

# THE FIRST WORLD WAR 1914-18

## Powys War Memorials Project

19

14-18



100

Community  
Engagement Toolkit



# How to use this toolkit

This toolkit helps local communities to record and research their First World War memorials.

It includes information about the war, the different types of memorials and how communities can record, research and care for their memorials. It also includes case studies of five communities who have researched and produced fascinating materials about their memorials and the people they commemorate.

The toolkit is divided into seven sections:

## ① Commemorating the centenary of the First World War

### ② The First World War

- A truly global conflict
- How did it all begin?
- A very short history of the war
- Wales and the First World War
- The men of Powys
- Effects of war on communities and survivors
- Why so many memorials?
- Memorials in Powys

### ③ War memorials

- What is a war memorial?
- History of war memorials
- Types of war memorial
- Symbolism of memorials
- Epitaphs
- Materials used in war memorials
- Who is commemorated on memorials?
- How the names were recorded

### ④ Recording and looking after war memorials

- Condition of memorials
- Preparing a Conservation Maintenance Plan
- Involving the community
- Grants

### ⑤ Researching war memorials, the war and its stories

- Finding out more about the people on the memorials
- Top tips for researching
- Useful websites
- Places to find out more
- Tips from the experts
- Regiments in Wales
- Gathering local stories

### ⑥ What to do with the information

- A leaflet
- An interpretive panel
- An exhibition
- A First World War trail
- A poetry competition
- Poetry and musical events

### ⑦ Case studies

- Brecon University of the Third Age Family History Group
- Newtown Local History Group
- Ystradgynlais Library
- The YEARGroup
- L.L.A.N.I. Ltd

Just click on the tags below to move between the sections...

# ① Commemorating the centenary of the First World War

Powys County Council is commemorating the centenary of the First World War with the Powys War Memorials Project, which honours the sacrifices made by the people of Powys during the war. The project encourages local people to find out more about their war memorials and the people they commemorate. This toolkit is an important part of the project. It helps communities to record and research the stories behind the memorials and gives practical advice on how to look after these treasured monuments. The project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Powys County Council, Cadw and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

The First World War started on 28 July 1914, with Britain declaring war on Germany on 4 August. It was to be one of the costliest conflicts in history, in terms both of lives and of economies. Nearly everyone in Wales has an ancestor who was directly affected by the war and all of us live with its long-term impacts.

The centenary of the war is a time to commemorate those who fought and died, and those who fought and returned to a society that was fundamentally changed by the war. It is a time to reflect on the personal stories of bereavement and grief, and of endeavour and survival at a time of great hardship. It is also a time to consider those who returned

and were deeply affected by their experiences, sometimes for the rest of their lives.

The memorials in our communities act as a focus for remembering and commemorating the war. The annual acts of remembrance keep the memories of the war and those who served in it alive, while the stories that are contained within their lists of names can paint vivid pictures of the war, many of which may now be disappearing from the collective consciousness. For example, most people are aware of the fighting on the Western Front in Europe but fewer know that it also involved countries in the Middle East, North Africa, the Americas and Asia.

The centenary offers an opportunity to re-ignite interest in memorials and those that they commemorate, in the wider impacts of the war on society throughout the world and in how it shaped politics and boundaries throughout Europe and Asia.

Please let us, the Powys County Council War Memorials Project Team, know about any project that you are involved in that is connected with the First World War commemoration. We have lots of resources and may be able to help. You can contact us by:

- E-mail: [warmemorials@powys.gov.uk](mailto:warmemorials@powys.gov.uk)
- Post: Powys War Memorials Project Officer, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 5LG.
- Telephone: 0845 6027030 / 01597 827460

*You can find out more  
about the Powys War Memorials  
Project here*

## ② The First World War

### A truly global conflict

Many called it the Great War, but it was great only in its extent, the number of those involved and its awful consequences. Nearly 70 million soldiers, sailors and airmen took part; 10 million never came home. Nothing like that had ever been suffered before.

The British Empire played a leading role in the war and lost nearly a million people, including members of the forces and civilians. Over 1.5 million were wounded.



In Wales, 272,924 men and women were recruited and about 35,000 are listed as killed or 'missing in action'. In Powys, as elsewhere, those who fell are remembered by memorials in towns and villages.



### How did it all begin?

The 'political' map of Europe in 1914 was very different from the Europe of today.



The great German, Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires still had territorial ambitions but the Turkish Ottoman Empire's influence in Europe was waning. Britain and France concentrated on their huge overseas empires but were also increasingly wary of the jockeying for power among former allies and enemies in Europe. Italy and Spain were no less watchful as Germany spent huge sums in an unparalleled arms race to build up its army and – like Britain – its navy.

Europe was a dangerous crucible about to burst into flames. And at the end of June 1914, the first sparks flew.

In Sarajevo, then part of the Austrian Empire, a Bosnian nationalist assassinated the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to this empire. A month later, despite frantic negotiations among Europe's leading powers, Austria prepared to invade Serbia which, it believed, was implicated in the murder. This led Russia, in support of Serbia, to mobilise its troops against Austria. Germany, fearful of Russian ambitions, then declared war on Russia and, almost immediately, on France. The various armies began to march.

On 4th August, Britain, in support of France (ironically, the 'old enemy') and Russia, then declared war on Germany and the world has never been the same again. The expression 'all Hell let loose' was never more accurate as, over the years of the war, many other countries were drawn into the conflict. The final line up was complex, as you'll see from the tables.

### Allied Powers (The Entente)

Andorra
Belgium
Brazil
British Empire including United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Australia, Canada, India, Malta, Rhodesia, Newfoundland, New Hebrides, New Zealand, South Africa
China
Costa Rica
Czechoslovak Legions
France
Greece
Guatemala
Haiti
Honduras
Italy
Japan
Liberia
Montenegro
Nepal
Nicaragua
Panama
Portugal
Romania
Russia
San Marino
Serbia
Siam
United States including Alaska, Hawaii, Philippines and Puerto Rico

### The Central Powers

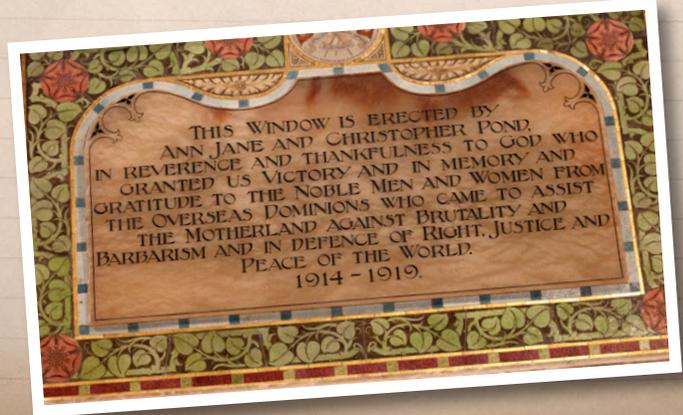
Austria-Hungarian Empire including Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, parts of north-east Italy, northern Serbia, parts of Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine
Azerbaijan and parts of Armenia
Bulgaria including parts of Greece and of Macedonia
Dervish State (parts of Somalia)
German Empire including Germany, Burundi, Cameroon, small parts of China, parts of Gabon, Ghana, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Namibia, north-eastern Nigeria, Palau, northern Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Samoa, mainland Tanzania and Togo
Jabal Shammar including most of Saudi Arabia and parts of Iraq and Jordan
Ottoman Empire including Israel, Lebanon, parts of Iraq and of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria and most of Turkey



The great empires of the United Kingdom, France and Russia formed the armed forces of what were called the Allied Powers and they were joined during the four years of conflict by more than 30 other countries, from Andorra to Japan and – crucially – the USA.

Opposing the Allies were the three empires of Austria-Hungary, Germany and Turkey (the Ottoman Empire). They were supported by a number of other countries. The Allied forces greatly outnumbered those of the enemy. Britain relied heavily on the armies from what is now the Commonwealth.

Countries in all the world's populated continents were involved. However, some European countries remained officially neutral – or were technically non-combatants. They included the Netherlands and all of Scandinavia. Despite that, never before had a war sucked in so many nations or left so many dead.



## A very short history of the war

Much has been written about the First World War since the conflict began, and more is added almost daily. There are extensive official records that are now accessible online, innumerable contemporary reports by journalists and experts, thousands of books and articles by eminent writers or former combatants, and a myriad collection of documents and ephemera held nationally and locally in libraries and archives. In addition, countless radio and television programmes have been, and are being, broadcast, and many plays and films have been produced as documentaries or entertainment.



Perhaps the most poignant accounts of the war itself are the works of poets and writers, including notable Welsh authors, letters of serving men and women which have recently become widely available, and photographs in many collections. They capture the horrors, the numbing deprivations, the occasional triumphs, the

## The war in words

The First World War inspired many poets to create their greatest work. One of the best known was Wilfred Owen who was of mixed Welsh and English ancestry. In April 1917 he was hit by shell blast and was later diagnosed as suffering from neurasthenia or shell shock. In hospital he met fellow war poet Siegfried Sassoon, who greatly influenced his style of writing. On return to light regimental duties, he spent time composing or revising a number of his best known poems before going back to the front line in August 1918. Only one week before the war ended he was shot and killed leading his men, for which he was awarded the Military Cross. His poetic legacy, both romantic and realistic, is a grim reminder of the tragedies of war.

Other notable names include Saunders Lewis, poet, dramatist and fervent Welsh nationalist, who served as an officer with the South Wales Borderers during the war, and another poet and dramatist, Sir Albert Evans-Jones, more commonly known by his bardic name of Cynan, who, uniquely, was elected twice as Archdruid at the National Eisteddfod.

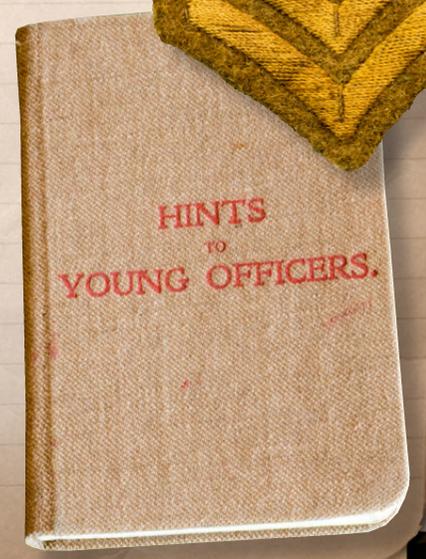
Perhaps most poignant of all was Hedd Wyn (Ellis Humphrey Evans of Trawsfynydd), an already noted romantic poet who wrote many poems about the horror of war. He was killed at Passchendaele just two weeks after he submitted his epic work, *Yr Arwr* (The Hero) to the National Eisteddfod. It won him, posthumously, the bard's chair which is still on display at Yr Ysgwm, the family farm in Snowdonia. His gravestone, at Boezinge in West Flanders, uniquely carries the additional words *Y Prifardd Hedd Wyn* (The Chief Bard, Hedd Wyn).

R Williams Parry, who was in the army from 1916 to 1918, had achieved recognition as a poet when he won the chair at the 1910 National Eisteddfod. In one of his later works, *Englynion Coffa Hedd Wyn*, he laments the death of Ellis Evans and wrote: *'The chair ... today stretching out its arms in a long peace of silence for the one who hasn't come.'*

camaraderie and the endlessness of a war that many thought 'would all be over by Christmas'. The internet is an excellent fund of information, comment and analysis that draws upon all kinds of sources.

The whole war was not only fought in the trenches of France and Belgium, although that aspect was one of the most awful. Equally dreadful was the extended conflict on the Eastern Front between Russia and Germany, the Allies' ill-fated Gallipoli campaign in the Dardanelles and their campaign in the Middle East. The war was fought not only on land but also at sea and in the air. And it affected millions of civilians whose only error was to live in the wrong place. Countless combatants died from illness or starvation as well as from the effect of armaments and the fate of many thousands of soldiers, sailors and airmen remains unknown.

What can be recorded here is that the British Empire's direct involvement began with the first British troops landing in France on 7th August to help the French army hold back Germany's advance through Belgium. It ended with the signing of the Armistice of Compiègne (in France) that came into effect at 11am on 11th November 1918.



Germany acknowledged defeat by the Allied Forces, which had been greatly strengthened by the USA's involvement from 1917. It is that date and time in November which is commemorated every year, at local war memorials as well as nationally.

What took place in the intervening four years and three months is recorded at infinitely varying levels of detail in widely available printed, graphic and digital formats. It is also recorded, informally, in the many thousands of diaries and letters to families that soldiers wrote during lulls in the fighting.

One of the most helpful sources, for those who want a simple overview, is *The First World War* published by Usborne in association with the Imperial War Museum.



It is intended for a young audience but provides a very accessible history for everyone.

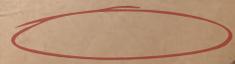
However, for every individual community, the most important history of the war is that which relates to its people. In the context of this project, it means the history that encompasses the accounts of the men of Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire and Brecknockshire who fought for their flag, some of whom never returned to their homeland.

## Wales and the First World War

In 1914, although Wales was clearly defined on the map, its profile as a 'separate' country was quite different from its status and reputation today. It was then, to all intents and purposes, part of greater England, as it had been for nearly 500 years. It was officially referred to as 'Wales and Monmouthshire' and speaking Welsh was not encouraged. Nevertheless, most of its people had a strong sense of 'Welshness' and this was particularly true, for obvious reasons, in Welsh-speaking areas.

The skill and toil of men and women in Wales' heavy industries had contributed hugely to the economy and power of Britain and its far-flung empire. Their continued productivity was a vital part of the overall war effort, providing steel for armaments and coal for ships. So, too, was the work of those on the land, producing food to sustain the population, and in the mills and the armaments factories.

When war was declared by Britain on Germany and its allies, young Welsh men were part of 'the flower of British manhood' that propelled



themselves into a battle of unknown, and unimaginable, consequences. Although miners and steelworkers, and also to an extent farm workers, were in 'reserved' jobs, which meant they could serve the war best by continuing to work there, many chose to sign up for military service overseas.

In the four years of the war, 272,924 men and women were recruited from Wales, mainly from the populous counties of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire. Initially they were volunteers; by 1916, however, they were conscripted like many of their fellows from England, Scotland and Ireland, all of which was then part of the United Kingdom. They were joined by men and women from the empire – Canada, Australia and New Zealand, India and South Africa.

The 1911 census records Wales' population as just under 2.5 million, about 5% of that of the United Kingdom – as it still is. In total, rather more than one in ten Welsh people went to war. The proportion of the male population was more than one in five. Some 35,000 are listed as dead or missing in the Welsh Book of Remembrance, equivalent to about one in eight of all Welsh combatants, nearly 1.5% of the whole population. While most were men,

women had played crucial roles, for example, in nursing and driving ambulances.

The impact of the war on the community was enormous, not least the loss of large numbers of young men, the bereavement of their families and friends and big changes in the structure and functions of society. There were huge moral and social dilemmas. Men from religious families who had always been taught in Sunday Schools 'Thou shalt not kill' were now being told it was 'God's work' to kill 'the Hun'. However, the Welsh language was banned from use as it was considered a 'foreign' language. Soldiers were not allowed to speak in Welsh, to write to their families or to receive letters from their relatives and friends in their native language.

Until August 2014, Wales was the only home nation not to have a war memorial in Flanders despite losing thousands of young men there in the First World War. A campaign to establish a Welsh memorial won the co-operation of the Belgian authorities who donated a site in the small village of Langemark where the Battle of Passchendaele was fought in July 1917. A dramatic Welsh dragon, created by artist Lee Odishow, now stands on a cromlech in memory of the lost men of Wales.



## The men of Powys

At the start of the war, the population of Powys was similar to that of today, about 135,000. This was just over 5% of the population of Wales so it's likely – based on national statistics – that around 15,000 men joined the armed forces from what were then the separate counties of Montgomery, Radnor and Brecknock. If the percentage of those who died mirrors that for Wales as a whole, the number of dead and missing servicemen from the three counties of today's Powys was fewer than 2,000 – a large number, however, from one of the least populated areas of Wales.

Men from Powys served in the various corps, brigades, divisions, regiments and battalions of the British Army, in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, and in the Royal Flying Corps (which became the RAF). Some were part of the several Welsh regiments including the South Wales Borderers, the Welsh Regiment and the Royal Welsh\* Fusiliers.



Battalions from the South Wales Borderers served in all the main areas of the war including the Somme, Gallipoli, Palestine and all the major actions on the Western Front. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers raised more battalions than any other regiment in the Great War.

Others were recruited to battalions that were raised locally such as the 2/7th Merioneth & Montgomeryshire Battalion which was formed at Newtown in September 1914, and the 25th Montgomery &

Welsh Horse Yeomanry Battalion which was formed in Egypt in 1917 from the Montgomery Yeomanry and Welsh Horse Cavalry. The rural landscape of Powys, though, provided many experienced horsemen for the Territorial cavalry. What is known is that there were relatively few Welsh officers, which is perhaps a comment of prevailing attitudes in the military at the time.

*\* During World War I the **Welch** Regiment and the Royal **Welch** Fusiliers were known as the **Welsh** Regiment and the Royal **Welsh** Fusiliers. In 1920 they changed their names to the **Welch** Regiment and the Royal **Welch** Fusiliers.*



## Effects of war on communities and survivors

The long-term impacts of the war were felt in all parts of society. Individuals who fought in the war and survived, lived with their memories, often shocking, for the rest of their lives. Many were in deep trauma (shell shock) that would be recognised today as Post-traumatic Stress Disorder but then was considered as evidence of cowardice. There were many cases of violence and domestic abuse recorded in communities after the war that could be attributed to this trauma.



Many returning soldiers suffered extreme injuries and disfigurements that deeply affected them and their families. Those who suffered gas attacks in the trenches also suffered blindness and lung injuries. Often, they were kept away from public places for fear of upsetting people and they had great difficulties getting jobs and earning wages to support their families.

Motor vehicles of the time were still quite crude and the engines often spluttered and coughed in what was known as "backfiring". When this happened in a busy street after the Great War, it was not uncommon to see men throw themselves to the floor. The survival instincts that they had learned during their wartime service were still locked inside their heads and for a split second their instincts told them they were being fired on again! Many men finding themselves in this situation would just stand up, dust themselves off and carry on as if nothing had happened.

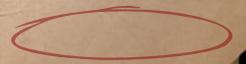
Many men returned home and had difficulty adapting to civilian life and their families. Some had missed out on four years of their children's development and both child and parent were strangers to each other. Many men were brutal after time spent in such a violent routine.

Women made many important contributions to the war. They were recruited as Land Girls and forestry workers to replace the men that went to the war, and many also worked in industry. This had a lasting impact on the role of women in society. Employment for women had been predominantly in domestic service, in shops and mills, and on the land. The war provided a wider range of occupations for women, which were better paid and offered better conditions of service. Women could earn £3 a week in munitions, compared with 8–10 shillings in domestic service.

The war also forced trade unions to accept women as members and to provide them with the support they needed as crucial wage earners in a family. Women could also socialise more. It became acceptable for women to go into pubs on their own and also to wear trousers, like the dungarees they wore for work.

Women also provided an essential service of making 'comfort for the troops' by sending letters and cigarettes. Their efforts had a huge effect on the morale of the fighting men.

There are many websites that can provide information about the First World War, the people who fought in the war and its impacts on communities.



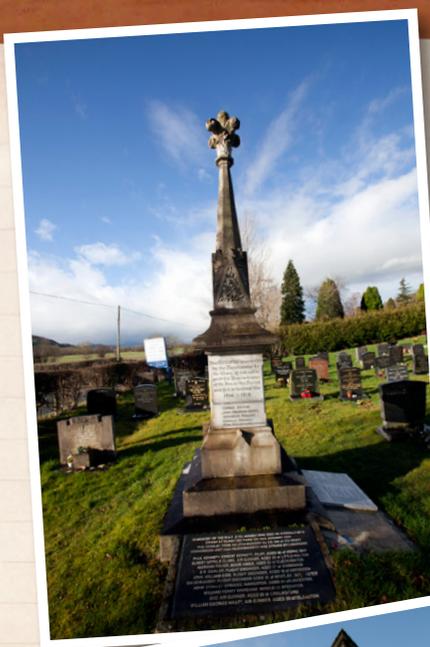
## Why so many memorials?

A hundred years ago, most people in Powys lived in small communities – not unlike today but at that time, few folk strayed far from where they lived, and certainly not often. Easy travel and communications were unfamiliar except to a few. Most life revolved round work and gathering places in villages and towns – the post office, the market place, the pub or the place of worship.

When it came to recording those who fell in the 'Great War', communities looked inward to register their own losses rather than sharing them with the wider world. Most who died were known personally and so each death was significant and precious to local people. It followed that memorials should reflect this sense of

community. And so almost every settlement, large or small, erected its own memorial or created books of remembrance. In some cases, memorials were put up in workplaces to record the loss of employees or bosses.

'National' memorials, although important,



were too remote to act as daily reminders of the fallen. Those who returned from the war also wanted to remember their fallen comrades in arms – the young men who would have been the community's future.

Local committees of various kinds were formed to decide what type of memorial should be established, where and at whose cost – most were erected or installed

by public subscription. In many cases, local churches or chapels were closely involved. Some memorials were, literally, monumental examples of public art, others were more discreet but equally important. Many are the focus of annual commemoration events.





## Memorials in Powys

There are more than 300 war memorials in Powys and they take many different forms. Some are outdoors, many are indoors. A number are elaborate, sculptural monuments, often depicting a soldier in a contemplative pose, others are simple or decorated crosses, some are strongly Christian in their design. A few are attributed to well-known sculptors of the time. Many are anonymous

although the names of those who created them are often recorded in parish records or other archives.

Indoor memorials are frequently plaques on the walls of churches, village halls, workplaces or other buildings. A few are stained glass windows in churches and a number are in the form of lettered or printed rolls of honour.

They may be memorials to a single person, to several or, simply, to 'the fallen'. They may record personal details of those commemorated, their rank, battalion, ship or other information such as where they were killed. They may say who was responsible for the memorial. Some have a religious or other quotation; most are in English but some are in Welsh or in both languages.

What is important is that each memorial has equal significance to its community, whatever its size, design,

materials or location. It is now increasingly important that all memorials are recorded not simply for their type and content but also for their condition as many are showing signs of stress from weather or decay. What will always be important is that local communities agree on who should take responsibility for their care, repair if needed and upkeep.

Every person recorded came from a family and belonged to a community. Many of these families are still living in the area, some in the same village or town. Others take an interest from further afield. New generations are keen to learn about their collective forebears and to remember that each surrendered his life in the pursuit of victory and in the cause of his country and the greater good.



# ③ War memorials

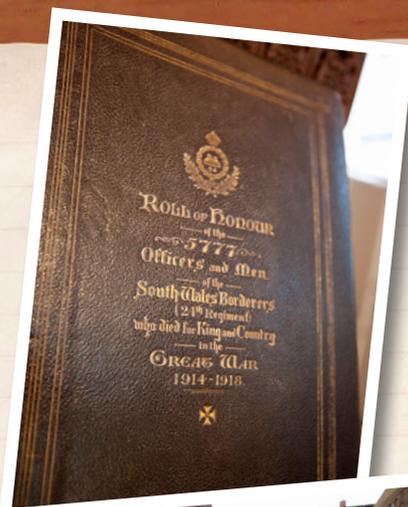
## What is a war memorial?

A war memorial can be any object that bears an inscription, or has a purpose, commemorating a war or a conflict and those involved. A memorial can be created or erected by anyone in any location and can be permanent (*a stone monument, sculpture or cross*), temporary (*a shrine or book of remembrance*) or living (*a tree or group of trees*).

A memorial can be in a public or a private location and can be inside or attached to a building, or outside in a garden, cemetery or public space.

Many are located in public parks or town squares but there are also many that are in more obscure locations that are harder to find.

War memorials can commemorate an individual or a number of people. They may have died in action, in wartime accidents or by friendly fire, or as a result of injuries or disease sustained in action. They can also commemorate those who served and survived, civilians



involved in or affected by the conflict as well as animals. Memorials can be erected during or soon after the conflict, or even some years later.



A gravestone above the grave of a fallen soldier is not classified as a memorial but as a 'war grave'.

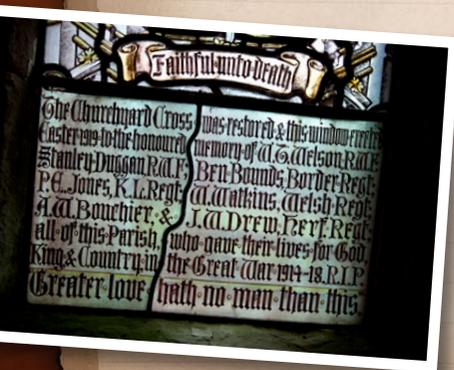
Where their body is not present and an additional inscription has been made about the person then it can be classed as a memorial. Many Welsh and other UK servicemen were buried overseas

in cemeteries still maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.



The War Memorials Trust in the UK has a concise definition of a war memorial.

*'Any physical object created, erected or installed to commemorate those involved in or affected by a conflict or war should be considered a war memorial. Memorials to civilians and animals should be included.'*



## History of war memorials

The earliest war memorial recorded in the United Kingdom is a Pictish stone of remembrance to the Battle of Dunnichen in Aberlemno, near Forfar in Scotland. It dates from the 7th century AD.

Subsequent memorials tended to celebrate victories or they commemorated significant individuals. They did not list the names of the regular soldiers who died. This changed after the Boer War (1899-1902) when communities began to remember those who had lost their lives with memorials that often listed the names of all those killed.

The First World War saw a turning point in the creation of war memorials. Because of the enormous numbers of casualties, the British government did not permit the repatriation of bodies. This left the bereaved at home with no grave or focus for their mourning.

As a result, war memorial committees were formed and they led campaigns to create memorials to honour the memory of local people killed during the conflict. Often the nature of the war memorial would be decided at a public meeting and the final decision would reflect the wishes of the local community. Because of the absence of any rules or government directives, many types of war memorial were created and dedicated.

Most communities will have at least one war memorial and sometimes several. Only fifty-two 'thankful villages' are recorded in the United Kingdom. These were villages where every man who went to war returned home. There are only four 'thankful villages' in Wales – Llanfihangel y Creuddyn, Colwinston, Herbrandston and Crossgates.

## Types of war memorial

Any object can be created or dedicated as a war memorial. They can be found in a diverse range of shapes, sizes, designs and materials, often far removed from the familiar traditional image of a cross on top of a column or plinth. The overriding concept, however, was to create something enduring to preserve the memory of the dead and the design chosen by a community offered an insight into their feelings and responses.

There are estimated to be between 60,000 and 100,000 war memorials in the UK, with around 300 currently recorded in Powys and many more likely to be identified as a result of this project. They all have a common purpose yet there are many different types in numerous materials.

The war memorials built during the 1920s and 1930s are generally conservative in design, conveying messages of comfort and respect as an enduring commemoration. Many have classical themes from the 19th century, simplified and made more abstract, reflecting early 20th century styles. The commissioning of memorials was generally at a very local level involving a wide range of local and national institutions. Their funding was also extremely varied, with private and charitable contributions from many sources.

We show on the next pages a general list of the different types of memorials with examples from Powys.



### Crosses

These appeared in several styles including the wheel cross at Leighton, near Welshpool, the Latin cross at Clyro, near Hay-on-Wye (with crucifix) or the market cross at Bwlch. There is also the Calvary cross type.

### Sculpted figures

These figures usually represented service personnel and either formed the whole memorial, as at

Llandrindod Wells and New Radnor, or were incorporated into a larger monument as at Builth Wells and Rhayader. Victory or peace sculptures were also used as part of some memorials. The bronze figure on the war memorial at Llandrindod Wells was sculpted by B Lloyd & Sons of Rhayader. The model was a local man, Jack Hamer.

### Cenotaph

'Cenotaph' is derived from the Greek words for 'empty tomb', meaning it commemorates people whose remains are buried elsewhere. It can be a memorial to an individual or a group. The most famous example is Edwin Lutyens' design in Whitehall, London but there are many others around the country. You can find smaller examples in Knighton and Presteigne.

### Obelisks and columns

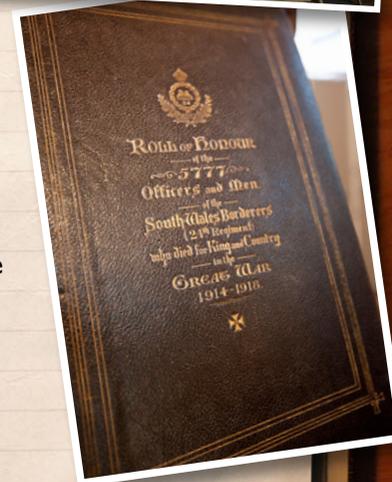
An obelisk is a tall, narrow, tapering monument such as at Buttington, near Welshpool. Obelisks and 'broken' columns were favoured in a number of places. They symbolised lives that had been cut short. A striking example of a classical column memorial stands on the hilltop overlooking Montgomery.

### Rolls of honour

Rolls of honour are lists of names presented in a commemorative book, or on a plaque. They were often simple in design and examples were placed in churches such as in Llanfared, near Builth Wells, and Glaschw, halls such as Coelbren Miners' Welfare Hall and schools such as Maesydderwen School, Ystradgynlais.

### Boards, plaques and tablets

Plaques are a common form of memorial and were either used on their own or included as part of a





larger monument. The plaque usually carried an inscription or a list of names. Metal plaques remain at risk from being stolen or damaged because of their scrap metal value.



### Functional memorials

The memorials above were all designed as stand-alone features in a particular setting – in a park, garden, village green or building. Some communities chose instead to create a more functional feature that was then dedicated to those who fell. These included schools, village halls, hospitals (such as Breconshire Memorial Hospital), sports fields, gardens and parks. Others that remain are horse troughs (such as at Norton, near Knighton), wells (Cwmtrwrch, near Ystradgynlais) and clock towers (Rhayader). These memorials may include a plaque or a notice of commemoration explaining its role as a memorial.



You can find plaques made from a variety of materials in places such as halls, schools, chapels and churches.



A plaque may sometimes be a private memorial to an individual soldier like that dedicated to John Davies in St Michael's Church, Llanfihangel Helygen, near Rhayader.

### Church fittings

The fittings formed part of the fabric or decoration of the church and included the pulpit in Capel Coelbren, memorial windows by Christopher Whall at All Saints in Glasbury and the lychgate at Berriew Church.



## Symbolism of memorials

There are many different types of symbols used in memorials. Many were drawn from traditional Christian imagery, communicating themes of self-sacrifice, victory and death. Some used medieval themes that reflected on a more secure past while others used more contemporary art deco styles. Examples of symbols used in memorials are:

### Cross of sacrifice

This type of memorial was designed by the architect Reginald Blomfield for the (then) Imperial War Graves Commission to commemorate the dead buried in overseas war cemeteries. The cross was normally a freestanding four-point limestone Latin cross, mounted on an octagonal base with a bronze broadsword, blade down, embedded in the face of the cross. The cross represents the faith of the majority of the dead and the sword represents military self-sacrifice. Memorials inspired by this design are at Leighton and Llangunllo.



### Wreath

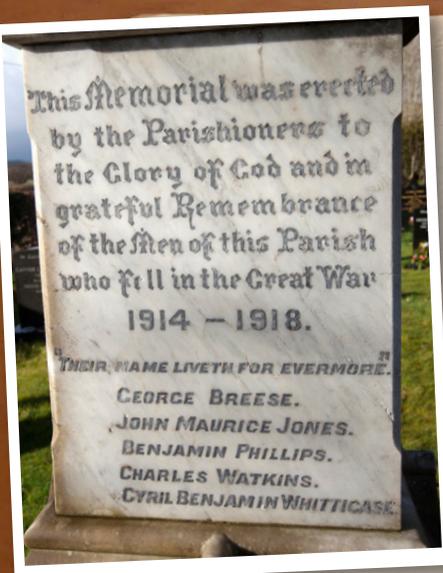
This was probably the commonest form of memorial and was used as a traditional symbol of commemoration, on-going life or of victory, if it was shown as a wreath of laurel leaves. You can find examples at Knighton, Presteigne and Talgarth, and combined with the cross of sacrifice at Carno and the sword at Newtown.



### Reversed arms

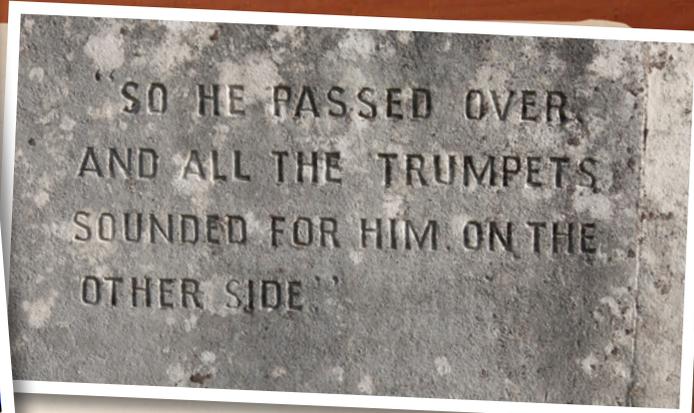
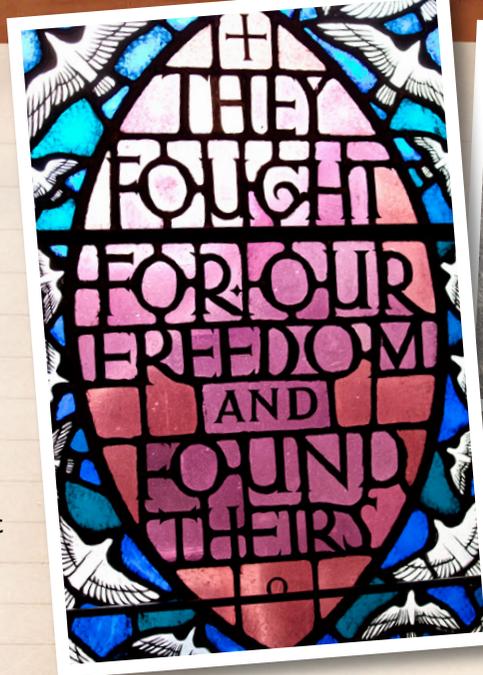
Sculptures of soldiers were often depicted with arms (rifles) reversed as a symbol of respect and remembrance for fallen comrades. There are examples at New Radnor and Llandrindod Wells.





## Epitaphs

An inscribed dedication or epitaph often accompanied the names of those commemorated. After the First World War, the Imperial War Graves Commission employed Rudyard Kipling as literary advisor for inscriptions used on war memorials. This was a somewhat ironic choice as Kipling was one of those responsible for creating the propaganda that encouraged so many men to enlist in the first place – but he lost a son in the war.



Some epitaphs appear in Latin – for example, *‘Pro patria non timeo mori’* (I do not fear to die for my country) on the roll of honour in Llanfared, near Builth Wells.

Kipling produced the most succinct and commonly used epitaph: *‘Their name liveth for evermore’* as used on the Llandrindod Wells memorial and adapted on many others.

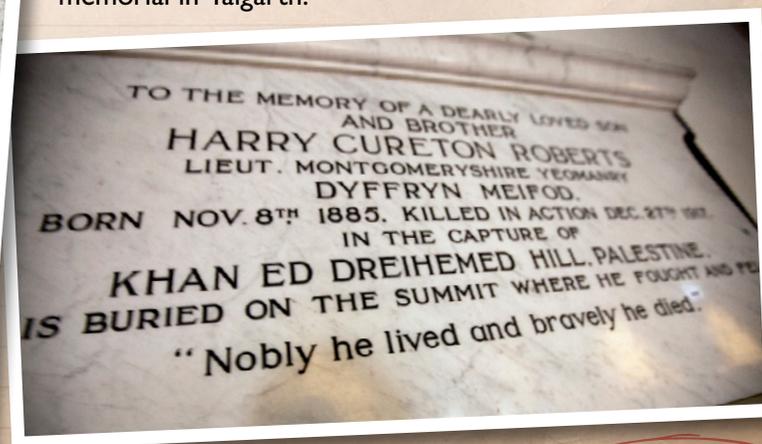
Also commonly used is the epitaph attributed to John Maxwell Edmonds, an English classicist, who produced a collection of twelve epitaphs for the First World War in 1916:

*When you go home  
Tell them of us and say  
For your tomorrow  
We gave our today*

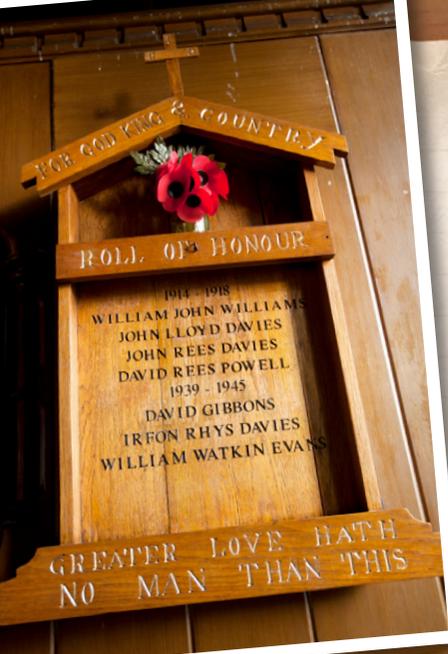
This epitaph appears in full on the memorial in Montgomery and in part on the memorial in Knighton.



Other epitaphs were adapted extracts from famous literary works such as Bunyan’s *‘Pilgrim’s Progress’* at Cwmbach and New Radnor: *‘So they passed over and all the trumpets sounded for them on the other side.’* Or they can consist of Biblical quotes such as *‘The sun went down while it was yet day’* (Jeremiah 15.9), on the memorial in Talgarth.







### Wood

There are many examples of wooden lychgates and other similar memorials in churchyards. Inscriptions were carved into the wood or cast as a bronze plaque. There are also wooden plaques, placed inside buildings, with carved inscriptions, and wooden frames supporting cast metal plaques in churches.



### Paper

Church memorials may take the form of Books of Remembrance with handwritten inscriptions.



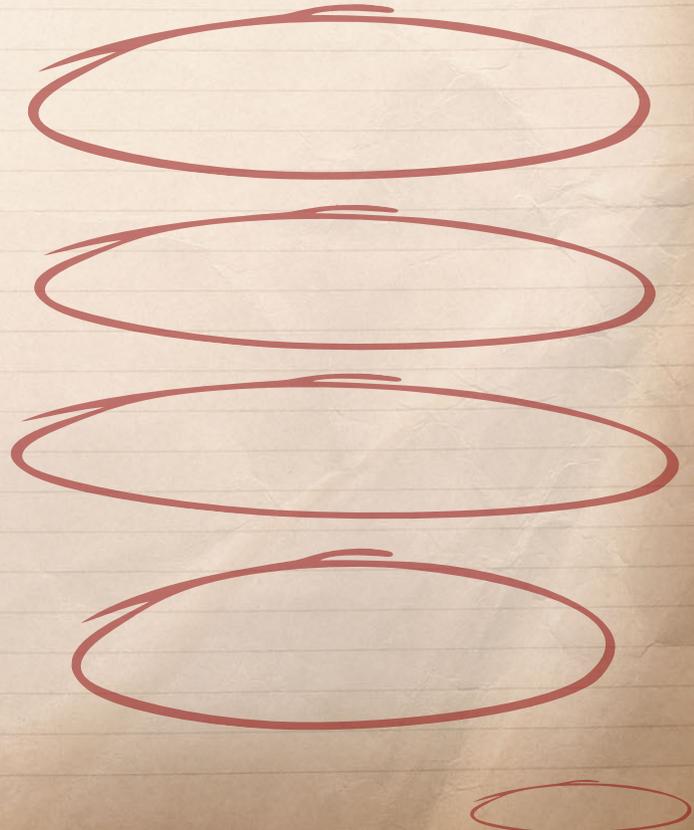
### Glass

Church windows often serve as war memorials, with dedications either written into the glass or on plaques placed near the window. Some churches carry the names of those who served in rolls of honour.

### Paint or Gilding

Many wooden panels have inscriptions painted or gilded onto the surface.

For more information on war memorials:





## How the names were recorded

The way the individual names were presented varies from memorial to memorial. They were listed in several different ways including:

- Alphabetically, with surname and forename or initials as on the memorials in Machynlleth and Rhayader.
- Alphabetically, as above but with the addition of rank, regiment and date of death as at Newbridge-on-Wye.
- In order of rank as at Clyro.
- Chronologically, in order of death.

Some memorials, such as that at Leighton, did not record any names and simply commemorated those killed in the war.

An individual name could have been included on several memorials. For example, they might be listed on a town or village memorial and also appear on another memorial



or roll of honour created by their community, school, church, company or club. This can often lead to confusion when researching names and it is worth double-checking their names, addresses and dates of birth and death.

In whatever way a community chose to record the names, it is important to remember that often a war memorial can be the only record of an individual. Each memorial, therefore, is a unique record of the past and a community's heritage.

The government chose to include only the names on the 'Dead Man's Penny' memorial plaque issued to the next of kin of service personnel, as all men were equal in death. It wasn't the first time that members of different social classes had died in war but it was the first time they had lived and died together.



## ④ Recording and looking after war memorials

War memorials, as with any monument or building, can deteriorate over time. They can be damaged by weathering, handling, subsidence, vandalism and poor restoration. Looking after memorials is an important task to enable communities, and future generations, to appreciate their value.

### Condition of memorials

Many memorials are outside and exposed to weather, but there are also those within churches, business premises and private houses that are more protected from the elements. Memorials located outside can suffer many problems including:

- Stone decay, caused by atmospheric pollution, vegetation growth, physical damage, cleaning, graffiti, etc.
- Erosion of mortar and the surface of brick or stone, through weathering.
- Subsidence of foundations.
- Loss of inscriptions through frost damage or theft of lead or bronze inlays.
- Theft of metal plaques and railings for their scrap metal value.
- Vandalism of all parts of the monument with damage to surfaces and use of spray paint.

Plaques or rolls of honour, located on, or inside, buildings can suffer from:

- Vandalism of surfaces causing physical damage, or damage from hammers, pens or spray paint.
- Loss of inscriptions.
- Deterioration of timber or paper.

Many of these problems can be avoided, or repaired, by establishing a regular maintenance programme starting with preparing a conservation maintenance plan.

In the Recording Toolkit you'll find details on how to prepare a conservation maintenance plan and how to look after and repair a memorial. A summary of the main stages in caring for a war memorial follows on the next page.

## Preparing a conservation maintenance plan

The Conservation Maintenance Plan is a mechanism for properly identifying the appearance and condition of a memorial and then drawing up a programme of regular maintenance and repair. The plan should be prepared in stages.

### 1. Recording your memorial

Before you do any work on maintaining or repairing a memorial you should make an accurate record of its features and its current condition and send this to the Powys War Memorials Project and the Built Heritage Section of Powys County Council. They can then give you advice on the best methods for looking after it.



We would also highly recommend you undertake a condition survey of your monument.

If you want to find out more about memorials there are organisations and websites that can help you and many local historians, students and civic trusts also have information on memorials and First World War history.

If the memorial is not protected through listing you may wish to apply for listed status. Powys County Council can help you find out if listing is possible.

### 2. Monitoring your memorial

You should inspect the memorial regularly – at least once a year. It may be good to have it inspected by a suitable specialist. Use a checklist during monitoring to make sure you monitor the condition of the main features including the structure, names and inscriptions, access, the surroundings and any security issues.

### 3. Maintaining your memorial

All maintenance of a built memorial should be carried out by a properly trained specialist. You can involve the community but they should be guided by an accredited specialist. There are lots of do's and don'ts for maintaining a memorial.



#### 4. Repairing your memorial

If a memorial needs to be repaired, you should get professional help from a properly qualified specialist. A specialist will assess any problems and recommend conservation solutions. Powys War Memorial Project, Powys County Council or the War Memorials Trust can offer advice and guidance on work needed, and any sources of funds.



#### Involving the community

It is really good to involve your friends and neighbours in the community in recording and maintaining war memorials. If they are aware of the memorial and they can participate in its care, they can help to check for damage or deterioration. There are suggestions for how the community can be involved in the next sections.



## Grants

Grants are available from Cadw for repair and conservation of war memorials. The War Memorials Trust can offer additional funding through its Small Grants Scheme on top of the 70% available through Cadw's scheme.

### Types of works the War Memorials Trust can fund

- Conservation.
- Like-for-like repair.
- Structural repair/stabilisation.
- Reinstatement of lost elements that form an integral part of the design.
- Addition of names where they can be accommodated on the memorial.
- Professional condition surveys and structural reports.

### Types of work they cannot fund

- New war memorials.
- Maintenance.
- Inappropriate work or methods.
- Relocation, unless the memorial is 'at risk' and as a last resort.
- Works to graves of any type.
- Applications to multiple schemes administered by the Trust for the same work.
- Work that has already started or been completed.

The grant schemes are open to anyone to apply.

Powys County Council also has funding available for conservation and improvement works on war memorials. For details, please contact the War Memorials Project team.

Once you have finished your recording keep a copy for your records and also send a copy to the Powys County Council War Memorials Project Team. You can do this in a number of ways:

- You can upload the details onto the project website:



- You can e-mail a copy to the team: [warmemorials@powys.gov.uk](mailto:warmemorials@powys.gov.uk)
- You can send a copy via post to:

Powys War Memorials Project Officer,  
County Hall, Llandrindod Wells,  
Powys, LD1 5LG

- You can call the Powys War Memorials Project Officer with the information on:

0845 6027030 or 01597 827460

## ⑤ Researching war memorials, the war and its stories

Researching war memorials can be a very satisfying, although time-consuming, task. It is a way of discovering people from the not too distant past, whose stories can be extraordinary and whose descendants may still live in the area. There are many records still available relating to people who fought in the war and of the hardships that their families and friends suffered both during and immediately after the war. This section provides a checklist of things that you can do to find out more about the people on the memorials.

### Finding out more about the people on the memorials

First of all, find out what information currently exists about the war memorial. It's possible that an organisation or an individual may already have done some research. Check with your local history groups, libraries, museums, schools and other community groups.

Once you know what already exists and what gaps there are, decide what you are wanting to research. Here are some suggestions for researching the names on the memorials:

1. Write down the names that are on the war memorial, exactly as recorded, and then list all their details including surname, forenames, rank, regiment and number. Take a photograph of the war memorial and the list of names.
2. Check other local memorials, such as a roll of honour in a school or church, for the same names.

3. Set up a file for each name, preferably as a spreadsheet or table. This makes it much easier to pull out different pieces of information, such as year of death, age at death and where the individuals came from. Fields could include:

- Name – first names and surname, and also any other names by which they were known, such as 'Bob' for someone whose name was Robert.
- Rank.
- Regiment.
- Where they fought.
- Age at death.
- Place of death.
- Grave site.
- Medals awarded.
- Parents.
- Place of birth.
- Other members of immediate family.
- Listing in 1911 census (and 1901 census).
- Any other information about the person such as membership of a band.

4. To research the dead, start by looking at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) website.

It has free search facilities and if the person is on its register, you will find their name, number, unit and burial site.

- The CWGC has a register for each location of a war grave where there may also be a memorial. Do a simple search,

putting in the surname and initials or first name for each person on the memorial. The website will probably provide additional information on where that person is buried.

- You can also search the site by the location of war graves (and associated memorials) in Powys, but not by war memorials as such.

5. Transfer the details from the website to your spreadsheet to allow further research and sorting.

You may find that the CWGC has no next of kin details for an individual. The usual reason is that it took the Commission up to fifteen years after the war to contact the families of the deceased, by which time many had moved or died. Some records were updated when the website was set up.

Another reason is that the Commission's cut-off date for commemoration by headstone, and therefore inclusion in records, was 31st August 1921. Many men died after that date as a result of their war injuries and may be included on a memorial but will not be recorded in the CWGC records.

Some of these men may be found in Pension Records or their Medal Index Card may show SWB (Silver War Badge). This was a lapel badge that showed they had served and had been discharged through wounds or sickness.

6. Compare your list of names from the website search with the names on your memorial and add any extras.

7. Search other websites such as Ancestry and Find My Past to collect extra information, such as dates and family details.



- Search the site for names with as much detail as possible.
- Search within sectors such as 'Military' (including casualties), 'Census', 'Births, Marriages and Deaths'.
- Check the person's details are correct by cross-referencing with the information you already have.
- Search other sectors such as 'Professions' or 'Parish'.
- Enter the details to the individual files to build people's history.
- Research parents and relations if this will add more to the story.

8. Search through archive collections relating to the war. The county archive is at Powys County Archives office in Llandrindod Wells and it is the official repository for the records of the county of Powys and the three former counties of Breconshire, Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire. The Regimental Museum in Brecon has a wide range of reference material including copies of lists, medal records and other information from The National Archives at Kew. The Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum in Caernarfon has excellent displays about the history of this regiment. Some records are also held at local libraries, archaeological trusts and museums.



The records you may want to research could include:

- Local newspapers and magazines. These may be held in your local library or museum and may also be online. Look for obituaries and other records of death for your names. You may also want to look for articles about the war memorial, its construction and dedication, and any published appeals for names to be included on the memorial.
- Transactions and other publications produced by local history societies and other groups.
- War diaries from the regiments. These were the daily records kept by each unit during the war, recording the operation of the unit on active service. They may include map references, casualties, individual names and awards of medals.

9. Ask around to find other information in your town or village. You can do this in several ways:

- Use the local media to appeal for information and to publicise your project. Contact local newspapers, radio and television stations, telling them about the project and asking them to publicise your request for information. You could also write a letter for publication, asking for information.
- Ask newspapers for any archive or stories that they may have.
- Research other information and photographs in your local library and online.

- Ask local organisations, such as museums, libraries, schools, clubs and societies, for any information they may have.
- Organise a reminiscence event inviting local people to bring any photographs, memorabilia and any other items relating to WWI. This activity can also explore links between the community in the early twentieth century and the community today – how many of the original families still live in the area, who are the direct descendants, what were the impacts on their lives?

10. Collate all the information and decide what you are going to do with it!

As you search you are likely to collect together a large amount of information. This may include:

- The details you included in the spreadsheet.
- Photographs of the memorial now and from earlier last century.
- Copies of newspaper and magazine articles.
- Copies of entries in record centres, registry offices and family trees.
- Copies of diaries, photographs from WWI, letters and other memorabilia from the time.
- Details from the war diaries of each regiment.
- Obituaries and other records of death.

## Top tips for researching

- Remember that there are often several ways of spelling the same name such as Morris, Morries, Morriss, Mores or Davis and Davies.
- The order in which people are listed on a war memorial varies. For example, they are usually listed in alphabetical order but could also be in chronological order according to their date of death, or in order of seniority, or precedence of regiment. On some memorials, they ran out of room at the bottom of the memorial and a few of the people who died at the end of the war are listed above those who fell in 1914.
- A person's rank can be confusing. For example, Signaller is a modern rank, but it was an occupation in the First World War.
- Unit names can be abbreviated as initials and this can cause confusion. For example, the Royal Naval Division is usually abbreviated to RND, which are also the initials for the Royal North Devon Regiment.
- People make mistakes, so double- and triple- check everything. Many sources of information have errors so it is important to double-source for everything if possible.
- List your sources – you might want to revisit the source for more information later.
- Make sure your sources of information are reliable.
- Cross-check and cross-reference your data sources. Check the listings on all local memorials, school records and clubs and societies' membership details.
- Some war memorials have been lost. Some were in the buildings or graveyards of chapels or churches that have been closed and sold for housing or other development; others have been damaged or destroyed by fire or demolition.
- Define the work of your project clearly. Know what you want to do, otherwise it's easy to get side-tracked.

- Find out what other local groups, schools and societies are doing for the WWI anniversary, and what they have already done. You don't want to re-invent the wheel!

When you have researched your memorial, please contact the Powys County Council War Memorials Project Team so that we can keep a record of the information. You can do this in a number of ways:

- You can upload the details on the project website:



- You can e-mail a copy to the team: [warmemorials@powys.gov.uk](mailto:warmemorials@powys.gov.uk)

- You can send a copy via post to:

Powys War Memorials Project Officer,  
County Hall, Llandrindod Wells,  
Powys, LD1 5LG

- You can call the Powys War Memorials Project Officer with the information on:

0845 6027030 or 01597 827460

## Useful websites

The website of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The world's largest online library of family history information. The website has census records, birth, death and marriage records, military records, parish records and other records.

This website has census records, birth, marriage and death records, parish records, travel and migration records, military, armed forces and conflict records and historic British newspapers.

The National Library of Wales holds books, maps, manuscripts, archives, bibliography, pictures and photographs relating to Welsh history and culture. There is a huge amount of material available online. It includes

The Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales website has details of collections, research, events and exhibitions.

This website has thousands of images and data about many aspects of Welsh life and culture.

A wealth of in-depth information, photographs, images and letters from museums, libraries and record offices in Wales.

The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales has many resources on the historic environment of Wales.

The Welsh Government's historic environment service.

This website has many fascinating stories and links to podcasts and recently broadcast programmes on WWI.

You can search over 400 million people living in Wales and England between 1841 and 1901.

This website is a record of everyone who lived in England and Wales in 1911.

All war memorials in Royal Mail properties are searchable online at this website. It includes information and some photographs.

The War Memorials Trust provides advice and information to anyone interested in war memorials. It also runs a grant scheme for repairing and conserving memorials.

This site is dedicated to men and women who died in wars. It lists memorials in many counties in the UK. A few are listed for Powys.

Forces War Records has a database of more than 6 million military records. It includes information on the military unit that people served in, the battles they fought and what life was like for them.

A guide to the military cemeteries and memorials around the world.

The National Archives is the government's archive for the United Kingdom.

This website provides an overview of the First World War battlefields on the Western Front. It shows where they are and what you can see there today.

The Imperial War Museum's War Memorials Archive.

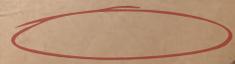
The Long, Long Trail, a site all about the soldiers, units, regiments and battles of the British Army of the First World War.

The British Newspaper Archive has over 200 years of newspapers.

The Regimental Museum of The Royal Welsh website has information about the regiment, the museum and its services and archives. It also has useful factsheets.

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust works to protect, record and interpret the historic landscape. Their website has details of projects, their newsletter and other services.

The County Council's website has details of the libraries, museums and the county archives.



## Places to find out more

In addition to many websites dedicated to the First World War, you can also find more detailed and specific information about the First World War in Wales and Powys in the national and county libraries and museums. The Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust also has a library and other resources with relevant material.

The National Library of Wales and Powys libraries have a huge range of resources and are the best places to start researching your war memorial. The Regimental Museum in Brecon holds a large amount of material about the history of local regiments in Powys. Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales and the museums in Powys all have programmes of exhibitions and events to commemorate the anniversary of the First World War.

The museums have collections of letters, diaries, photographs, images and other artefacts relating to the First World War. Some are on display, while others are held in storage. The museums are good places to visit to see examples of the types of letters, diaries and memorabilia that exist from the First World War. They are unlikely to have specific information about your war memorial. Contact the museums and libraries before you visit to find out what material they have available. They may be able to get additional items out of storage for you.

Powys Archives and the main libraries hold copies of local newspapers. Some are on microform, others have digitised data for some records such as births, marriages and deaths. Local newspapers often carried reports from the War Office about the local battalions and units giving details about where the units went and soldiers who had been sent home due to wounds and illness, as well as reports of the deaths of local servicemen.

All the county's libraries also have a range of books and other materials relating to local history and the First World War. Local studies sources are available at the Brecon, Newtown and Llandrindod Wells libraries, which hold copies of trade directories, newspapers, periodicals and local history publications. Brecon Library holds data relating to Breconshire; Newtown Library holds data relating to the former county of Montgomeryshire and the Powys Archives Research Service holds data relating to the former county of Radnorshire. Local Studies publications are listed in the library catalogue and also at Powys Archives.

The libraries have printed materials, catalogues, microfilm readers, and computers which are available for individuals and groups to use free of charge. Use of the computers and microfilm readers needs to be booked in advance. The libraries also offer free access to two key websites for researching individuals:



### **The Regimental Museum of the Royal Welsh, in Brecon**

The Barracks, Brecon, Powys, LD3 7EB

Tel: 01874 613310 Fax: 01874 613275

info@royalwelsh.org.uk

The Regimental Museum has an outstanding collection of military artefacts on display, telling some of the history of the Royal Welsh regiment and some of its predecessors: The Royal Welsh Fusiliers, The Royal Regiment of Wales, the South Wales Borderers, Welsh Regiment and the Monmouthshire Regiment. The museum also has substantial







- War memorials do not list everyone from that village or town who died in the First World War. Individuals may have been left off the war memorial list for a number of reasons. It could be a simple error, or that their family didn't want their names on the memorial or that the family had moved away.
- The Burnt Records. Many records of ordinary soldiers from the First World War were lost during the Second World War when the Records Office where they were stored in Arundel Street in London was bombed and set on fire in 1941. Around 60% of the records were destroyed. Many of those that were saved were damaged by fire, with smoke marks and burnt edges.

- There are around 2.8 million records surviving from the First World War.

- Silver war badges were awarded to soldiers who were wounded. The medal records a unique number for each soldier and also where they enlisted.



## Regiments in Wales

There were four infantry regiments in Wales.

### I. The South Wales Borderers

- An infantry regiment of the British Army. The first regiment was formed in 1689. They served in many conflicts including the American Revolutionary War, battles in India, the Zulu War and the Boer War before World War One.
- They were based at Brecon and recruited mainly from South Wales.
- There were two regular battalions at the start of the First World War. One was in China when war was declared. The second regular battalion went to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force, which was sent to the Ypres area on the Western Front at the start of trench warfare in 1914.
- The newly recruited soldiers were sent to training camps in Kinmel Park in Bodelwyddan, near Abergele, north Wales.
- Battalions went to Thessalonica, Palestine and Gallipoli.
- Between 1200-1400 men enlisted at Brecon.
- The South Wales Borderers saw action in many different Theatres of War during the First World War.

- The South Wales Borderers, The Welsh Regiment and the Royal Welsh Fusiliers became the 38th Welsh Division, which is also known as Lloyd George's Welsh Division.
- They became part of the Royal Regiment of Wales in 1969 and are now part of the Royal Welsh.

## 2. Monmouthshire Regiment

- The Monmouthshire Regiment was a territorial infantry regiment that originated as a voluntary unit of riflemen. It was formed in Monmouthshire in 1859.
- The 1st, 2nd and 3rd battalions of the Monmouthshire Rifle Volunteer Corps became part of the South Wales Borderers in 1881.
- Many miners joined the Monmouthshire Regiment.
- They went to France and Flanders and suffered heavy casualties in the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915.
- The Monmouthshire Regiment became part of the Royal Regiment of Wales in 2006 and is now part of the Royal Welsh.



## 3. Welsh Regiment

- There were 34 battalions of the Welsh Regiment in the First World War.
- They saw service in many different regions but most of their soldiers were deployed to France and Belgium.



- Nineteen of the 34 battalions saw active service overseas and nearly 8,000 officers and men were killed or died of their wounds or war-related illness.

## 4. Royal Welsh Fusiliers



- An infantry regiment of the British Army, starting as the 23rd Regiment of Foot in 1689 and becoming the Royal Welsh Fusiliers (RWF) in 1881 and then the Royal Welch Fusiliers in 1920.
- They recruited soldiers from mid and north Wales.
- They suffered appalling casualties in action at Mametz Wood in 1916.
- They took part in the famous Christmas 1914 football game among British, German and French soldiers.
- Many men of the 5th, 6th and 7th RWF died at Gallipoli and more later in Egypt and Palestine.
- Several famous writers served with various battalions of the regiment in France, including the poets Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, David Jones, Hedd Wyn and Frank Richards.
- They are now part of the Royal Welsh.



## Gathering local stories

### A reminiscence event

Reminiscence events such as a Talk and Tea afternoon or a Drop-In session can be a very effective way of gathering local people's stories about the First World War. People are invited to bring any family photographs, mementoes and memorabilia to the event, where these items can be photographed and scanned along with a record of their history. Reminiscence events can unearth real treasures as some families have a collection of items that belonged to relatives who served in the war. They may bring in medals, photographs, letters, uniform or other items relating to the war.

### Things to think about when organizing a reminiscence event

- Find a suitable venue – somewhere that is easy to find, has parking space nearby, toilets, electrical supply and space for groups of tables and chairs.
- Have several cameras and a scanner available on the day.
- Publicise the event well. Invite groups such as the British Legion.
- Consider taking the event to residential homes for elderly residents, day centres and luncheon clubs for elderly people.
- Offer refreshments.
- Consider having a display of memorabilia relating to the First World War to act as a discussion point and visual focus for your event.
- Invite the Powys War Memorials Officer from Powys County Council to the event.



## ⑥ What to do with the information

Finding out more about war memorials and the people whose names are recorded on them can result in a large collection of records and information. Much of this will be of interest not just to the descendants of those recorded but also to the wider community. There are many ways that you could present the information so that others can appreciate your work. You can produce interpretation materials such as leaflets, an indoor or outdoor interpretive panel, or an audio trail. You could also arrange events and activities with a First World War theme to involve the community.

Here are some ideas. Look at the case studies in Section 7 for projects that Powys communities have already undertaken.

### A leaflet

A standard 'A4 folded into three' leaflet is easy to produce and can be printed on a home printer and distributed to the community. It could contain a summary text from your research and photographs and other images of the memorial and the people listed there. It could also contain information about your town and village during the First World War to set the historical context. You can produce the leaflet yourself or get a professional to do it for you.

### Things to think about when writing a leaflet

- Keep the text to a minimum. You may want to produce it in Welsh and English.
- Aim for a good balance between text, images and space.
- Make it personal and friendly.
- Make it active and in the present tense.
- Use humour, with care, where appropriate.
- Communicate ideas and concepts, not just a string of facts.
- Avoid clichés 'like the plague'!
- Test it with friends and colleagues.
- Make it interesting and memorable.

### An interpretive panel

Panels can be a useful way of interpreting a war memorial. They are easily accessible and can present information that helps visitors to appreciate, understand and enjoy what they are looking at. Panels need to be sited carefully otherwise they may be obtrusive. A general rule of thumb is that the text should be limited to around 200 words per panel. If it is bi-lingual, that means 100 words per language. You will need to make every word count!

### Things to think about when preparing an interpretive panel

- Identify a single theme for each panel and keep it simple.
- Select the material carefully to tell the most important story, or stories.
- Layer the information with arresting headlines, an introductory paragraph and more detailed information.
- Good design is crucial to attract people to the panel – if it is not well designed they are unlikely to read it.
- Good images are essential – make sure you have high resolution images.

- Captions are a useful way of getting more information across.
- Consider including quotes – they help to make the interpretation personal.
- Think about how the panel will be made and installed. It's important that it is made of suitable and robust materials. You may need to get planning permission for your panel. Contact the Powys War Memorial Project for advice.

You can e-mail the team on: [warmemorials@powys.gov.uk](mailto:warmemorials@powys.gov.uk)

You can write to the Powys War Memorials Project Officer,  
County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 5LG.

You can call the Powys War Memorials Project Officer on:  
0845 6027030 / 01597 827460

### **An exhibition**

You may want to put together an exhibition about your war memorial project that you could use in village halls, at fetes and other local events. It can explain the work that you have done, showcase your results and ask for more information from other local people. Think about the way you want to present your exhibition and the materials you want to use. You could get it printed onto tough paper, laminated paper, a plastic such as Foamex or another material. Ask the Powys War Memorials Project Officer for advice: [warmemorials@powys.gov.uk](mailto:warmemorials@powys.gov.uk). The information could be simply pinned up on walls, mounted on display boards, or printed on pop-up banners or large sheets of card or Foamex. If you think you may want to use it more than once, it may be worth borrowing, or buying, a display system. These vary in size, material and cost.

### **Things to think about when developing an exhibition**

- You need an introduction to explain what the exhibition is about – you know your project intimately but for anyone new to it, you need to set the scene and explain the context of what you have been doing.
- Split the information up into different sections so it is easy to read and not overwhelming.
- Position the text at a height that most people can read – including children and people in wheelchairs.
- Text and images need to be large enough to be seen easily from at least a metre away.
- If your exhibition is staffed, consider having objects that people can handle – these are useful discussion points and help to draw people into the exhibition.
- Think of ways to make it interactive – maybe include a 'post-it' space where people can write their own stories and comments.
- Include contact details and where people can find out more about your project.

### **A First World War trail**

A trail can be an imaginative way to get families and youth groups involved in your war memorial project. A trail can encourage them to explore the area around the memorial and the town or village where it is located. They can find out more about the heritage and hidden features and discover special places, sights and sounds. The trail can be produced as a publication or as an audio or video trail.

A trail could start at the war memorial and visit different sites, such as the village hall where recruitment of volunteers took place, the school where many of the recruits and conscripts were educated and some of the venues used by different clubs and societies that were operating in your town or village during the First World War.

### **Things to think about when developing your trail**

- Who is your trail for? Is it for local people or visitors, families, youth groups or adults?
- Start and finish points. These should be located at a place that is easy to find within the town or village, with easy access to parking. There should be an area where groups can congregate safely, away from traffic. Ideally the start and finish points should also be close to public toilets.
- The route. Make sure the route is suitable for your audience – not too long or difficult to find and navigate. It should be safe, away from traffic and other dangers as well as natural hazards such as rivers, boggy ground and steep slopes.
- Destinations or stopping places along the trail. Each of these should feature a point of interest and have a story that can be made interesting to your audience.
- Health and Safety issues. Identify the hazards and make sure you can offer First Aid.
- Risk Assessment. Preparing a Risk Assessment for the trail may encourage more groups, such as youth groups, to use the trail.
- Publicity. Who is your trail for? How will you promote it?
- Instructions and equipment. You'll need to tell the users what they need to do to complete the trail – and if they need any equipment such as maps. You could produce the trail as a leaflet, or it could be developed as a downloadable leaflet, audio trail or an app for smart phones.
- Clues, navigational directions, a map of the route and the answers to the clues. You'll need to produce these and make them available for users.
- Keep it short, 'do-able' and fun!

### **A Poetry Competition**

The First World War is remembered by many for the poetry that it inspired. Poets such as Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Robert Graves wrote about their experiences of trench warfare and its impact on their lives and the lives of others. More recently, poets such as Owen Sheers have written contemporary poetry and plays about the conflict and its impacts today. Schools and community groups could organize a poetry competition, inviting people to write new poems inspired by the commemoration of the First World War or by more recent conflicts. The poems could be performed at an event, see below, or as a short video and/or collated on a website or published.

### **Poetry and musical events**

Poetry and music have always been an important part of Welsh culture, with the long-held tradition of a chair at the Lord's table being awarded to the best poet and musician at an Eisteddfod. There is plenty of material. The poets Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, David Jones, Hedd Wyn and Frank Richards all served with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Saunders Lewis, the Welsh poet and language activist, was with the South Wales Borderers during the First World War.

There is a body of music composed by musicians who fought in the trenches. Ivor Gurney, George Butterworth and Cecil Coles were all musicians and composers who joined up to serve at the Front. Ralph Vaughan Williams, who was 41 at the time, enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Troops in training and on active service sang many folk and music hall songs, often adapting the words to reflect their lives in the trenches. At the end of the war there were a lot of celebrations which involved music influenced by the new jazz from America.

You can organize a poetry or musical entertainment showcasing a range of popular poems and music from the time of the First World War. This could include solo performances by poets and musicians, readings, band music and communal singsongs. Popular songs from the First World War include Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag, There's a Long, Long Trail A-Winding, The Bells of Hell Go Ting-a-ling-a-ling, It's a Long Way to Tipperary and Roses of Picardy.

### **Things to think about for a poetry and/or a musical community event**

- Find a suitable venue with space for performers and audience, refreshments, toilets and parking.
- Do you need sound projection facilities?
- Which local organisations might like to be involved – the local school, Brownies, Scouts and other youth groups, clubs and societies, book groups, elderly persons groups, residential home residents?
- Professional and/or local performers?
- Promotion and publicity – consider posters, flyers, invitations to local groups, press releases to local newspapers, radio and television stations.
- Ticket sales – where will you sell tickets?
- Is it going to be a fund raising event?
- Health and Safety issues need to be considered.
- Do you need a licence?
- Do you need insurance?
- Invite the War Memorials Officer from Powys County Council to the event.

If you are planning a project or event around your research or your local memorial, please let the Powys County Council War Memorials Project Team know – we may be able to help. You can do this in a number of ways:

- You can e-mail the team: [warmemorials@powys.gov.uk](mailto:warmemorials@powys.gov.uk)
- You can contact the team by post to:

Powys War Memorials Project Officer,  
County Hall, Llandrindod Wells,  
Powys, LD1 5LG

- You can call the Powys War Memorials Project Officer on:

0845 6027030 or 01597 827460

When you have completed your project send any materials or outputs, or some photographs of your activities, to us and we will include them in the Powys War Memorials Project website. We will also include a selection of the projects in a book that we will produce at the end of the project.

# ⑦ Case studies

## **Brecon University of the Third Age Family History Group**

Steve Morris, Project Leader

### **What we produced**

A book about the people listed on the war memorial at St Mary's Church, Brecon. We are also developing a website so that the data can easily be updated as more information is gathered.

### **Why we started our research**

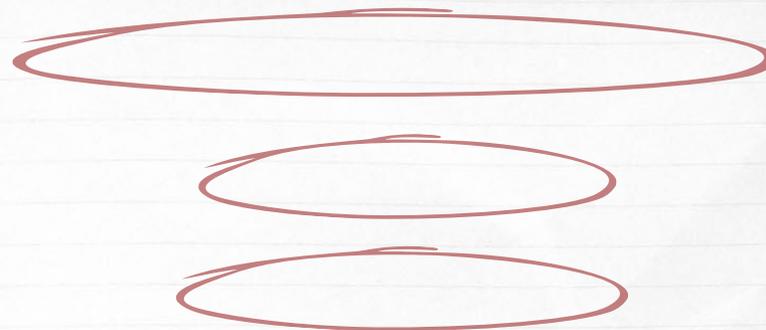
Brecon U3A had a talk about Remembrance Day and the First World War and that inspired us to research the people named on the war memorial at St Mary's Church. We began work in December 2011, aiming to produce a short biography for each person listed on the memorial, in time to mark the centenary of the First World War.

### **How we arranged our research**

There were 10 of us in the group. We started by writing down all the names on the memorial. We set up a computer file for each of the 92 people listed on the war memorial outside St Mary's Church. We divided the number of people on the memorial between us, and each person started to research a group of 10 people. We ran it as a project. We had a project plan and met every month to report on what each of us had done. It really helped to have regular reports as it inspired us to keep going and kept us on track. We knew, for instance, that by March 2013 we'd found 90 of the original listing.

### **The websites and other resources we used**

We used three main websites:



We started by looking up the names on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website. That gave us a good start for some of the names. We found the regiment and service number for some people, but we couldn't find any records for others listed on the memorial.

We used [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) and [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk), which are available free in Powys libraries. Individuals have to pay a subscription fee to access more detailed information on these websites. We used Ancestry to check the 1911 census records, which gave us lots of information about some of the men and their families. We also looked through copies of the Brecon and Radnor Express and the Brecon County Times, searching for articles about the war and the war memorial. There are copies of these newspapers on microfiches of the local newspaper in the library. Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery also has some copies of these newspapers and you can request photocopies of particular pages, which were easier to read than the microfiche.



The Brecon and Radnor Express has featured our project three times so far and each time it's brought us more information from readers. We sent a letter appealing for information, then the paper did an article about our research and that gave us good local links as well as information and memorabilia. The newspaper also ran an article about our project getting some funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It's all been really useful publicity.

We contacted Brecon Town Council and looked at the records for Brecon Cemetery. The Town Council gave us a map of the cemetery and a list of names of the people who were buried there. They've also given us a small grant, which has helped us fund the project.

*"It was quite a challenge as we hadn't done research work like this before, but it's been rewarding. The project has grown in scale and we're very pleased that we have managed to find out quite a lot about some of the people."*  
Steve Morris, project leader.

### **Our project got bigger**

Our project grew more ambitious as we did our research. We decided that we would try to record everyone from Brecon who died as a result of their involvement in the First World War. Each of our people had to have a real connection with Brecon – they could have been born here, or worked in the town or moved here with their family. We found more names on different memorials around town. There's a memorial plaque in the cathedral, and both the secondary schools have rolls

of honour listing the pupils who died in the war. And of course the hospital is a war memorial – it's called Breconshire War Memorial Hospital. It has a plaque that lists all the names of the fallen, village by village. We've also found some individuals from Brecon who died in the First World War who are not listed on any memorial in town.

### **The number of names doubled**

We've ended up with a list of over 160 men who were associated in some way with the three parishes of St Mary's, St John's and St David's churches in the town of Brecon. We're producing a book with our research and we're going to develop a website too, so that any new data can easily be added as more information becomes available.

### **What's happening now?**

We presented our research to the U3A group in November 2013, to great acclaim. We're still adding to the database now. We have won several awards for our research, including a community grant from Gwanwyn Arts, a festival celebrating creativity in older age co-ordinated by Age Cymru.

*"It's a bit like doing a jigsaw, but without the picture on the box! There are lots of little pieces of information available once you start searching, but you have to join them together to see the story."*

Steve Morris, project leader.

### Top tips

We used an Excel database to record the information. You can put in different fields such as forename, next of kin, address, dates of birth and death. Having all this data in a spreadsheet makes it much easier to search for different groups. For example, we wanted to find out where our people lived in Brecon and we wanted to search by date of death. Both were easy to do using the spreadsheet.

### Regiment and service number make research much easier

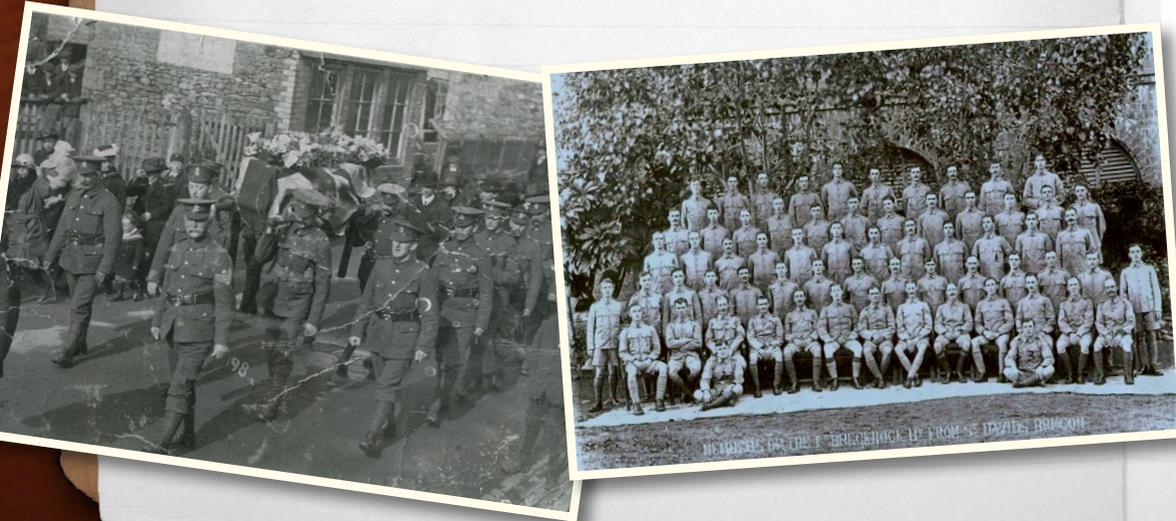
Having an individual's regiment and service number makes it much easier to research their story.

### Keep checking and double-checking

Cross-check your data as much as you can. People make mistakes – we've found names that are spelt wrongly and dates that are incorrect, as well as names that have been left off completely.

### Keep a note of your sources

You might want to re-check the data or research or add something else at a later date.



# Brecon Remembers ...



## World War One

The brief lives of over 180 Brecon men  
who gave their lives in The Great War

*To be published in autumn 2014*



## Newtown Local History Group

David Pugh, Chair

### What we produced

'Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Cenotaph', an A4 book giving a short biography of each of the 217 people listed on the memorial. The book is divided into two sections; the first records those who died in the First World War, the second records those who died in the Second World War.

### Why we started our research

As a group we have done a lot of research about Newtown and we're familiar with the names of most of the local families who have lived in Newtown and the surrounding villages over the last centuries. We started thinking about the anniversaries of the World Wars and realised that there wasn't a book that gathered together information about the people listed on the cenotaph. There were no records for the fallen of the First World War in the churches or chapels. That was our driving force, to create something to record the stories of the Newtown people who died

in the First and Second World Wars. We felt it was vital to remember them and the sacrifice they had made for us. We also knew that if we didn't do the research soon, many of the people who had close family members involved in World War One wouldn't be around to share those memories. We started in earnest in 2002 and published 100 copies of our book. We've also got the book available in an

electronic format so people can have those too.

### How we did our research

There were three of us who did most of the research, and others got involved as the project progressed. It took us about seven years from start to finish, although we had gaps in between due to health problems.

We set up a spreadsheet, recording people's names, rank, regimental number and so on.

We focused on the town cenotaph, but there are other memorials in Newtown such as those at the high school, churches and chapels, the local cricket club pavilion and the old police station.

We trawled through old copies of the two local newspapers that were published between 1914 and 1920, The Montgomeryshire Express and The County Times. We also looked at back numbers of The Newtownian, the local magazine. It took hundreds of hours but it revealed a wide range of information. We looked at letters that had been published in the papers. That gave us lots of data, especially from letters published up until 1916, after which letters were censored.

*"We realised that we were right on the cusp of a major change. When the cenotaph was erected everyone in Newtown knew most of the people who were listed. Now, in the early 21st century, there are very few people who remember the people who died in the First World War. We knew if we didn't do our research then, that there would soon be no-one who remembered those people and their stories."*

*"Researching the people on the cenotaph has been the most important thing that we as a group will ever do. It was a long job but we felt we had to do it and we wanted to do it as well as we could."*

David Pugh



### Top tips

The Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum in Caernarvon was very helpful. They have an exhibition and other information about the regiment. The headquarters of the 7th Royal Welch Fusiliers was in Newtown, so there was a lot happening here during the First World War. After the war the

government set up Instruction Factories, which were training centres for former servicemen to learn new skills such as basketry and woodwork, and there was a centre in Newtown.

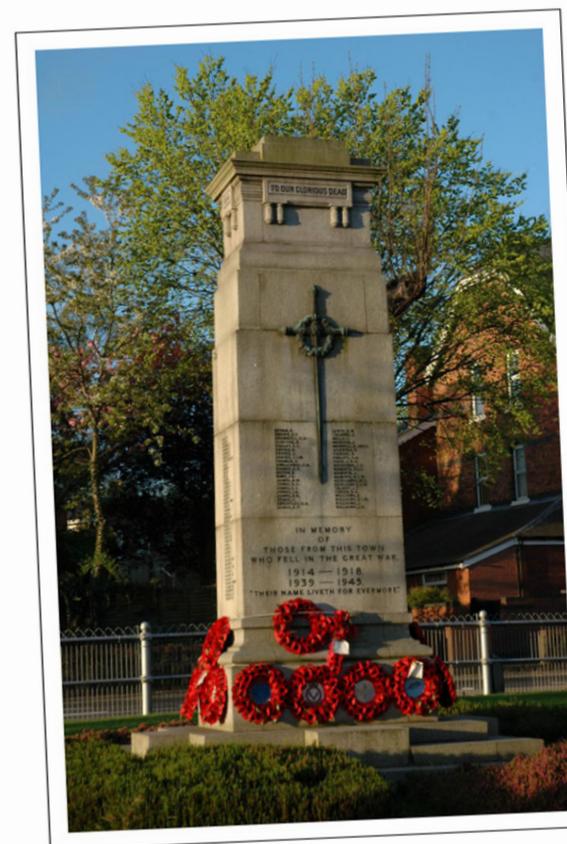
Check your sources and cross-reference them to make sure that the data you use is as reliable as possible. Nothing is completely accurate, even the Commonwealth War Graves Commission has mistakes in its data.

Be aware that some of the data needs to be dealt with very carefully. We found families who were shocked by our research. One family didn't know that they had had an uncle who died in the First World War. Another family discovered that their mother had had another child, which they didn't know about.

Persevere! We kept on looking for information about each person, even when there seemed to be nothing to find. We adopted a 'Micawber Attitude', sure that 'something would turn up' and it usually did!

## NEWTOWN AND LLANLLWCHAIARN CENOTAPH

*Biographies of those who fell in the  
1914-1918 and 1939-1945 Wars  
and who are commemorated on the Cenotaph*



<b>Name</b> BOUND, David Pryce	<b>Rank</b> Private (Gunner)	<b>Service No.</b> 836476
<b>Date of death</b> 7.11.1918	<b>Place of death</b> France	<b>Age</b> 26
<b>Regiment, etc.</b> Royal Field Artillery	<b>Grave ref. &amp; location or Service Memorial</b> II E3 Premont British Cemetery, Aisne, France	



David was born in Llanwnnog in 1892, the son of Thomas, a railway platelayer, and Ruth (née Brown) Bound. His siblings were Thomas William, John, Elizabeth Jane, Mary Ellen, Ethel, Ruth Gwendoline, Gladys, Dorothy and Edith Amelia. The family lived at Dingle Cottage, Middle Dolfor Road, Newtown.

David's first employment was as boots at the Elephant & Castle Hotel in Broad Street. He moved on to work for the Cambrian Railways, like his father. He then moved to Manchester and became a tram conductor. He married and had one child.

David enlisted in the RFA in 1914 and went to France the following year. He was wounded in the leg in July 1917. He spent six months in hospital in England and returned to France where he saw continuous service until his death. He died on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1918 at a casualty clearing station in France.

At the time of his death, his brother, Lance-Corporal John Bound, was a patient at the Montgomeryshire Infirmary, where he had been for some time, suffering from a severe compound fracture of the leg received in action in France in March 1918.

Reports of David appeared in the *Montgomeryshire Express* of 10.12.1918, 29.7.1919 and 11.11.1919 and the *County Times* of 14.12.1918.

Gunner David Pryce Bound is commemorated on the memorials in St David's Church and Zion Baptist Church.

Our birth made us mortal, our death will make us immortal.

Old Proverb

<b>Name</b> BRAY, George Llewellyn	<b>Rank</b> Acting Corporal	<b>Service No.</b> 31311
<b>Date of death</b> 23.4.1917	<b>Place of death</b> France	<b>Age</b> 21
<b>Regiment, etc.</b> 18 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Manchester Regiment	<b>Grave ref. &amp; location or Service Memorial</b> Arras, Pas de Calais, France	



George was born in Newtown in 1896, the son of Pryce, a gardener, and Susannah (nee Price) Bray. His siblings were John Edward, Charles Pryce, Gertrude Ann, Ethel, Henry, Frank and George.

In 1901, the Brays were living in Bear's Court, Broad Street. They later moved to Bank Cottage, Broad Street. At one time George was an apprentice with Charles T. Griffiths & Son in Broad Street, Newtown, tailor and draper.

At the time of his joining up, he was working in Prestatyn where, in June 1915, he joined the Manchester Regiment. He was sent to France at Christmas 1915.

George was killed in the Battle of Arras on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1917.

References are made to George in the *County Times* of 2.9.1916 and 2.6.1917 and the *Montgomeryshire Express* of 5.6.1917 and 23.4.1918.

Corporal George Llewelyn Bray is commemorated on the memorials in St. David's Church and in the United Reformed Church.

Bray. - In loving memory of my dear son, George Llewellyn Bray, 18<sup>th</sup> Batt, Manchester Regiment, killed in action somewhere in France on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1917, in his 20<sup>th</sup> year.

A better lad no parent had;  
He volunteered without being called  
To end his life in a foreign land.

From Father, Brothers and Sisters, Broad-street, Newtown.  
*Montgomeryshire Express, 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1918*

## Ystradgynlais Library

Caryl Jones, Librarian

### What we produced

We developed an exhibition to commemorate the start of the First World War. The library has a good range of resources including access to the Ancestry and Find my Past websites and a digitised version of the local newspaper Llais Llafur, Labour Voice. We also knew about Val Trevallion's research into Ystradgynlais war memorial.

### How the research was done

We listed all the names on the Ystradgynlais war memorial and created a file for each person. We looked up each surname in the database for the local newspaper and searched the index of births, deaths and marriages. We put each name into the Search facility. It tells us what page of the newspaper to look at. We also used the Ancestry and Find my Past websites to search for information and census data.

### What was produced

We produced a temporary exhibition for display in the library during part of the centenary of the First World War. We developed a standard card for each person listed on the town memorial and these are the core of the exhibition, along with photocopies of articles from the newspapers, maps and photographs.

### Top tips

Use the facilities in Powys libraries to research people on a war memorial. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Ancestry and Find my Past websites are really easy to use.

We have digitised copies of the local newspaper Llais Llafur, Labour Voice, in Ystradgynlais Library, with an index of births, deaths and marriages, which makes it easier to search through the back copies.

*"We wanted to do an exhibition to commemorate the First World War for the library. I knew about Val Trevallion's amazing work and asked her if we could use her information. She agreed and we've developed the exhibition from that and the materials we have in the library."*

Caryl Jones, Librarian and  
Secretary of the Ystradgynlais  
Family History Society.



**THOMAS HOWELL  
DAVIES**

**CAPTAIN**

South Wales Borderers;  
11th Bn.

Died on the 6th October  
1919

Memorial

St Cynog's Church  
Ystradgynlais



Thomas enlisted as a volunteer in August 1914 into the London Rifles (Royal Fusiliers) and was drafted out to France in December of that year. He remained in France till Nov. 1917, when he was sent home for six months training for his commission. On being re-drafted to France he soon worked his way up to the rank of Captain and Acting Major with the Middlesex regiment. He was gassed in France and this undoubtedly caused his death. He was 33 years of age and left a widow and one child.

Further information can be obtained  
from

Labour Voice newspaper  
11th October 1919



represented by a detachment of ex-soldiers. The following are the names of the fallen, as inscribed on the tablet —

J. Allen ✓	H. S. King ✓
D. Ashton ✓	W. Lewis ✓
R. Butler ✓	J. Lloyd ✓
B. Carr ✓	H. Maher ✓
J. Carter ✓	A. Mainwaring ✓
J. T. Chadford ✓	A. B. Malloy ✓
W. Clifford ✓	T. Malloy ✓
J. H. Cole ✓	Marsden ✓
L. Colwill ✓	J. Marshall ✓
H. Corfield ✓	A. Martin ✓
Colles ✓	H. Martin ✓
D. J. Davies ✓	H. Morgan ✓
H. G. Davies ✓	E. Morgan ✓
E. Davies ✓	T. Morgan ✓
R. G. Dawes ✓	T. J. Morgan ✓
C. De la Haye ✓	G. Mountjoy ✓
P. Draper ✓	A. Palmer ✓
R. Edwards ✓	Phibben ✓
D. Evans ✓	M. Powell ✓
J. W. Evans ✓	W. J. Powell ✓
S. Fletcher ✓	E. M. Rees ✓
V. Francis ✓	A. Richards ✓
G. H. Francis ✓	I. Roberts ✓
H. B. Furness ✓	F. Russell ✓
D. Griffiths ✓	D. J. Samuel ✓
D. Griffiths (S.R.) ✓	D. Taylor ✓
J. W. Givens ✓	B. B. Taylor ✓
J. Griffiths ✓	P. Thomas ✓
H. Hinch ✓	T. Thomas ✓
Lewis Soli ✓	O. Thomas ✓
W. Hoskins ✓	O. Watkins ✓
D. Howells ✓	C. S. White ✓
E. Howells ✓	J. Whiting ✓
D. Hughes ✓	W. Williams ✓
W. Hull ✓	A. Williams ✓
W. Hunt ✓	O. Williams ✓
E. M. James ✓	O. J. Williams ✓
J. James ✓	J. Williams ✓
A. Jones ✓	W. T. Williams ✓
J. Johnson ✓	J. Woodhouse ✓
T. Jones ✓	W. J. Woodhouse ✓
W. Jones ✓	W. Woodward ✓

Special hymns were sung, and the Bishop of Swansea, in the course of an impressive address said that they should not look upon the tablet as a decorative ornament, but as a symbol of remembrance of those who had died and died for the country and their loved ones.

*Handwritten notes:*  
 \* BARRIS ✓  
 L. DAVIES ✓  
 HARRIS ✓  
 W. DAVIES ✓  
 DA DAVIES ✓  
 R. G. DAVIES ✓  
 TH. DAVIES ✓  
 D. DAVIES ✓  
 J. JONES ✓  
 GRACE ✓

## **The YEARGroup**

Val Trevallion, co-ordinator and author

### **What we produced**

We produced a website, listing the dead of the Ystradgynlais War Memorial and the churchyards and cemeteries where they are buried or remembered.



### **Why we started our research**

It all started when I stumbled across an elaborate grave hidden by brambles and nettles in one of my local graveyards. I was saddened that this person, who had obviously been important in his lifetime, had been abandoned and forgotten. I started thinking about the graves and tombstones in the local churchyards and began to look at burial records and the various village and town memorials and plaques listing the fallen of the First World War. I found a series of Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstones and other family graves which had additional remembrance carvings or memorials on them, such as 'Also in memory of our son David who died at Ypres in 1914'. I decided to record all the people in the graveyards in the valley of the River Tawe. I started with the war memorials in Ystalyfera and Ystradgynlais.

I contacted the local branch of the British Legion for help and 12 of us formed a research group. We called ourselves the Ystralyfera Electronic Archive Research Group or the YEARGroup for short. All the other members were war veterans. I was their recorder, as they

didn't use computers. We started in 2000 and gradually built up a body of information about the graves in the valley. The other members were all elderly, in their 70s and 80s. Sadly, they've all died now. But I keep on recording the graves, partly out of respect and affection for them and partly because it's become an important personal quest.

### **How I did my research**

I started by listing the names on the war memorial. I went to the local cemeteries to see if I could find the graves of the people listed on the war memorial. I searched the village and town for information as well, looking at school records, visiting the library, asking groups like the Scouts if they had any information about the fallen. I visited workplaces to see if they had rolls of honour of their employees who had gone to war. I took photographs of all the graves and the various memorials.

I went onto the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website. It's a free website, and it has lots of information on it. I worked through each of the names on the war memorial, trying to find out as much as I could about each person. I wrote it all down, building up a file on each person. I learnt that what I really needed was the name, rank, and regimental number for each person. The regimental number is really helpful as it means you can find out more from army records.

I also looked through the census records, using the Find my Past website. I also looked through the local newspapers for obituaries, deaths and relevant reports and articles.

The YEARGroup and I have gathered a great deal of information. I've got over 6000 photographs of graves and short biographies for many of the people who are buried in the graveyards in the Tawe Valley. I'm interested in the social history of all these people where they lived, who their families



were, where they worked and their role in the World War. I'm still researching, adding more data each month.

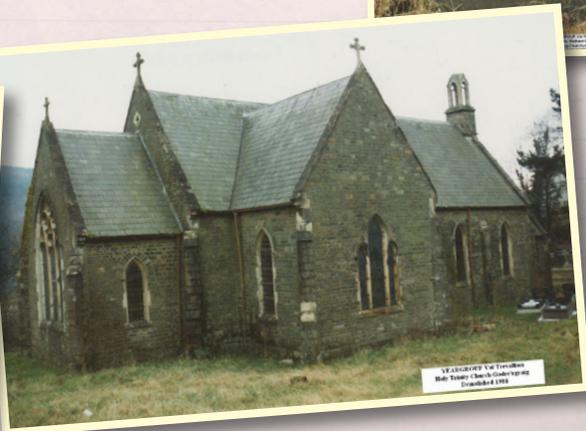
### How it all developed

I have a website with information about the people who are buried in the graveyards and commemorated on memorials in churches and chapels in the Tawe Valley. The one for Ystradgynlais is:



It lists the names on the Ystradgynlais war memorial. Clicking on a name takes you to a page for that individual, with information about him. This may include a photograph of his grave or remembrance grave and a photograph that was in the newspaper at the time of his death. The list also includes the names of the fallen that are not listed on the memorial. It's a community resource, freely available to anyone.

The website was created by volunteers from Grey Wolf Web Design.



## L.L.A.N.I. Ltd

Nia Griffiths and Nick Venti of L.L.A.N.I. Ltd, the community regeneration organisation for Llanidloes and the surrounding area.

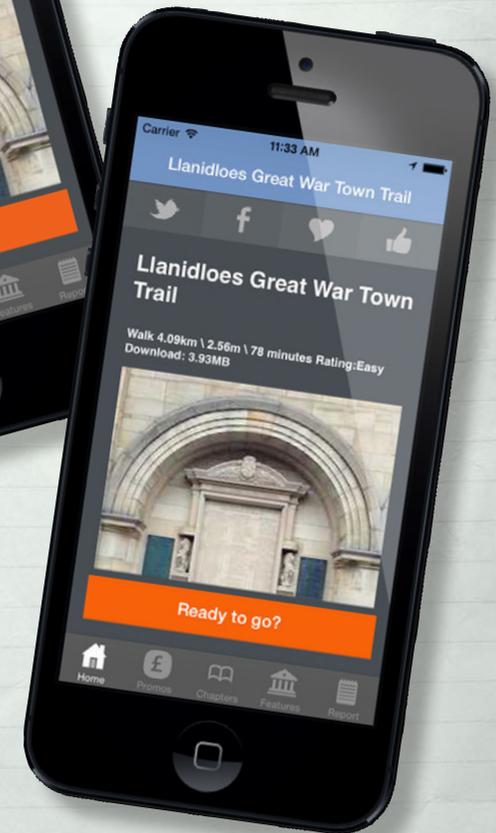
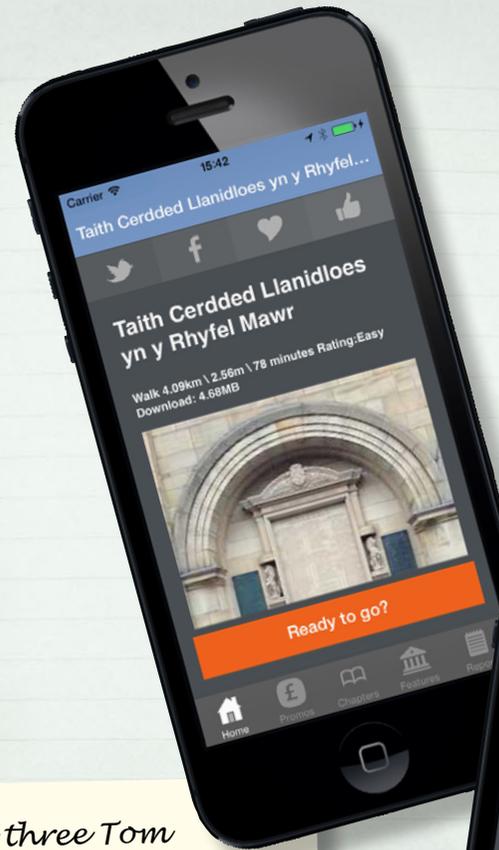
### What we produced

We developed two downloadable Great War Trails around Llanidloes and are writing a book about the 116 men listed on the town memorial. The trails take users around the town and into the surrounding countryside, to discover more about the lives and landscapes of the people on the memorial. The trails are part of the series of routes known as the Mid Wales Trails, which promote activities for tourists and visitors to Mid Wales, and they are all available as Apple iOS and Android apps.

The trails are the result of our research into the war memorial on the Town Hall. Nia's great-grandfather is one of the men commemorated on the memorial. We started off with a list of names, wondering who these people were and what information existed. We searched online for information and gradually built up a file for each of the names. There are 116 men on the memorial and we've found information for about 110 of them.

*"Researching the information has become addictive. I've had 22 sessions going through the County Times searching for information about the men on the memorial - that's a lot of hours - but it's been worth it."*

*"We have three Tom Joneses on our war memorial and we had six candidates for them. Sometimes you can only get so far with the research and have to accept that maybe you won't find out any more. Walter Evans is one of our mystery men, we've found nothing about him yet..."*





**LLANIDLOES YN Y RHYFEL MAWR  
LLANIDLOES IN THE GREAT WAR**

*Byddwn yn eu cofio nhw*

*We will remember them*

A Talk by

**Nia Griffiths & Nick Venti**

**Wednesday April 9th 2014**

**Church Hall, Llanidloes**

**7.30pm**

Mynediad am ddim / Free Entry

Cyfraniadau / Donations to:

Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru 2015

Meifod

Prosiect hanes cymdeithasol gan LLANI Ltd

A social history project by LLANI Ltd



Cronfa Awaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Ddiablu  
Cwledig Ewrop yn Buddsoddi  
mewn Ardaloedd Cwledig  
The European Agricultural Fund for  
Rural Development: Europe Investing in  
Rural Areas



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government