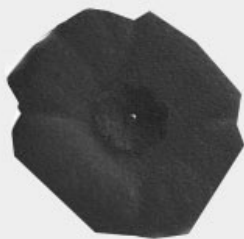
The British Legion have provided more than 400 crosses to remember those Grangetown fallen.

We are hoping those families who have ancestors who are on the memorial or online memorial will be present.

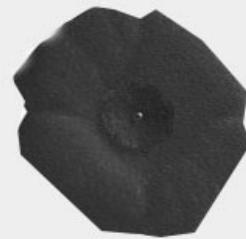
On Monday 4th August, a week-long exhibition opens at Grangetown Library.

There will be displays telling some of the stories of local men, and it's also a chance for people with their own stories to share them.

On Monday evening, there is a drop-in event from 5pm-8pm where you can hear more about the Grangetown World War One project and the research into the men and you can also bring along photos and stories.



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www.grangetownwar.co.uk



Survived pit disaster but died in France a year later

It was Britain's worst colliery disaster, but George Herbert Rees survived the explosion at Senghenydd's Universal colliery which killed 439 miners.

The tragedy happened on 14th October 1913 - but incredibly, one year later to the very day, Rifleman Rees died of wounds while serving in France.

He was born Grangetown, son of the late Thomas and Ann Rees in 1883 - believed to be at 20 Redlaver Street. The family later lived in Field Street, Trelewis. George's residence on enlisting with the Rifle Brigade 3rd Battalion was in Ely, Cardiff. He died of wounds sustained during the first Battle of Aisne on 14th October 1914, aged 32, and is buried in France.



The pilot's son who became a flying ace and won gallantry medals



Captain Peter Carpenter was the son of a ship's pilot from Grangetown, but it was skills as a pilot of a very different kind which brought him recognition in World War One.

Carpenter was born in 1891, one of nine children to Peter and Jane Carpenter of 35 Clive Street. He went to Grangetown National School and was known as a good rugby player before leaving school and getting job as a clerk for the Spillers and Baker flour mill company. He had joined the Public Schools Battalion in 1914 and went to France but a rugby-playing accident saw him break his leg and he was later transferred to the Royal Flying Corps, with his first flight in 1917. He survived a crash due to engine failure while training and flew in a Sopwith Camel with 45 Squadron in the September for action in France and later Italy

Carpenter transferred to 66 Squadron as a flight leader. By August 1918, he had won the Military Cross for bringing down six enemy aircraft in three months. "The offensive tactics pursued by this daring and skilful officer have produced most successful results," read the citation.

He went on to win the DSO for more hits, showing a "magnificent example" and was one of a flight which saw a colleague win a Victoria Cross.

Carpenter had 24 "claims" including 15 aircraft destroyed. Her finished the war having flown on 190 combat patrols and nine bombing raids. Of these, he led 139 patrols and his total war flying time came to 422 hours 30 minutes.

After the war, Carpenter went into business in the shipping industry - including an office in Cardiff - but this fell victim to the big crash in the 1920s. He went to work for an insurance firm in London, where he died in 1971.





Docksman who left a wife and young daughter

Rifleman Joseph Taylor was born at 2 Oakley Street in Grangetown in September 1886, the youngest and last child born to Eliza Taylor, who was in her 40s. He had five brothers and two sisters, the eldest Emily was already 26 when he was born.

The family had moved from Gloucestershire and moved again to Barry in March 1901. At 14, Joseph worked as a baker's assistant while his father John and brothers worked in the docks.

Joseph was living back in Grangetown, in Clive Street, and working as a docks labourer by the time he got married in May 1913 at St Paul's. His bride Edie, who had also been brought up near the Taylors in Oakley Street, was living with her widowed mother at 25 Warwick Street. Her father had died of TB when she was eight. This is where Joseph and Edie's daughter Violet Elizabeth Taylor was born on 1 February 1914.



Joseph, with a photo alongside of his wife and daughter



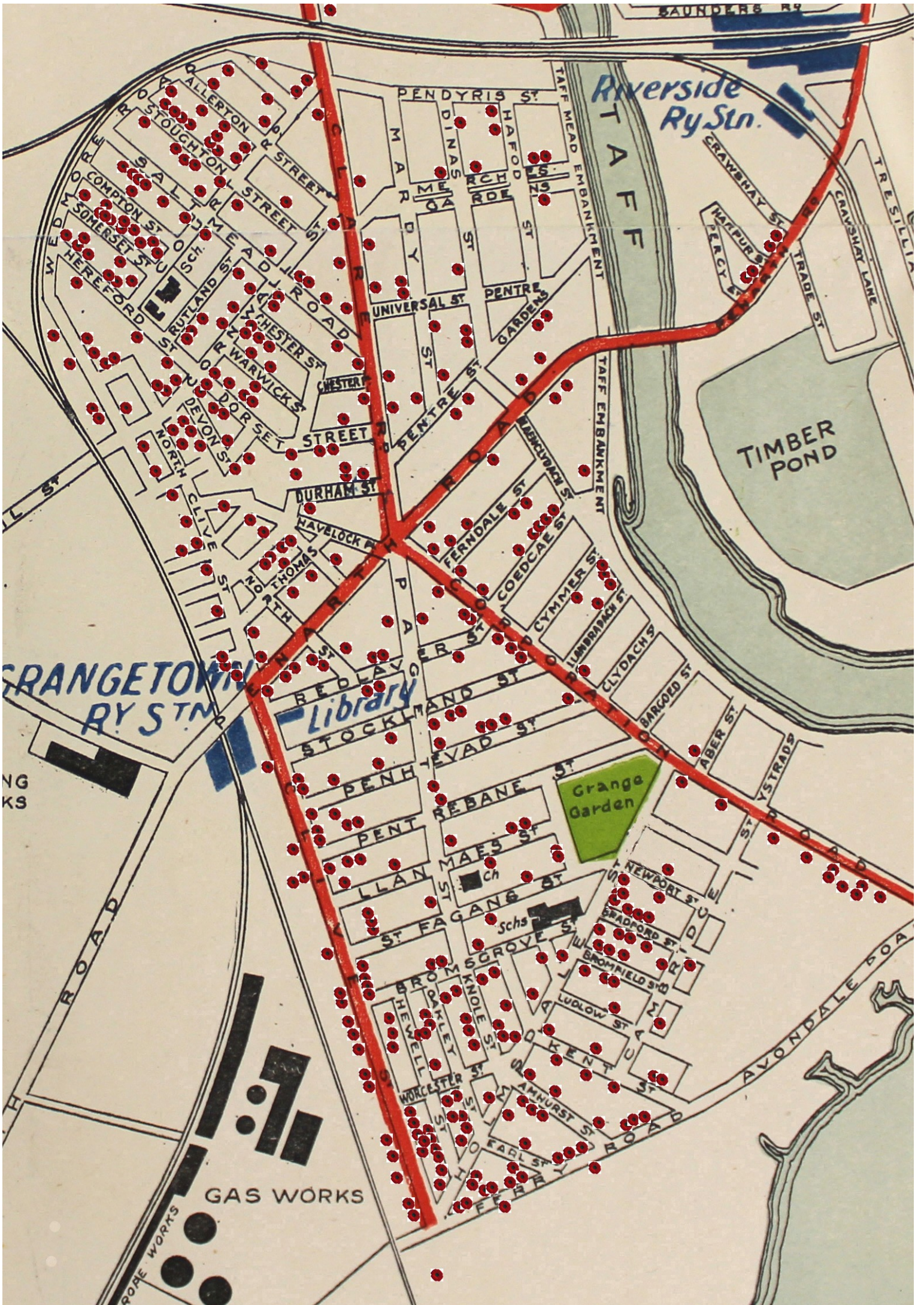
Joseph is pictured second from the right, standing

When war broke out, Joseph enlisted in Barry. He died in Belgium in February 1916, aged 29, while serving with the Rifle Brigade, a few days after Violet's second birthday.

Thanks to Michael Brown, Joseph's grandson

This issue has been supported by Butetown Riverside Grangetown Communities First. Without their assistance we would not have been able to produce this commemorative paper. We are extremely grateful for their help and support.





*We have produced a map to show where most the men lived
- there are still some we do not have addresses for.*

More addresses will be added as more details are confirmed.
Where more than one name appears next to a house, these
are usually relatives, but sometimes people sharing a proper-
ty. We have used the last address known for them or the
address when they enlisted, where available.

Aber Street: No 1 (Woods)

Allerton Street: 31 (Hancock H); 41 (Alimoor); 50 (Tugwell)

Amherst Street: 5 (Lewis A); 10 (Goodwin E); 14 (Griffiths); 16
(Carey); 17 (Caveill); 43 (Phillips)

Bedwas Street: 2 (Brown)

Bishop Street: 8 (Murphy)

Bradford Street: 3 (Renwick); 4 (Maidment); 8 (Appleby); 9
(Mayne); 13 (Parsons); 20 (Bethell and Purnell);

Bromfield Street: 2 (Owens); 3 (Cocks); 5 (Payne); 16 (Hancock
C); 17 (Withers); 18 (Edwards)

Bromsgrove Street: 17 (James H); 19 (Bell); 27 (Jennings)

Cambridge Street: 12 (Macey); 29 (Drury W), 44 (Chamis)

Chester Street: 2 (Munck); 8 (Williams, CE); 25 (Martin W and
Roberts)

Clare Road: 5 (Brown F); 14 (Richards CF); 61 (Hore); 70 (Smart);
81 (Darby); 95 (White RJ); 98 (Harben); 112 (Corbey); 122
(Hale); 141 (Bagg); 155 (Bucknell)

Clarence Embankment: 15 (Pimm)

Clive Street: 5 (Noyes JJ); 30 (Hayes and Isaac); 39 (McFarlane); 41
(Miller H); 43 (Alexander); 45 (Evans RP); 63 (Hall J); 65
(Horsey); 68 (Beer); 73 (Newman); 80 (Fehrenbach A and EJ); 100
(Goodland); 107 (Casper); 109 (Deans); 110 (Evans DC); 111
(Holman); 113 (Wilkins); 118 (Ryan); 130 (Fouracre); 136
(Espeland); 143 (Tarr G); 144 (Fry EJ and AJ); 145 (Melean); 147
(Evans CWC); 152 (Turner FW); 154 (Pasley); 157 (Henzell); 165
(Jenkins W); 166 (Marshall); 176 (Wingstedt); 182 (Mather); 202
(Rumney); 218 (Porteous); 220 (Wines); Mildon Terrace
(Hannam)

Coedcae Street: 19 (Biancardi); 29 (Packer); 31 (Wilson); 33
(Wall); 37 (Uzell)

Compton Street: 1 (Letton); 15 (Tilley); 19 (Lee); 34 (Atkins); 39
(Witts)

Cornwall Street: 1 (Jones M); 25 (Coombes); 27 (Perry); 41
(Forgan); 47 (Davis); 58 (Percy); 66 (Cooksley); 67 (Thomas EJ);
73 (Regan J); 76 (James A); 77 (Saunders); 102 (Lee); 110
(Flaherty JP and W)

Corporation Road: 7 (Connors); 15a (Stewart JH); 16 (Newby); 28
(Whittington); 30 (Harris AB); 33 (Rees); 40 (Male); 50 (Osmond);
56 (Johnson); 73 (Clargo). 110 (Hall M); 138 (Evans W); 156
(Barrett); 184 (Roberts J and TH); 196 (Price J and Stevens JH);
198 (Baker); 202 (Child and Gordon); 220 (Lewis SJ)

Court Road: 2 (Hutchinson); 10 (Skelley); 30 (Hida); 40 (Holder);
58 (Herring); 66 (Howes); 82 (Torrington); 83 (Regan D); 102
(Walsh); 114 (Long WH).

Cymmer Street: 16 (Barnett)

Devon Place: 5 (Sullivan, J and TJ); 13 (Denham); 22 (Martin A)

Devon Street: 6 (Bradley); 8 (Williams J); 16 (Hollyman)

Dinas Street: 11 (Clarke); 40 (Power); 78 (Haviland)

Dorset Street: 1 (Manfield); 18 (McCarthy); 22 (Smith); 23
(Turner); 29 (Maggs); 44 (Driscoll EC); 57 (Stafford); 60 (Gillis);
70 (Lingham); ** (Thomas J)

Durham Street: 2 (Wheeler); 6 (Breeze, J and F); 25 (Kitch)

Earl Street: 7 (Long S); 14 (Watkins)

Ferndale Street: 1 (Williams WG); 13 (Welchman); 38 (Duggan);
42 (Davies FH)

Ferry Road/Sea View: 5 (Hale); 7 (Maynard and Warren); 15
(Partridge); 17 (Pates); 25 (James E); 28 (Huxtable WJ); 31
(Lawrence); 41 (Harris J); 53 (Reed); 57 (Porter); 66 (Pillar); 77
(Haberfield); 79 (Summerhayes); 81 (Allsopp)

Forrest Street: 12 (Thomas A)

Franklen Street: 7 (Wilcox)

Grange Gardens: 6 (Webber); 8 (McCallum); 83? (Lefeuvre);
'Tynedale' (Henderson)

Hafod Street: 2 (O'Brien), 10 (James, SB)

Hereford Street: 7 (Waite); 12 (Bragg); 14 (Lander); 25
(Wellings); 34 (Griffiths); 38 (Hill and Howe); 44 (Driscoll C); 53
(Chapman)

Hewell Street: 6 (Brackley); 12 (Kinson); 23 (Robinson WH and L);
47 (Wastercott); 55 (Gatscieas); 56 (Fish); 58 (Yorath and Francis);
59 (Duney); 60 (Shaw); 62 (Brockway W); 66 (Dangerfield)

Holmesdale Street: 9 (Hooper WJ); 14 (Smithyman); 16
(Marshall); 19 (Cleal); 27 (Larsen); 37 (Reed AT); 48 (Taylor); 53
(Arnell); 96 (Reed SF); 100 (Sharp); 102 (Brown H); 104 (Dillon
and Main); 114 (Wiggins)

Kent Street: 5 (Adams); 14 (Lonn); 35 (Cleves); 36 (Heins); 46
(Burgess); 63 (Parker); 65 (Ennis)

Knole Street: 5 (Harding); 8 (Rosewarne); 32 (Holdham); 36
(Gillespie); 37 (Cottier); 42 (Lewis RA); 45 (Huxtable)

Llanbradach Street: 13 (Reid P)

Llanmaes Street: 3 (Calman); 27 (Storr); 34 (O'Shea); 47
(Carpenter); 53 (Reid WC)

Lucknow Street: 1 (Miller)

Ludlow Street: 13 (Blake)

Machen Street: 5 (Whelan)

Madras Street: 1 (Callinan); 6 (O'Brien M); 9 (Mahoney); 13
(Flynn); 15 (Noyes J)

Mardy Street: 55 (Symonds); 66 (Thomas OG); 79 (Baskett); 118
(Laugharne), 120 (Smith, R)

Maitland Place: 5 (Darrock); 7 (Stauber)

Merches Gardens: 17 (Thomas AD); 26 (Dacey JA); 32 (Jamieson);
46 (Chere), 52 (Mathias)

Monmouth Street: 3 (Phillips); 24 (Edwards H); 31 (Lewis R)

Newport Street: 11 (Doyle); 12 (Glynn)

North Street: 1 Harris (M); 3 (Hooley); 4 (Harris CT)

North Clive Street: 4 (Oliver); 11 (Nelson); 27 (Miller A); 35
(Hughes); 39 (Tyler); 45 (Morris); 54 (Webb); 64 (Rich D); 68
(Dickinson)

Oakley Street: 15 (Luscombe); 26 (Pearson); 28 (Tarr); 54
(Williams JG); 68 (Harris AJ); 78 (Brockway F)

Paget Street: 12 (Drake); 13 (Quance); 55 (Higgins); 71 (Lloyd); 95
(Preston); 124 (Bohlin)

Penarth Road: 16 (Steele); 28 (Sullivan T); 38 (Dessington); 40
(Fullerton); 58 (Hopkins); 66 (Leworthy); 83 (Davies D); 95
(Sweet); 133 (Kingdon); 179 (Francis F and AC); 237 (Seymour);
239 (Coase); 245 (Anderson); Weston Ho (Hancock)

Penhevad Street: 8 (Bryant), 11 (Smith F); 25 (Rich C); 49 (Davies
HE); 51 (Reed T); 55 (Plain); 91 (Williams JE)

Pentre Gardens: 9 (Jensen); 11 (Hardy); 68 (Harris JR); 70 (Collins
C)

Pentre Street: 31 (Ford); 39 (Briley); 71 (Moloney)

Pentrebane Street: 13 (Chislett); 15 (Woodward); 16 (Sims); 18
(Dunscombe); 24 (Jones F)

Redlaver Street: 14 (Gardiner); 18 (Keenan); 33 (Shorney); 35
(Lockyer); 38 (Chappell)

Rookwood Street: 19 (Jones HWJ)

Rufland Street: 5 (Salter); 35 (Rodd); 39 (Woodyatt); 41 (Simpson)

St Fagans Street: 11 (Jones IG and PE; and Walker CR); 26 (Rowe);
39 (Simmons)

Saltmead Road (later Stafford Road): 7 (Ivanishevich); 10
(Churcher); 14 (Pardington); 18 (Thomas T); 22 (Dryland); 50
(Palfrey); 65 (Johns); 68 (Guppy); 75 (Goodwin G); 79 (Smith CP);
81 (O'Callaghan); 82 (Addicott); 85 (Giles J)

Sevenoaks Street: 2 (Noad); 30 (Thompson W); 31 (Barrow)

Somerset Street: 12 (Fry WJH); 13 (Barnes); 18 (Welton); 24 (Bird);
26 (Bates); 28 (Hill); 52 (Evans GW)

For Stafford Road (see Saltmead Road)

Stockland Street: 37 (Sparkes); 45 (Giles L); 47 (Robins)

Stoughton Street (later Jubilee St and Sussex Street): 12 (Hooper
WW); 21 (Thomas CH); 28 (George); 30 (Dean and Henders); 41
(Wainwright); 45 (Collins F); 51 (Drake-Power); 54 (Jenkins A
and Riddick); 58 (Condon); 68 (Branch); 69 (McGuinness); 70
(Dacey J)

Taff Embankment: 34 (Alfred); 46 (Phillips); 50 (Ridge); 56
(Dacey HE)

Thomas Street: 9 (Barry); 16 (Price A); 29 (Morgan); 49
(Christensen T)

Tynant Street: 2 (Bradford), 22 (Palmer)

Van Street

Warwick Street: 5 (Richards WH); 22 (Fry W), 25 (Taylor), 33
(Jones GJ)

Wedmore Road: 7 (Perks); 8 (Botwood); 21 (Lightfoot); 34
(Goodfellow); 43 (Williams C); 50 (Rich A); 52 (Pook); 53 (Jones
HJ)

York Place: 5 (Thompson CH)



And ones who survived, by the skin of their teeth ...

Pte George Rolls, of Rutland Street described himself as the "luckiest man in the Army" after his escape at Armentieres.

He was one of six men out of 28 in his unit who survived. His story was one of some fortune. The sight had been hit off his rifle; then he took a dead comrade's weapon but that was also broken. Then when using a third, he was struck. "The bullet took an extraordinary course," reported the *South Wales Echo* in 1914. "After grazing his left arm it had gone across his chest without doing any damage and pierced his right arm "I am the luckiest man in the Army," George, 29,(pictured right) told his wife in a letter.



Edmund Bowen was a marine engineer in the merchant fleet before the War and also with the Royal Naval Reserve. He survived a U-boat attack on his ship, HMS Hermes, in October 1914 by using two empty petrol tins as buoyancy aids.

The 35-year-old lived in Stockland Street in Grangetown with his wife and two young daughters. He recalled the attack on October 31st, which had killed 22 crew of the ship in the straits of Dover. It had been carrying a cargo of sea planes from Dunkirk.

"After my watch was over I went to the mess and was just drinking a cup of coffee when the first torpedo struck the ship," he recalled a few days later. "The shock of the explosion was such as to throw the cup out of my hand."

He took the decision to move to the forward part of the ship, but two colleagues went aft and were badly injured.

"When I was on the deck I actually saw the second torpedo coming at a terrific pace. I gave the crowd around the warning to go as far forward as possible. We went, some of us, out of danger before the impact occurred. When it did happen, there was an awful sight. The stern of the vessel was right up in the air and there were thousands of pieces flying about."

Bowen describes the calmness of the captain, who was as collected "as if it was an every day occasion."

"How did I escape? Don't laugh but as a matter of fact I saw some empty petrol tins lying on one side. I tied two together and kept them around my neck. Others did likewise and they held up a treat."

Bowen leapt clear with his improvised floats and spent 10 minutes in the water before clambering aboard the Leonides, which had come to their rescue. "Several men who couldn't swim used empty petrol tins and were saved apart from one poor fellow who was picked up by died 10 minutes afterwards."

Bowen was welcomed aboard by a lieutenant who invited him to take some clothes and his boots from his cabin, as he'd left all his possessions behind apart from the clothes he stood in.

Bowen is believed to have remained a retired member of the naval reserve until his death in 1948.





Two Grangetown boys who went to sea and didn't come home

Our image of World War One is usually of the trenches, but many Grangetown men served on merchant ships or the Royal Navy, which came under threat from German submarines.

Our research so far has found two Grangetown casualties on ships sunk by U-boats were barely out of school and were lost at sea within a few days of each other in 1918.



John Stewart (*pictured above*) was 15 and the son of a widow, who lived on Corporation Road. He left Court Road School and went to work on the Windsor slipway, before becoming an assistant cook on the SS Ventmoor. On only his second voyage on the cargo steamer, as it sailed around the Greek Islands it was torpedoed on 14th February. All 21 on board lost their lives. He was the son of Mary Ann Stewart (nee Hurlow) and the late James Hutton Stewart (b Perth, 1872).

Even younger was Arthur Leonard Brown, just 14 and a mess room steward on a cargo vessel carrying iron ore. He was the son of William and Emma Brown of 2 Bedwas Street. The family had lived in Roath earlier. On the 4th February when on route from Algiers for Barrow, his ship the SS Treveal was torpedoed and sunk when off the Skerries, Anglesey. He was among 33 who lost their lives.

Are you related to either of these boys? We'd like to hear from you if you have any stories to tell.

The Grangetown woman who died at the front

So far, our research has uncovered one Grangetown woman who was also recorded as dying on active service and was one of the last to be buried in a war cemetery at the end of July 1920 in France.



Anna Catherine Miller, known as Kate, was 27 when she died and had been at the front for nearly four years serving with the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps. The corps worked as cooks and waitresses, among other duties, and three of her younger sisters - believed to be Eveline (b 1896) and twin sisters Irene and Edith (b1898) - were also serving.

Kate was the eldest of six daughters born to John Miller, a Russian-born gasworks worker and Irish mother Elizabeth and living at 27 North Clive Street, Grangetown, Cardiff. In 1911, Kate was an under-foreman at the nearby Freeman's cigar factory before joining up.

Her obituary in the *Cardiff Times* says she died on July 29th "tragically sudden after pleuro pneumonia." She was expecting to be demobbed shortly before she was taken ill. She was the last to be buried from World War I in St Pol-sur-Ternoise cemetery and was given a service number to be included, as a worker, in the Commonwealth Graves Commission list. She is however one of more than 60 people from Grangetown who died but who were not included on the memorial.

Are you one of the Millers' descendants and have any stories to tell?





The schoolboy rugby star who died ~ and a double family tragedy

George Harben is pictured here proudly wearing his Wales schoolboy rugby cap in the yard of the old Court Road School. Within six years he was dead, killed in France while serving with the South Staffordshire Regiment. He was one of 200 old boys from the school estimated to have served in the Great War.



Pte George Harben was born at 98 Clare Road in Grangetown in 1895. He lived with his father Sidney, a joiner, and mother Mary. As a schoolboy rugby international, he played for Wales against England at Leicester in 1908. His schoolboy cap was passed down the family and is now in the safe keeping of his great, great nephew.

George, who had worked as a messenger boy after leaving school, was killed at Ypres on 27th August 1915, aged 20. The battalion he was with had only arrived a month before. He is buried in Flanders in a section of a cemetery with 28 comrades from his regiment.



Pte Harben's name appears twice on the Grangetown memorial, once mistakenly against the Welsh Regiment.

But his family suffered a double loss in the War, and one not recorded on the memorial or anywhere else. He had an elder brother Sidney - named after his father and four years George's senior - who served in the Royal Navy on the "Q" boats. The family story is that Sidney sadly disappeared on shore leave in Ireland at Queenstown at the height of the troubles, was posted as a deserter and nothing was ever heard of him again. A shipmate told the family he may have been carrying a large amount of money on shore and that he was murdered, but there is no proof and his fate is a mystery.

Thanks to his nephew Pat Good

A letter home

"There are not many of our regiment left. All our officers got hit and there were only three of them left the day I got wounded, so you can guess how hard we had it in the trenches. It was cold in the night and I lost my overcoat and coat. I wore the cap of an officer who was killed by my side so I had a narrow escape. On that day we lost 58 men and three officers in our company. The first day we went into action we had no chance but I came out of that all right. It was on a Wednesday that I got hit, in the morning, and I had to stop in the trench all that day."

Letter home from hospital from Pte Richard Tudor to his parents at 6 Kent Street, after he was wounded at Ypres in 1914 serving with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.





'I saw her all ablaze and sinking and I don't want to see such a sight again

A vivid account of a Grangetown stoker serving on the HMS Cornwall when it chased German ships in the Battle of the Falklands in the south Atlantic in late 1914.

Alec (or Alick) Lock was 18, a post boy and the son of a Devon-born bricklayer Tom and Gertrude Lock. He was brought up as one of 10 children at 62 Court Road but at the time of the war, the family were living in Saltmead Road (*now Stafford Road*). His two brothers Arthur and Tom were serving in the Army Service Corps. Alec was on board HMS Cornwall - which has a connection with the Cornwall pub near the family home.



Alec was serving as a Royal Navy stoker and gave a colourful account of his light cruiser's actions after the enemy was spotted as the Cornwall was docked at Port Stanley in the Falkland islands on the morning of December 8th 1914. This is his letter back home to his parents which was reprinted in the *Echo* in January 1915.

"By the time you get this, I suspect you will have heard we've been in action with the Germans and sunk four of the five ships we engaged. We are waiting to sink the remaining one before returning for England for leave.

"We had put into the Falkland Islands for coal and 21 of the 24 boilers were 'out', everything being ready for cooling, when a terrible row was heard from (HMS) Canopus and the look-out on Sapper Hill.

'Shake her up'

"With all speed we lit up and were away in less than an hour. The chase lasted from 8.30 until 4.10 when we fired the Nurnberg and crippled her. We then left her to the (HMS) Kent, who sank her, and at full speed engaged with the (SMS) Leipzig. We sank her after 10 hours chase and battle and only 18 of her hands were saved. Not one of our men were injured - our only casualty being the death of our canary, which was blown to pieces cage and all.

"I would like you to see the way we respond to the call of action which is often sounded off for exercise. We were on the fo'castle [upper deck], up the funnels, clinging to the ropes, in order to watch the chase, as they had a good 40 miles start on us. It was a picture to see the stokers on deck waiting to go down and relieve the others and saying 'Roll on half past 12 and let's get down to shake her up.'

"I saw her all ablaze and sinking and I don't want to see such a sight again. When we returned we were all shattered and not from sinking as the stoke holds were flooded. We are being patched up now before going into the dry dock."

"We will beat the other ship [Dresden] if we find her. She has only four-inch guns and we have six-inch. It's terribly cold here after coming from the Tropics but we are living well - beef and mutton every meal, as it's only two and a half pennies per pound out here."

Of 286 on board the Leipzig, only seven officers and 13 crew were rescued, the Cornwall picking up four survivors. The Dresden remained elusive until March 1915 when she was found sheltering by the HMS Kent and Glasgow and was scuttled. Alec survived the war, it's believed he married afterwards and died in 1951.



HMS Cornwall was a light cruiser built in 1902



Grangetown Local History Society

are proud to host a

Grangetown and World War One Exhibition

Stories * Memories * Photos

Find out more about more than 450
local men who fought and died

Grangetown Library,

Monday 4th to Saturday 9th August

* Drop-in event for families with stories
+ Talk on 4th August, 5pm~8pm



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