

Llandaff Rowing Club

Rowing – A Local History

By Terry Chard Apr 2024

It has not been possible to find, or, recreate lost archives and records belonging to Llandaff Rowing Club, but, in this case it is felt that it would be a worthwhile exercise to create a background to the sport through the process of discovery. With this in mind various newspaper archives, with accreditation to **the National Library of Wales**, have been researched and these have been placed in chronological order so that a sensible interpretation of the development of rowing, in the early days, can be created. Also, it was not possible to cover the period from 1910 onwards and of course, there would have been a dramatic and significant change of events from 1914 through to 1919 anyhow.

It is clear that there were two early rowing clubs based at the Llandaff Weir site and these were the Taff Amateur Rowing Club and the Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club with one seemingly being treated more favourably by the local press than the other, at various times.

The following script, hopefully, adds to the history of rowing at Llandaff and will give some background to the existing Llandaff Rowing Club, this apart, we have to wonder in awe at some of the events that took place and whether any of the names mentioned still have descendants in the area. It is these names that could well hold the key to any missing history, archives and records that would further help the Llandaff Club.

The Available Evidence

The weir is located at a place that was once a place of rapids, its lower reaches being a crossing point, or ford, approached from an ancient trackway. The weir was built to provide a mill race for the Llandaff mill which was demolished in the 1930's during the construction of Western Avenue.

On an early OS map of 1875 there was no evidence of a building, or identity of a rowing club on the site but an 'island' and mill race just above the weir is plain to see.



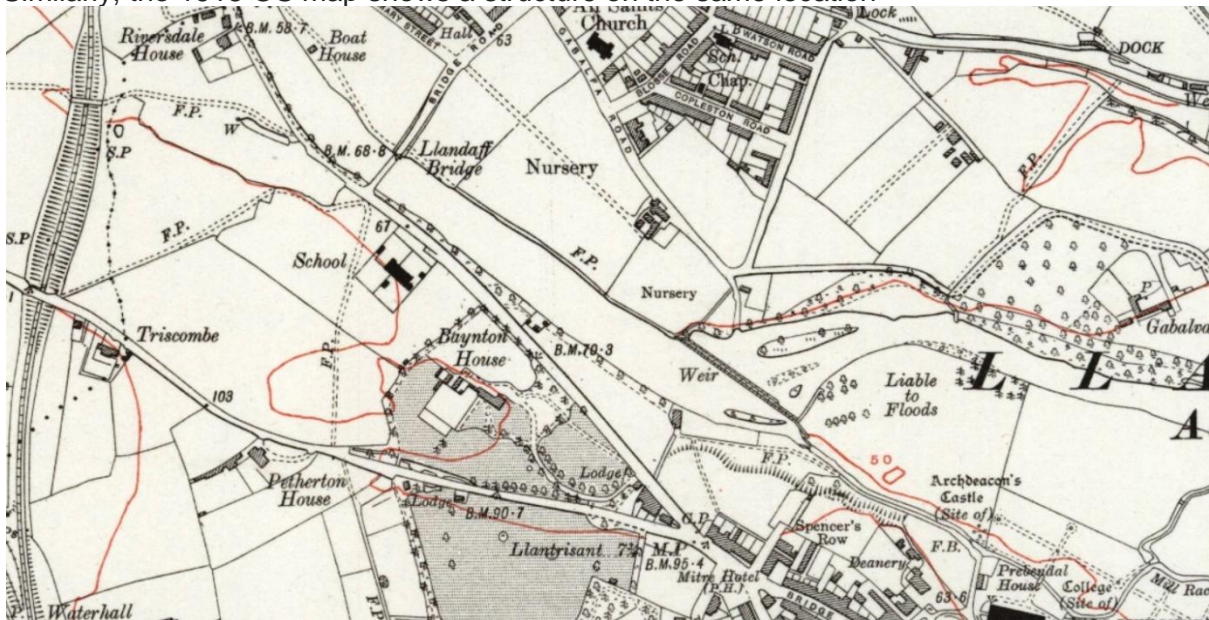
Accreditation – National Library of Scotland

The 1898 OS Map (next page), however, shows a 'structure' on the site at a time when rowing was actively going on there.



Accreditation – National Library of Scotland

Similarly, the 1915 OS map shows a structure on the same location



Accreditation – National Library of Scotland

These maps support the evidence for what follows:

The earliest evidence for the sport of rowing in the Cardiff area was found in 1856 when the Cardiff Annual Sailing Regatta was advertised in *The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* on 28th June. (This is not to say that this dated the first ever competition for rowing, only that it was the earliest evidence found to date). The event took place on Monday 14th July and was “open to Boats belonging to the Port of Cardiff only”. At this event ‘Rowing Matches’ were advertised – “Ladies Cup – To be rowed for by Gentlemen Amateurs in Four-oared Gigs, not to exceed 24 feet”.

On 7th August 1858 *The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* published an article as follows: “Rowing Match at Cardiff – The first of the Cardiff Amateur Rowing Matches came off on Friday evening last, the course being from the Dolphins at the Pier-head to Penarth beach”. This tells us that although the port authority organised and arranged the Cardiff Regatta, which included rowing, the Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club was in existence at this time and was arranging its own rowing competitions.

In 1859 The Committee of the Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club announced that they have engaged the steamer 'Iron Duke', for an excursion to Barnstaple Regatta (The Cardiff Times 23rd July 1859) and in 1860 Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club advertised a Regatta in The Cardiff Times on the 5th May as follows "Regatta in the East Bute Dock on Wednesday May 9th 1860 to commence at half past four o'clock precisely". The Cardiff Regatta (presumably still under the auspices of the port authority) also went ahead in August of that year.

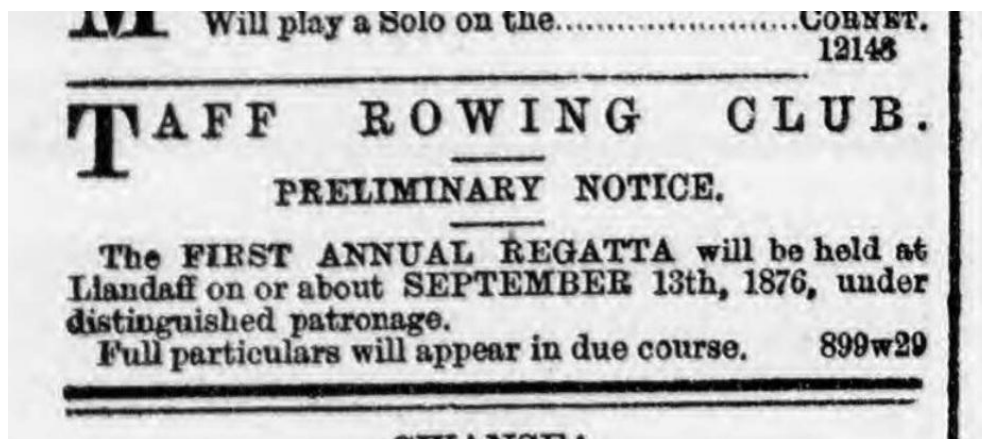
In 1861 (23rd March) the club had purchased a 'splendid eight-oared gig, which will enable two four-oared crews to practice together' to add to 'their matchless fleet of boats'.

On 19th June 1863 (The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian) printed a snippet of information that read "Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club – An opening Regatta in connection with this club will take place on Wednesday 1st July on the river Taff". It didn't give the exact location but perhaps a hint that the event was not in the dock or bay area. In 1863, September, the Cardiff Regatta was postponed because it was felt impossible to 'go through the whole of the programme in one day', clearly a sign of the popularity and the size of the undertaking at that time. However 9th October "... was fixed for the rowing matches, the place selected being the mouth of the river Taff, a splendid piece of water for such a purpose". Unfortunately the event was spoiled by the weather.

The club continued to thrive through 1864, organising an event in the West Dock 'as it is completely empty of ships'. In 1865 (May) they held a General Meeting at The Windsor Hotel, Bute Docks and did so again in November of 1866.

Between 1866 and 1876, for some reason (yet to be pursued) no information / records could be found.

Of most interest though is this piece published in the Western Mail on 25th September 1876

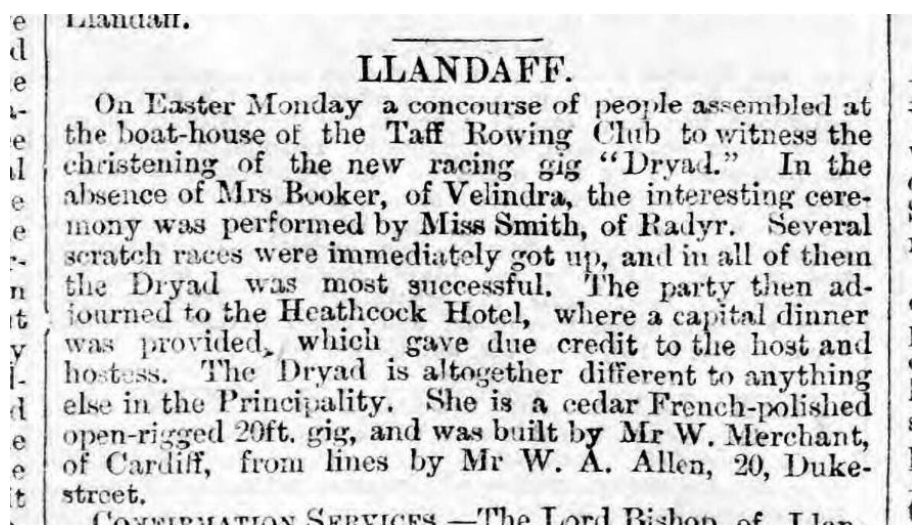


Followed up by a report in The Cardiff Times on 16th September 1876 titles 'The Taff Rowing Club Regatta' which went on to state "The first of a series of annual regattas proposed to be held on the river Taff took place on Wednesday above the Llandaff weir, where there is a fine expanse of water admirably adapted for rowing"....."A grandstand was erected on the rising ground, commanding a view of the river from the weir to the bridge". This alone gives us some idea as to the scale of the event. The report went on to list the various races and the winners of each competition. Worthy of note within this report was the following: "Juvenile 30ft Open Gig Race. For Amateurs under 16 years of age. Open to Llandaff boats only....." Within this report, the island, mentioned previously, was the scene of a mishap when a man upset his boat near to it while the island had a number of ladies and gentlemen standing on it, viewing the events.

This gives us the first notion of an event at Llandaff 'The First Annual Regatta' and also the existence of another rowing club, that of the Taff Rowing Club and possibly, although it is difficult to interpret, the suggestion that the competition included boats from 'Llandaff', this most likely

being descriptive of the boats that are housed on the site rather than belonging to a club of that name.

From 1876 the involvement of the Taff Rowing Club becomes more prominent and on 7th April 1877 The Cardiff Times printed the following:

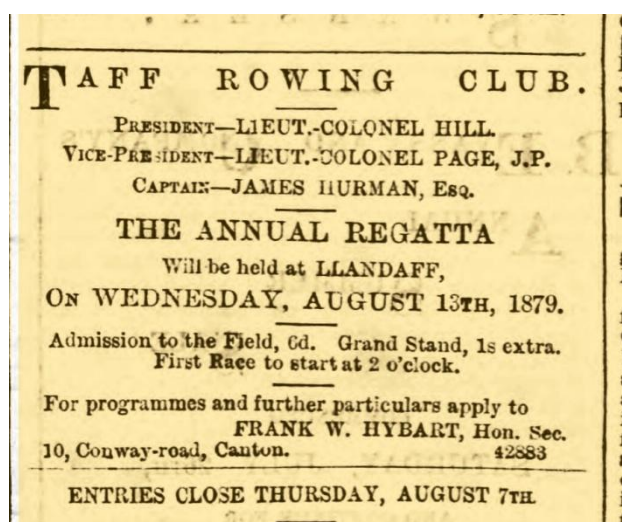


This tells us something of the patrons of the club, the fact that this club was sufficiently successful to own a racing gig such as this (the Dryad) and that The Heathcock was a favoured venue.

On 12th July 1877 the 'Llandaff Regatta' was mentioned in the Western Mail "The second annual regatta of the Taff Rowing Club came off on Wednesday at Llandaff", once again confirming that 1876 was the first regatta.

Meanwhile, there is still evidence the Cardiff Regatta continued to run with a report in The South Wales Daily News on 24th September 1878 reporting "The Cardiff Pilots Regatta, now an annual affair, took place on Monday". Within this report was a race "For shipwrights or shipwrights' apprentices, in four-oared gigs, not exceeding 30 feet long:....There were four entries, the winners being 1st, Novice (Llandaff Club) 2nd etc.....and Model (Llandaff Club) was the fourth boat".

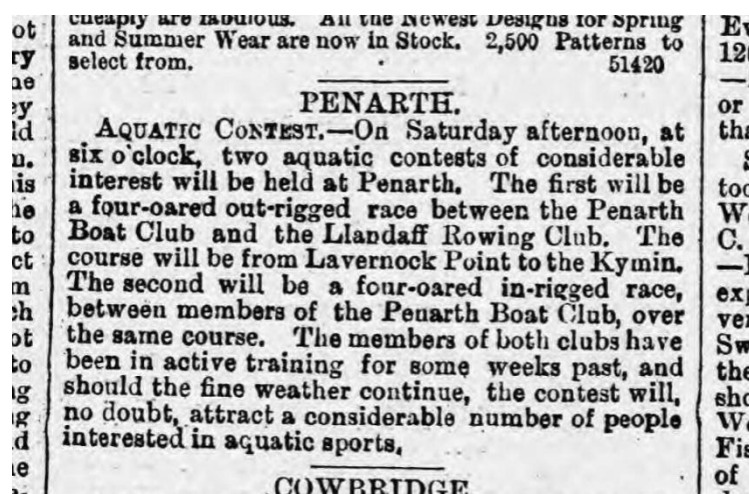
By 1879 things were 'on the up' and The Cardiff Times printed a short passage that proclaimed the success of the 'Taff Rowing Club' with.... "Under the presidency of Col. Hill, the club continues to prosper. Some 18 or 20 boats were on the river and the few scratch races got up between the members of the club seemed to attract great interest among the numerous spectators on shore. The chief event of the day was the trial of a new four-oared outrigger, said to be the first of its class rowed in the Principality. The trial gave great satisfaction. The weather was fine". It is clear that these clubs were very popular having patrons listed among the 'great and the good' of their day. T W Booker of Velindra was noted earlier and the next cutting also gives us the name of Lieutenant Colonel Hill listed as President in The South Wales Daily News on 11th August 1879. Lieut Col Hill lived at Rookwood just a stone's throw from the Llandaff based club, a man of great status and wealth.



The Taff Rowing Club Regatta of 1879 was mainly dominated by the Bath Club by an interesting observation here is that the Cardiff Rowing Club also competed in this regatta along with the Chepstow club.

The Taff Rowing Club Regatta of 1880, distinguishes for the first time, races for amateurs and professionals, each having their own races to compete in. On the face of it, this seems to be a measure of the status, not just of the level of competition, but also that of the club itself.

It was 1881 that emphasis on the Llandaff location was used to suggest a club title. On 13th May 1881 The South Wales Daily News printed an article on a race between the Penarth Boat Club and 'the Llandaff Rowing Club' off the coast.



This however, could well be a reporting discrepancy, the writer not having sufficient knowledge of the sport. But again, there was more of a suggestion of the Llandaff identity in the report that followed, printed in the Cardiff Times on 21st May 1881, a race which Llandaff won:

WESTERN MAIL & SOUTH WALES DAILY NEWS

ROWING MATCH AT PENARTH.

On Saturday afternoon, a match which excited some interest took place at Penarth, between two picked fours of the Penarth Boat Club and Llandaff Rowing Club, resulting in the utter defeat of the former crew. Shortly after six o'clock both crews launched their boats (outriggers) from a temporary landing stage off the Lifeboat house on the beach, paddled down to Lavernock Point, whither the s.s. Lady Margaret with the starter, referee, and a select party on board, had preceded them. The course was from off Lavernock Point to an imaginary station off Kymis, a distance of two miles. Penarth had choice of stations, and took the outside position, Llandaff being inshore. A capital start was effected about 6.35, Penarth going away with the lead at a great pace, which they only maintained for about 100 yards, when the Llandaff crew, pulling a steady swinging stroke, overhauled them, and passing, continued the lead, and came in easy winners by several lengths.

The winning crew pulled from start to finish a steady stroke, that gave evidence of careful training and practice; the steering of the boat was also admirable. The losers, who pulled most pluckily, were evidently beaten from the first. Instead of the long and steady stroke of their opponents, the spurt at starting evidently so exhausted the men that, although they made several gallant efforts, they were totally unable to lessen the distance, and their steering also showed want of skill. The Lady Margaret, supposed to have accompanied the race, was so far astern that a good view could not be obtained from her. The Llandaff crew, in doubt about the distance, rowed nearly half-a-mile further than necessary; they were, however, as apparently as fresh as when they started. The result of this race shows the advantage of steady, careful training, the smooth water of the river giving the Llandaff Club, perhaps, more frequent opportunities for practice. The following were the crews:—Llandaff: D. A. Thomas, stroke; A. Smith, No. 3; J. Smith, No. 2; — Edwards, bow; L. Brown, cox. — Penarth: J. Roskel, stroke; A. D. Ashford, No. 3; George Thomas, No. 2; J. Gaskell, bow; E. Ashford, cox. Duration of race, 14 minutes. The second match was between two fours of the Penarth Boat Club, in rigged boats. The course was from the Lifeboat House to the Cein-y-Wrach and home. The following are the crews, the distances between the first and second being about eighteen lengths. Scott, stroke; Balti, No. 3; Corke, No. 2; Deacon, No. 1; Arthur, cox. Walker, stroke; Girling, No. 3; Evans, No. 2; Warren, No. 1; Deacon, cox.

On the 18th August of that year the Western Mail printed a story that was headlined "Llandaff Rowing Club Regatta", but here, the story that followed had conflicting references such as "The sixth annual regatta of the Taff Rowing Club took place on Wednesday at Llandaff Weir".... followed by a results summary that stated "City Challenge Cup, open to recognised amateur clubs, for four-oared out-rigged boats, Llandaff held it last year".

A similar coastal race was also held in 1882 and covered by the South Wales Daily News on 8th August, a bank holiday, "a most successful regatta was held at Penarth on Monday". The report going on to say "The Glamorgan Cup four-oared race in outriggers, with coxswains, open to any amateur club in Glamorganshire, distance one mile. Two crews competed for the prize, value £12, viz., Llandaff Rowing Club and Penarth Boat Club", Penarth winning on this occasion. A

similar report was also shown in the Weekly Mail on 12th August 1882, again mentioning the 'Llandaff crew'.

By this period it's safe to assume that the weir site is a well established venue for the sport and this bulletin was printed in the Western Mail on 20th March 1884:

PROPOSED ROWING CLUB FOR CARDIFF.

A well-attended meeting was held at the Angel Hotel, Cardiff, on Wednesday evening, under the presidency of Mr. J. Hurman, for the purpose of considering the advisability of establishing a first-class amateur rowing club for Cardiff. The meeting unanimously approved of the suggestion, and a further meeting was arranged for Thursday, the 27th inst., to enter more fully into the matter and make practical arrangements for commencing operations at once. In the meantime matters will be forwarded by a Provisional Committee, consisting of Messrs. S. Butler, W. Parry Thomas, F. Hybart, J. L. Brown, and H. M. Thompson, hon. sec. pro tem., who have already obtained estimates of the probable sum which will be required to establish the club and considerable support from several prominent gentlemen of the town. Lord Tredegar and others have consented to become patrons of the club, and a number of honorary members have also been enrolled. The Provisional Committee find that a suitable piece of water for practice is available on the Taff at Llandaff, and that a site for a boat-house can be had, most beautifully situated near the weir, close to the city of Llandaff, and only half-an-hour's walk from Cardiff. A boat-house, with bath and dressing-rooms, the design for which was submitted to the meeting, can be erected for about, £150, and a modest stock of boats to begin with, consisting of two new inrigged fours, two new outriggered fours, with sliding seats, and two new open sculling, boats, can be built for about £135. The proposal to establish the club was received with enthusiasm, and there seems little doubt that it will be thoroughly carried out.

Arguably, this event alone would seem to be the catalyst for consolidating the sport in the region and at Llandaff in particular. Unfortunately no follow up report on this could be found.

The sport continued to flourish with the Cardiff Rowing Club, this report dated 15th June 1885 in the Weekly Mail covered an event that opened the season for them:

CARDIFF ROWING CLUB.

This flourishing club, which now has a large number of members and a good stock of boats, which are conveniently housed in the new boat house, situate near the weir, at Llandaff, commenced the season by a four-oared race on Saturday, for which four crews had been in constant training for three weeks. The race was rowed in outriggered boats, fitted with sliding seats. The course was about one mile, from the Scour, near Rhadyr, down to Llandaff Weir, and notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather and the counter attraction of a first-class cricket match, a large number of spectators assembled to view the sport. The prizes were five silver cups, and were presented to the winning crew by Professor Wardell in a few well-chosen remarks. The following is the result of the racing:—

First heat.—1st: F. Dunkerley, T. S. Tregellis, C. M. Morgan, W. J. Stibbs (stroke), and Corbet Browne (cox.). 2nd: T. W. Hutchins, R. M. Meerate, A. F. Hill, C. A. Heitzman (stroke), and L. C. Browne (cox.). Stibbs' crew came away at the start, and, rowing in good form, had little difficulty in winning the heat by two lengths.

Second heat.—1st, E. Watts, H. J. Simpson, E. H. Clothier, R. Trotter (stroke), and Toney Browne (cox.); 2nd, W. R. Hawkins, F. T. Morris, A. Hybart, C. M. Thompson (stroke), and L. O. Browne (cox.). This was a stubbornly contested race down to the bridge, when Mr. Trotter's crew came away with a good lead, Mr. Thompson's crew, being evidently short of condition and practice, giving up before the goal.

Final heat—1st, Mr. Stibbs' crew; 2nd, Mr. Trotter's crew. Great interest was taken in the deciding heat, both crews being much fancied by their respective friends. Mr. Trotter had the Llandaff side, and Mr. Stibbs the Llandaff Yard side. As Professor Wardell gave the word "Go" both crews dashed away at a great pace, rowing clean and well, and steering a faultless course. The superior power of Mr. Stibbs' crew gradually carried them to the fore inch by inch, and enabled them, in spite of No. 3 breaking his stretcher near the bridge, to win a splendidly contested race by a length and a half. The winning crew was loudly cheered on landing.

REGATTA AT LLANDAFF.

A BOY DROWNED.

On Wednesday the Taff Rowing Club, which had been suspended for the past two seasons, resumed its operations by holding a regatta at Llandaff. The prizes were of the value of about £30, and the competitors were about the same in number as at the last regatta. The course was an excellent sheet of water, over three-quarters of a mile in length, extending from the Skom to Llandaff Weir. The boats had to pass under the rather narrow arches of Llandaff Bridge, but this did not prove any difficulty. The weir having just been raised to afford a better supply of water to the flour mills, oarsmen had the advantage of water 15 inches deeper than usual. There were three competitions, the first being for the City Challenge Cup, of the value of 20 guineas, by four-oared outriggers. The cup has to be won at two successive regattas before it becomes the absolute property of the winners, and it is at present held by the Bristol Ariel Rowing Club. The next competition, for the St. Fagan's Plate, was open only to members of the Taff Rowing Club; but the third, a sculling race, was open to members of all recognised amateur clubs. The arrangements were admirably carried out by the officials of the club, Mr J. Hurman (captain) being judge; Mr W. Matthews, starter and umpire; and Mr T. Thomas, hon. sec. During the afternoon the Cardiff Town Band played selections of music. The racing resulted as follows:—

CITY CHALLENGE CUP.—1st heat: Taff Rowing Club rowed over, there being no other competitors. 2nd heat: Penarth Boat Club beat the Bristol Ariel Club. Final: Taff Rowing Club beat the Penarth Rowing Club.

SCULLING RACE.—1st heat: J. Gethin (Penarth Boat Club) rowed over. 2nd heat: J. Lovering (Taff Rowing Club) beat H. Roderick (Taff Rowing Club). In this heat Roderick fell out of his boat about 200 yards from home, and Lovering won easily. Final heat: J. Lovering beat J. Gethin.

ST. FAGAN'S PLATE.—1st heat: The crew of the Taff Rowing Club, coxswained by C. White, beat the crew of the same club coxswained by F. Matthews. 2nd heat: A third crew (of the Taff Rowing Club) rowed over. Final: C. White's crew won.

The regatta, though on the whole of a gratifying character, was marred by a sad occurrence. A group of children were standing near the water's edge, when one of them, a boy about 10 years old, living in Llandaff, fell into a deep pool close to the weir, and disappeared in the water. Mr Howells and three of the members of the Taff Rowing Club plunged in to the rescue, but, owing to the force of the current, they were unable to reach him. Grappling hooks were then used, and the body was recovered about an hour afterwards.

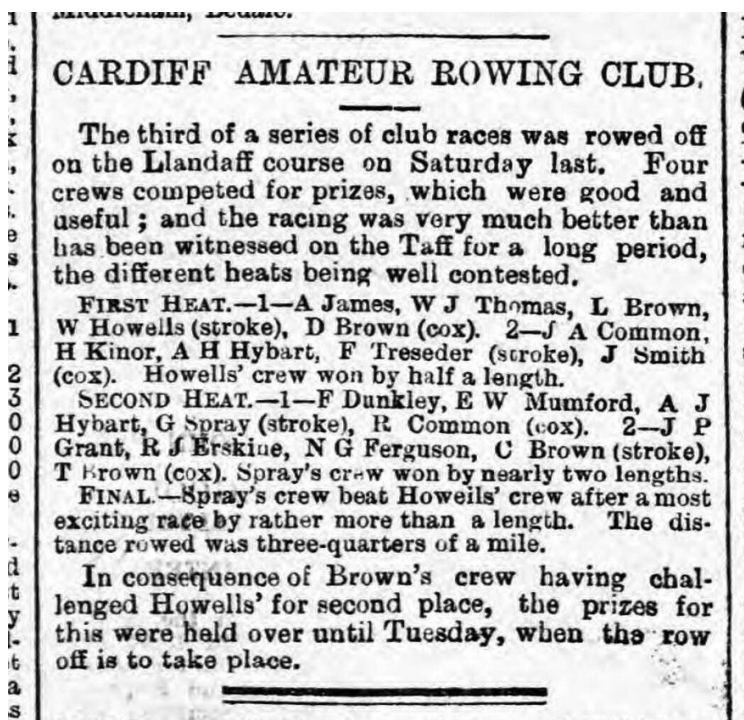
REGATTA AND SPORTS AT

Although knowing that in 1885 the Cardiff Rowing Club were based at Llandaff an article in the South Wales Daily News on 2nd Sept 1886 gives us a bit more insight into club activities for the Taff Rowing Club, albeit one that has a very unfortunate story attached to it:

Quite why this club had suspended its activities is not known, but it had been restarted in May of that year, announcing as much in The South Wales Echo on 10th May.



It's clear that both clubs reside at the Llandaff site at the same time. In 1888 The Cardiff Rowing Club had an article published in The South Wales Daily News on 7th August:



In 1889 the Taff Rowing Club called for changes in the governance of the sport in the wider regions when an article was published in the South Wales Echo on the 9th March which perhaps provides some idea as to the difficulties of running a successful club and competing at a high level. There are clearly moves being made to review the way in which the sport is being run and to agree a way forward that would benefit all the clubs involved.

The Action of the Taff Rowing Club.

The hon. secretary of the Taff Rowing Club, Llandaff, has just issued the following circular to clubs located in the West of England, the Midlands, and South Wales:—

Dear Sir,— With reference to my circular of January 1st it has been suggested by various clubs that a meeting of delegates (representing clubs in the West of England) should be called "to thoroughly discuss the advisability of forming a new association or otherwise." I am directed by the committee of the T.R.C. to advise you that a meeting will be held on Wednesday, the 10th April, at Bell's Hotel, Worcester, at 3 p.m. Trusting your club will be represented, and that a favourable settlement may be arrived at, I beg to remain, yours faithfully,

S. HALL,

P.S.—I trust it will be borne in mind that this scheme is not being promoted for the sole benefit of the T.R.C., but for the benefit of mechanics and rowing clubs in general. I may add that only four of the present members of the T.R.C. could be objected to under the A.E.A. definition of an amateur, and that the said four members are not very anxious to compete away from home.—S.H.

On 24th Sept 1889, The South Wales Echo announced the Taff Rowing Club's annual dinner to be held in the Maltsters Arms, Llandaff.

One item of note here is the name of Charles J. Asplin of the Taff Rowing Club who saved a Llandaff Yard boy aged 6, from drowning having 'jumped into the water fully dressed' (the South Wales Echo 21st June 1890). His gallantry was recognised by The Royal Humane Society, being awarded the honorary testimonial on vellum at the Llandaff Yard schoolroom in the presence of the members of the Taff Rowing Club (9th August 1890 the South Wales Daily News).

The Taff Amateur Rowing Club continued to hold their regatta at Llandaff, doing so in September 1890 (8th Sept the South Wales Echo) as did the Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club (15th Sept the South Wales Daily News) and again in August of 1891.

Both clubs continued through 1892 'on the water' and the Taff Amateur Rowing Club held an AGM at the Maltsters Arms in Llandaff reported in the South Wales Daily News on 5th March 1892.

LLANDAFF.

TAFF AMATEUR ROWING CLUB.—The annual general meeting of the above club was held on Wednesday, at the Maltsters' Arms, Llandaff, when the chair was taken by Mr E. J. Cross. The accounts shows a balance on the right side. The following officers were elected:—President, Mr J. R. Christie; vice-presidents, Mr Jonas Watson and Mr T. J. Masters; captain, Mr E. J. Cross; vice-captain, Mr A. Bryant; hon. sec. and treasurer, Mr J. R. Jones.

RISCA.

1893 was just as active a year for both Clubs and there was a nice piece in the Evening Express on 6th September 1894 with this little extract:



them.

CARDIFF AMATEUR ROWING CLUB.

ANNUAL REGATTA AT/LLANDAFF.

The annual regatta of the Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club was not favoured with what could be termed ideal weather this afternoon. There was a pretty good muster of spectators, and altogether the meeting promised to be a most successful one. There were 15 events on the programme, and the course extended three-quarters of a mile—from the stake boats to the top of the island. During the afternoon the musical selections by the band of the 3rd V.B. Welsh Regiment considerably enlivened the proceedings. The judges were Dr. Arthur and Mr W. W. Howells, whilst the other officers of the meeting included—Umpires, Messrs A. W. Dendy, W. R. Hawkins, and A. J. Hybart; starters, Messrs J. L. Brown and G. F. Mason; clerks of the course, Messrs W. J. Thomas and G. F. Forsdike. All the arrangements of the regatta were conducted by the regatta committee, of which Mr G. Welmut Harrison is the hon. secretary. The following are the results of the various events:—

JUNIOR FOUR-OARED RACE.—First heat—Taff R.C. 1; Cardiff R.C. 0. No. 3 Cardiff broke and our and Taff won easily. Crews—*Cardiff R.C.*—D. Browne, E. W. Williams, W. A. Baylis (cox.) *Taff R.C.*—C. D. Lupini, C. Collier, E. Perry, T. Harry, and R. Matthews (cox.)

OPEN PAIR-OARED RACE.—1st heat—1, Newport R.C.; 2, Philistines. Won by four lengths. Crews: *Philistines*—A. H. Baylis, J. H. Bowen, and E. Baylis (cox.) *Newport R.C.*—W. J. Locke, J. Sherwood, and R. Matthews (cox.)

OPEN MAIDEN FOUR-OARED RACE.—First heat—Cardiff (B crew) 1; Cardiff (A crew) 0. Won by a length and a half. Crews:—*Cardiff R.C. (A)*—A. Ross, C. Callaghan, J. H. Bowen, C. R. Cadogan, and E. P. N. Bayliss (cox.) *Cardiff R.C. (B)*—G. Matthes, P. Roscaria, S. Roscaria, E. J. Manders, and C. Roscaria (cox.)

OPEN SCULLING RACE.—A. Brown, Cardiff, 1; T. Harry, Taff R.C., 2.

A NEW CLAIMANT TO THE

South Wales Echo 8th September 1894 – Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club



Taff Amateur Rowing Club 17th Sept 1894 the South Wales Daily News



TAFF AMATEUR ROWING CLUB.

ANNUAL REGATTA.

The second regatta of the season was held on the weir river at Llandaff on Saturday, it being in connection on this occasion with the Taff Amateur Rowing Club. Delightful weather favoured the meeting, and the attendance was both large and enthusiastic. The band of the 3rd V.B. Welsh Regiment played selections during the afternoon. The arrangements of the regatta were not by any means so complete as they might have been, and in consequence of the events being greatly over time it was found expedient to postpone the finals of the club pair-oared race and the club four-oared race. The officers of the meeting included—Captain, Mr W. Matthews; vice-captain, Mr F. Newberry; hon. sec., Mr C. D. Lupini; starter, Mr W. Matthews; judge, Mr Hybart; umpires, Messrs W. Old and W. Howells; and clerk of the course, Mr F. Newberry; whilst the regatta committee consisted of Messrs W. Matthews, F. Newberry, G. G. Spray, and E. A. Hybart.

RESULTS:—

The following are the results:—

JUNIOR-SENIOR FOUR-OARED RACE.—First heat—Cardiff Rowing Club, 1; Barry Rowing Club, 2. Crews—*Cardiff*—D. Browne, E. Williams, W. A. Baylis, A. Browne, and P. Baylis (cox.) *Barry*—T. G. Mein, P. Hayden, J. H. Cranston, W. W. Getkin, and R. Spray (cox.) Cardiff won an excellent race by about two lengths. Second heat—Taff Rowing Club, a bye. Crew—C. D. Lupini, C. Collier, E. Perry, T. Harry, and R. Matthews (cox.) Final—Cardiff beat Taff after a good race by half a length.

OPEN MAIDEN FOUR-OARED RACE.—Taff Rowing Club, 1; Newport R.C., 2. Won easily. Crews—*Taff R.C.*—E. W. Collier, T. Stanley, A. G. Cross, J. E. Blackburne, and R. Matthews (cox.) *Newport R.C.*—F. Wallie, H. Canning, A. Bees, F. Cox, and J. Kitchen (cox.) Cardiff Rowing Club, a bye. Final—Taff Rowing Club beat Cardiff Rowing Club after a good race.

OPEN PAIR-OARED RACE.—Taff R.C., 1; Cardiff R.C., 2. Won by two lengths. Crews—*Taff*—E. A. Hybart, G. G. Spray, and E. Spray (cox.) *Cardiff R.C.*—W. A. Baylis, A. Browne, and P. Baylis (cox.)

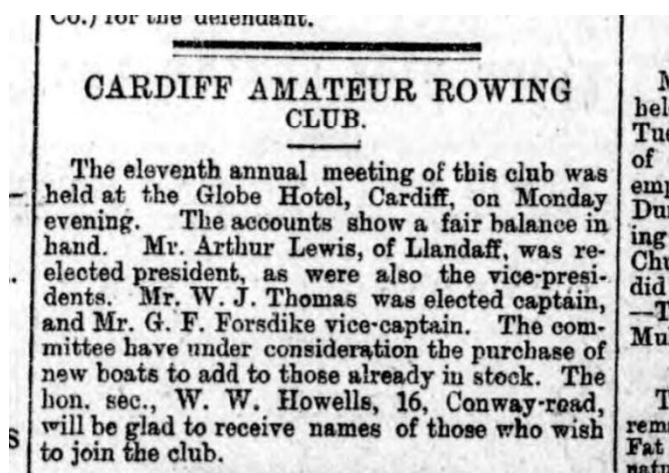
CLUB PAIR-OARED RACE.—First heat—Messrs C. Collier, T. Harry, and Bertie Spray (cox.) beat W. Old, A. Bryant, and R. Matthews (cox.) Second heat—Messrs C. D. Lupini, F. Newberry, and R. Matthews (coxswain) beat T. Harman, E. Perry, and E. Spray (coxswain). The final heat was, on account of the lateness of the hour, postponed.

CLUB FOUR-OARED RACE.—First heat—W. J. Davies's crew beat A. Kattenbach's crew by four lengths. Second heat—J. Stables's crew beat C. D. Lupini's crew by five lengths. The final of this race was postponed.

SWIMMING RACE.—1, W. J. Davies, 2sec.; 2, E. G. Spray, scratch.

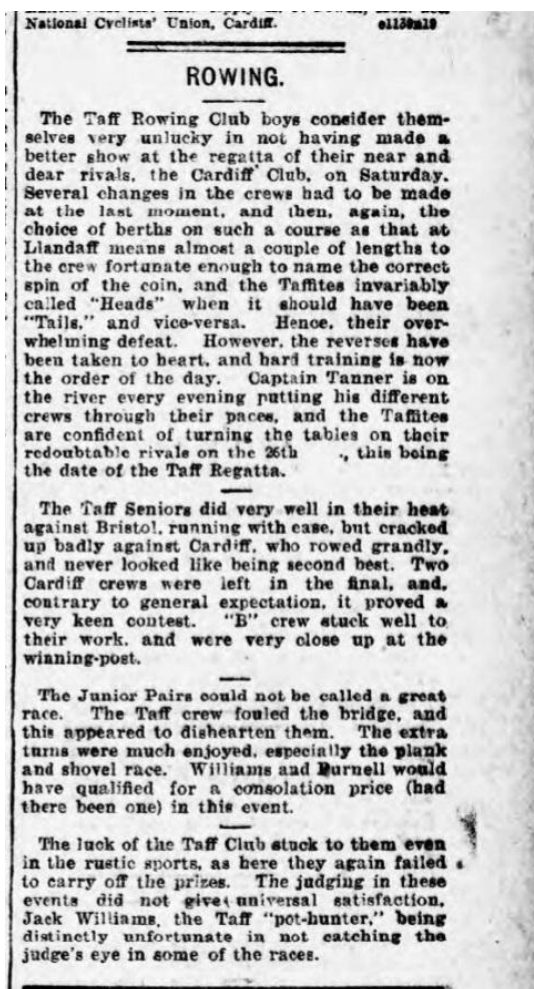
NEW YORK PRICES

Earlier in the year 28th Feb 1894 in the Western Mail we hear of the Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club's AGM, this being claimed as their 11th, which places their official founding date as 1884. This also seems to suggest that the Cardiff club had a preferred venue in the 'town' rather than in Llandaff, sometimes favoured by the 'Taff' club.

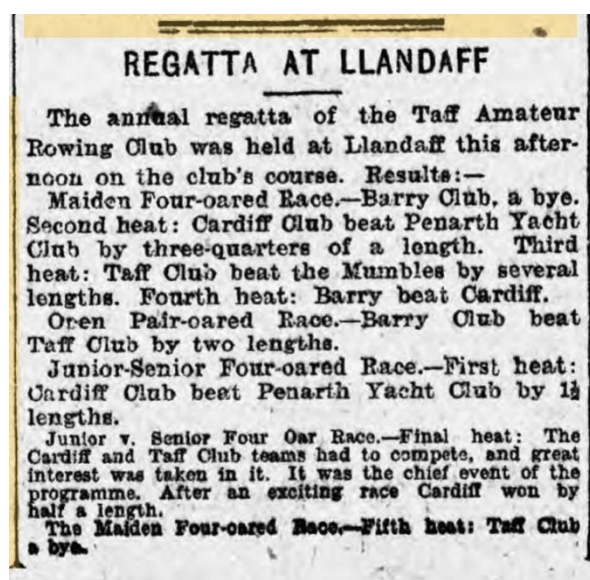


The Taff Amateur Rowing Club however held their AGM in 1895 at the Corporation Hotel, Cardiff according to The Evening Express, 6th March 1895 with their opening day scheduled for Saturday March 30th, 4 pm at Llandaff requesting all members to attend.

Over the years these clubs shared the Llandaff venue together and it seems that this was done, successfully, on alternate weeks. They also competed against each other at their respective events and in all probability at others as well. All indications are that these clubs got on well together as friendly rivals. The regattas went on for many years, through 1896; 1897. On 3rd July 1899 the South Wales Daily news wrote of a race between Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club and the Penarth Yacht Club having taken place over a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile course on the weir with the Cardiff club winning 'easily' so the event, once run off the coast, was now on 'inner waters'. Over these last few years, reports on the 'Taff Club' had dried up, but they are mentioned 'in dispatches', the 'Cardiff Club' holding regattas in 1899, 1900 and with both holding regattas in 1901. In 1902 The Evening Express, 19th July published a short account of the regatta that month, in which the Taff Club didn't seem to do themselves justice:



Their extra effort and drive all to no avail though, this cutting being published by the Evening Express on July 26th 1902;



This next cutting dated 16th August from the Evening Express 1902 provides us with an interesting pen portrait of some of the movers and shakers in the Taff Club at that time, the introduction being worthy of display:

For over 40 years the Taff Amateur Rowing Club, the oldest-established organisation of the kind in the district and the premier club of Wales, has been well known to all old Cardiffians, and many an experience can be told by some of the founders, such as Mr. James Hurman. Mr. D. A. Thomas, M.P. for Merthyr, Mr. J. Lane Herbert, Mr. Richard Sleep, Ac., of jocund times, when they used to row, wearing their broad brim straw hats, with blue bands. The regattas were amongst the most popular and fashionable events at the time. The committee have always done their utmost to promote rowing in the district, especially have they tried to get the River Taff weired. They were the promoters of the grand Jubilee Regatta in 1887, which was a great success. On this occasion the Taff Club great success. On this occasion the Taff Club had the fine crew composed of the Brothers Smith and Brothers Lovering, who for years swept the boards wherever they competed. The annual regattas held at Llandaff are looked forward to by hundreds as one of the most enjoyable day's sport of the season, for which thanks are due to the hard-working hon. Secretary, Mr. J. K. Scott. It has been most gratifying to the committee that the majority of the members of last year, and many of this year's members, were successful in taking one or more prizes. This is undoubtedly, due to the energetic and hard-working captain, Mr. R. J. Tanner, and old members, including Mr. C. D. Lupini, who still takes a great interest in the club. The committee, to further promote rowing this year, put up, for the first time on the river, a grand challenge shield for open junior senior fours, and two valuable silver cups for club fours and sculling. This year the club has enjoyed a record membership, and the committee intend carrying out a considerable enlargement of their boat-house. The president is Mr. R. Sleep, who has given very valuable prizes from time to time for competition.

MORNING EXPRESS AND EVENING MAIL. SATURDAY, AUGUST

LOCAL LEADERS IN ATHLETICS.—No. 8.

Taff Amateur Rowing Club—Its Record and Officials.

PHOTOS AND BIOGRAPHIES OF CAPTAIN, SECRETARY, AND STROKE.



MR. J. K. SCOTT.
(Hon. Sec.)

MR. R. J. TANNER.
(Captain.)

MR. W. A. BAYLISS.
(Stroke.)

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The committee, to further promote rowing this year, put up, for the first time on the river, a grand challenge shield for open junior senior fours, and two valuable silver cups for club fours and sculling. This year the club has enjoyed a record membership, and the committee intend carrying out a considerable enlargement of their boat-house.

The president is Mr. R. Sleep, who has given very valuable prizes from time to time for competition.

MR. R. J. TANNER, CAPTAIN.

Mr. R. J. Tanner, who comes from Gloucestershire, stands 6ft. 1 1/2 in. in height, and weighs 12st. 5lb. He came to Cardiff in 1892, and joined the ranks of the Taff in 1894, winning his maiden race in 1897 and junior senior in 1899. Mr. Tanner pulls No. 3 in the junior-senior crew, and, possessing fine length and physique, is a very valuable man. This year he has acted as captain, and to his energy and congeniality the present satisfactory position of the club is to a very large extent due.

MR. J. K. SCOTT, SECRETARY.

Mr. J. K. Scott, the secretary, is a Devon man. The secretaryship of a rowing club is no sinecure, and it rebounds to this important position. He is 25 years of age, won his first race in 1899, pulls No. 2 in the junior and senior crew, tips the beam at 12st. 4lb., and stands 6ft. in height. He is a staunch puller, a popular member, and the excellent regattas held by the club are largely due to his efforts.

MR. W. A. BAYLISS, STROKE.

A great deal in winning a race depends upon the stroke, and in Mr. Bayliss the Taff Club have had for many years a man they will find hard to replace when he gives up rowing. Mr. Bayliss hails from Stourport, and he learnt all his rowing with the club at that town, one of the finest in the country. He came to Cardiff in 1894, and joined the Cardiff Rowing Club, but shortly afterwards threw in his lot with the Taff. He won his maiden race in 1892, juniors in 1893, and junior senior in 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1899, and 1901. Mr. Bayliss stands 5ft. 11 1/2 in., and weighs 11st. 8lb., and is generally in the pink of condition.

One of the interesting aspects of this is the reference to Taff Rowing Club being 40 years old at the time, this being the case it would date its formation as 1862 and as stated "the oldest-established organisation of the kind in the district and the premier club of Wales" something to be exceptionally proud of and a huge accolade for the existing Llandaff Club which was formed from it.

By 1903 things were going well for the Taff Rowing Club:

factory character is forthcoming.

TAFF ROWING CLUB.

The annual general meeting of the Taff Amateur Rowing Club was held on Monday evening at the Mitre Hotel, Llandaff, Mr. R. Sleep being in the chair.—The annual balance-sheet was submitted by Mr. J. K. Scott (hon. secretary), and it was reported that the financial position of the club was excellent.—Mr. Godfrey S. Clark was elected president, while Mr. R. J. Tanner was re-elected captain and Mr. E. Gallin vice-captain.—Mr. J. K. Scott having taken an active part as hon. secretary of the club for the past five years, during which time the club has been very successful, tendered his resignation, and Mr. W. C. Crafter was unanimously elected in his place.

A DAILY OCCURRENCE.—New cures resulting from the use of Dr. Williams' pink pills for pale people are daily coming to light in

24th March 1903 The Evening Express

TAFF ROWING CLUB

Last night a meeting of the committee of the Taff Rowing Club was held at the Mitre Hotel, Llandaff, Mr. R. J. Tanner presiding, when it was unanimously decided to hold the club four races on June 13, to be followed by a smoking concert, at which some of the best talent of the district will be present. The club is growing in popularity, and year by year is attracting new members to its ranks, who are showing much enthusiasm in upholding its prestige.

ACCIDENT TO LADY WAUCHOPE

27th May 1903 The Evening Express

ROWING

CARDIFF CLUB RACES.

The club fours races of the Cardiff Rowing Club were rowed off last week, the final being won on Saturday by Ivor Thomas's crew, who beat C. Roscorla's crew by 6ft. Seven crews entered for the races, which were rowed off in half a dozen heats and a final. In the first heat Roy Thomas (bow), A. T. Jenkins (No. 2), B. R. Edwards (No. 3), and E. W. Williams (stroke), beat A. B. Jenkins (bow), O. H. Thomas (No. 2), Gordon Williams (No. 3), and S. C. Box (stroke). It was a good race. E. W. Williams' crew got away at the start, and, maintaining their lead, won cleverly by nearly a length. In the second heat J. Hoggarth (bow), R. Angel (No. 2), R. Pritchard (No. 3), and Ivor Thomas (stroke) beat A. R. Thomas (bow), P. J. Thomas (No. 2), J. Hawkins (No. 3), and F. J. Box (stroke). Thomas's crew got away in fine style, and eventually won by two lengths. In the third heat G. S. Rees (bow), T. Woosey (No. 2), W. T. Hooper (No. 3), and I. J. Flux (stroke), beat S. Thomas (bow), J. Seymour (No. 2), F. Jenkins (No. 3), and P. C. Wake (stroke). This was a grand race. Flux's crew fouled the bridge, and Wake's crew then led by a length, but Flux put on a tremendous spurt, and won by 4ft. There was one bye, namely, F. Harrison (bow), C. S. Bassett (No. 2), W. Roscorla (No. 3), and C. Roscorla (stroke). Ivor Thomas's crew met E. W. Williams' in the fifth heat, and won by a foot, after a good race, in which Williams' crew led all the way until a few lengths from home, when one of the crew caught a crab, and Thomas's crew came up and won luckily by a foot. In the sixth heat C. Roscorla's crew beat I. J. Flux's crew, after a close, ding-dong race all the way. Roscorla's crew stayed the better, and won by 5ft. In the final heat C. Roscorla's crew got away at the start, and maintained the lead to the bridge, after which Thomas gained, and won as stated.

TAFF AMATEUR ROWING CLUB.

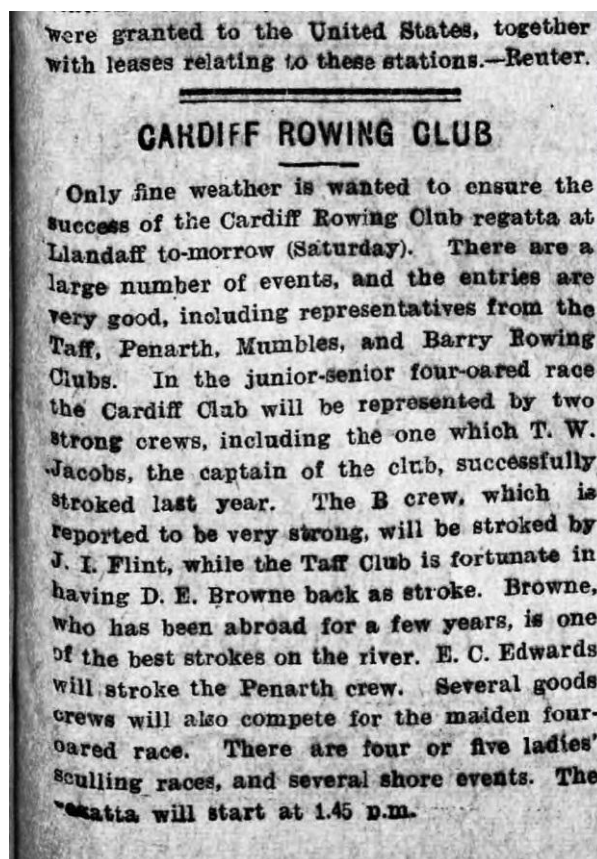
The semi-final in connection with the above club was rowed off on Saturday afternoon. Mr. W. Crafter's crew beat Mr. R. J. Tanner's crew. In the final Mr. D. Collier's crew beat Mr. W. Crafter's. The prizes were distributed by Mr. R. J. Tanner at a smoking concert at the Mitre Hotel, Llandaff, in the evening.

Extensive coal deposits have been discovered in the district of New Ontario, which are said to be among the most valuable in Canada.

On 15th June 1903 The Evening Express printed this article (alongside) which covers both clubs confirming the continued existence of both clubs and within the detail provided, it also tells us that the Taff Club were using The Mitre Hotel, Llandaff, as venue a of choice for some of their events.

It's a great pity that some of these establishments are no longer with us, if only they knew of their wonderful history and heritage and how important they were in the community. (The well used phrase "use it or lose it" doesn't cut it, when they once offered a preferred place for local people to socialise and were once a focal point and an essential part of the community).

On 17th July 1903 The Evening Express published this short bulletin again publicising a regatta for the Cardiff Rowing Club an event which also included the Taff Rowing Club.



Unfortunately the weather didn't oblige on the day. "The unpropitious weather which prevailed on Saturday afternoon not only rendered a late start necessary in the Cardiff Rowing Club's Regatta at Llandaff Weir, but also militated against the large attendance usually found at this interesting event". (The Evening Express 20th July 1903)

The Taff Amateur Rowing Club held an AGM at The Mitre Hotel, Llandaff in 1904, reported in the Evening Express on 2nd March of that year. The report (shown next page) tells us that this was a time when 'alterations and extensions' had been made to the dressing room at some expense and a clear indication that the club was a very successful one. It's difficult to understand though, just what arrangements were in place with the Cardiff Rowing Club, being as they both shared the same venue and presumably the same facilities.

The Taff Rowing Club's regatta in 1904 was held on 16th July "in charming weather" with the competing crews listed as being the Penarth Yacht Club; Taff Rowing Club and the Cardiff Rowing Club.

Ref previous page 2nd March 1904 AGM

TAFF AMATEUR ROWING CLUB
Annual Meeting at Llandaff.

The annual general meeting of the Taff Amateur Rowing Club was held at the Mitre Hotel, Llandaff, last evening, Mr. R. J. Tanner (captain) in the chair. The hon. secretary presented his report and balance-sheet for 1903, which showed, notwithstanding the exceptionally heavy expenditure incurred in alterations and extensions to the dressing-room, a balance in hand of £3 11s. 5d. In the course of the report it was mentioned that great interest had been taken in the club's doings, the following open events being won:—Barry Rowing Club Regatta: Junior-senior four-oared and pair-oared; Cardiff Rowing Club Regatta: Junior four-oared; and Taff Regatta: Junior-senior four-oared, maiden four-oared, and pair-oared. The regatta held on August 15 was somewhat marred by inclement weather, but the entries for this important event created a record for this or any other club in the district, crews from Gloucester, Cardiff, Penarth, Barry, and Mumbles competing. The committee tender their thanks to the subscribers, to whose assistance the present successful position of the club is to such a large extent due, for their generous support, and also to Messrs. C. D. Lupini and Arthur John for their valuable work in connection with the regatta. The report and balance-sheet were adopted, subject to audit.

Mr. William Jones, Heathlands, Maindy, was unanimously elected president. Mr. D. E. S. Browne was elected captain, and he nominated Mr. Percy Jeffery as his vice. The following were elected the committee:—Messrs. R. J. Tanner, C. D. Lupini, C. Collier, E. Gallon, and Howard Jenkins. Mr. W. Crafter, 13, Tudor-road, Cardiff, was re-elected hon. secretary and treasurer. Votes of thanks were passed to the retiring officials.

RADIUM IN THE BATH WATERS

The 1904 regatta for the Cardiff Rowing Club didn't fare as well as the Taff Rowing Club's, "Unfavourable Weather But A Large Attendance" reported on 25th July in The Evening Express, "The club during the last seven or eight years has enjoyed uninterrupted success owing chiefly to the indefatigable services rendered by the esteemed late secretary Mr Woods-Howells".

On 10th August 1905 The Evening Express tells us of a meeting held by the Taff Amateur Rowing Club at the Angel Hotel, Cardiff, but it also shows that the club's 'headquarters' was at The Mitre in Llandaff, where they held their AGM in March of that year.

TAFF AMATEUR ROWING CLUB

Preparations are now being made for the annual regatta of the Taff Amateur Rowing Club, and a meeting of the committee was held at the Angel Hotel, Cardiff, on Wednesday evening, Mr. E. Gallon (captain) in the chair. August 19 was agreed upon as the date of the regatta at Llandaff. Events similar to those which comprised last year's interesting programme were arranged, and include open junior-senior for the Taff Challenge Shield, open juniors, open maidens, club fours for the Conway Cup, club pairs, and ladies' and gentlemen's double sculling races. Entries close on Monday next. Enclosure tickets may be obtained on application from the hon. secretaries—Messrs. F. Kelly and F. Crafter—at the club's headquarters, Mitre Hotel, Llandaff.

In 1906 the Cardiff Rowing Club held the 'Cardiff Regatta' on July 7th, "Favoured by brilliant weather, the shady banks of the River Taff at Llandaff Weir presented an animated appearance for the annual regatta. Growing in importance year by year, the local Henley is now regarded in the light of an inviting social attraction and the dresses of the ladies today were extremely effective and pretty".

CAPSIZED AT LLANDAFF.

Five Jolly Watermen Ducked.

Five young light-hearted members of the Taff Rowing Club (Cardiff) appeared on the river in a pleasure boat at Llandaff on Monday evening. They rowed with grace and strength, when their little boat crashed into a submerged rock, which has not yet been assigned a place on the club's chart. The cold and callous waters rapidly filled the boat, the oars were swept away, and for a moment wild confusion reigned supreme. But only for a moment, for soon Robert Gallon, Hamilton-street, Canton; Idris Miller, Llandough; — Jellings, Cathays; Norman Holden, Ely; and Fred Golding, Miskin-street, Cathays, realised that their safety lay in being calm. A few orders were hurriedly shouted, the boat was moved away from the rock, and with the footboards as oars they started in pursuit of the oars. The chase took them beneath an overspreading tree, and three of the oarsmen seized a bough with the object of increasing the speed of the boat. But that bough snapped, and the young man fell in a heap into the boat, capsizing it, and all five were in a second struggling in the water. The accident was witnessed by many people on the river banks, and occasioned much excitement and alarm. Messrs Frank Crafter and Walter Crafter, who were on the river at the time, rowed to the rescue of their "wrecked" comrades. The latter, however, had scrambled to the bank, none the worse for the ducking in five feet of water. The boat was taken in hand and towed into safety. As Messrs Gallon, Miller and Co. walked into the club-house they were received with wild, joyous cheers, mingled with laughter, and advised to at once change their clothes for racing attire. This they did, and stayed at the Mitre Hotel, Llandaff, while their clothes were being dried.

Some excitement thrilled the Cardiff Times on 21st July 1906 with the boatmen of the Taff Rowing Club giving them something to write about, with The Mitre once again proving to be a most hospitable and helpful establishment.

Another successful regatta was held by The Taff Rowing Club in August 1906 with an extensive race card with the usual suspects competing (Taff; Cardiff and Penarth) as well as Barry Rowing Club.

The Barry Herald briefly reported on the Barry Club at the Cardiff Regatta on 26th July 1907 although it was the Cardiff club that seemed to take all before them.

In 1908 the Taff Rowing Club held their AGM at "the headquarters, Llandaff", The Mitre, reporting that "members of the club having greatly increased" (Evening Express 10th April), they had their 'first of the season club fours in June with a record entry and in the evening had a "most enjoyable tea and smoking concert at The Grand Hotel, Cardiff". Their regatta was highly anticipated in August of that year when they eagerly looked forward to "Teams being sent down from the Midlands and local crews will have to display unusually good form if the Taff Challenge Shield is to be kept in the district".

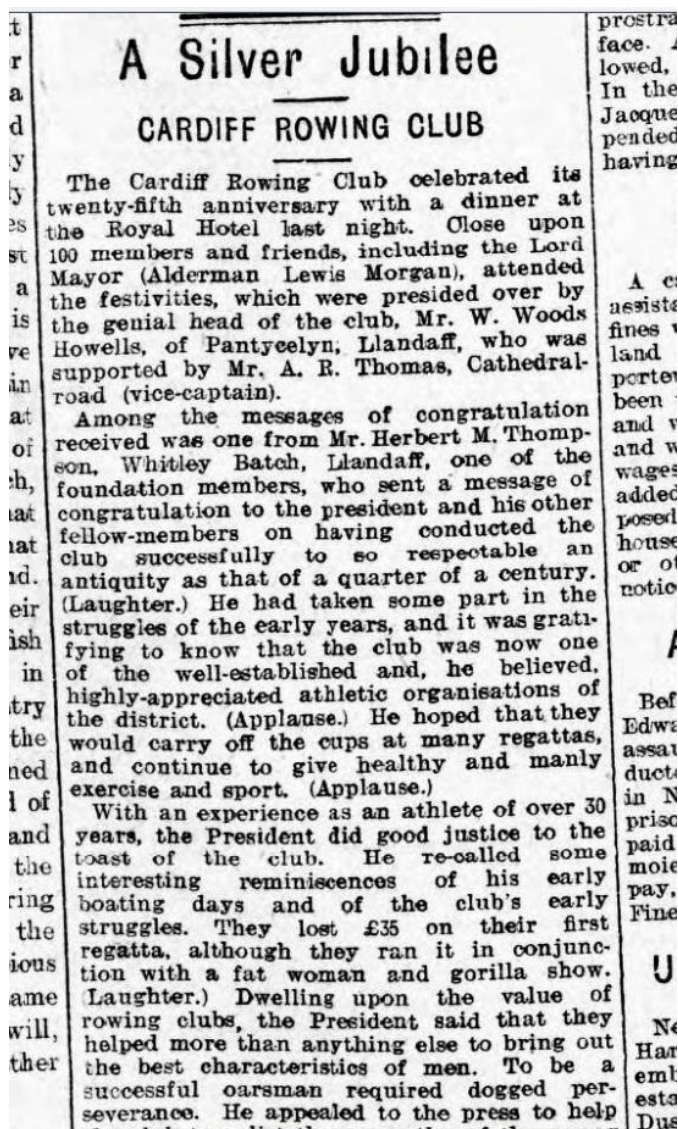
More wonderful snapshots were printed in the Evening Express on 17th August 1908



Showing early photographs of (1) Groups of crews awaiting their turn (2 and 4) Competitors in the Double Sculling Race (3 and 5) Lady competitors in the Egg and Spoon Race (6) The policeman and the suffragette.

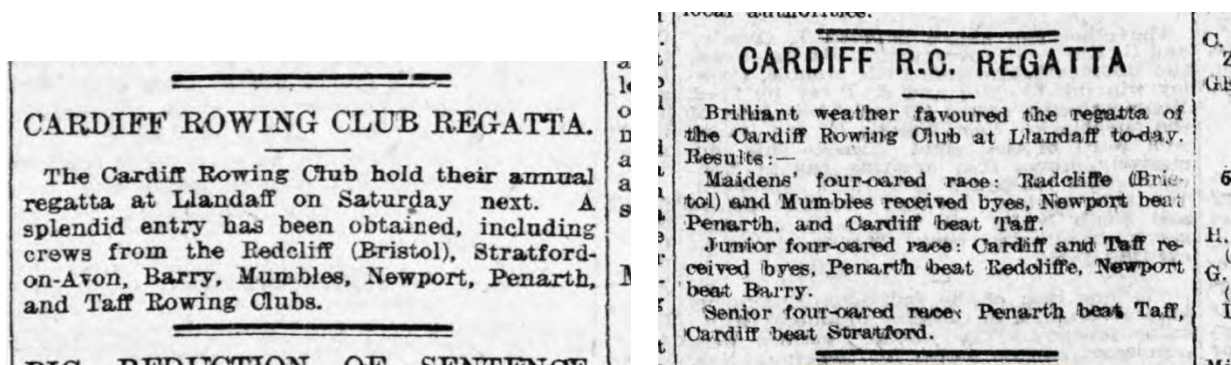
It's clear that these clubs were thriving, the newspaper reports and these photographs give every reason to believe that they were enjoying a very successful period in their history. Although the Cardiff club is not mentioned within this script for 1908 they were equally as active, the newspapers however seemed to be less generous with their coverage.

On March 20th 1909 notice was given in The Evening Express of the 'Silver Jubilee' of The Cardiff Rowing Club. According to this account this would date the club at 1884 (ref p. 12) but which takes no account of early reports written about within the early part of this script.



March 20th 1909 The Evening Express

On 5th July 1910 The Evening Express published notice of the Cardiff Rowing Club's Regatta and on the 9th July briefly reported on some results.



The newspaper then published a more detailed account on the 11th July 1910 (next page).

his first marriage.
Harman was committed for trial on bail.

ROWING.

Close Racing in Cardiff Club's Regatta

Brilliant weather and a large entry list combined to make the annual regatta of the Cardiff Rowing Club, which took place over the half-mile course at Llandaff on Saturday, one of the most successful in the history of the club. Eight clubs, including those at Redcliff (Bristol) and Stratford-on-Avon, were represented, and some good racing was witnessed. The arrangements for the entertainment of the visitors were excellent, thanks to the energetic way in which the club officers discharged their duties, and an enjoyable programme of music was discoursed by the band of the R.G.A. Messrs. R. L. Leyshon, W. Roscorla, and W. J. Thomas were judges, and the secretarial duties were carried out by Messrs. S. V. Jenkins and Norman Robertson. Results:—

Maiden Four-oared Race.—Newport (A. H. Jesseman, R. W. Butler, E. Summers, H. Baddeley, and W. H. Stoneman) beat Penarth Yacht Club (A. J. Maddocks, A. O. Brown, C. H. Graham, Stanley Wakeford, and S. Body). Cardiff Rowing Club (E. Hogarth, T. C. Berkeley, D. T. Jones, Frank Wilkes, and A. C. Thomas) beat Taff Rowing Club (W. O. James, W. H. Mitchell, H. Dean-Gay, J. Phillips, and — Taverner). Redcliff Rowing Club (T. J. Davies, H. W. J. Smith, P. F. Miller, P. J. Armstrong, and E. Williams) beat Newport.

In the final the Cardiff cox steered into the bank soon after the start, several lengths being lost in consequence, which the crew failed to recover, Redcliff winning easily.

Junior Four-oared Race.—Penarth Y.C. (G. H. P. Bedford, E. A. Lee, R. R. Harrison, V. S. Williams, and S. Taverner) beat Redcliff R.C. (T. J. Davies, H. W. J. Smith, P. J. Miller, P. G. Armstrong, and E. Williams). Newport R.C. (J. Pritchard, H. P. Hudson, C. Bates, C. Summers, and W. H. Stoneman) beat Barry R.C. (T. M'Donald, A. Evans, C. Walton, G. W. Slater, and A. String). Taff R.C. (W. Blacker, R. Vokes, W. Gould, C. Gibbon, and — Taverner) beat Cardiff R.C. (J. E. Seymour, T. S. Basset, C. S. Basset, F. W. Alexander, and H. G. G. Williams).

Penarth, beating Newport, were left with Taff in the final, which produced a great race. Taff were leading slightly as the enclosure was reached, but Penarth, pulling strongly together, gradually reduced the lead, and, amid a scene of great enthusiasm,

The available research resource ends at 1910 and consequently no further information is currently available. It must be pointed out that the National Library of Wales Newspaper Archive is the only resource that has been investigated for this script.

TC