



ST FAGANS FIRST WORLD WAR TRAIL

**War broke: and now the Winter of the world
With perishing great darkness closes in.**

From '1914' by Wilfred Owen

**Gwae fi fy myw mewn oes mor ddreng,
A Duw ar drai ar orwel pell**

From 'Rhyfel' by Ellis Evans (Hedd Wyn)

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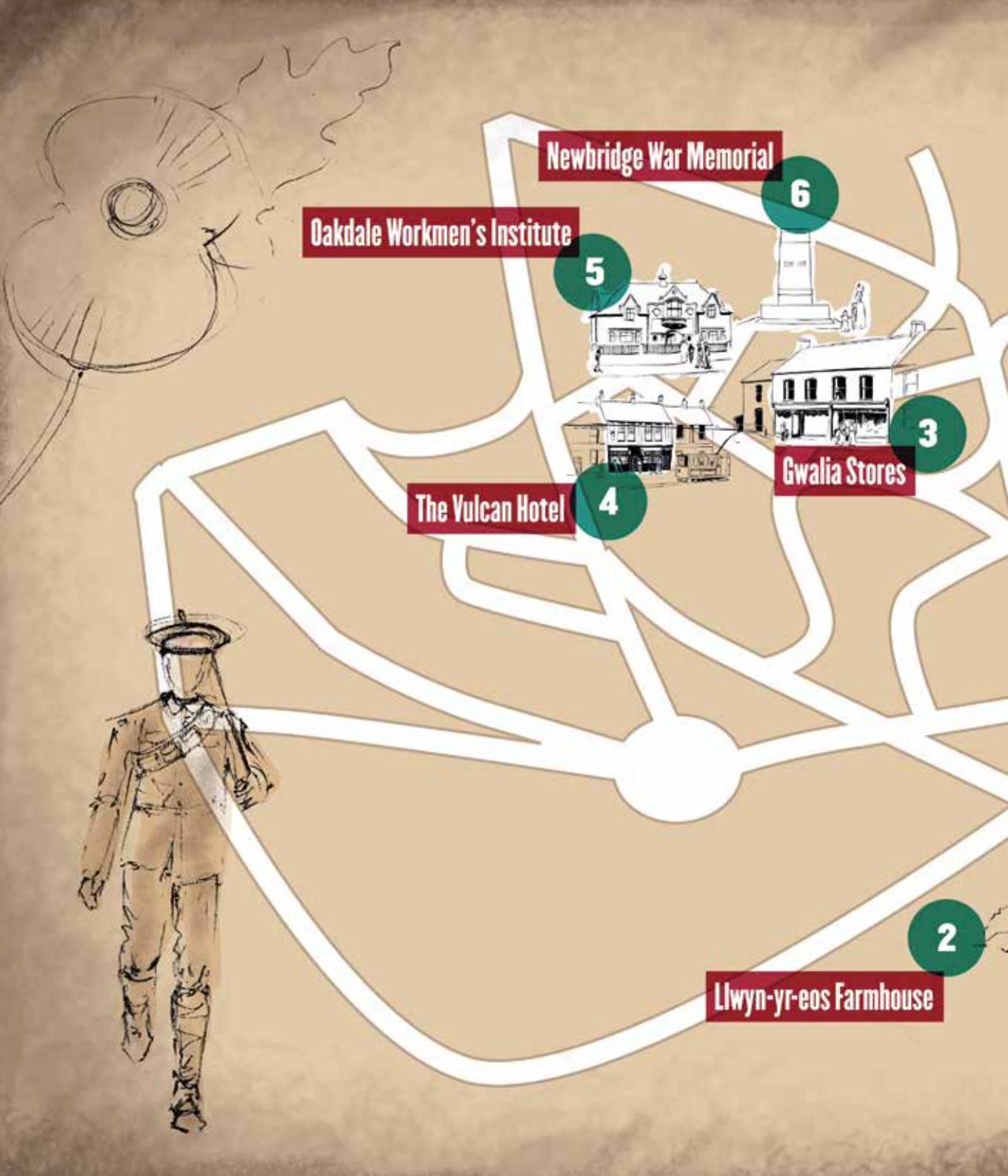
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Introduction

The First World War had a profound effect on the people of Wales, both at home and abroad. 32,000 people lost their lives, leaving a generation of widowed women and fatherless children. Many more lost friends, colleagues and neighbours.

This booklet explores the impact of the conflict through some of the Museum's historic buildings. How did the war affect those who lived, worked and socialised within their walls? From private homes to public buildings, rural villages to industrial towns, shop keepers to landed gentry – the First World War touched families and communities across the country, leaving no one unscathed.



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**MUSEUM
ENTRANCE**



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St Fagans Castle



St Fagans Castle

During the war, St Fagans Castle was home to the 1st Earl of Plymouth and his family. In 1916 he lent a pavilion in the Castle grounds to the British Red Cross to open a 70-bed auxiliary hospital. Wounded soldiers returning from the front line came here to recuperate. As casualty numbers increased, many stately homes and public buildings were converted into makeshift hospitals. Over 100 were opened in Wales.



Elizabeth Radcliffe from St Fagans village was a volunteer nurse at the hospital, 1916-18. Photo private collection.

The patients at the St Fagans Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachment Hospital were nursed by local women who trained under the VAD scheme. A VAD nurse had to be between 23 and 38 years old. As well as cleaning and cooking, they were also trained in basic home nursing. Some of the volunteer nurses at St Fagans were also maids for the family at the Castle.



(above) Beadwork buckle made by Walter Stinson at the St Fagans Red Cross Hospital, 1917-18.

(left) Walter Stinson (top right) in the Italian Garden sometime between December 1917 and April 1918.

(far left) Soldiers and nurses in the Italian Garden at St Fagans Castle, 1916.



Corporal Walter Stinson was a patient at the hospital in 1917-18. A painter and decorator from Battersea, he joined the County of London Battalion in 1915 and fought in France. While convalescing at St Fagans he made jewellery using

scraps of wallpaper and coloured beads. Walter and his fellow patients sold beadwork to raise funds for prisoners of war.

Like many families, the Plymouth family suffered a devastating loss during

the war. On 26 August 1914 their youngest son, Archer, was killed in action. He was a Lieutenant with the Coldstream Guards. The family were at St Fagans Castle when they received the news.

Llwyn-yr-eos Farmhouse

Llwyn-yr-eos was a tenanted farm on the Plymouth Estate in St Fagans. Farming played a crucial role in the war effort, producing food for the nation.



Gladys May Evans from Port Talbot in her Women's Land Army uniform. She worked on the Plymouth Estate at St Fagans during the war.

At the beginning of the war, Britain relied heavily on imported foods, especially wheat for making bread. Due to German U-boat attacks on British merchant ships, food shortages were a growing concern.

When Lloyd George was elected Prime Minister in December 1916, he issued an appeal to farmers to increase food production. More land was ploughed in order to grow additional crops.





On the Land: Ploughing by Archibald Standish Hartrick, 1917.

With the loss of so many agricultural workers to the war effort, the Women's Land Army was established in 1917. Over 250,000 volunteered, but despite their best efforts very little additional food was produced.



Members of the Women's Land Army harvesting corn at Gelli Cadwgan Farm, Builth Wells.

Gwalia Stores



Gwalia Stores was owned by Alderman William Llewellyn and served the community of Ogmere Vale. By 1916 the shop comprised a bakery, ironmongery, grocery, gentlemen's outfitters, chemist and a section selling animal feeds.



In October 1914, Alderman Llewellyn allowed the War Office to establish a Recruitment Office in the Gwalia buildings.

A number of his staff signed up, including Evan James Evans. He joined the Glamorgan Yeomanry in October 1914. He died from wounds received in action

on 19 March 1917 and is buried in Macedonia.

Food supply was a growing concern during the war.

The situation worsened in 1917 when 417 food supply ships were sunk.



Evan James Evans.

Food rationing was introduced in 1918, starting with sugar in January, followed by meat, butter, cheese and margarine in April.

Everyone received a ration book and had to register with a local butcher and grocer.

5 JUL 1918

MINISTRY OF FOOD.

Serial No.

Wa
20

Nº 20571

NATIONAL RATION BOOK (B).

INSTRUCTIONS.

[*Read carefully.*]

1. The person named as the holder of this Ration Book on the Reference Leaf (page 6) (Green) must sign his name in the space provided on that leaf, and must copy in the space provided for it on the Reference Leaf the Serial Number appearing at the head of this cover.

2. The Book must be registered at once for the purchase of **Sugar, Fats (i.e. Butter, Margarine and Lard), Butcher's Meat and Bacon.** To register for Sugar the holder must sign his name and enter his address and date of signing on the Sugar Counterfoil (Yellow), and take the book to the sugar retailer. The retailer will enter *his* name and address in the proper space (numbered 1) on the inside of the cover and on the back of the counterfoil, and will detach and keep the counterfoil. Registration for other foods will be effected in the same way, by use of the counterfoils for Fats (Blue), Butcher's Meat (Red), and Bacon (Red).

3. Persons living in hotels, boarding houses, hostels, schools and similar establishments should not register their Ration Books until they leave the establishment.

4. The Ration Book may be used only by or on behalf of the holder, to buy rationed food for him or members of the same household or guests sharing common meals. It may not be used to obtain rationed food for others.

5. The Ration Book may only be used while the holder is living in Great Britain, is not drawing Government rations, and is not in an institution (hospital, asylum, workhouse, &c.). If he dies or joins the forces, or enters an institution, the book must be given up to the proper authority, that is to say, the Registrar of Deaths, the naval, military or air force authority, or the head of the institution, as the case may be. If the holder leaves Great Britain for a period exceeding four weeks the book must

IF FOUND, RETURN TO ANY FOOD OFFICE.

(opposite above) Gwalia Stores, 1914.

(right) Mrs Ruth Davies with her staff and customers outside Malvern Stores, Llangamarch, about 1916. Sugar was very scarce during the war.



The Vulcan Hotel

The Vulcan Hotel is St Fagans' latest building project and will open its doors in 2022. It was built in 1853 in an area of Cardiff called Newtown, later Adamsdown. The predominantly Irish community that lived here built Cardiff docks. Many of them came to Cardiff to escape the famine in Ireland. A number of them slept in the guest rooms upstairs.



Newtown was a small community of only seven streets. However, there were nine pubs in the area. As the docks were of strategic military importance during the First World War, new, curtailed licencing hours

“Drink is doing us more damage in the war than all the German submarines put together”

– David Lloyd George

were imposed on all public houses.

During the War, Ellen Agetha Baker (née MacCarthy) was one of nine children who lived here. They slept upstairs and had



meals together as a family downstairs, in-between opening hours. Her vivid memories were of great help to us in interpreting life at The Vulcan. Her father's brother, Daniel MacCarthy died on the battlefields of

Ypres in 1918 aged 26. Each year, on the anniversary of his death a photograph of him was hung above the fireplace in the Smoke Room - a tradition we will continue.



Daniel T. MacCarthy

Oakdale Workmen's Institute

Workmen's institutes – or 'stutes as they were known – were once common sights in Welsh industrial towns and villages. Coal miners and other workers clubbed together to build these impressive structures to provide education and leisure facilities for themselves and their families. This example from Oakdale was built in 1916 – midway through the war – at a cost of £6,463. An opening ceremony was held on 10 September 1917.



Armistice celebrations at Abercynon Workmen's Hall and Institute, 1918. The tea party was arranged to celebrate the homecoming of soldiers.

At the end of the war, communities across Wales established 'welcome home' committees to raise funds to honour local men returning from the front. Village halls and workmen's institutes became focal points for Armistice and peace celebrations. A victory ball was held at the Oakdale Institute in early 1919. Little is known about this event, but the committee minute

book notes that a certain individual was to be written to 'regarding whether he took intoxicating liquor into the Victory Ball'.

After the war, the building continued to play an important role in the community. During the economic downturn of the 1920s, the 'Stute's management committee established a welfare fund to help struggling families.



The Visit to the Institute.

HRH Prince Albert visiting Oakdale Institute, 16 January 1920. He was President of the Industrial Welfare Society.



A 'welcome home' banner flown in Gendros, Swansea, to celebrate the Armistice, 1918.



Miners at the Oakdale Colliery, 1910s.

Newbridge War Memorial

An estimated 272,000 Welshmen fought in the First World War. 32,000 lost their lives. Almost every village, town and parish had its list of war dead. War memorials were built by local councils and committees to pay tribute to those who died and provide a shared focus for feelings of loss. There are at least 3,000 war memorials in Wales.



This memorial was built in 1936 to commemorate 79 local servicemen – including five sets of brothers – who died in the war. Their

names are recorded on the bronze plaque on the left side of the memorial. The inscription reads ‘At the going down of the sun

**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.**

– From ‘The Fallen’, Robert Laurence Binyon, 1914



and in the morning we shall remember them'. Over half of the men listed served with the South Wales Borderers. The majority worked in the Celynen Collieries before being called to war.

The memorial was moved to the Museum in 1995. A service is held here each Remembrance Day to honour all who have lost their lives in conflict.



(above) Bernard Morris of Newbridge was an assistant electrician. He was killed in Arras, France, on 23 April 1917.



Arthur Edward Harvey enlisted in September 1914. He died aged 28 on 3 May 1917.