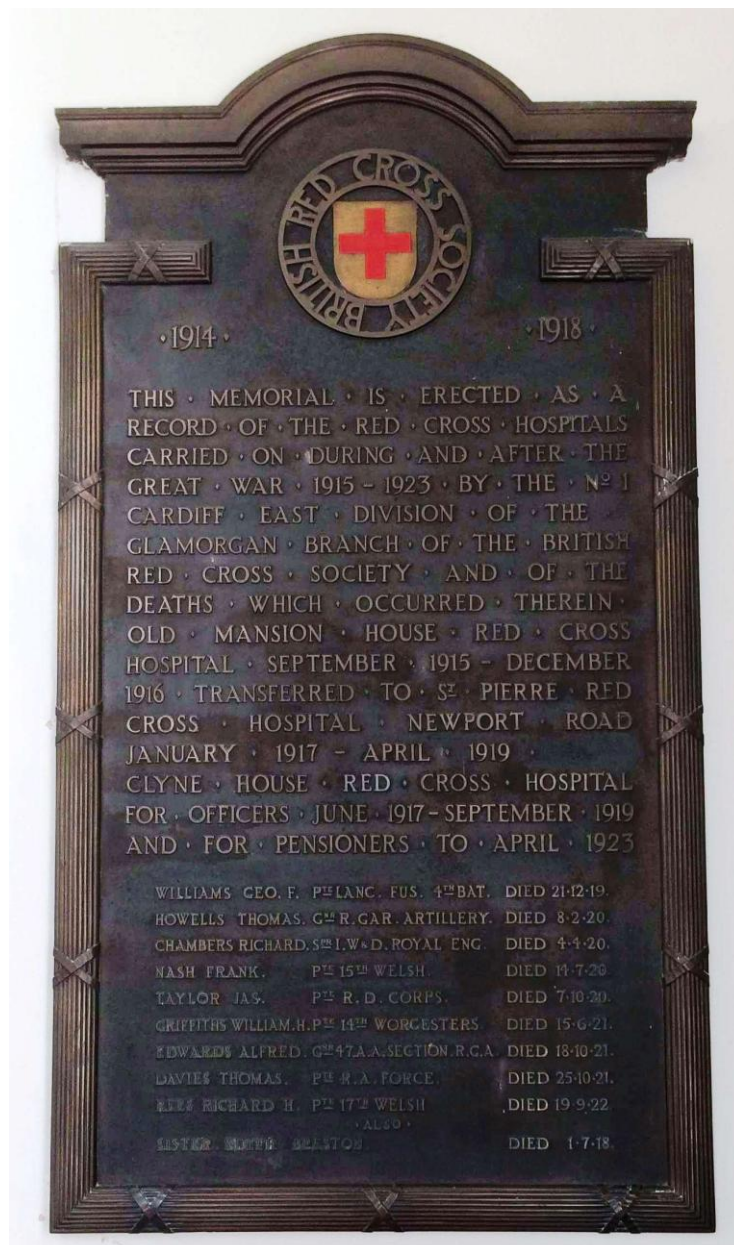


British Red Cross Society Memorial Plaque

St Edward's church,

Westville Road, Pen-y-lan, Cardiff

The lives of those that fell



The British Red Cross Society memorial plaque at St Edward's church in Pen-y-lan, Cardiff, remembers the work performed by the Cardiff East branch of the Red Cross. It refers specifically to the work done during and after the Great War and remembers those that lost their lives at the Old Mansion House hospital, The Walk (Sep 1915 - Dec 1916), St Pierre Red Cross Hospital, 60 Newport Road (Jan 1917 - Apr 1919) and Clyne House Red Cross hospital for Officers, 132 Newport Road (Jun 1917 - Sep 1919) and at Clyne House when it was converted to a hospital for veteran pensioners (to Apr 1923).

The memorial contains ten names, nine soldiers and one nurse. The soldiers all appear to be pensioners who died at Clyne House, 132 Newport Road. Some are remembered by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission but others are not as they died after the deadline for listing such deaths or because their cause of death was not necessarily attributable to their war service.

This booklet is a record of research into the lives of those listed on the plaque. It is believed with reasonable confidence that the correct individuals have been identified. Some errors and omissions in the details are however quite likely. When the author is made aware of any errors, or additional information comes to light, the details on the [website version](#) will be updated where possible.

Although the individuals listed on the plaque have been identified, it is not known where all are buried. Of the burial places known, some are buried at Cathays Cemetery in Cardiff and others in their hometowns. Sister Edith Beeston is buried in Lower Machen.

Ted Richards

Roath Local History Society

August 2021

Website: roathlocalhistorysociety.org

e-mail: roathwarmemorial@gmail.com

The plaque was unveiled by Dowager Countess of Plymouth in February 1924.



A tablet erected in St. Edward's Church, Roath, in memory of those who died at Clyne House and St. Pierre Red Cross Hospitals, both in Newport-road, as the result of war service, was unveiled by the Dowager Countess of Plymouth on Saturday.

[Western Mail photo.]

GEORGE FRANCIS WILLIAMS

Private, 4th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers (Service Number: 47366)

George Francis Williams was born on 25 May 1890 in Cardiff to Tom Williams, a printing compositor, originally from Weymouth, Dorset, and Lucy Mary Williams née Clements originally from Stogursey, Somerset. He was baptised at Canton Parish Church on 7 Aug 1890 when the family were living at 15 Market Road. George became a compositor like his father. He enlisted in the army on 4 Jan 1915 and served with the 4th battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers. He married Gladys Leonora Phillips at St Luke's church, Canton on 12 Oct 1915. He left for France on 14 Oct 1917. He was discharged on 24 Jan 1919 on the grounds of ill health. Their daughter Margaret Hannah Lucy Williams was born on 10 Aug 1919 when they were living at 3 Egham Street, Canton. George died three months later on 21 Dec 1919 aged 29 in one of the Red Cross Hospitals on Newport Road, Cardiff. He is buried at Cathays Cemetery (Plot CE. 1247). He is remembered on the [Red Cross Memorial tablet at St Edwards church](#), Pen-y-lan. His wife Gladys was sadly refused a widows pension as they had married after George had enlisted. [Commonwealth War Graves Commission record](#).



THOMAS HOWELLS

Gunner, 57th Company, Royal Garrison Artillery (Service Number 278133)

Thomas Howells was born in Merthyr around October 1880. Before joining up he had already served six years in the Carmarthen Militia. At the time he joined up he was working as a collier. He joined up on 9 Oct 1914 in Cardiff and served in Egypt until 9 Aug 1917 when he was discharged with ill health (enteritis). Thomas Howells passed away on 6 Feb 1920 aged 39. He died at Clyne HOuse Red Cross Hospital, 132 Newport Road, Cardiff. He is buried at Cathays Cemetery, plot EB.81. The above information is taken from his military records which also records that his next of kin was his brother, John Howells, who was lodging in Treharris at the time. Thomas is remembered on the Red Cross memorial plaque at St Edward's church, Pen-y-lan. [Commonwealth War Graves Commission](#) record. (Possible: We know when he was discharged Thomas was 36 yrs 10 months so can pinpoint his birth to ~Oct 1880. There is not a Thomas Howells birth registered in Merthyr in Q4 1880 but there was one in Q1 1881, mother's maiden name Davies. This ties in with an 1881 census of David Howells, an iron puddler at Cefn Coed, Merthyr and his wife Mary with Thomas 4mths. In 1901 Thomas is a 'Private soldier in Reg', and there is a brother John, coal hewer).



RICHARD CHAMBERS

Sapper, Inland Waterways and Docks, Royal Engineers (Service Number: WR/552616)

Richard Chambers was born in 1876 though we know nothing of his family background other than he was single. He enlisted in the Royal Engineers on 11 Sep 1916 and was discharged on 16 Sep 1918. He served as a Sapper in the Inland Waterways and Docks division. His records showed he served abroad which may have been in any number of locations including France, Mesopotamia, Salonika etc. [The work of the Inland Waterways and Docks division is explained here](#). His records show he suffered from VDH (heart disease) and bronchitis. Richard died on 4 Apr 1920 aged 40 at Clyne House Red Cross hospital on Newport Road, Cardiff (his death registration states he was 40 but his pension records state he was born in 1876 making him a bit older). His military pension record shows his address as 36 Maria Street, Docks, Cardiff which in the 1922 Cardiff Directory was a boarding house. He is buried at Cathays Cemetery, Cardiff (Plot EB. 77) alongside two other members of the Royal Engineers. [Commonwealth War Graves Commission record](#). (The burial record indicates he died at Clyne House Hospital but 24 Shakespeare Street crossed out next to it. This may have been a genuine error or may indicate an address he had connections with e.g. friend, relative or as a boarder. The address was occupied by Patrick Donovan in the 1911 census and 1922 Cardiff directory).



FRANCES NASH

Private, 15th Battalion, Welsh Regiment (Service number: 241162)

Frances 'Frank' Nash was born in 1882 in Pontlottyn to Frank Nash, an iron worker, originally from Ireland and Ellen Nash nee Murphy, a wardrobe dealer, also originally from Ireland. It appears Frank was mainly raised by his mother and step-father, Michael O'Reily, in Merthyr Tydfil. The 1893 South Wales Daily News records that a boy, Frances Nash, received six stokes from the birch rod for stealing two pigeons from a coop in Penderyn. He married Elizabeth Henderson in Merthyr Tydfil in 1906 and they went on to have two sons Frank and Allan. In 1911 the Nash family were living in Glebland Street, Merthyr and Frank working as a fishmonger. In Aug 1914 he served a couple of weeks in Swansea gaol for drunkenness. He enlisted shortly after on 15 Oct 1914 and served with the 15th Battalion, Welsh Regiment. He survived the entirety of the war and was discharged on the grounds of ill health on 4 Mar 1919. He died of cardiac failure on 15 Jul 1920 at Clyne House Red Cross Hospital, Newport Road, Cardiff aged 38. His stepfather, M O'Reily, of 26 Stuart Street, Merthyr Tydfil, was in attendance. Frank's final resting place is not known. He is remembered on the [Red Cross memorial plaque at St Edward church](#), Pen-y-lan, Cardiff.

JAMES MALONE a.k.a. JAMES TAYLOR

Private, 331st Protection Company, Royal Defence Corps (Service Number: 29942)

James Malone was born in Gowran, Co Kilkenny, Ireland in around 1864 to Michael Malone and Johanna Malone née Hogan. He emigrated to Liverpool and worked as a waiter. He enlisted with the Royal Lancashire Regiment on 5 Oct 1892 under the name James Taylor (Service Number: 3705) and served 12 years including in India (1894-96) and South Africa (1899-1902). He also served with the Manchester Regiment (Service number: 20113). In WWI he was a Private in the 331st Protection Company, Royal Defence Corps which was based in Newport. He died on 7 Oct 1920 aged 56 at Clyne House Red Cross Hospitals on Newport Road, Cardiff. His address at the time was given as 23 Coomassie Street, Newport. His disabilities at the time were listed as VDH (heart disease), albuminuria and bronchitis and his cause of death was attributed to nephritis and cardiac failure. He is buried at Cathays Cemetery (plot EB 106) and shares a headstone with two other members of the Royal Defence Corps. The headstone refers to James Malone served as 29942 Private J Taylor aged 60. He is unusual in having two Commonwealth War Graves Commission records under the names [James Malone](#) and [James Taylor](#). He is remembered on the [Red Cross memorial plaque at St Edward church, Pen-y-lan, Cardiff](#). His pension records name his next of kin in 1920 as being Margaret Malone, his sister, in Gowran, Co Kilkenny, Ireland.



WILLIAM HENRY GRIFFITHS

Private, 14th Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment (Service number: 44000)

William Henry Griffiths was born in 1899. We don't know much about his family background other than he was single and lived at 15 Glan Nant, Cwmfelinfach. He served as a Private in a number of regiments including the South Wales Borderers (service number 24365) and the Labour Corps (service number 131677) as well as the 14th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment. He was discharged on 23 Feb 1919. He suffered from trench feet and VDH (valvular disease of the heart). He died on 15 Jun 1921 aged 21 at one of the Red Cross hospitals on Newport Road, Cardiff. He is remembered on the [Red Cross Memorial plaque at St Edward church](#), Pen-y-lan, Cardiff. His final resting place is not known.

ALFRED EDWARDS

Gunner, 47th Anti Aircraft Section, Royal Garrison Artillery (Service Number: 43798)

Alfred Edwards was born in 1884. We don't know a lot his background. He was single and served as a Gunner in the 47th Anti Aircraft Section, Royal Garrison Artillery. His military record shows he lived at 8 School Street, Pontllynn. He enlisted on 30 Oct 1915 and served in the Balkans. He contracted malaria which led to bronchitis. Alfred left the army on the grounds of ill health and was awarded a pension that commenced on 24 Jan 1919. It appears he never recovered and he died on 18 Oct 1921, aged 36, at Clyne House Red Cross Hospital, 132 Newport Road, Cardiff of pneumonia and syncope. His profession on his death certificate is stated as collier. (His death was certified by Dr J.J.E.Biggs, the Cardiff rugby player who went on to become Lord Mayor of Cardiff in 1922). Alfred Edwards is remembered on the [Red Cross memorial tablet at St Edward church](#), Pen-y-lan, Cardiff. His final resting place is not known.

THOMAS JOHN CANTON DAVIES

Private/Aircraftman, Royal Air Force (Service Number: 234661)

Thomas John Canton Davies was born on 21 Mar 1899 in Ystradyfodwg, Rhondda Valley, the only child of William Davies, a coal miner originally from Roch, Pembrokeshire and Eleanor Davies née Canton originally from Llan Mill, Pembrokeshire. In 1911 the Davies family were living at 112 William Street, Ystrad. When he enlisted in the Royal Navy Air Service on 1 Aug 1917 he gave his occupation as a school teacher. His records appear to show he was based with Squadron A at Dunkirk. He transferred to the RAF on 1 Apr 1918. He was medically discharged on 13 Feb 1919 with his disability quoted as nephritis (kidney disease). He died on 21 Oct 1921 at Clyne House Red Cross Hospital, 132 Newport Road, Cardiff aged 22 with the cause of death on his death certificate stated as chronic nephritis (3 years). His mother Eleanor was present at his death. He is buried at Trealaw Cemetery. He is remembered on [the Red Cross Memorial at St Edward church](#), Pen-y-lan, Cardiff.



RICHARD HENRY REES

Private, 17th Battalion, Welsh Regiment (Service Number 25558)

Richard Henry Rees was born on 21 Oct 1895 in Swansea to Richard Rees, a gamekeeper, and Lillian Rees née Bohn, both originally from Swansea. He was baptised at Christ Church, Swansea on 8 Jan 1896 when the family were living at Graig Street. By 1901 they had moved to Newton Nottage, Porthcawl. They were still there in 1911 when 15 year old Richard was working as an errand boy. He joined the 17th battalion, Welsh Regiment on 2 Jan 1915 but only served two week before being discharged due to illness, the reason given - not being considered likely to become an efficient soldier. He was issued with a Silver Badge on 4 Jan 1917 exempting him from further military service on account of illness. He died on 19 Sep 1922 aged 26 at the Red Cross Hospital, Newport Road, Cardiff. He was buried at Newton Nottage parish church on 23 Sep 1922. He is remembered on the [Red Cross Memorial at St Edward church, Pen-y-lan, Cardiff](#).

EDITH MAY BEESTON

Sister, Red Cross Hospital, Cardiff

Edith May Beeston was born in Lower Machen in 1893 to George Beeston, a stonemason, and Emma Sarah Beeston née Burges, both originally from Machen. We know little about Edith other than she joined the Red Cross hospital in Cardiff on 10 Sep 1917 and died on 1 Jul 1918 aged 25. A family notice in the Western Mail refers to her having died at Lower Machen. She is remembered on the [Red Cross memorial in St Edward church](#), Pen-y-lan, Cardiff. On the plaque she is referred to as Sister Edith Beeston. It is likely she was working at the Clyne House hospital or the St Pierre hospital, Newport Road, Cardiff, as those are the hospitals mentioned on the memorial. She is buried at St Michael parish church in Lower Machen in the same plot as her brother Frederick who died in 1912.

