

THE GREAT WAR: THE WELSH GUARDS AND THE POLICE OF SOUTH WALES





*Glamorgan policemen from Porthcawl who joined the Welsh Guards:
Back row left to right: PC DC Grant, PC WJ Thomas and PC D Hayes.
Front row sitting left PC W. Richardson, sitting right PC F Trott.
Only PC's Hayes and Richardson survived the war.*



THE GREAT WAR: THE WELSH GUARDS AND THE POLICE OF SOUTH WALES

2015 sees the centenary of the formation of the Welsh Guards in February 1915.

As will be seen in the pages which follow, South Wales Police's predecessor forces of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Swansea, Merthyr and Neath had close connections with the regiment from its formation.

It had been our intention to include details of this in our

commemorative booklet for 1915 but in view of the amount of material which we have available, we have produced it as a separate booklet.

We hope that it will provide a fitting tribute to those policemen from South Wales who served with the regiment during the First World War and especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Gareth Madge OBE

Chair, First World War Project Group, October 2015

The Welsh Guards is the youngest of the Foot Guards Regiments having been formed in 1915 when it joined the Grenadier Guards, Coldstream Guards, Scots Guards and Irish Guards which had been raised at various times over the previous 300 years.

After the start of the First World War in August 1914, throughout Wales regular army reservists and members of the territorial forces were mobilised into Welsh regiments and other units of the British Army. In addition, many thousands of men volunteered to join the New Armies established in response to the call from the Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener, for sufficient manpower to fight what he believed would be a long war.

Many of these volunteers joined established Welsh regiments such as the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, the Welsh Regiment and the South Wales Borderers. Eventually, as a result of the influence of David Lloyd George, a Welsh Division, the 38th, was formed which was to fight with distinction from 1915 to the end of the war, taking part, in particular, in the fierce fighting at Mametz Wood on the Somme and at Pilkem Ridge near Ypres.

Notwithstanding the existence of such formations, Lord Kitchener expressed a wish to see a regiment of Welsh Foot Guards being raised as well. He clearly had a firm view of the matter as emerges from an exchange between him and General Sir Francis Lloyd, commanding the London District, noted by the History of the Welsh Guards in the First World War:

“The order to raise the regiment was given by Lord Kitchener to Sir Francis Lloyd on February 6th. The actual conversation is so typical of both men that we give the note, made at the time by Sir Francis Lloyd:

‘Lord Kitchener, very abruptly: ‘You have got to raise a regiment of Welsh Guards.’

Sir Francis Lloyd: ‘Sir, there are a great many difficulties in the way which I should like to point out first.’

Lord Kitchener, very rudely: ‘If you do not like to do it someone else will.’

Sir Francis Lloyd: ‘Sir, when do you want them?’

Lord Kitchener: ‘Immediately.’

Sir Francis Lloyd: ‘Very well, sir, they shall go on guard on St David’s Day.’”

And so it was that, on 26th February 1915, King George V authorised the creation of the Welsh Guards which did, indeed, mount guard at Buckingham Palace on 1st March.

Officers and NCO's for the new regiment came from other Guards regiments and other regiments in the Army. The first Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Murray-Threipland, for example, came from the Grenadier Guards.

There was, in particular, a substantial contribution of NCO's and men from the Grenadier Guards which had traditionally recruited in Wales. Some 200 recruits from the Guards Depot at Caterham also joined the Regiment.

At this point it is worth noting that a number of police officers in the Glamorgan, Cardiff, Swansea, Merthyr and Neath forces were men who had served in the



The first guard mounting by the Welsh Guards, Wellington Barracks, St. David's Day, 1915. © IWM (69194)

Regular Army before the war and were, therefore, recalled to the colours as reservists on the outbreak in August. Many of these were with Guards Regiments and, especially the Grenadier Guards, and transferred to the Welsh Guards on its creation.

After initial training in London, the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards,

readied itself for overseas service. There was only one battalion on active service during the war. A second battalion was in due course raised but was a reserve or training battalion based in Britain.

Before leaving for France, however, there were ceremonial duties to be attended to. In June the Battalion was inspected by the



Some of the men who transferred from other Guards Regiments, White City, London, March 1915. © IWM (Q67393)

RECRUITING POSTER



The poster features a central illustration of a Welsh Guardsman in uniform, wearing a bearskin hat, standing between two crossed flags: the Union Jack on the left and the flag of the Welsh Guards (a red dragon on a white field) on the right. Above the soldier's head is a crown. Below the soldier is a banner with the Welsh text "CYMRU AM BYTH".

WELSH GUARDS

RECRUITS

GOOD PAY Are now wanted for the above Regiment. **SOUND COMRADESHIP**

QUALIFICATIONS.
Welsh parentage on one side at least or domiciled in Wales or Monmouth or men with Welsh surnames. Good Character
Height: 5ft. 7ins. and upwards. Age: 18 to 25 years.

TERMS OF SERVICE: 3 YRS. WITH COLOURS & 9 YRS. IN RESERVE OR FOR THE PERIOD OF THE WAR
Apply to the nearest Recruiting Officer or Barracks, and say you want to join the WELSH GUARDS.

GOD SAVE THE KING

Y MAE EISIEU

GWYR IEUAINC

o gymeriad da i wasanaethu yn y Gatrawd uchod.
Rhieni Cymraeg gwyr ei cartrefi yn Cymru neu enwau (surnames) Cymraeg.
Oedran: 18 i 25 mlynedd, ag uchder 5ft. 7ins. a drossodd.

Telera'r gwasanaeth neu'r ymrwymiad yw 3 mlynedd gyda'r fyddin a 9 mlynedd fel Nellduwyr (Reserves).

GELLIR YMRWYMO HYD DIWEDD Y RHYFEL

EXCELLENT TRAINING **DUW GADWO'R BRENIN.** **ACTIVE SERVICE**

Lord Mayor of Cardiff who presented a cheque from the City of Cardiff in order that the Regiment could purchase drums and other instruments for its band and on 3rd August the Battalion paraded for inspection before the King and Queen in the gardens of Buckingham Palace.

On 17th August the Battalion left Wellington Barracks, entrained at Waterloo Station and travelled to Southampton from where they sailed on the *SS Palm Branch* and

the *SS Petersburg* to Le Havre where they arrived the following day. Amongst the first NCO's to go to France with the Battalion was Lance Sergeant 283 Ernest Helson, (pictured below) of Number 4 Company, formerly



PC 138 of the Swansea Borough Police, who, sadly, was to die of wounds on 18th July 1916.



Detachment of Welsh Guards on first arrival and in new uniform at Chelsea Barracks. © IWM (Q67406)

The Battalion faced its first major action at the Battle of Loos in September and October 1915 which claimed the lives of several police officers and their names appear in the Roll of Honour in this booklet. During the remainder of the war, as part of the Guards Division, the Battalion fought with bravery and distinction in all the major battles on the Western Front including the Somme and Ypres.

The Battalion took part in the final

offensives of the War and at the time of the Armistice on 11th November 1918 it was in Northern France. It then marched on foot for over two hundred miles to reach Cologne in Germany where it was based before it eventually returned to Britain in March 1919.

By the end of the war the Battalion had suffered 856 men killed and 1755 wounded. It had also earned its first Victoria Cross through the bravery of Sergeant Robert Bye of Pontypridd.



The caption to this postcard reads "Presentation to the City of Cardiff of German Gun captured at Loos by the Welsh Guards, 18th November 1915"

As far as police officers are concerned, as indicated, a number of those who were already in the army at the time of the formation of the Regiment transferred to it. In addition, as the war years went on more and more police officers were released by their Chief Constables to join the army, many of them becoming members of

the Welsh Guards. The Glamorgan Constabulary, in particular, made a significant contribution.

It has not yet been possible to identify all the police officers who served in the Regiment but listed at the end of this section is a Roll of Honour which records the names of all those police officers



Welsh Guards in a reserve trench, Guillemont (Somme) September 1916.
© IWM (Q4415)

from our predecessor forces who died whilst serving with the Welsh Guards. There are 33 of them out of the 92 police officers in total who we have identified died during the War.

It is also important to remember that police officers were often NCO's in the Battalion and carried with them responsibilities of front line leadership. Many police officers also distinguished themselves with their bravery as detailed in this booklet.

After the War various Welsh Guards Comrades Associations were established and the connection between policing in South Wales and the Regiment was particularly evident in the East Glamorgan branch, as a history of the Regiment published in 1965 describes:

"Captain Lionel Lindsay, MVO, OBE, exercised a great influence over the branch during this period, being Chief Constable of Glamorgan and a great friend of our President, though not a Welsh Guardsman. Nevertheless he was keenly interested in every activity of the branch, which was made up by the majority of policemen serving in the Glamorgan Force, and when

these people wanted time off to attend any function, it was usually granted if duties permitted."

When Captain Lindsay retired in 1937 the branch presented him with a silver salver.

The connection between policing in South Wales and the Regiment continues to the present day. This year our Chief Constable attended the presentation of new colours to the Regiment by Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle. In addition, the rugby teams of the Regiment and South Wales Police this year again played against each other for the Elson Cup. Lance Corporal Dane Elson was killed in action in Afghanistan in July 2009, and the cup was instituted in his memory, his father being a South Wales Police officer.

The Welsh Guards has, since 1915, continued to serve the country with distinction. We recognise the endeavours of all those who have served in the Regiment over the years and, in particular, we remember the association which arose between it and the police forces of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Swansea, Merthyr and Neath during the First World War.

ROLL OF HONOUR

BELOW ARE LISTED THE POLICE OFFICERS FROM OUR PREDECESSOR FORCES WHO DIED WHILST SERVING WITH THE WELSH GUARDS DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR:



LANCE SERGEANT 243

JACK RANDALL BIRCH

Police Constable 132

Swansea Borough Police

Killed in action on
8th December 1916.



PRIVATE 1214

WILLIAM HENRY CARTER

Police Constable 404

Glamorgan Constabulary

Died of wounds on
25th October 1915.

PRIVATE 1330

WILLIAM EAST

Police Constable 548

Glamorgan Constabulary

Killed in action on
6th October 1915.

PRIVATE 801

EDWARD JOHN EDWARDS

Police Constable 576

Glamorgan Constabulary

Killed in action on
10th September 1916.

PRIVATE 1348

BENJAMIN EVANS

Cardiff City Police

Killed in action on
27th September 1915.

PRIVATE 1270

DAVID WILLIAM EVANS

Police Constable 648

Glamorgan Constabulary

Killed in action on
27th September 1915.

PRIVATE 3704

EDWARD PRICE EVANS

Police Constable 477

Glamorgan Constabulary

Died of wounds on
9th December 1917.



**PRIVATE 2961
RONALD EVANS**
Police Constable 578
Glamorgan Constabulary
Killed in action on
1st December 1917.

**LANCE CORPORAL 719
JOHN FARLEY**
Police Constable 270
Glamorgan Constabulary
Killed in action on
16th September 1916.



**LANCE CORPORAL 1343
HERBERT JAMES FISHER**
Cardiff City Police
Killed in action on
16th September 1916.



**PRIVATE 1331
DAVID CHARLES GRANT**
Police Constable 591
Glamorgan Constabulary
Killed in action on
27th September 1915.

**LANCE CORPORAL 1672
RICHARD HAMER**
Police Constable 363
Glamorgan Constabulary
Died of wounds on
12th July 1916.

**LANCE CORPORAL
1184 AUGUSTUS HARRIS**
Police Constable 526
Glamorgan Constabulary
Killed in action on
16th September 1916.



**SERGEANT 283
ERNEST ROBERT HELSON**
Police Constable 138
Swansea Borough Police
Died of wounds on
18th July 1916.



PRIVATE 103
ALBERT HOLLYMAN

Cardiff City Police

Died on 21st October 1918.



PRIVATE 1347
GEORGE HENRY LOCK

Cardiff City Police

Killed in action on 1st July 1916.



PRIVATE 987
JOSEPH INMAN

Police Constable 150
Swansea Borough Police

Killed in action on
15th September 1918.



PRIVATE 2013
REGINALD LOVIS

Police Constable 57 Merthyr
Borough Police

Killed in action on
10th September 1916.

PRIVATE 1380
HENRY MORGAN JONES

Police Constable 117
Glamorgan Constabulary

Killed in action on
10th September 1916.



PRIVATE 1210
WILLIAM GEORGE MATHIAS

Police Constable 397
Glamorgan Constabulary

Died on 20th May 1915.

PRIVATE 1189
WILLIAM JONES (MM)
Police Constable 684
Glamorgan Constabulary

Died of wounds on
10th September 1916.



LANCE CORPORAL 1345

PERCY JOHN MARKS

Cardiff City Police

Killed in action on
4th September 1917.



PRIVATE 951

THOMAS VOYLE MORGAN

Police Constable 69

Merthyr Borough Police

Died of wounds on
25th May 1916.



PRIVATE 120

LEONARD NOWELL

Police Constable 255

Glamorgan Constabulary

Died of wounds on
12th October 1915.



PRIVATE 1246

ARTHUR RICHMOND

PERKINS

Police Constable 77

Glamorgan Constabulary

Killed in action on
10th September 1916.



CORPORAL 1888

SIDNEY AMBROSE PHELPS

Police Constable 730

Glamorgan Constabulary

Killed in action on
25th September 1916.

PRIVATE 2528

ARTHUR PUGH

Police Constable 292

Glamorgan Constabulary

Died of wounds on 22nd
September 1916.



PRIVATE 1279
ERNEST LEWIS REEVES
Police Constable 364
Glamorgan Constabulary
Killed in action on
27th September 1915.



SERGEANT 242
AUBREY ALFRED SMALE
Police Constable 26
Swansea Borough Police
Died of wounds on
10th September 1916.

LANCE CORPORAL 1385
EDWARD JOHN TAYLOR
Police Constable 62
Glamorgan Constabulary
Killed in action on 8th May 1916.



PRIVATE 1333
WILLIAM JONES THOMAS
Police Constable 319
Glamorgan Constabulary
Died on 13th April 1917.



LANCE SERGEANT 1245
FRANK TROTT
Police Constable 324
Glamorgan Constabulary
Died on 11th November 1918.



LANCE CORPORAL 1101
WILLIAM JAMES WILLIAMS
Police Constable 225
Glamorgan Constabulary
Killed in action on 1st July 1916.

BRAVERY AWARDS



**DISTINGUISHED
CONDUCT MEDAL**



MILITARY MEDAL

WE REMEMBER BELOW THOSE POLICE OFFICERS FROM OUR PREDECESSOR FORCES WHO WERE RECOGNISED FOR THEIR BRAVERY WHILST SERVING WITH THE WELSH GUARDS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR.



ALBERT EVAN JOHNSON

Albert Evan Johnson was Constable 542 of the Glamorgan

Constabulary, who came from Yeovil in Somerset and was stationed at Gorseinon at the outbreak of war. He joined the Welsh Guards as Private 1795 and was eventually promoted to Sergeant. He was awarded the Military Medal for his bravery in, as a newspaper report of the time described it, “putting an enemy gun out of action in a charge” whilst police records state that it

was for “capturing an enemy blockhouse and prisoners” in October 1917. He was wounded during his service on the Western Front. After the War he returned to police duties and was stationed at Pontardulais for many years before retiring as a sergeant in 1945.

ARTHUR GEORGE HAM

Arthur George Ham was originally from Somerset and was a Neath policeman. He became Private 1663 in the Welsh Guards and was eventually promoted to Sergeant.

He was awarded the Military Medal during his service on the Western Front and on 28th March 1918, the London Gazette announced the

award to him, as a Corporal, of the Distinguished Conduct Medal with the following citation:

"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in an attack. He rushed his Lewis gun forward under heavy fire and engaged some enemy machine guns which were giving trouble. On reaching the enemy's trench he got a captured machine gun into action against the enemy and was of the greatest assistance in organising machine gun teams and getting the guns into action. His cheerfulness and courage were a splendid example to all."

After his war service he returned to police duties in Neath.



THOMAS NORGATE

Thomas Norgate was Police Constable 471 in the Glamorgan

Constabulary and stationed at Gowerton at the start of the War. Originally from Ropley in Hampshire, he joined the Welsh Guards as Private 1889 on 5th August 1915 and during his service on the Western Front was awarded the Military Medal. Police records state that it was for "bravery and devotion to duty whilst acting as a stretcher

bearer" on 31st July 1917. He was presented with his medal by the Chief Constable of Glamorgan, Captain Lionel Lindsay, at a civic reception for the Glamorgan Constabulary held in Barry on Armistice Day, 11th November 1918. He was discharged from the army on 14th December 1918 due to his wounds and was awarded a Silver War Badge in recognition of the fact.

ANTHONY AUGUSTUS WEST

Anthony Augustus West was a Glamorgan Constabulary police officer stationed at Port Talbot who, after returning to police duties following the First World War, became an Inspector in the force. During the war he served with the Welsh Guards as Private 758. He was presented with the Military Medal for bravery by Captain Lindsay at the same civic ceremony in Barry at which Thomas Norgate received his medal as mentioned above. After the war he was, for many years, chairman of the East Glamorgan Branch of the Welsh Guards Comrades Association.

WILLIAM JONES

William Jones was born in Llangeler near Newcastle Emlyn in Carmarthenshire in 1891. The family moved to live at Pencastell Farm in Cymmer, following the re-marriage

of his widowed mother. He worked on the farm until he joined the Glamorgan Constabulary shortly before the outbreak of war at which time he was stationed at Maesteg as Constable 684. He joined the Welsh Guards as Private 1189. He was awarded the Military Medal for bravery on the Western Front. The History of the Welsh Guards in the First World War states that on 9th July 1916, Private West (mentioned above) and Private W. Jones were presented with their Military Medal ribbons by Major General Feilding. They were also members of a party, which included Lance Corporal 1245 Trott (PC 324 Glamorgan), which represented the Guards Division at a parade in Paris on 14th July.

The "Glamorgan Gazette" for 4th August 1914 reproduced a letter from Private W.J. Thomas, Welsh Guards to a police colleague:

"Our boys-the Welsh Guards-went over the top and were very successful. They gained the lines of trenches, and are still holding them. Several were killed and wounded. P. C. William Jones, of Maesteg, went with an officer into the German trenches and brought back two prisoners. The officer took his name and recommended him, and he now wears the Military Medal ribbon."

On the other hand, the "Police Review" for 22nd September 1916

reported that he had received it in the following circumstances:

"...for carrying Lance Corporal E. J. Taylor, Welsh Guards, who was mortally wounded, across a fire-swept zone into a place of safety. They were comrades in the Police Force previous to joining the Army."

The Lance Corporal Taylor referred to was formerly PC 62 Edward John Taylor of the Glamorgan Constabulary also stationed at Maesteg before the War, who died on 8th May 1916 aged 26.

Whatever the position may have been, what is not in doubt is the bravery of William Jones. Sadly, he died of wounds on 10th September 1916 aged 25. He has no known grave but is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme and on the Glamorgan Police War Memorial at Bridgend.



DAVID J. EVANS

David J. Evans was originally from Bedwas. He was a constable in the Cardiff City

Police stationed at Cathays Police Station before he joined the Welsh Guards as Private 1360, later being promoted to corporal. He was awarded the Military Medal during his service on the Western Front.

THE GREAT WAR CENTENARY

1914-1918  2014-2018

South Wales Police is currently gathering information about the many police officers from our predecessor forces of Glamorgan, Swansea, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath and Cardiff who served in the armed forces during the First World War.

We want to ensure we uncover as much information as possible about our proud history, and the many men who served both the force and their country to ensure they are never forgotten.

All the stories and information collected,

including photographs, letters and newspaper coverage from that time will be shared online and on Facebook.

To make a contribution please email:
[policemuseum@
south-wales.pnn.police.uk](mailto:policemuseum@south-wales.pnn.police.uk)

FIRST WORLD WAR PROJECT GROUP

Gareth Madge (Chair),
Danny Richards, Robin Mellor, Peter Wright,
Paul Wood, Daryl Fahey,
Allison Tennant, Coral Cole, together with Philip Davies of the Western Front Association.



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