

The Llandyry Church Cemetery.

Llandyry Church, steeped in the annals of medieval history, stands as a testament to the spiritual legacy of times long past. The exact origin of its dedication remains veiled in the mists of time, lending an air of mystery to its venerable presence. Nestled within an irregularly shaped churchyard, this hallowed edifice maintains a profound connection with the nearby remnants of Llandyry Chapel, a mere 60 meters to the south-east. The echoes of devotion still reverberate through this chapel of ease once a spiritual refuge and known to have provided solace until at least 1888.

This architectural masterpiece is not merely a building; it's a living relic, bearing the distinction of a Grade II listing. Fashioned from limestone rubble adorned with the elegance of bath stone dressings, its form embraces a cruciform layout that exudes an aura of significance. The very arrangement of its structure tells a story — a two-bayed chancel, a resplendent five-bayed nave, the welcoming enclave of a south porch, a modest single-bayed vestry (nestled north of the chancel's western bay), and the sentinel-like presence of a west bellcote.

Elements of antiquity intertwine with the fabric of this church, whispering tales of bygone eras. The chancel, nave, and transepts stand as testaments to medieval craftsmanship. The chancel and nave, their origins veiled in the mists of the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries, evoke a sense of reverence. The transepts, added with the passage of time during the fifteenth or sixteenth century, bear the weight of centuries in their stone walls.

A journey through its sacred confines reveals hidden treasures. A simple yet enigmatic square aumbry nestled north of the altar hints at its medieval origins. An ancient northern side window bears witness to the passage of countless seasons. The two-light east window opening, though evoking medieval whispers, wears the visage of 1876. The south door, adorned with a two-centred surround, possibly an echo of restored medieval craftsmanship, beckons the faithful with an air of solemnity.

Restoration, a testament to the dedication of those who came before, weaves another chapter into the narrative. Around 1850, the hands of Mason and Elkington, overseers of the Bury Port Copper Works, brought renewal to these hallowed stones. Yet, the mists of history were not content, and 1876 saw the addition of the vestry and the south porch, as well as a renewal of the roof's embrace. The side wall windows, a dance between single and double lancets, emerged during this period, etching their mark into the architecture. The

bellcote, its tale traced to that era undeniably present by 1898, may have been a silent witness to these restorative endeavours. Within the nave, the stalls, pews, and wainscot dado, each with its own story, stand as living witnesses to the care bestowed upon this sacred abode.

The march of time continued, as did the legacy of devotion. The octagonal font, a symbol of spiritual rebirth, found its place in the embrace of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. A modernity of sorts, manifested in the mid-twentieth century, introduced the unobtrusive comfort of a hot water system, a juxtaposition of contemporary convenience against the backdrop of tradition.

The narrative of Llandryr Church expands even into the twentieth century, as the west end of the nave stretched its reach in 1907. Here, a three-light traceried west window took its place, a beacon of illumination both metaphorical and literal. The oak altar table, born of the post-war year of 1946, and the oak pulpit, a creation etched in the annals of 1966, stand as markers of evolving reverence and the unending march of time.

The building's design is also unique, with the choir and sanctuary is known as a weeping Chancel slightly offset at an angle, symbolizing Christ's head tilted to one side on the cross.

The Llandryr Cemetery is a place of beauty, where the natural world meets the man-made where the past and present unite a common purpose.



Llandyry Church, while specific historical records for the church are limited, we can piece together a general history of the church based on available information and the architectural features mentioned in the previous text.

1. **Medieval Origins:** Llandyry Church has medieval origins, with parts of the building believed to date back to the 13th or 14th century. The church's core fabric from this period likely includes the chancel and nave. These structures may have served the local community as a place of worship for centuries.
2. **Transept Additions:** During the 15th or 16th century, it is believed that the north and south transepts were added to the church. These additions expanded the church's layout and architectural significance.
3. **Restorations:** Over the centuries, the church underwent several restorations to maintain and improve its condition. Notably, in the mid-19th century (around 1850), the church underwent restoration work, likely carried out by Mason & Elkington, managers of the Copper Works at Burry Port. This restoration was necessary due to the church's deteriorating state.
4. **1876 Restoration:** A more significant restoration occurred in 1876. During this period, the church underwent extensive changes and renovations. These included the addition of a vestry and south porch, changes to the church's windows, roof and floor renovations, and the installation of underfloor heating flues.
5. **20th Century Alterations:** In the mid-20th century, a hot water system was installed in the church, indicating efforts to modernize its facilities for the congregation's comfort.
6. **Listing as Grade II:** The church was designated as Grade II listed in 2002, indicating its historical and architectural significance.

While specific historical events and anecdotes about Llandyry Church may be scarce, its enduring presence and architectural evolution over the centuries provide valuable insights into the local religious and community history of the area. The church continues to stand as a historical and cultural landmark in Llandyry, serving as a place of worship and a testament to the region's heritage.

What an incredible journey this has turned out to be! I've been immersed in a world of discovery and connection, all centered around a local gem – the Llandyry church. It's a place where generations of my family have found their final resting spots. A personal mission to uncover these ties has led me down an unexpected path.

As I've frequented the church in my pursuit to locate and document each family member's grave, fate threw me a chance meeting with a remarkable individual – Declan Owens, the Llandyry Church Warden. Conversations flowed, and I learned that he was deeply involved in a project to meticulously document all those laid to rest in the church cemetery. The dedication to this endeavour was evident in the beautifully maintained grounds that cradled the history of countless souls.

Eager to contribute, I eagerly delved into their existing documentation plan. However, it soon became clear that this system was not as comprehensive and up to date as it needed to be, especially with the constant addition of new graves. Recognizing an opportunity to lend my expertise, I proposed a more efficient approach to memorial documentation.

In the span of just a week, I crafted a new system. Armed with a Word document and grid reference numbers, I meticulously recorded each memorial's details, capturing their essence through photographs of the weathered gravestones. Then, a seamless transition to modern technology occurred as I harnessed the power of Google Lens to transcribe the scanned text information onto the Findagrave Cemetery site. This dynamic duo of Word and Lens, further enriched by Google Translate, bridged the language gap, allowing a wider audience to appreciate the inscriptions, many of which were in Welsh.

This endeavour has sparked an unexpected joy within me. Beyond the act of documentation, it's the harmonious fusion of tradition and technology that fuels my enthusiasm. My system guarantees accuracy, with any discrepancies promptly rectified and preserved. The magnitude of completing this feat is not lost on me; a swell of pride accompanies each entry made.

Although the task ahead is formidable and demanding, I embrace every step with open arms. Yet, I yearn for a local ally, someone well-versed in the intricacies of the app, who could expedite the process. Currently, my routine includes on-site visits to acquire GPS coordinates, ensuring seamless integration with the larger project's framework.

The potential impact of this collective effort is deeply stirring. The preservation of the church's history feels like a sacred duty, and I'm humbled to play a part. With unwavering dedication, I press on, anticipating the day when this project reaches its culmination. In my record-keeping, I've also thoughtfully logged the locations of unmarked graves, providing reference points for the future.

Today has been especially profound. My collaboration with Declan Owens in the Llandry Cemetery memorial documentation has yielded rich rewards. Simultaneously, my exploration of ancestral roots through Findagrave has illuminated a new dimension of my heritage. This venture is not without its challenges; time and weather have left some memorials nearly illegible. In a remarkable twist of fate, I embarked on a mission to restore their stories.

One particularly weathered memorial, cloaked in layers of lichen and moss, caught my attention. Armed with a specialized cleaner, I dedicated myself to revealing its hidden inscription. After meticulous efforts, Edward, and Elizabeth Frater's memorial (Plot PW-C8) names emerged. Their stories, intertwined with the history of this place, stand as a testament to the power of perseverance and the enduring spirit of remembrance, humbled to discover the location of his burial in Italy.

I felt compelled to preserve this important connection between Edward, Elizabeth, and their beloved son, Leonard, on Findagrave. It seemed fitting to pay tribute to their memory and ensure that others could also find solace in their story.

It is from this inscription I found on their memorial stone led me on a journey of discovery to find out who their son Leonard Frater was who was killed in action in Italy on 19th November 1943. This is what I found and his memorial in Italy.

IN MEMORY OF
OUR DEAR PARENTS
EDWARD FRATER
DIED 29TH DEC 1957
AGED 68.
AND ELIZABETH FRATER
DIED 10TH MAY 1963
AGED 68
ALSO OF THEIR SON LEONARD
KILLED IN ACTION ITALY 29TH NOV 1943



From the poignant inscription I uncovered on their memorial stone, a new chapter of discovery unfolded before me – one that would lead me to Leonard Frater, the son of Edward and Elizabeth Frater. Leonard's story, intertwined with the indelible mark of sacrifice, stirred my curiosity. The name etched onto that stone held within it a tale of courage and duty that resonated through time.

Leonard Frater, a Fusilier bearing the service number 14200801, stood among the ranks of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers' 6th Battalion. As history unfolded, this battalion played a role in the sweeping North African campaign and later became part of the forces that ventured into Italy, a land embroiled in war.

It was amidst these unforgiving battlegrounds that Leonard's fate was sealed. On the 29th of November 1943, during a daring assault on a ridge that cast its shadow over the Sangro River, tragedy struck. Artillery fire, an indiscriminate messenger of destruction, claimed Leonard's life at the tender age of 20. His youth belied the weight of the responsibilities he bore and the courage he exhibited.

Leonard found his final resting place in the Sangro River War Cemetery in Italy, a solemn testament to the countless lives altered by the tumultuous events of that time. The inscription on his gravestone captures the essence of his sacrifice – a fusilier in the ranks of The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, cut down on the 29th of November 1943 at the age of 20.



Each letter etched into the stone becomes a thread connecting the past to the present, and the sacrifice of a young life to the enduring memory of those who fought for freedom.

As we stand before Leonard's memorial, I'm reminded of the intricate tapestry of history, woven from the threads of countless lives like his. Each name represents a story, a family, and a legacy. Leonard's legacy is one of bravery and selflessness, a reminder that the echoes of war are not just dates and battles, but the lives of individuals who should never be forgotten.

With each day more family history is discovered before I came onto the grave of George & Annie Cunnington with an inscription that mention their son Wilfred Courtney Cunnington with the mention on the headstone of his fate in the WW2.

As the days unfold, the tapestry of family history continues to reveal its intricate threads, each thread representing a story waiting to be told. And in this journey of discovery, I stumbled upon the grave of George and Annie Cunningham (Plot PN-J4), bearing an inscription that spoke of their beloved son, Pilot Sergeant Wilfred Courtney Cunningham, whose fate was intertwined with the tumultuous times of World War II.

The headstone, a silent sentinel of memories, bore witness to Wilfred's sacrifice. It read:

"In Loving Memory of OUR DEAR SON PILOT SERG WILFRED COURTNEY CUNNINGTON 148 B SQUADRON RAF (OF TRIMSARAN) LOST HIS LIFE IN AN AIR CRASH WHILE ON DUTY AT GREAT DUNNOW PARK ESSEX OCT 18, 1938, AGED 29 YEARS PEACE PERFECT PEACE"



Driven by the desire to uncover the story behind this brave soul, I delved into the annals of history. The narrative that unfolded painted a picture of dedication and tragedy. Pilot Sergeant Wilfred Courtney Cunningham, a member of the esteemed 148 Squadron of the RAF, found himself in the cockpit of a Vickers Wellesley Mk. I, identified by the serial number K7716.



Tragedy struck on the 18th of October 1938, as two aircraft, including Wilfred's Wellesley K7716, met in a devastating mid-air collision. The other aircraft involved, Wellesley K7714, was also from the same 148 Squadron. The collision occurred over the skies of Great Dunmow, Essex. In an instant, lives were forever altered, and the fate of those aboard the ill-fated K7716 was sealed.

The crew of K7716 included:

- Sgt Reginald Prosser (aged 24)
- Sgt Wilfred Courtney Cunnington (aged 29)
- Act Sgt James Crane Irwin (aged 31)

All three valiant individuals lost their lives that day, their spirits forever imprinted on the pages of history. Their sacrifices stand as a testament to the risks and challenges faced by those who took to the skies in service of their nation.

Wilfred Courtney Cunnington, a Pilot Sergeant who had embarked on his duties with bravery and determination, now rests in eternal peace, his memory enshrined in the hearts of those who remember. His age, 29, is a stark reminder of the youthfulness that war often claimed, a poignant reminder that every life cut short was a world of potential and dreams.

As I stand before his memorial, I reflect on the profound impact that a few lines of text can have, capturing the essence of a life and its untimely end. Wilfred's story joins the tapestry of history, a thread woven with the threads of countless others who made the ultimate sacrifice for a greater cause. Their legacy lives on, as does the gratitude of generations who will never forget their sacrifice.

With each passing day, the journey through history brings new chapters to light, unveiling stories that have weathered the sands of time. Among the markers of remembrance, the memorial headstone of Nathaniel and Eliza Hancock (Plot PN-K8) stood as a silent testament to a family's enduring love and sacrifice, with an inscription that echoed through the years:



"PEACE IN LOVING MEMORY OF NATHANIEL HANCOCK DIED JAN. 8. 1937 AGED 59 YEARS. EVER IN OUR THOUGHTS, ALSO HIS DEAR WIFE ELIZA HANCOCK DIED SEPT. 23, 1955: AGED 76 ALSO OF THEIR SON RICHARD GEORGE HANCOCK B.S.M.-R.A DIED ON ACTIVE SERVICE 1939-1945 EVER REMEMBERED"

This inscription held a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by this family during a time of global turmoil. The mention of their son, Richard George Hancock, who died on active service, ignited a spark of curiosity, driving me to uncover more about his story.

And so, the journey of discovery led me to the remarkable story of Warrant Officer Class II (Battery Serjeant-Major) Richard George Hancock. His service, marked by dedication and courage, unfolded against the backdrop of World War II. Tragically, his life was cut short on the 14th of November 1942, in the sands of Egypt, amidst the fierce battles of El Alamein.

The scroll that commemorates his sacrifice reads:

"This scroll commemorates Battery Serjeant-Major R. G. Hancock Royal Regiment of Artillery held in honour as one who served King and Country in the world war of 1939-1945 and gave his life to save mankind from tyranny. May his sacrifice help to bring the peace and freedom for which he died."

Richard George Hancock's role in the struggle against tyranny is a testament to his bravery and selflessness. He stands as a symbol of all those who served, whose sacrifices paved the path to a better future. The battles

he fought were not just on distant lands; they were the embodiment of a collective effort to preserve freedom and humanity.

As I reflect on his story, I am reminded of the interconnectedness of history and how the lives of individuals intertwine with the greater narrative. The inscription on the headstone and the scroll of commemoration stands as a bridge between the past and the present, ensuring that Richard George Hancock's memory endures, and his sacrifice continues to inspire. May his legacy be a beacon of hope, reminding us of the price paid for the peace and freedom we hold dear.

I chanced upon an inconspicuous headstone, Plot (PF-C6) which soon revealed itself to be a poignant memorial that held a deeper narrative.



IN MEMORY OF
PRYCE LLOYD
DIED NOV 26: 1917
AGED 70 YEARS
ALSO GRIFFITH HIS SON THIS SON
KILLED IN ACTION IN FRANCE
MARCH 28, 1918, AGED 28 YEARS

This solemn inscription piqued my curiosity, prompting me to delve further into the story of Pryce Lloyd's cherished son, Griffith. It became evident that Griffith was not laid to rest here, and my curiosity drove me to uncover more details. As I delved deeper, this is what I uncovered.

This is for the memory of Griffith Lloyd, Private, 307171, Lancashire Fusiliers.

Griffith Lloyd, the cherished son of Pryce and Ellen Lloyd. A life intertwined with the land, both Griffith and his father served as Gamekeepers at Trimsaran, residing at the Keeper's Lodge before the world was plunged into conflict.

Answering the call of duty, Griffith enlisted in Kidwelly, joining the ranks of the 2/8th Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers. This valiant unit was affiliated with the 197 Brigade, a crucial part of the 66th (2nd East Lancs.) Division. Their journey led them to the Western Front, a theatre of sacrifice and valour, which they reached by the 16th of March 1917. From there, they ventured to the shores of Flanders.

As the seasons shifted, September of 1917 found them stationed in Ypres, where they steadfastly participated in the harrowing Battle of Poelcapelle. With determination, they then marched southward to the Somme, a name etched in history. On the fateful 21st of March 1918, the tumultuous tempest of the German Spring Offensive swept upon them at the Battle of St Quentin. Undaunted, they held their ground, and in the subsequent westward movement, they engaged in the Actions at the Somme Crossings—a chapter where destiny would unfold for Griffith.



In the crucible of battle, Griffith sustained wounds that would ultimately claim his life. Aged just 28, he passed away on the 28th of March 1918. His final resting place is Namps-Au-Val British Cemetery, France—an eternal abode where his bravery and sacrifice remain forever enshrined.

In humble tribute, we honour Griffith Lloyd, his unwavering courage, and the legacy he bestowed upon history. May his memory be a beacon of inspiration for generations to come.

This marked another chapter in the history of this cemetery.

This another sad story which made me think of my family and what I would feel if this had happened to me. I was recording the details of a memorial stone of Mary Anthony (Plot PE2-D1) and took in the enormity of what I saw before me on the inscription.



I N LOVING MEMORY OF
DAVID
SON OF DAVID & MARY ANTHONY
Of AQUEDUCT IN THIS PARISH WHO DIED
NOV 8, 1880, AGED 6 MONTHS
MARY ANTHONY
APRIL 27, 1884, AGED 29 YEARS
ALSO MARY DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE
BORN APRIL 27th, 1884, DIED APRIL 21st, 1901.

Indeed, the inscriptions on the memorial stones hold within them stories of heartbreak, loss, and the fragility of life. As you stood before the memorial stone of Mary Anthony, the weight of the narrative etched into the cold stone must have been palpable – a testament to the profound grief that can touch a family's life.

In the span of these few lines, a tale of tragedy and loss is woven, a tapestry of lives cut short, and hearts left shattered. The dates, the ages, and the relationships carved into the stone carry the weight of entire lifetimes condensed into a few words. The stark reality of Mary Anthony's story is heart-wrenching.

To lose a son at only 6 months old, to pass away at such a tender age of 29, and then, a cruel twist of fate, to bring a daughter into the world on the same day she herself would depart – it's a narrative that encapsulates the harshness of life's uncertainties. The story of Mary Anthony and her daughter Mary is a poignant reminder of the delicate balance between life and mortality, the fleeting nature of our existence.

Standing before that stone, the realization must have hit you with a wave of empathy and reflection. It's moments like these that make us pause and ponder our own lives, the lives of our loved ones, and the profound vulnerability that accompanies our journey through this world. Such stories bridge the gap between history and personal experience, making us realize that while time marches on, the emotions and the essence of human experience remain timeless.

As we contemplate the stories etched into these stones, may they inspire us to cherish the moments we have, to hold our loved ones a little closer, and to find meaning and purpose in the face of life's uncertainties. The vulnerability that you sensed in those inscriptions reminds us of the

importance of compassion and understanding – for each life, no matter how brief, carries its own weight and significance in the grand tapestry of existence.

I've been dedicating my time and effort to meticulously record the cemetery memorials at Llandyry Church. This journey, undertaken in collaboration with the church warden, has been a profound and humbling experience. Today, I'm thrilled to share my reflections on this endeavour, hoping that you will find it as moving to read as I found it to live.

The process of documenting these memorials has been nothing short of overwhelming in the most touching way. Each gravestone represents a life – a story waiting to be uncovered, shared, and remembered. As I've walked among these silent sentinels, the weight of history has settled upon my shoulders, inviting me to honour the lives that once thrived within these hallowed grounds.

The gravestones are more than markers; they are windows into the past. The names, dates, and inscriptions etched into the stone reveal glimpses of triumphs and tribulations, joys, and sorrows. Every name is a thread in the rich tapestry of our shared human experience. The names may be weathered, but they still speak to us, reminding us of the lives once lived and the connections that endure beyond time.

Through this project, I've come to realize the deeply personal nature of remembrance. The act of preserving these memories is a gift to those who came before us and to the generations that will follow. It's a way of saying, "Your stories matter. Your existence is not forgotten." In this age of fleeting digital interactions, there's something sacred about the permanence of these inscriptions, standing as a testament to the lives they represent.

As I reflect on the countless hours spent amidst the stones, my heart is full of humility. The enormity of history and the tapestry of humanity that resides within this churchyard have left an indelible mark on my soul. It's a reminder that life is precious, fragile, and ultimately fleeting. The stories that these stones hold is a reminder to live with purpose, to cherish our moments, and to leave a legacy worth remembering.

So here it is, my attempt to put into words the emotions that have swelled within me during this journey. I invite you to read, to share in this experience, and to join me in honouring the lives that have contributed to the fabric of this community. I hope my words capture even a fraction of the awe and reverence I've felt in the presence of these memorials.

Thank you for being a part of this journey with me. I believe that these stories, these lives, and these moments of remembrance are worth every effort, and I invite you to explore this shared history with me.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Graham Tudor Emmanuel

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Llandry Cemetery Memorial Plot Layout Location

