

# First World War Military Sites: Infrastructure and Support

## Report and Gazetteer



Llywodraeth Cymru  
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Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd  
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

# First World War Military Sites: Infrastructure and Support

## Report and Gazetteer

Project No. G2180

Report No. 1370

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# FIRST WORLD WAR MILITARY SITES: INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT

## GAT PROJECT NO. G2180

## GAT REPORT NO. 1370

### Report and Gazetteer

#### SUMMARY

*This report describes the results of a study, carried out by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust and grant aided by Cadw, of First World War sites in north-west Wales coming under the theme of “infrastructure and support”. It focuses particularly on the military and auxiliary hospitals in the area but also looks at a range of activities that local people in north-west Wales undertook to help the war effort. This includes efforts to increase in food production and forestry, the work of local societies and the use of existing buildings to accommodate soldiers during training and Belgian refugees. Over all 93 sites have been identified and included in the gazetteer (appendix I). All the sites are included in an Access database to assist inclusion into the HER, and there is an accompanying MapInfo table of polygons. The history and background of these sites are considered and their current condition was checked and recorded at a basic level. The work for this project was undertaken in the financial year 2016-17.*

Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn disgrifio canlyniadau astudiaeth, a gynhaliwyd gan Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd gyda chymorth grant gan Cadw, o safleoedd Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf yng ngogledd-orllewin Cymru dan y thema “isadeiledd a chefnogaeth.” Mae'n canolbwyntio'n benodol ar yr ysbytai milwrol ac ategol yn yr ardal, ond hefyd yn edrych ar ystod o weithgareddau y gwnaeth pobl leol yng Ngogledd-orllewin Cymru ymgymryd â nhw i helpu ymdrech y rhyfel. Roedd hyn yn cynnwys ymdrechion i gynyddu cynhyrchu bwyd a choedwigaeth, gwaith cymdeithasau lleol a defnyddio adeiladau presennol i letya ffoaduriaid o Wlad Belg a milwyr yn ystod hyfforddiant. Mae dros 93 o safleoedd wedi cael eu hadnabod a'u cynnwys yn y mynegai daearyddol (atodiad I). Mae'r holl safleoedd wedi cael eu cynnwys mewn cronfa ddata Access i gynorthwyo eu cynnwys yn y Cofnod Amgylchedd Hanesyddol (HER) ac mae yna dabl MapInfo o bolygonau. Mae hanes a chefnidir y safleoedd hyn yn cael eu hystyried a chafodd eu cyflwr presennol ei wirio a'i gofnodi ar lefel sylfaenol. Cafodd y gwaith ar y prosiect hwn ei wneud yn ystod y flwyddyn ariannol 2016-17.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

This project is part of a pan-Wales initiative to identify and record the most significant elements of twentieth century military architecture across the country and to inform designation and management priorities. With the centenary of the First World War sites of this period are the focus of the project for 2014 to 2018. The 2013-14 phase of the project comprised a programme of baseline data collection and a pilot field study. From 2014 the project is to focus each year on a theme identified in the CBA publication *Modern Military Matters* (Schofield 2004). These are listed as:-

- Military landscapes
- Research and Development and manufacturing
- Infrastructure and support
- Operations
- Commemoration

For the year 2016-17 the theme was Infrastructure and Support. A major focus for this theme has been hospitals and convalescent homes as many hundreds of thousands of wounded soldiers required nursing after being returned from the front. However the civilian public provided support for the war effort in a wide variety of ways and this report attempts to investigate this support and identify associated localities and physical remains. This includes agricultural and forestry work specifically focused on supplying the war effort, and the role of numerous social organisations and other groups including the Women's Institute in war work and support services.

Addition aspects have been included that perhaps best fit under this theme than under the others. These include

billeting for soldiers in training and the provision of accommodation to Belgian refugees, both of which involved using existing civic and private buildings. Remembering conscientious objectors in histories of the First World War is often difficult and the themes used for this project seem almost specifically designed to exclude them. The Infrastructure and Support theme has therefore been chosen as the most suitable place to include at least some locations related to conscientious objectors to ensure that they are not entirely forgotten and to represent the fact that although the war was widely supported by the public this support was not unanimous.

The aim of the project is to locate sites related to this theme, establish as much of their history as can be obtained from easily available resources and determine whether physical remains still survive. The results are therefore very site based with some general background to place the sites and their functions in context. A very large number of civilians each made their own small contribution to the war effort but combined these contributions made a major impact on the success of the war. The nature of this particular theme reflects these small contributions and many of the sites recorded are minor individually but together reflect the extent and variety of civilian support for the war effort.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

Figure 1 shows a general distribution plot of sites covered in this report. Where there are several sites within an area they are shown on a series of more local maps (figures 2 to 8).

### **2.1. Desk Top Study**

The desk-based study started with the compilation of material from the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record (HER) and National Monuments Record (NMR). These were combined into a database with grid references allowing comparison to other source material through a Global Information System (GIS), in this case MapInfo. The third edition County Series maps were used to check the location and extent of sites just before or during the First World War. The information in the basic database was supplemented by and checked against available primary and secondary sources.

The number of sites already on the HER and NMR was small, with hospitals best represented but a great many of the auxiliary hospitals were missing and a few of the entries on the HER were confused. A list of auxiliary hospitals provided by the Red Cross on their website ([www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)) was critical to identifying hospitals but this list provided no real locational information and some of the place names were mis-transcribed and confused.

Some information was found by a search of Bangor University Archives and the Record Offices for Gwynedd, Anglesey and Conwy, but here the information was often fragmentary and in the form of notes on photographs or other clues that supported information gathered elsewhere. The most valuable sources of information were the contemporary newspapers, mostly accessed through Welsh Newspapers Online.

Much of the research on sites covered by this theme has been done by local or subject specific researchers and appears on websites on line such as [www.workhouses.org.uk](http://www.workhouses.org.uk) and Scarlet Finders ([www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)). Other sites such as [geography.org.uk](http://www.geography.org.uk)<sup>1</sup> were also useful for hints on where hospitals might be located. The internet has therefore been heavily used for this project but evidence obtained from internet sources has been checked against published and archive sources. The combination of clues from the websites with names on the County Series maps often enabled locations of buildings to be identified and a search of newspapers on Welsh Newspapers Online or the 1914.org website enabled their use to be confirmed and often precise dates and other details to be obtained. Without access to digitised and searchable newspaper resources like these the level of historical detail that has been included in this report would have been impossible in a project of this size.

Secondary published sources, especially local histories, were used in a similar way to information from websites. Such publications often do not give locations for the sites that they mention or assume sufficient local knowledge for the reader to identify the sites. By using the maps to try and locate the sites and the newspapers to provide confirmation and dates local histories could provide specific sites that could be included in the gazetteer.

Buildings and sites covering larger areas have been defined by polygons created in MapInfo and recorded in MapInfo tables with metadata as recommended by Gwynedd HER. Where precise locations of sites could not

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1 <http://www.geography.org.uk/article/Auxiliary-Hospitals/6>

be established obviously polygons would have been of minimal use, although approximate grid references allow future researchers to carry on the search in the correct area.

## **2.2. Fieldwork**

Once a full list of sites had been obtained these were compared to modern aerial photographs to determine whether buildings and other obvious features survived. This enabled the many destroyed sites to be identified and this is recorded in the database so it can be included in the HER. A selection of surviving sites was made for site visits. As these could only involve external inspections of easily accessible buildings not all were inspected as relatively little extra information was likely to be obtained. In a small number of cases it was suspected that earthwork or foundation remains might survive on open ground and these sites were prioritized for site visits. These visits involved a brief walk-over of the site to check current condition and survival of features.

## **2.3. Report**

This report describes the background and methodology of the project, and the results of the fieldwork. It is usual that a confidential report accompanies the main report providing recommendations for scheduling and future research. However in this case, as discussed below, the nature of the sites meant that none are recommended for scheduling. There is a separate confidential report done as part of this project on the Cefn Du Marconi Transmitter Station.

The present report incorporates a gazetteer of sites (appendix I), which has been generated from the Access database accompanying this report. The database is designed to aid input into the HER and includes Welsh translations for site names and for the site summaries.

## **2.4. Archiving**

The digital archive generated from the project will be archived with the RCAHMS, who share with Historic Scotland a facility for the active curation of files. This archiving will be carried out at the end of the whole project in 2019.

## **2.5. Outreach**

Information from this phase of the project was disseminated via the GAT website and talks to local societies. The main outreach focus was concentrated on a day school, run in partnership with CPAT and Storiell, on the Home Front in the First World War in North Wales. This took place on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at Storiell, Bangor, coinciding with an important photographic exhibition by Aled Rhys Hughes relating to the Battle of Mametz Wood. There were five speakers at the Day School:-

Jane Kenney, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust: *What We Did in the War: The Home Front in WWI in Anglesey, Caernarfonshire and Merioneth*

Dr Frances Richardson, Friends of St Julitta's Church: *Caernarfonshire Women in World War One*  
Deanna Groom, Royal Commission: *Commemorating the Forgotten U-boat War around the Welsh Coast 1914-18*

Jeff Spencer, Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust: *Aspects of the Home Front in North-East Wales 1914-18*

Roger Thomas, Historic England: *Lions, not Lambs to the Slaughter – the training of Kitchener's Army*

The day ended with a visit to the North Wales Heroes Memorial Arch, the history of which was related by Don Mathew, Bangor Civic Society. There was also an exhibition about Capel Curig during the War produced and supplied by Friends of St Julitta's Church, and First World War objects for inspection provided by Harvey Lloyd of Friends of St Julitta's Church and by Roger Thomas.

Thirty people attended and 4 volunteers assisted in organising the day and serving tea and coffee. Two of the speakers also had voluntary assistance with displays and objects. With speakers, volunteers, assistants and staff 45 people in total attended the day.

The event was largely organised by Dan Amor, outreach officer and Rob Evans also assisted on the day. Andrew Davidson introduced the day and chaired the morning talks and Jane Kenney chaired the afternoon.

## **2.6. Copyright**

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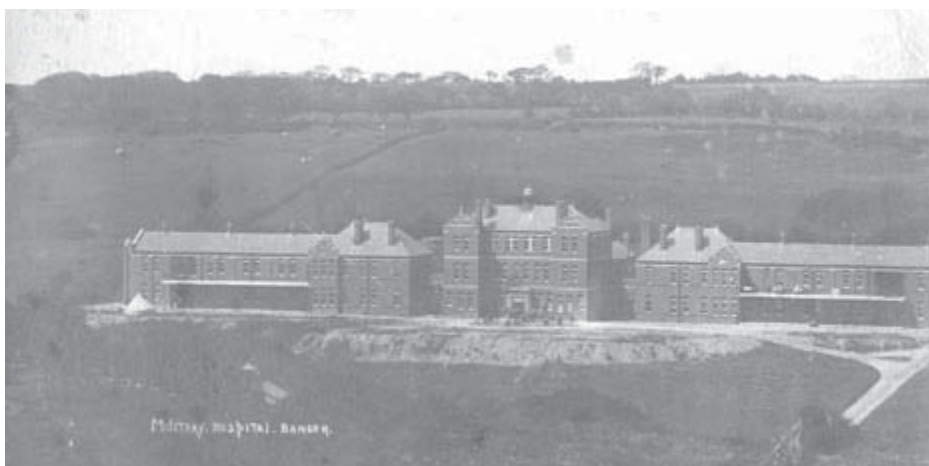


Plate 1. Military Hospital, Bangor, later St. David's Hospital (PRN 62309) (Caernarfon Record Office: XS3277/1)

Plate 2. Nannau, site of the Officers' Neurological Hospital (PRN 19608)



Plate 3. Ty'r Enfys, Trearddur Bay, a non-Red Cross convalescent home (PRN 62302)

Plate 4. Bodlondeb Castle, Church Walks, Llandudno (PRN 11942)



### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. Introduction

See figure 1 for general location of sites and the series of more local maps (figures 2 to 8) where there are several sites in an area.

The First World War is seen by historians as a new kind of war in which civilians were vital in sustaining the war effort and were treated as legitimate targets by the enemy (Beckett 2006, 16). Although most of the actual fighting in the First World War occurred abroad, beyond the limits of our islands, its effects were felt across Britain through the blockade of merchant shipping maintained by the German U-boats and through the efforts needed by the whole country to support the war effort. Merchant shipping was targeted by the Germans and London and the east coast of England were even bombed by airships and aeroplanes (Beckett 2006, 182-4). This is often referred to as a “total war” where the whole of society is involved at some level. Industrial production was obviously focused on war but other economic and social aspects of life also had to be directed towards helping support the soldiers at the front. Food production was of critical importance, not only for the troops but also for the civilian population, especially after the U-boat blockade really began to bite in 1917. The numbers of injured troops were huge, and while they were given initial treatment in field hospitals and in hospitals behind the frontlines, many needed long term treatment and convalescence back in Britain, before they had recovered sufficiently to be sent out to the front to face death and injury again.

Sites relating to these activities are hard to find as they were usually normal residential properties or other buildings the original functions of which were very different to those they were put to during the war. Although many of these buildings are mentioned by local historians their locations are rarely specified and the processes used in this project, as described above, have led to the pinpointing of locations as well as often establishing dates of war use and revealing other historical details. The gazetteer (appendix I) gives a list of new sites that can now be included in the HER, as well as adding new information to existing entries. Some of the new sites are buildings that should be in the HER for other reasons but the larger part of their entries will cover their use during the First World War because of their specific identification during this project.

#### 3.2. Military Hospitals, Auxiliary Hospitals and Convalescent Homes

##### *Background and Military Hospitals*

Very soon after the start of the War the need for hospitals and convalescent homes for soldiers back in Britain was realised. Large military hospitals were established by the War Office and to support these many smaller hospitals and convalescent homes, termed auxiliary hospitals, were set up by the Red Cross.

Existing hospitals were often used for the main military hospitals. In both Bangor and Caernarfon these were nearly new at the time they were taken over by the War Office as they were poor law hospitals that had just been rebuilt to meet modern standards. The New Poor Law Caernarfon Infirmary, also known as Eryri Infirmary or Eryri Hospital and later as Ysbyty Eryri, Caernarfon (PRN 62297) was opened in 1913 to replace the infirmary building associated with the workhouse at Bodfan. In December 1914 it was proposed that the hospital be used for wounded soldiers, but it was not until January 1916 that the workhouse patients were moved out and the soldiers moved in. In July 1917 there were 74 wounded soldiers in the hospital and by January 1919, when the hospital was transferred back to the Workhouse there were still 32 soldiers in residence (Lindsay 1991-92, 81).

In Bangor a military hospital was also established in the recently built Poor Law Infirmary (PRN 62309) (plate 1). This hospital later became the County Hospital and in 1953 its name was changed to St David's Hospital for Women and Children (Povey and Hughes 1994; Cowell 1997, 101; Griffith 1994, 71). The military hospital was initially run with the help of the Red Cross until it was possible to fully staff it with professional nurses. The aim was to establish 200 beds but the initial effort was to supply 50 beds and the first patients, 40 men, arrived on 30th October 1914 (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 14th August 1914, p5; 30th October 1914, p6; 9th April 1915, 5; 6th November 1914, p3). Tents in the hospital grounds were used to increase the number of beds available, as photographs dating from 1915 show (Cowell 1990, 24).

The auxiliary hospitals were set up by local Red Cross branches in any available suitable building, including village halls and private residences. Throughout the War the local branches continued to search for suitable



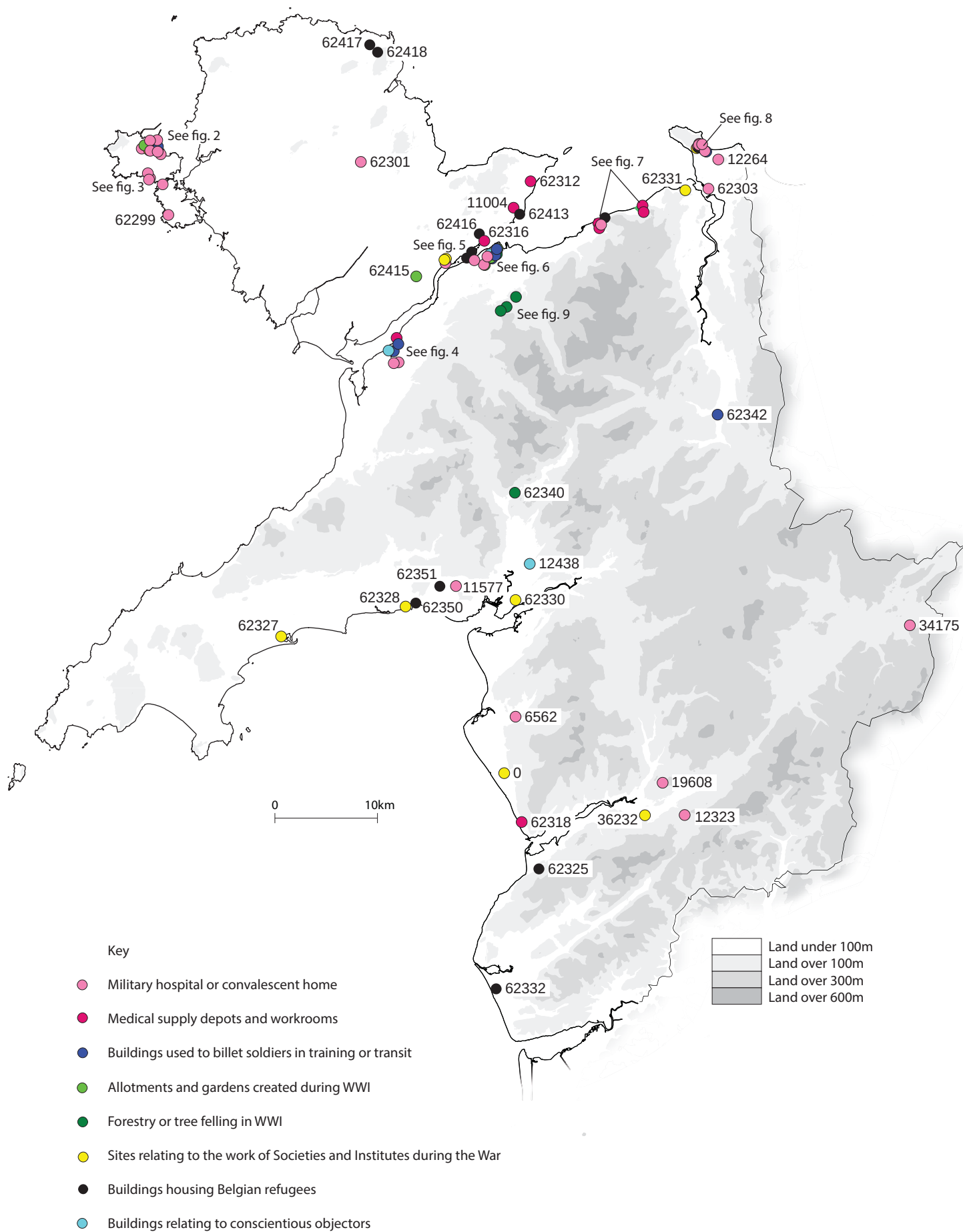


Figure 1. Location of sites studied under the “infrastructure and support” theme (with PRNs for those not shown on more detailed maps)







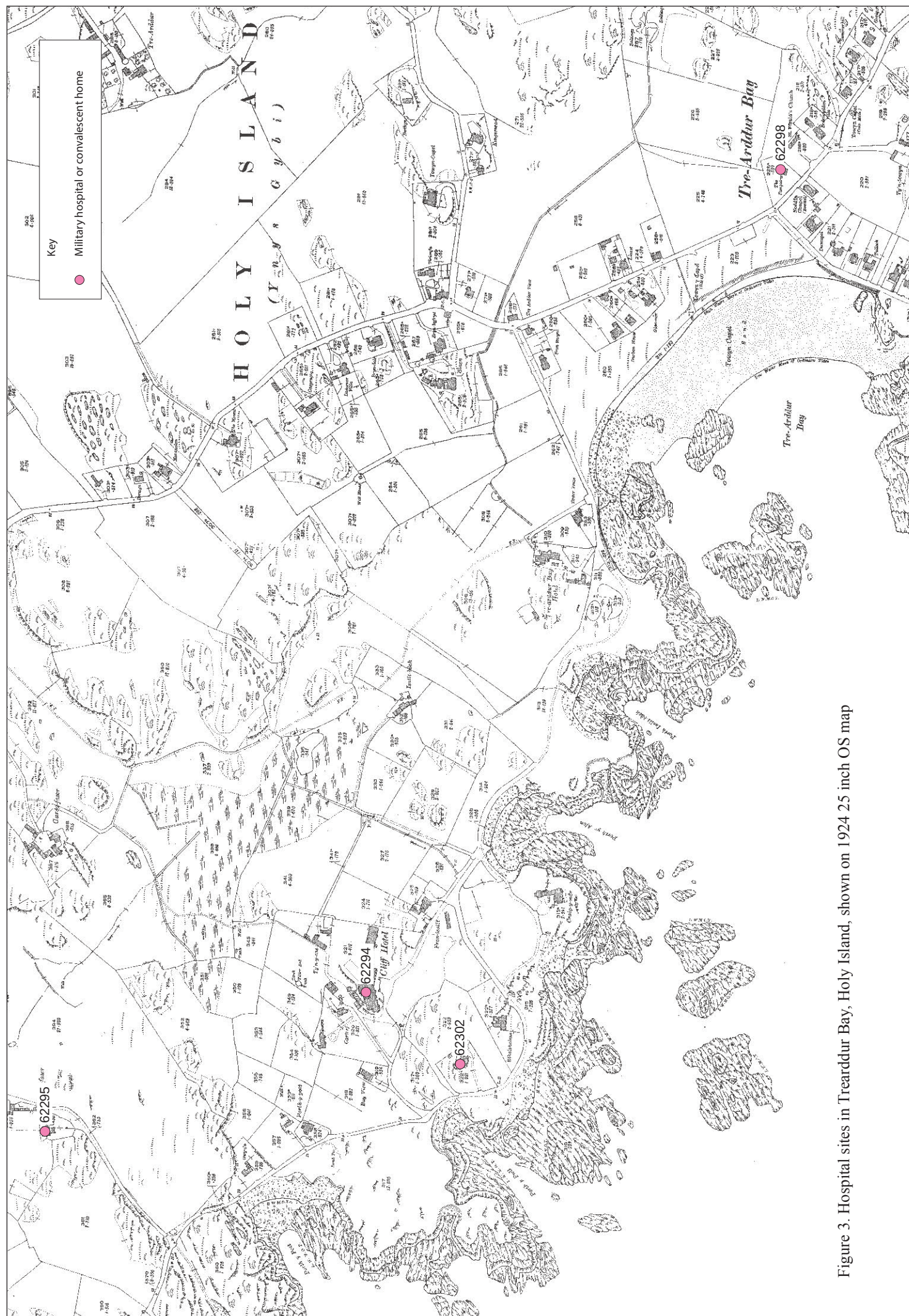


Figure 3. Hospital sites in Trearddur Bay, Holy Island, shown on 1924 25 inch OS map







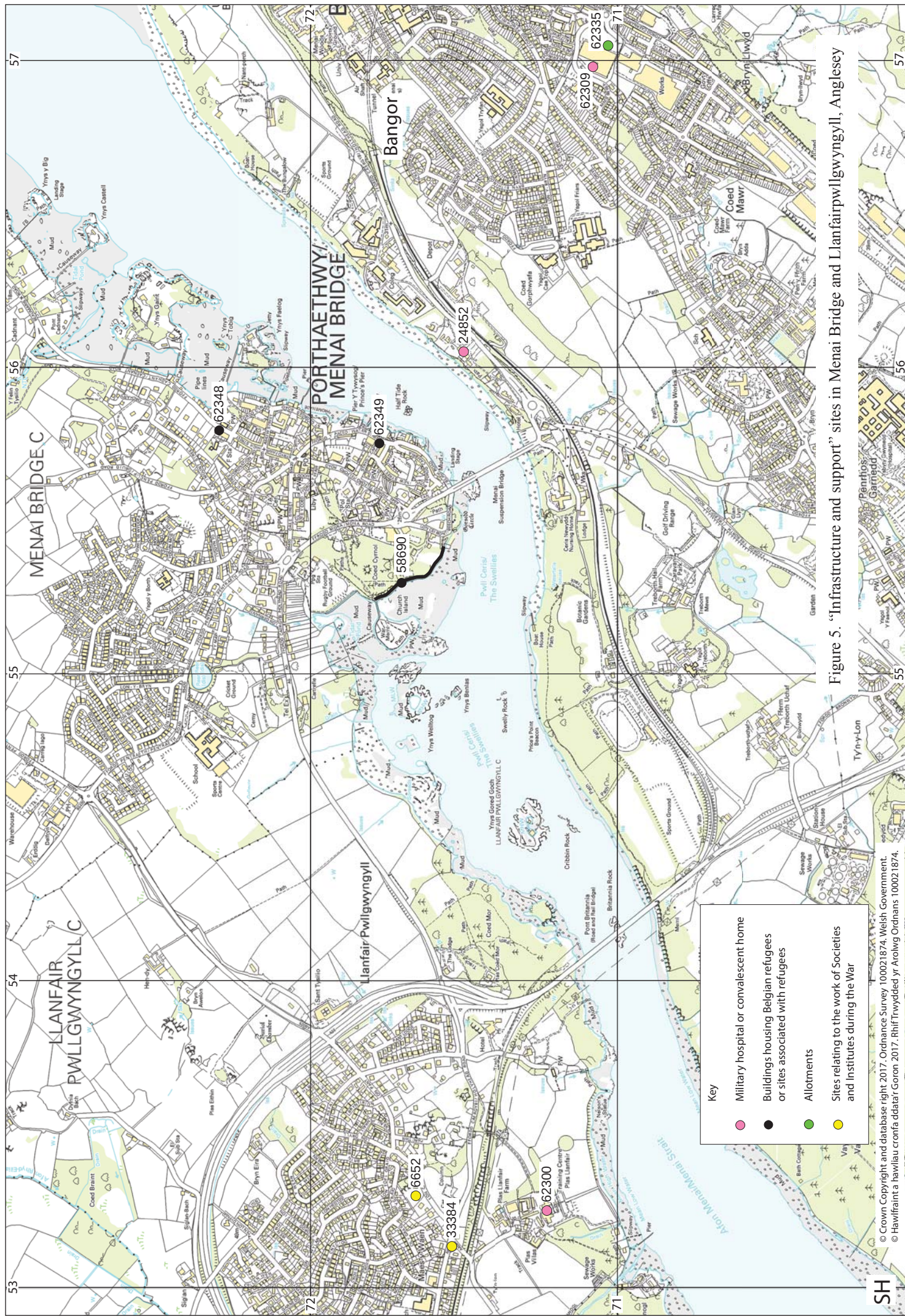


Figure 5. “Infrastructure and support” sites in Menai Bridge and Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, Anglesey









Figure 7. “Infrastructure and support” sites in Llanfairfechan and Penmaenmawr







locations for hospitals as the need increased. In 1918 the Anglesey branch of the Red Cross was having trouble finding suitable buildings, although several had been offered to it including Plas Newydd, the problem largely being getting patients to the hospitals when they were some distance from a railway. There was also a problem with acquiring new volunteer nurses at this stage of the war as most local women were already committed to other war work (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 26<sup>th</sup> April 1918, p3).

The auxiliary hospitals were staff mainly by volunteers. These came from the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) originally set up by the War Office in 1909 to ensure enough nursing personnel in case of a war without having to employ large numbers of professional nurses. By 1914, 1757 female detachments and 519 male detachments had been registered with the War Office. These volunteers were not paid and in peacetime had to meet regularly and train and prepare for potential war. When the War started they were therefore well-prepared to assist professional nurses. Between 70,000 and 100,000 women are estimated to have served with the VADs during the First World War across Britain ([www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)). Trained nurses could enrol for paid war work and worked in the military hospitals and at the front but untrained women from all backgrounds could join the VADs as volunteers and receive training (Grayzel 2002, 39). VADs were set up across North Wales in the few years before the War with the Holyhead Detachment being formed in 1911, so that by the War broke out Holyhead already had trained nurses available and wounded soldiers were being cared for as early as October 1914 (Roberts 1920, 4).

Many auxiliary hospitals had a professional matron, but in the majority of cases even the matron was a volunteer. In Holyhead only two of the hospitals had professional matrons, the rest had purely voluntary staff (Roberts 1920, 4). It was quite common in north-west Wales for the lady of the house, who had volunteered its use, to become the commandant of her hospital.

Soldiers also used civilian hospitals, especially where they were suffering from diseases that required isolation or specific treatments. The Brynseiont Tuberculosis Hospital was opened in 1916 and was never adopted as a military hospital but a photograph (CRO: XS/1515/4) taken during the war shows military patients, including a black soldier, who must have been suffering from TB (Gwyn and Brooks 2013, 14). Generally the auxiliary hospitals were in addition to civilian hospitals, ensuring additional beds for soldiers without limiting care available to civilians. William (2002, 117) records that the Maesdu Emergency Hospital in Llandudno was offered to the Red Cross and that they proposed to use it for infectious cases, but no evidence has been found that it was ever used by the Red Cross, so this offer may not have been taken up, probably because it was required for civilian use. There has been some confusion about Conwy Workhouse (PRN 7983) being used as a military hospital but Draper (2005, 197-201), who has studied the history in detail, is quite clear that the workhouse continued in that function throughout the First World War. The workhouse did however support some impoverished ex-soldiers and the families of soldiers fighting on the front, especially when the mother died and the children were left unprovided for (Draper 2005, 197-201).

While most of the hospitals were simply for convalescence some were more specialised. A neurological hospital was set up within the house and grounds at Nannau, Dolgellau (PRN 19608) (plate 2). It was used for officers with shell shock, giving specialist but not prolonged treatment (Slyfield 2004). Officers with spinal injuries were also sent to Nannau (Silver 2003). Shell shock was becoming understood as a genuine illness and some 80,000 British soldiers were identified with the illness in the First World War (Slyfield 2004). However it seemed more likely that officers would be diagnosed and treated rather than the men. The commandant of the hospital was Louisa Vaughan, the lady of the house, and the specialist in charge was Sir Alfred Bakewell Howitt. The hospital opened on 11th February 1918 and was in use until May 1921, when the house was handed back to the Vaughan family (Slyfield 2004; Nanney Williams 2016, 233, 237).

Some long established hospitals were adapted for war use, such as the Stanley Sailor's Hospital (PRN 58710). This was established on Salt Island, Holyhead, in November 1871, but extended to provide extra accommodation during the War, including extra sleeping quarters, a recreation room and a new bathroom. The extended hospital could accommodate 30 patients, with further ward accommodation added in 1916. From 1916 to 1919 over 1400 patients were treated in the hospital, including men from all over the world (Roberts 1920, 6-7; Roberts and Lancefield 1997, 80-83). Miss Jane Henrietta Adeane, a niece of WO Stanley of Penrhos, who had been closely involved with the hospital before the War, was the hospital commandant. She provided funding for the expansion of the hospital and accommodated nurses in her own house, Plas Llanfawr (PRN 62414), and was rewarded by being appointed Dame of the British Empire for her war services (Roberts and Lancefield 1997, 80-83).



Plate 5. Wounded soldiers and nurses  
outside Plas Trescawen (PRN 62301)  
(Courtesy of Anglesey Archives WSP/151)



Plate 6. Plas Tudno, Llandudno, a non-Red  
Cross hospital (PRN 62305)



CAERYNWCH HALL HOTEL

Plate 7. Caerynwch Hall, Brithdir  
(PRN 12323)  
(Courtesy of Dolgellau Record Office  
ZS/2/113 (date unknown))



Plate 8. Pale Hall, Corwen (PRN 34175),  
in about 1875, shortly after it was built  
(Wikimedia Commons image)



The work to care for wounded soldiers continued after the end of the War as there were still numerous soldiers who were recovering from their injuries or who would be permanently disabled. The Stanley Sailor's Hospital (PRN 58710) continued to be a convalescent home for disabled servicemen (Roberts 1920, 7). A new facility was created in the Lady Thomas Convalescent Home for Discharged and Disabled Soldiers and Sailors, also in Holyhead (PRN 62321), which was opened on 14th July 1919 by Mrs Lloyd George (Jones and Jones Rowlinson 2015; Roberts 1920, 20). It was based on a building called "Gors", an unfinished mansion on the estate of RJ Thomas MP. This was rearranged and extended to create the Home, in which there were two 19 bed wards, a 6 bed ward, a sick ward, a billiards room, recreation and work rooms, offices and a dispensary. Lady Thomas was the commandant (Roberts 1920, 20).

### ***Auxiliary Hospitals***

There was a significant number of auxiliary hospitals and convalescent homes in north-west Wales. These were fairly widely scattered throughout the area but did concentrate in certain locations where suitable large buildings were available, preferably not too far from a railway. Identifying the hospitals on the list provided by the Red Cross is not always simple. The Red Cross lists the "Bungalow Auxiliary Hospital, Trearddur Bay, near Holyhead" (PRN 62298), which was possibly in a house known as The Bungalow on Lôn St Ffraid, but the identification is due to this being the only building given this name on the 25 inch maps. A hint in an autograph book in Anglesey Archives suggests that Bungalow Auxiliary Hospital may possibly be the same as Isallt Fawr (PRN 62295), which was also a hospital in Trearddur Bay, but confusingly not a bungalow. The Red Cross also list "Hill Auxiliary Hospital, Holyhead", which may be the same as Llys y Gwynt, due to the position of this house but it's identification is not certain.

Not all hospitals caring for soldiers during the War were listed in the Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals. Ty'r Enfys, Trearddur Bay (PRN 62302) (plate 3) is not on the Red Cross list but is named as a convalescent home by Roberts (1920, 4). Bodlondeb Castle, Church Walks, Llandudno (PRN 11942) (plate 4) is recorded in local histories as having been a hospital but the accuracy of this was doubted until a contemporary newspaper report was located mentioning that the building had been let for "our wounded soldiers" (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 3rd December 1915, p4). Plas Llanfair, Llanfairpwllgwyngyll (PRN 62300) is reported as being used as a temporary convalescent home for wounded servicemen (Jones 2012, 8), but no evidence of this has been found in the newspapers. Jones (2012, 8) also mentions Plas Tre-Ysgawen or Trescawen, Capel Coch (PRN 62301) as a convalescent home but there are some photographs of this in use, providing confirmation (plate 5), which would probably also be forthcoming for Plas Llanfair with more research. Plas Tudno, Llandudno (PRN 62305) (plate 6) was also an auxiliary hospital but is specifically stated as not being a Red Cross hospital (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th November 1917, p4). It therefore appears that several independent hospitals were set up, explaining some of the gaps in the Red Cross list.

Holyhead and Trearddur Bay had a notable concentration of hospitals and convalescent homes (figures 2 and 3). The hospitals were busy throughout the War and over 3000 patients passed through the hospitals in the Holyhead area (Roberts 1920, 4). The first VAD hospital in Holyhead, and one of the first in the region, was set up in the Assembly Rooms (PRN 58713), Holborn Road, Holyhead. It was opened in October 1914 and, like many hospitals in the area, took in wounded Belgian as well as British soldiers (Roberts 1920, 4; Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal, 20th November 1914, p5). Llandudno was another place where there was a concentration of hospitals due to the number of large properties that were offered to the Red Cross for use.

Merionethshire had only four auxiliary hospitals; Aberartro, Caernwch, Pale and the neurological hospital at Nannau, Dolgellau (PRN 19608). Mrs Antonia Marian Owen ran a Red Cross hospital for about 40 patients in Aberartro Hall, Llanbedr (PRN 6562). A hospital was run for two years in Caernwch Hall (PRN 12323) (plate 7), Brithdir, near Dolgellau closing on 22 March 1919 ([mylearning.org](http://mylearning.org)<sup>2</sup>) and run by Mary Richards, a keen botanist, who won the Royal Red Cross Medal for her work in the hospital (Condry 1998, 6). Palé Hall, near Corwen (PRN 34175) (plate 8) was handed over by its owner Sir Henry Robertson in September 1917 for use as a military hospital, run by a matron and staffed by local volunteers who had been trained by the St John's Ambulance Association (Llangollen Advertiser, 28<sup>th</sup> September 1917, p8). It seems to have been in use until the end of the war.

Many of the Red Cross auxiliary hospitals were established in private houses and the commandant of the hospital was usually the lady of the house. The wealthy, in particular, who had large mansions were often keen to have that space used for the war effort by converting part or all of their houses into hospitals. On the death of Fanny

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2      <http://www.mylearning.org/ww1-home-front-at-dr-williams-school-dolgellau/p-4877/>



Plate 9. Baron Hill (PRN 11004)  
from the air as it is now in a very  
ruined state



Plate 10. Soldiers and their pets at Bodlondeb  
Hospital, Bangor, c.1916 (PRN 24852) ((CP  
1206/4/47) image provided courtesy of Conwy  
Archives Service)



Plate 11. The Jewish Chabad  
Retreat Centre that may formerly  
have been Red Court Red Cross  
Hospital, Church Walks, Llandudno  
(PRN 62306)



Plate 12. The Penrhyn Cottage VAD  
Hospital, Bangor (PRN 62293)  
(made available on the internet by  
[salfordwarmemorials.proboards.com](http://salfordwarmemorials.proboards.com))



North, the architect Herbert Luck North's mother, in 1917 Plas Llanfair (Y Plas), Llanfairfechan (PRN 62304) was converted into Plas VAD Auxiliary Military Hospital (Roberts 2012, 13-14). Lady Magdalen Bulkeley, as well as running a Red Cross workroom at Baron Hill, Beaumaris (PRN 11004) (plate 9), seems to have taken in convalescent wounded soldiers (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 21st May 1915, p6). Lady Bulkeley was the president of the Anglesey Branch of the Red Cross and a meeting held very soon after the start of the war to consider the locations of hospitals was held at Baron Hill (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 14<sup>th</sup> August 1914, p5; 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1915, p5).

The whole of Wern Manor, Dolbenmaen (PRN 11577) was lent, rent free, to the Red Cross by Mr and Mrs Greaves, for use as a hospital. The Greaves also provided water, electricity, heating, and food such as vegetables and rabbits. The first patients arrived on 13th December 1915 and by July 1917 there were 41 patients. David Lloyd George's daughter Olwen spent part of her Christmas holiday nursing at the hospital (Cambria Daily Leader 9th January 1917, p1). Near Bangor Bodlondeb (PRN 24852) was converted into a Red Cross convalescent home under the command of the owner, Henry Rees Davies's, sister-in-law, Mrs John Davies of Ceris (Cowell 1990, 26 and 1997, 95), while Henry Rees Davies himself was away on active. In early May 1915 20 wounded soldiers were received at Bodlondeb, being delivered by train to Menai Bridge station from which they were taken to the hospital in cars lent by local residents (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 14th May 1915, p5) (plate 10). Later in the month 23 soldiers injured in the Dardanelles arrived. Some were Australian and one was "Russian", actually Polish from Warsaw but that part of Poland was under Russian control at the time (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 28th May 1915, p8).

In the Holyhead area several more modest houses were in use as convalescent homes for wounded servicemen; including Ty Wrideen (or Ty Wridin), Roscolyn (PRN 62299), Isallt Fawr, Trearddur Bay (PRN 62295) and Llys y Gwynt, Llanfawr Close, Holyhead (PRN 62296) (Roberts 1920, 4; Jones 2012, 8). Ty Wrideen had 12 beds and was set up and maintained by Sir H. M. Grayson at his own expense (Roberts 1920, 4). Many of these houses still survive, some largely unchanged. Red Court Hospital, Church Walks, Llandudno (PRN 62306) (plate 11) is another example of a private house, in this case the home of Mr WG Lecomber, handed over to the Red Cross for conversion into a hospital. By 1st January 1915 it was fully equipped and ready to receive patients (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 1st January 1915, p7).

One of the most well-known and well-supported hospitals was the Penrhyn Cottage VAD Hospital, Bangor (PRN 62293) (plate 12). The hospital was established in a property in Upper Bangor called Llwyneithin lent by Lord Penrhyn, now part of Hillgrove School, Ffriddoedd Road. Cowell (1990, 25) suggests that Llwyn Eithin and the Penrhyn Cottage Hospital were two separate hospitals, but the newspaper reports make it clear that these were the same place.

The use of existing convalescent homes was an obvious development. A home for shipwrecked sailors run by the British and Foreign Sailors' Society was loaned to the Holyhead VAD for conversion into a hospital (Roberts 1920, 4; Jones 2012, 8), became known as the Beach Auxiliary Hospital, and could accommodate 80 patients (Roberts 1920, 4). This home is often thought to have been the Stanley Sailors' Home, Newry (PRN 58712) (plate 13), but research for this project suggests that it was a new home not far away, probably a building named as "Sailors' Rest" on the 1924 25 inch map, located on St David's Street (PRN 62669). The Lady Forrester Convalescent Home, Llandudno (PRN 12264) (plates 14 and 15), being an existing convalescent home, was not under the Red Cross, even though it was converted to an auxiliary military hospital during the war and cared for both British and Belgian soldiers (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th November 1917, p4; 1st January 1915, p7). By 1915 the Edward Malam Convalescent Home, Degannwy (PRN 62303) (plate 16), built in 1913 for convalescent and recuperative holidays for the people of North Staffordshire, was in use as a military auxiliary hospital not under the authority of the Red Cross (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 3rd December 1915, p7; 25th February 1916, p4). The Home was partly staffed by Degannwy V.A.D. Carnarvon 14 (Adrian Hughes (Home Front Museum, Llandudno) pers. com.).

Hotels were particularly suitable buildings to adapt as hospitals. The Cliff Hotel, Trearddur Bay (PRN 62294) (plate 17), known during the First World War as the Darien Hotel, was used as a VAD hospital and also took some Belgian soldiers (Roberts 1920, 4). The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser (20th November 1914, p6) states that 8 detachments of VADs are employed at the Darien Hotel. A former YMCA Hostel was used in Llandudno as a hospital. This was the Balmoral Red Cross Hospital, Llandudno (PRN 62308) (plate 18) opened in December 1915 on Trinity Square. In May 1917 an extension was opened in two houses opposite on Charlton Street, which increased the total beds to 100 (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 4th May 1917, p3). However this still was



Plate 13. Holyhead Sea Cadets' hall  
formerly the Stanley Sailors' Home,  
Newry, Holyhead (PRN 58712)

Plate 14. Patients at the Lady  
Forrester Home during the War  
(PRN 12264) (photograph courtesy  
of Adrian Hughes, Home Front  
Museum, Llandudno)

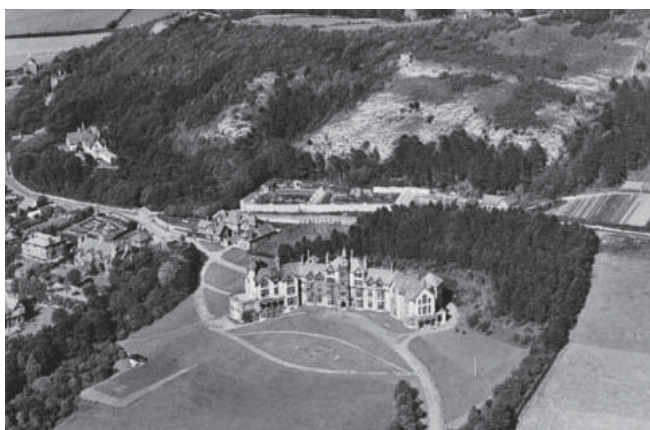


Plate 15. Lady Forester Convalescent  
Home, Llandudno (PRN 12264)  
(Copyright RCAHMW)

Plate 16. Malam Court  
formerly the Edward  
Malam Home, Warren  
Drive, Degannwy (PRN  
62303)





not enough and huts were erected in the grounds of Trinity Church, to provide a further 20 beds (William 2002, 117; Adrian Hughes (Home Front Museum, Llandudno) pers. com.).

The auxiliary hospitals relied on the generosity of local people to provide money, food and other supplies and often advertised in the local newspapers for assistance. There were regular collections of eggs and vegetables to feed the patients (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th February 1917, p5). In some areas there were VAD groups where there were no hospitals but they helped supply other hospitals for example the Aberdaron VAD collected eggs for the Penrhyn Cottage Hospital, Bangor; in March 1916 549 eggs were collected from the Aberdaron area for the hospital (Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 28<sup>th</sup> April 1916, p7). Gifts of food donated to Bodlondeb hospital, Bangor, included 10 brace of partridges and 12 brace of pheasants (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12th October 1917, p8; 2nd March 1917, p8). There are numerous references in the newspapers to donations of food and other supplies to the Penrhyn Cottage Hospital (e.g. North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12th October 1917, p8), but these were not quite enough as Mrs Trench, the vice-president of the Bangor Red Cross Society VAD, requested whether anyone “would kindly give her a little pig for the farming branch of the hospital” (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 14th April, 1916, p8).

The provision of entertainments by the local people for wounded soldiers in all these hospitals was regularly reported in the newspapers, as was the donation of cigarettes, reading matter and other supplies to improve their comfort. Outings of patients from Wern Udgor to Pwllheli and Porthmadog are recorded with local people raising money to supply teas to the patients (Yr Udgor 26th June 1918, p3; Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 31st January 1919, p7). Bodlondeb patients were entertained by Bangor Choir and had whist drives and billiard tournaments (2nd March 1917, p8). Fund raising events were common to support the hospitals such as a garden fête held in September 1916 by Mrs Grayson to raise money for the Rhoscolyn and Trearddur Bay Nursing Association (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser, 15th September 1916, p7). Even the military hospitals had problems finding resources. In August 1914, not long after the hospital had been requisitioned, William Morgan, the acting chaplain, made a request for reading material, magazines, periodicals and books, for the patients of the Military Hospital in Bangor (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 28<sup>th</sup> August 1914, p5).

### ***Survival of Hospital Buildings***

In general the survival of hospital buildings is good as many were returned to domestic use after the War and have continued in that use ever since. However some of the larger hospitals have been entirely lost; the Bangor Poor Law Infirmary, later St David’s Hospital (PRN 62309), was demolished for a retail park that bears its name, and the site of the Stanley Sailors’ Hospital, Holyhead (PRN 58710) is now under the ferry terminal.

Several of the houses are listed buildings, such as Wern Manor, Dolbenmaen (PRN 11577) and Nannau, Dolgellau (PRN 19608), which are grade II\* listed. With one exception none are listed because of their use as hospitals but that is at least mentioned in the listed building description for Wern Manor. The exception is the Lady Forrester Convalescent Home, Llandudno (PRN 12264), a grade II listed building built as a convalescent home and has been listed for that specifically.

Many of the surviving buildings seem largely unchanged at least externally, e.g. the Edward Malam Home (PRN 62303) is now apartments and called Malam Court but still appears much the same (plate 16), but it seems likely that considerable internal changes have been made. In the case of private dwellings it is unlikely that the temporary alterations necessary to convert them into hospitals have survived. Locating any such remains would involve a detailed inspection of the interiors of these buildings, which was beyond the scope of this study.

Some of the buildings that have survived have been extensively converted. Llwyneithin, Ffriddoedd Road (PRN 62293), which held the Penrhyn Cottage VAD Hospital, Bangor, is now part of Hillgrove School (David Price pers. comm.). The Lady Thomas Convalescent Home for Discharged and Disabled Soldiers and Sailors (PRN 62321) later became the Gors Maternity Hospital and has now been converted into flats (Jones 2012, 8). The Sailor’s Home, Newry (PRN 58712) still survives but is now a Sea Cadet’s training centre (plate 13). Both parts of the Balmoral Red Cross Hospital, Llandudno (PRN 62308) are now smart flats (plate 18), and the Caernarfon military hospital (PRN 62297), which became Ysbyty Eryri, still exists but is now a rehabilitation hospital for the elderly.

There is also survival of information in other forms. Although Plas Llanfair, Llanfairfechan (PRN 62304), the home of St. Winifred’s School for Girls from 1922, was demolished for a housing estate (Roberts 1937, 21) a photographic album is preserved in Conwy Archives (CP1206/4) which contains some photographs of staff and



Plate 17. The former Darien or Cliff Hotel, Trearddur Bay (PRN 62294), now apartments

Plate 18. The Balmoral, Llandudno (PRN 62308), first a YMCA hostel, then the Balmoral Red Cross Hospital, and now apartments



Plate 19. 88-90 Mostyn Street, Llandudno (PRN 62339), once the Cafe Royal and Majestic Ballroom, used in the First World War by the Royal Welch Fusiliers as their Battalion Headquarters



patients at the hospital during the First World War. It also includes photographs of Bodlonddeb when in use as a hospital (plate 10). Occasional other photographs of other hospitals also survive, although they seem surprisingly rare in the county archives and more likely to be found in private collections of postcards or the photographs of relatives. The autograph book with entries from patients in the Beach and Isallt Fawr Hospitals (Anglesey Archives WM/1764) gives more of an idea about the personality of some of those patients, as well as information about their regiments and where they originally came from.

### ***Workrooms and supply depots***

The Red Cross hospitals were supplied with bandages and other supplies partly from War Hospital Supply Depots and Work Parties set up throughout the country. Volunteers were organised into work parties that were generally based at a workroom. Each work party had a registration number and were sent labels for dispatching their supplies to the Stores Department, when they were not delivered directly to local hospitals. Their members could qualify for Certificates and Voluntary Workers' Badges. The number of depots or workrooms registered in north-west Wales is small but significant. The Scarletfinders website ([www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)) has a list of workrooms across Britain, including those in north-west Wales, obtained from reports by the Joint War Committee of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England on Voluntary Aid Rendered to the Sick and Wounded at Home and Abroad and to British Prisoners of War, 1914-1919. The list includes often badly spelt names and no address but many of them can be found by close inspection of the maps. These workrooms were mainly set up in private houses, some grand houses but most very much more modest, and made use of existing organisations, such as the Anglesey Needlework Guild, to recruit suitably skilled women. This is another example of industrious war work being carried on in ordinary homes across the region.

Workrooms 1219 and 4375 were based near Beaumaris, the latter being at Baron Hill (PRN 11004) run by Lady Magdalen Bulkeley. Tros-yr-Afon, Llangoed (PRN 62312) was the location of the Beaumaris Red Cross Workroom No. 1219, run by Miss Turner. Both Lady Bulkeley and Miss Turner were part of the Anglesey Needlework Guild and were busy making garments and blankets for soldiers in 1914 (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 4<sup>th</sup> December 1914, p7), and setting up the workrooms presumably grew from this earlier work. In February 1918 Miss Turner supplied to the Penrhyn Cottage Hospital pyjamas, bed socks, day socks, and slippers made by her workroom (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 1st March 1918, p4).

There were three workrooms in Penmaenmawr and one in Llanfairfechan. Lonfa, Penmaenmawr (PRN 62311) is quite a modest house on Mountain Road but Mrs John Jenkins ran the Red Cross Workroom no 1792 here. Bronwylfa, Penmaenmawr (PRN 62314) accommodated Red Cross Workroom no 1462 run by Miss Jones. Mrs Watkin Davies, wife of the rectory Rev. F. P. Watkin Davies, ran the Red Cross Workroom no 4743 in the Rectory, Llanfairfechan (PRN 62315). Mrs Watkin Davies was also the commandant of the Plas Auxilliary Hospital in Llanfairfechan (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24th January 1919, p4) and the honorary secretary to the local branch of the Queen Mary's Needlework Guild making her an obvious person to set up a workroom (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 6th November 1914, p7).

Elsewhere in the region Miss Patchett ran the Red Cross Workroom no 1364 in Allt Fawr, Barmouth (PRN 62318), Mrs E Jackson ran the Red Cross Workroom no 1654 in The Bungalow, north of Caernarfon (PRN 62319), and the wife of the vicar, Rev. Edwin Jones, ran the Red Cross Workroom no 4795 in the Vicarage, Holyhead (PRN 62320).

In 1917 Miss L. Jones-Hughes of Bronwylfa (who ran the 1462 workroom), opened a depot at Noddfa, Penmaenmawr (PRN 62313) for the collection of sphagnum moss, for use in Red Cross Hospital work (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 27<sup>th</sup> April 1917, p8). Sphagnum moss has antiseptic properties and is very absorbent, so it was especially useful for field dressings at the front and was required in large quantities. In an area with much moorland and bogs full of sphagnum moss there must have been large scale collection of this material in north-west Wales during the War but no specific localities have been identified for this project. There were adverts in several papers from June 1918 and continuing after the war offering to pay good prices for sphagnum moss (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 7<sup>th</sup> June 1918, p1).

Many of the houses used for these workrooms still exist and are now modernised dwellings though externally many probably look much as they did during the War. No substantial alteration would be required to make a workroom, with local women probably bringing in their own sewing machines, so in most cases no traces survive of this vital contribution to the war effort other than the list of workrooms.

### 3.3. Billets for Soldiers

With the number of soldiers being recruited, especially after conscription was introduced in May 1916, a large number of men had to be moved round the country and collected together for initial training and preparation for sending to further training or to the front. Many existing buildings were used as billets including hotels and guest houses but also other less obvious buildings such as schools. The identification of these is difficult and has relied often on passing references and photographs. The locations identified in this project should be considered as representative rather than in any way a complete list as there are a great many more to be identified, especially the guest houses used by the troops.

Llandudno was a focus of the collection of men. Royal Welch Fusiliers training near Llandudno were billeted in the town and the Battalion Headquarters were at the Cafe Royal and Majestic Ballroom (PRN 62339) (plate 19) on Mostyn Street (William 2002, 117). Oriel Mostyn (PRN 62343) (plate 20) was requisitioned in 1914 as an army drill hall (Jones 2002, 118; historypoints.org).

The presence of the troops provided a useful income for lodging house owners and hoteliers who had lost their usual customers. Those housing troops were initially promised three shillings and threepence per soldier per day, but this rate was soon cut. The conditions for the soldiers were basic with four or five men sharing a largely unfurnished room (Adrian Hughes Daily Post, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014<sup>3</sup>).

Towns were very keen to have soldiers billeted locally as this brought in money, especially to areas that suffered seriously from a lack of tourists. The Bangor City Council argued strongly that the town would be ideal for training, especially as Lord Penrhyn had offered the use of Penrhyn Park for training, and they claimed they could take 1000-1500 soldiers. General Mackinnon, based in Chester, who made the decision, was not initially encouraging (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24<sup>th</sup> December 1914, p5), but in February 1915 the 11th Battalion of South Lancashire Regiment, known as the St Helen's Pals, arrived in Bangor. Their officers were billeted in the Castle (PRN 1701) and British Hotels (PRN 24840) and the men were found lodgings throughout the city. They were allowed to use Penrhyn Hall (PRN 12595) as a recreation centre. The soldiers were in the city for less than 2 months but later the same year men of the West Lancashire Engineers were also billeted in the city for a while, probably at the same hotels (Ellis Jones 1986, 138-9). Officers of the Royal Welch Fusiliers also used the British Hotel (Cowell 2006, 14). In 1916 340 drivers attached to East and West Lancashire Engineers, Glamorgan Engineers and Cheshire Engineers arrived in Bangor from the training camp of Coed Helen to be billeted for the winter. They were billeted in lower part of the city with headquarters at the Riding School on Glynne Road, and also had use of Penrhyn Hall and St Mary's mission room, Hirael (North Wales Chronicle 20<sup>th</sup> October 1916).

When the 11th Battalion South Lancashire Regiment was billeted in Bangor, the Brigadier General of the whole Lancashire Brigade established offices in part of Craig Beuno (PRN 34688) (plate 21), the home of Charles Pozzi, a city councillor and strong supporter of the use of the town for training soldiers (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12th March 1915, p6). There has been a suggestion that this house was also a hospital during the First World War, but no evidence has been found to support this.

In 1916 the Caernarfon Higher Standard or Central School (PRN 62353) and the National School (PRN 62341) were taken over for billeting soldiers, leaving the children to cope with part time teaching in poor accommodation. The schools were returned to the education system by the end of February 1918 (Lindsay 1993, 84). Some smaller towns also took in soldiers. Royal Engineers billeted in Betws y Coed are remembered because they built a footbridge over the Afon Conwy locally known as Sappers' Bridge (PRN 62342).

Soldiers were regularly sent to Ireland to control unrest, provide defence against possible German landings and also for training, crossing from the harbour at Holyhead. In February 1915 Bodedern School was used to supply tea to troops on their way to Holyhead, with the school being decorated and speeches being made to turn the event into an occasion (Anglesey Archives WA/8/16b, 277).

The London and North Western Railway Company provided a rest room for soldiers staffed by volunteers. This supplied food and warmth and care for the sick (Roberts 1920, 27). The Holyhead Scouts helped to supply troops with tea and water as they travelled through the station and waited in the town (James 2014, 63). When sailings were suspended due to U-boat activity or bad weather, there were significant problems in housing and feeding

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3 <http://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/local-news/world-war-i-gallant-llewellyn-6791669>





Plate 20. Oriel Mostyn, Llandudno (PRN 62343) requisitioned in 1914 as an army drill hall

Plate 21. Craig Beuno, Garth Road, Bangor (PRN 34688). Head quarters for the Lancashire Brigade while they were training in the Bangor area



Plate 22. Part of area possibly used for the Rest Camp for soldiers in transit through Holyhead (PRN 62338)

all the troops. To solve this problem a Rest Camp was erected in March 1918 at Holyhead, which could cater for 1000 people and about 73,000 men passed through the camp between March 1918 and October 1919. General Sir Owen Thomas caused the camp to be created and Captain B Jones of the Monmouth Regiment was the first Commandant of the Camp (Roberts 1920, 9). The people passing through the camp included sick and wounded soldiers, deported conscripts from Ireland, British and American sailors and torpedoed submarine crews (Roberts 1920, 9). The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser records that 46 Sinn Fein prisoners were briefly held at the Rest Camp before being sent on to their destinations at prisons across Britain (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24th May 1918, p2). There is a claim that the prisoners included Eamon de Valera (Roberts 1920, 9) but the Chronicle does not mention him and it is likely that he would have been mentioned if present. It does mention the presence of Countess Markievicz and her dog, for which she had to buy a ticket on the train taking them to jail from Holyhead. The prisoners were landed in great secrecy at night in a quiet part of the harbour and transferred to the rest camp, apart from the Countess and her dog who were housed elsewhere as she was the only female prisoner.

Local tradition identifies the land belonging to Tyddyn Lantern (PRN 16079) at the northern end of Turkey Shore Road and above the old dock as the location of the rest camp (PRN 62338) (Peter S Roberts pers. comm.). This would be a sensible location as it was close to the South Pier where the soldiers were presumably embarked. Inspection of this area revealed nothing to prove this identification but the area is very overgrown and part has been extensively dumped on and the soil scraped away down to bedrock (plate 22).

### **3.4. Food production**

#### ***Land Girls and Farming Women***

In spring and summer 1917 the naval blockade of Britain by the Germans was at its height, with U-boats used to attack merchant shipping. There was a very high loss of ships with their cargo, much of it imported food; between February and December 1917 6,235,878 tons of shipping was lost (Stammers 2012, 74). For example in 1917 46,000 tons of meat is recorded as having been lost at sea (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 190). In addition between 1914 and 1916 food production from British farms fell due to the loss of labourers to war and to factories and to the loss of horse power as horses were requisitioned for war (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 204). There was also a poor wheat harvest in North America in 1916, so even if shipping could get past the U-boats imported wheat was in short supply and expensive (Beckett 2006, 112). All these factors led to a crisis in the food supply.

In January 1917 the Food Production Department of the Board of Agriculture was created and empowered to encourage food production, partly by guaranteeing the price of corn, and to punish those leaving land uncultivated (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 205; Beckett 2006, 112). The authority of the Food Production Department came from the Cultivation of Lands Order 1917 and its implementation was devolved to executive committees for the local War Agricultural Committees. While appealing to the patriotic instinct of farmers and emphasising the “extreme urgency” of the need for food the Committees could also take possession of land not considered to be adequately cultivated (Merionethshire Agricultural War Committee: Bangor Mss 14877). A major aim was to plough up grassland for crops to extend the cultivation of cereals and other food crops (Bangor Mss 14877). This aim was assisted by the Corn Production Act of August 1917 which guaranteed minimum prices for wheat, oats and potatoes for six years to encourage investment by farmers and an increase in arable land (Beckett 2006, 112-113). As well as increasing production there were efforts to reduce consumption with advertising to encourage people to waste less and regulations to limit the number of courses served in restaurants and fines for feeding pigeons and stray animals. There was also sugar rationing from 31<sup>st</sup> December 1917 and rationing of meats and fats from April 1918. While this may not have reduced consumption much it did even it out over the population and reduced queueing at shops (Beckett 2006, 120).

The loss of male labour required the organisation and encouragement of women to take over some farm work and to produce food in other ways. The most famous innovation to increase women’s involvement in agriculture was the Women’s Land Army (WLA), created in March 1917, and administered under the Board of Agriculture (Grayzel 2002, 42; Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 206; Beckett 2006, 75). The Land Army girls were generally from urban, middle class backgrounds and had to face hard work, low pay and poor conditions as well as suspicion from the rural population (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 206). However their respectable backgrounds meant that they provided good propaganda for the contribution that women could make to the war effort so they were very visible at the time. This led to their contribution being over estimated both at the time and afterwards (Grayzel 2002, 42-43). In fact in 1918, when the Land Army was at its peak, it was only 16,000 strong across Britain



(Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 209; Beckett 2006, 75), and there were probably only 100 WLA members on Anglesey (James 2014, 66). German Prisoners of Wars also provided labour on farms, as did the Labour Corps. The latter were injured or disabled soldiers unfit to return to the front but able to agricultural work; 80,000 of these worked on farms across Britain in 1917 (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 210-11). The practical contribution of the Women's Land Army was therefore small compared to the contribution of these other groups (Grayzel (2002, 43).

In Wales as elsewhere the Women's Land Army was not a large force; in January 1919 there were 85 Land Girls employed in Caernarvonshire, and 23 in Anglesey, 55 of them had been awarded good service ribbons (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 17<sup>th</sup> January 1919, p3). A demobilisation rally was held in Bangor in December 1919 for the Land Army from Anglesey and Caernarfonshire and 52 land workers attended, most of whom were continuing working on their farms after demobilisation (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 5<sup>th</sup> December 1919, p11).

Women did play a large part in working the land in the war but most of these came under the Women's Section of the Food Production Department's Labour Division and were rural women who had always worked on the land and were already skilled and experienced in most of the tasks that they undertook. The Food Production Department registered women willing to work on the land and organised their work. Across Britain it had about 300,000 women registered (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 209-210). The organisational bodies were also called the Women's Food Production League or the Women's War Agricultural Committee. The former provided instruction, demonstrations, equipment and seeds for women cultivating their own gardens or allotments and the latter registered local women willing to work part-time in agriculture and organised work for them, mainly paid work. The Women's Committees aimed to organise rural women who had previously worked independently without organisation or support. They also used experienced women to supervise gangs of inexperienced women. In each area registrars collected names of women wanting to be involved and organised. However the Agricultural Organising Officer for Wales when carrying out inspections in 1916 found that Anglesey had a particularly poor up-take of registration. This was largely attributed to the difficulty of women finding agricultural work in the county as farmers claimed to have enough labour and were resistant to taking on experienced men, never mind inexperienced women. The surplus of labour in Anglesey suggests that relatively few men had signed up for the armed services voluntarily (Bangor Mss 14877).

Women's War Agricultural Committee organised competitions to demonstrate the ability of women agricultural workers. Over 2000 people attended a Women's Test Meeting near Rhuddlan in North Wales in February 1918 when competitions were held including ploughing, milking and hedging. A newspaper clipping reports that most of those attending were local women determined to prove that they were better than the Land Army girls, although there is little evidence of the latter. One of the aims of the competitions was to prove to local farmers what the women were capable of and dispel prejudices against them (Bangor Mss 14877).

### **Allotments**

Another way to increase food production was to encourage the growing of food in gardens and to increase the number of allotments. The Horticultural Section of the Food Department Board of Agriculture was set up to encourage the production of vegetables in gardens and allotments (Roberts 1920, 13). In spring 1917 there was a campaign to increase the number of allotments cultivated and to grow vegetables in gardens, publicised by vegetables being grown in the garden on No.10 Downing Street by Prime Minister David Lloyd George and on gardens in front of Buckingham Palace. Schools and hospitals were encouraged to grow their own vegetables.

Across the county the number of allotments doubled during 1917 (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 213). The push to increase the number of allotments was even more successful in Llandudno. There were already 148 allotments in the town in the spring of 1917 but a year later there were 448 (William 2002, 118). The convalescent soldiers at Balmoral Red Cross Hospital, Llandudno (PRN 62308) dug and planted 3 allotments to produce vegetables to feed the patients (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 4<sup>th</sup> May 1917, p3).

A shortage of potatoes was reported in Bangor in March 1917, which further encouraged the cultivation of allotments. There were 200 allotments in the city by June 1917, some being next to the Town Hall (PRN 62333) and some in front of the Military Hospital (PRN 62335) (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1917, p8). Bangor University made a large area of the Bishop's Park available for allotments during the war (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 5<sup>th</sup> July 1918, p2). There were also allotments in Glanadda, off Deiniol Road, near Garth Road (PRN 62337), in Upper Bangor and in Hiracl. Most were let by the Allotments Committee and in

some sophisticated techniques were used to increase yields. At Deiniol Road (PRN 62336) walls were constructed out of sods and old window frames were placed on top to create extensive cold frames. The sward (PRN 62333) next to the Town Hall was hard to cultivate but succeeded in producing “fine crops”. The allotments on the Friars Estate were rubbish heaps converted into gardens but in 1917 were “blossoming abundantly” (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd June 1917, p2). The allotments (PRN 62335) in front of the Military Hospital were chiefly let to railwaymen and used to grow potatoes (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd June 1917, p2).

In Holyhead the Park was taken over by the Local Authority and divided into plots for allotments. The Park was only newly created as it does not appear on the 1900 25 inch map. The Park was privately owned but in 1917 was given by Mr William Thomas, a Liverpool ship-owner, to the Local Authority. The 1924 map shows the lower flatter part of the park as allotments (PRN 62334) and 1199 allotments were been rented from 1916 to 1919. The Local Authority provided allotment holders with free seed potatoes and Mr John Magee provide free manure (Roberts 1920, 14).

From early in 1915 school gardens were used to grow potatoes and other vegetables. Where schools did not have gardens new land was acquired for growing food. By summer of 1917 sixty seven schools in Caernarvonshire had gardens (Lindsay 1993, 84). St Paul’s School had a garden at the corner of Deiniol Road and Farrar Road, acquired specifically to grow food during the War (Lindsay 1993, 84). It is not clear which side of the road the garden was as open space that might have been used is shown on both sides on the 1914 25 inch map. However extensive allotments were developed off Deiniol Road, which suggests that the land used was between Farrar Road and the station (PRN 62336), with St Paul’s school having some of the lower part of this area. The Women’s Food Production League is described as having allotments in the upper portion of this land, so presumably closer to the station. They also had allotments in Upper Bangor (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd June 1917, p2). Llanddaniel National School turned part of their playground into a school garden and cultivated potatoes, and broad and French beans (James 2014, 69).

Schools were also used to improve food production in other ways. School holidays were arranged so that children could help with harvests and some boys over 13 were officially released from education to go and work the land (Lindsay 1993, 85). The older boys took time out of school to help with work, such as the turnip weeding done at Bodedern in July 1916 (Anglesey Archives WA/8/16b, p300-301) and in 1915 boys from Llangadwaladr school helped pick stones from the fields and helped with weeding and sowing. At harvest time everywhere school attendances were low (James 2014, 66-67).

Horse chestnuts were collected by school children and they and their teachers processed them, removing the outer husks to prevent rotting. The nuts were used in some industrial processes instead of grain so preserving grain for human consumption. In the autumn term of 1918 there was a major campaign of blackberry picking. Schools and other youth groups picked blackberries and these were sent to industrial jam makers and the pickers were paid in cash (James 2014, 69). The schools were granted half days for this purpose under the supervision of the teachers (Lindsay 1993, 85). They were supposed to be paid 4d per pound, although the Amlwch school logbook records a rate of only 3d per pound (Anglesey Archives WA/8/7, p214). Amlwch and Carreglefn schools record 200lbs being gathered in an afternoon (Anglesey Archives WA/8/7, p216; WA/8/22, p78), although the Anglesey record holders seem to be Llanddeusant School who picked 2 tons, 14 ¼ hundred weight and got paid £75 10s 7d (James 2014, 69-70).

Some of the allotments are identifiable on the maps, either marked as allotments or open spaces in the locations described in the newspapers. Only those allotments reported to have been created specifically to aid the war effort have been included in the gazetteer. Many of these areas are now built over, but some remain as open ground or parks. None of those listed are still used as allotments, which emphasises the temporary nature of the spread of allotments to help fill the gap in the food supply during the War.

### **Forestry**

Timber supply was under the same strains as food production; more was needed during the War but imports were almost impossible. In 1913 90% of the timber used in Britain was imported (Stammers 2012, 74), so when the German attacks on shipping hit their height in 1917 the timber supply was hit even more severely than the food supply. Timber was essential for the war effort, used for trench supports, crates for munitions and supplies, and huts on the front line and pit props as coal mining increased at home. The Home Trade Timber Committee was formed in 1915 to co-ordinate timber supplies and increase home production (Stammers 2012, 74). In early 1917 this work was taken over the Timber Supply Department responsible directly to the War Cabinet. North Wales



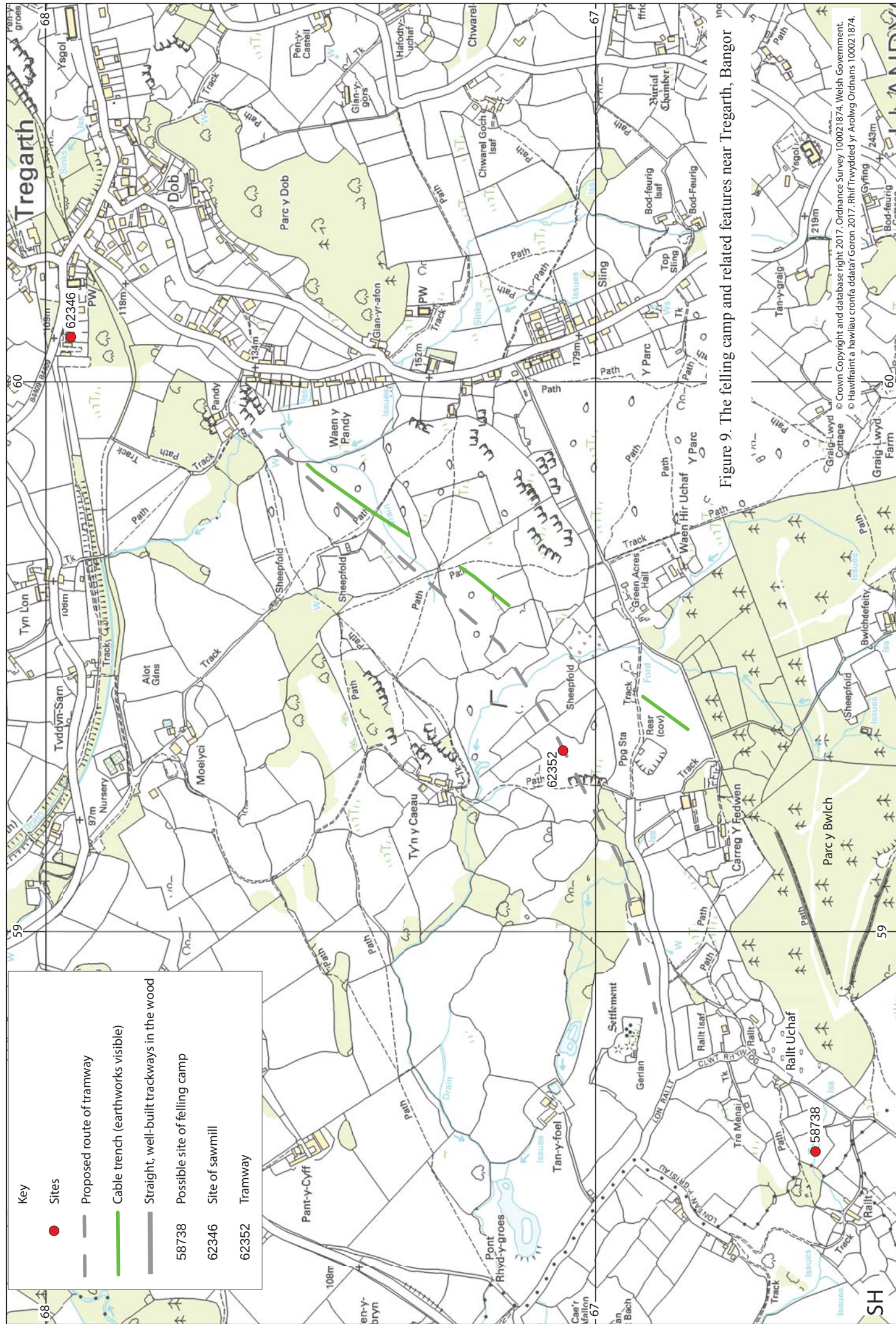


Figure 9. The felling camp and related features near Tregarth, Bangor



was covered by Division II run by Fraser Story, professor of Forestry of University College, Bangor. North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser (17<sup>th</sup> January 1919, p3) describes Professor Story as having been in charge of the Timber Supply Department of the Board of Trade of the whole of Wales, while Stammers (2012, 75) states that Division II covers Anglesey, Caernarfon, Denbigh, Flint, Merioneth and North Montgomery.

This work by Story, helped by Thomas Thompson also from the University, meant that teaching in the Forestry Department had to be suspended for the duration of the war (Hetherington 2004, 4; Cambrian Daily Leader 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1916, p6). Story had a staff, based at 249 High Street, Bangor (PRN 62345), who valued the timber, supervised felling, and looked after plant and labour. Before the Division had been established the search for suitable woodlands had started with a questionnaire sent out in April 1916 to 1550 landowners. A total of 1101 contracts were issued with landowners in North Wales for cutting timber from their land including three contracts with the Penrhyn Estate (Stammers 2012, 75). While perhaps not part of the formal contract system Captain Higson of Craflwyn Hall, Beddgelert is known to have felled and sold many of the trees in the hall's garden during the War (Cadw 1998, 187). From the map evidence this seems to have mainly consisted of trees along the southern boundary of the garden, including ones that had lined the western drive (PRN 62340).

Labour was recruited from Canada with experienced Canadian foresters forming the Canadian Forestry Corp, but inexperience labour was also obtained from prisoners of war, conscientious objectors, women, and men of other nations. Women's Land Army had a sub-section of the Women's Forestry Corps (Grayzel 2002, 4), but there are few traces of them being employed in North Wales. However some women organised by the Women's War Agricultural Committee were employed in forestry and the Gwydir Estate employed a "large number" of women planting trees during the War (Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury 7<sup>th</sup> March 1918, p6 (in Bangor Mss 14877)).

Of the other nationals employed in forestry unemployed or rescued Finnish seamen were in demand as they generally had considerable experience of forestry work at home. The Finns worked in teams of 100 to 300 and there were 11 Finnish felling camps in Wales. They worked under contract and were paid an agreed wage plus overtime and free medical care (Stammers 2012, 75-6). The sailors worked in gangs of twenty felling trees, cutting off branches and sawing the trunks into transportable lengths. The timber was hauled out of the woods by horses or vehicles and sawn into planks that were then transported by road or rail (Stammers 2012, 78).

In June 1916 Lord Penrhyn signed contracts for felling trees in Parc Bryniau and Parc Ocar, the latter also covering Parc y Bwlch on the slopes of Moel y Ci. A team of Finnish sailors (with at least one Estonia (John Evans pers. comm.)) were housed in a camp (PRN 58738) above Pentir next to Parc y Bwlch wood (figure 9). Accommodation was in huts or tents with straw mattresses and blankets provided (Stammers 2012, 76). There was a tramway running from the camp to a temporary saw mill near Tregarth (PRN 62346); the site of the sawmill is now lost under a garage (Stammers 2012, 78). The Finns were known locally as the Russians as Finland did not gain its independence from Russia until December 1917 and the seamen had sailed under the Russian flag. The Finns mixed with the local people, learnt some Welsh and drank in the pubs of Bethesda, but they initially earned more than local men working at the felling camp which caused tension and the wages of the local men had to be raised. Two of the Finnish sailors married local girls and stayed in Tregarth after the war (Stammers 2012, 78-81). One of them, Karl Anderson born in Nagu, Finland in 1893 and came from Liverpool docks to Moelyci. He married Annie Jane Thomas, Tregarth in 1918 and they had one daughter, Jennie Anderson, who married and went to live Deiniolen and still has descendants in the area (pers. com. Sulwen Roberts).

Relations between the Finns and local people were generally very good but in 1918 one of the Finns was accused of stabbing a local man, who was an injured soldier who had received the Distinguished Conduct Medal. However the Finn was cleared of the offense and the 'war hero' appeared to be most at fault, with alcohol being involved (Caernarvon and Denbigh Herald 8<sup>th</sup> February 1918, information collected by Hywyn Williams 10/06/2016).

The location of the felling camp (PRN 58738) proposed by Stammers (Stammers 2012, 77) is sheltered by gorse covered knolls and is fairly, although not perfectly level, with a convenient stream running through it (plate 23). The site was not closely inspected for this project but it appeared unlikely that traces of the huts remained. There is a better chance that the remains of the tramway that carried timber to the sawmill do survive. Aerial photographs were inspected in an attempt to identify the route of the tramway. Nothing was seen along the route that Stammers suggests (2012, 77) but a linear feature was seen on Bing Maps and then located on aerial photographs from Central Photographic Unit, Cardiff dating to 1986<sup>4</sup>. This feature could be intermittently followed in a nearly straight line from near the woods down to just before Pandy, and is aligned on the sawmill. The feature is visible

4 APs from Central Photographic Unit, Cardiff: Library No. 8606, sortie J A Story, frames 5286/0112 and 0171, date 01/10/1986



on the ground in several places and was inspected on 23/01/2017, however an air valve access hatch was seen on the line and this raised the question of the nature of the feature. A utilities search was carried out and this showed that the linear feature is in fact the route of a high voltage electricity cable; the air valve being related to a pipe crossing the cable and coincidentally placed on the line of the cable. This means that the precise route of the tramway is still unknown. A walk-over survey of the route suggested by Stammers might identify earthworks but as the route crosses land owned by several farms and is not crossed by footpaths obtaining permission was too complex for the current project.

John Evans, a local resident (pers. comm.), highlighted that some of the paths in the wood itself are well-constructed and broad and suggested that these could possibly be parts of the tramway. Two paths benched into the hillslope and built-up on the downhill side were inspected (figure 9). These run very straight through the wood and the lower one would have exited the wood at an appropriate place for the tramway to start. However these tracks are shown on the 25 inch OS maps from 1889 and were probably constructed when the wood was first planted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nothing was seen to suggest that these were specifically used as part of the tramway, although this remains possible.



Plate 23. The field suggested as the location of the felling camp (PRN 58738), now partly overgrown by gorse.

### 3.5. Organisations and Societies

Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain had numerous philanthropic charities and societies and many of these existing groups were mobilised to provide support for the troops or their families when the war started and to increase food production. The number of socks produced and sent to the soldiers at the front would seem to be vast but considering the conditions in the trenches, especially in winter, it is likely that few things would have been as welcome as a new, dry, clean pair of socks.

Meetings of these societies were often held in existing halls or private homes and it is often difficult to identify buildings or locations specific to them. However some had purpose built halls and other buildings can be linked not only with these groups but also directly with their war work.

The most famous of these groups is the Women's Institute and this is of particular importance to North Wales as the first Women's Institute in Britain was set up on Anglesey during the First World War. There were several other women's societies, some of which do still continue today but which are now less well known, that made an equal or greater contribution to the war effort as the Women's Institute.

#### ***Women's Institute***

The Women's Institute movement was started in Britain during the First World War to encourage countrywomen to get involved in growing and preserving food to help to increase the food supply. The first Women's Institute

established in Britain was at Llanfairpwllgwyngyll on Anglesey and many of the other earliest Institutes were in North Wales.

The Women's Institute, first established in Canada, was started in Britain under the sponsorship of the Agricultural Organization Society (AOS), a society established to encourage improvement in farming. The AOS had been talking about a women's movement for some years and Mrs Alfred Watt, from the Canadian Women's Institute, had arrived Britain in 1913 and tried to raise interest in starting the movement here, but there had been little enthusiasm. The War changed attitudes as, once it was realised that the War was not going to be over in six months, the importance of mobilising women was realised. The AOS supported Mrs Watt's campaign and Colonel Sir Richard Stapleton Cotton, who was resided in Llanfairpwllgwyngyll and was Chairman of the North Wales Branch of the AOS, was instrumental in organising a conference held in Bangor in June 1915 at which it was agreed that a Women's Institute movement should be formed in Britain. The day after the conference the Colonel organised a meeting of women in Llanfairpwllgwyngyll at which Mrs Watt spoke. This led to a meeting in September 11<sup>th</sup> 1915 when the first Women's Institute was formally founded at Llanfairpwllgwyngyll (Davies 2015, 12, 19, 50, 55, 58, 63).

The AOS worked from the success at Llanfairpwllgwyngyll and concentrated on North Wales when trying to encourage the establishment of more Women's Institutes, with ones being set up in Denbighshire at Cefn and Trefnant within a month of the Llanfairpwllgwyngyll Institute. There was soon also one set up in Criccieth under Mrs Drage. With these successes in North Wales Institutes were also soon established in England (Davies 2015, 70, 71). There were disagreements between AOS and the Women's Institute and before the end of 1917 the Women's Institute had been taken over by the Women's Branch of the Board of Agriculture's Food Production Department (Davies 2015, 73).

Many rural women in North Wales were Welsh speaking and Welsh was important in some Institutes from the start. The term "Sefydliad y Merched" was and still is used as the direct translation of Women's Institute. The name "Merched y Wawr" is used by a group that split off from the Women's Institute in the 1960s when the use of English in the official WI was insisted on.

Below is a table of WIs that existed during the war with either the date of their founding or the earliest reference to their activity found in the newspapers. Not all possible newspapers have been searched so this latter date can be improved and it is likely that the date of founding for most institutes has been reported in the newspapers so it should be possible to find this with more research. A note on a cutting in the Bangor University Archives (Bangor Mss 14877) states that Bangor City was not allowed to organise a WI but had to concentrated its efforts on the Women's Food Production League. However it seems to have had a WI by January 1918, so initial pressures must have been over-come.

*Women's Institutes in north-west Wales during the First World War*

| Area                                        | WI founded     | Earliest reference in newspapers | Reference                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Llanfairpwllgwyngyll                        | September 1915 |                                  | Davies 2015, 63                                                               |
| Brithdir and Bryncoedifor (later Dolgellau) | February 1916  |                                  | Dolgellau RO: Z/M/6324/23                                                     |
| Penrhyndeudraeth                            | December 1916  |                                  | Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 28 <sup>th</sup> December 1917, p7 |
| Holyhead                                    |                | January 1917                     | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12 <sup>th</sup> January 1917, p2        |
| Criccieth                                   |                | January 1917                     | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12 <sup>th</sup> January 1917, p2        |
| Trefriw                                     | March 1917     |                                  | Conwy Record Office CX272/1/1                                                 |



| <b>Area</b>         | <b>WI founded</b> | <b>Earliest reference in newspapers</b> | <b>Reference</b>                                                                           |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Porthmadog          | March 1917        |                                         | The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 1917, p7                   |
| Pwllheli            |                   | March 1917                              | Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 16 <sup>th</sup> March 1917, p7                 |
| Bethesda (St Ann's) | April 1917        |                                         | The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24 <sup>th</sup> April 1917, p6                   |
| Dyffryn             | June 1917         |                                         | Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 1917, p7                  |
| Caernarfon          |                   | August 1917                             | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24 <sup>th</sup> August 1917, p6                      |
| Barmouth            | November 1917     |                                         | Barmouth and County Advertiser and District Weekly News 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 1917, p3 |
| Llanfairfechan      |                   | December 1917                           | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 14 <sup>th</sup> December 1917, p3                    |
| Abersoch            |                   | January 1918                            | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 25 <sup>th</sup> January 1918, p3                     |
| Llanberis           |                   | January 1918                            | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 25 <sup>th</sup> January 1918, p3                     |
| Bala and Penllyn    |                   | January 1918                            | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 25 <sup>th</sup> January 1918, p3                     |
| Blaenau Ffestiniog  |                   | January 1918                            | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 25 <sup>th</sup> January 1918, p3                     |
| Chwilog             |                   | January 1918                            | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 25 <sup>th</sup> January 1918, p3                     |
| Four Crosses        |                   | January 1918                            | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 25 <sup>th</sup> January 1918, p3                     |
| Bangor              |                   | January 1918                            | North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 25 <sup>th</sup> January 1918, p3                     |
| Llanaelhaiarn       | February 1918     |                                         | Y Dinesydd Cymreig, 6 <sup>th</sup> February 1918, p8                                      |
| Llanbedr            |                   | February 1918                           | Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 1918, p7              |

One of the main methods used to increase food production in an area was to improve distribution by WI groups setting up stalls run by volunteers to sell garden and allotment products. The Criccieth WI was the most successful at this. They opened a stall in summer 1916 that was held twice weekly from May till October and worked on a voluntary basis. Fruit and vegetables were brought by WI members to the Drill Hall, Criccieth (PRN 62328), which was used as a depot. The produce was weighed and sorted and the producers were paid according to the price on the Liverpool market. In 1917 the stall was registered as a co-operative society and was known as the

Criccieth and District WI Cooperative Society. In 1919 the Cooperative Society was forced to separate entirely from the WI and was run as an independent company, but increased costs and other problems caused the business to close (Davies 2015, 202-208). This venture did not always have the support of the local community as there were complaints about the price paid to the small group of producers, as it was seen as unfair to other producers and raised the prices of vegetables in the area (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 04/05/1917, p7).

There were five other WI market stalls, at Pwllheli, Porthmadoc, Caernarfon, Llanfairfechan and Llanbedr. These were run just for the duration of the war and closed when the voluntary labour to run them was no longer available (Davies 2015, 204, 206). Caernarfon WI opened a depot in the High Street to sell garden produce and eggs (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1917, p6).

Other WIs concentrated more on organisation and training. The Penrhyndeudraeth Institute bought seed potatoes and other vegetable seeds for distribution to members and had sub-committees on basket making, poultry, and domestic economics to supply training (Cambrian News and Welsh Farmers Gazette 28th December 1917, p5). The Llanbedr WI took over allotments themselves to produce food as well as helping local farms with threshing (Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1918, p7). Pennal WI was asked to provide classes in butter and cheese making as well as boot repair (The Cambrian News and Welsh Farmers Gazette 14/06/1918, p7).

### ***Other Societies and Guilds***

The Girl's Friendly Society (GFS) was founded in 1875 to support country girls working in towns. During the First World War GFS hostels housed women on war work<sup>5</sup>. The Society had lodges and homes of rest in Church Walks, Llandudno (PRN 62326) and Queen's Road, Criccieth, which were probably used as accommodation for women coming to work on the land during the War (Bangor Mss 14877). The lodge on Church Walks, Llandudno (PRN 62326) is currently an Indian Restaurant, but that in Criccieth has not yet been located.

In general the GFS provided social groups for young girls, but they still made their contribution to the war effort, particularly in egg collection to help feed wounded soldiers. The Gaerwen GFS collected 1575 eggs in 6 months and sent most to the National Egg Collection Depot, with some being sent to Bodlonddeb Hospital, Bangor (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 7<sup>th</sup> January 1916, p8). The National Egg Collection was launched in August 1914 by the magazine Poultry World to supply fresh eggs to soldiers in the Base Hospitals in France and Belgium (James 2014, 64). The campaign was a great success and it is estimated that 41 million eggs were collected by the end of the War (James 2014, 64). In August 1915 a "Million Egg Week" was held and the target exceeded (Beckett 2006, 108). The system for delivering the eggs was so efficient that eggs could be sent to the soldiers in France within 3 days of being laid<sup>6</sup>. Most of the collection of the eggs was done by children (James 2014, 64).

The London Needlework Guild was renamed Queen Mary's Needlework Guild in 1914 (it still exists and is now called the Queen Mother's Clothing Guild) and supplied clothes to the troops at the front as well as carrying on their work of clothing the needy at home. During the war hundreds of thousands of garments were packed up and sent out to troops overseas<sup>7</sup>. Llangristolus had a Queen Mary's Guild during the war that collected articles for soldiers and also provided a parcel of clothes for Belgium refugee children (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16<sup>th</sup> October 1914, p8). Llandudno had a branch with a depot in Deganwy Avenue opened in October 1916, and during the War this handled a total of 72,372 articles such as swabs and bandages which were sent to the headquarters in Altrincham. A branch for producing sphagnum moss dressings was opened in Deganwy, with the moss obtained from Llyn Helig on Lord Mostyn's land near Holywell, Flintshire (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24<sup>th</sup> May 1918, p3). Plas Rhianfa, Cwm Cadnant (PRN 62316) was used by the Menai Bridge and Llandegfan orthopaedic branch of the Queen Mary's Guild to make orthopaedic appliances, mostly from disused materials (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 28th June 1918, p4).

Other sewing guilds such as the Church Guild of Workers and the Non Conformist Sewing Guild were also busy.

5 <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/9e3bee7a-6881-43ef-91e9-1ff7116b4f4a> and <http://www.gfsplatform.org.uk/our-history.php>

6 <http://www1centenary.oucs.ox.ac.uk/body-and-mind/the-national-egg-collection-for-wounded-soldiers-and-sailors-1914-1918/>

7 <http://qmcp.org.uk/history/> and [http://qmcp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/The\\_QMCG\\_Flyer\\_2014.pdf](http://qmcp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/The_QMCG_Flyer_2014.pdf)



Both of those guilds had a presence in Holyhead and made clothing for the hospitals and men at the Front (Roberts 1920, 28). The Women's Patriotic Guild was formed in Bangor within days of the outbreak of war to collect clothing, blankets etc. for the troops. The Guild also helped to staff the military and auxiliary hospitals (Ellis Jones 1986, 137-8). The Women's Patriotic Guild in north-west Wales seems only to have existed in Bangor, but they supplied significant numbers of items to the troops at the front and in hospital including a total of 4070 hospital bags, 6365 pairs of socks, 2124 mufflers and 948 flannel shirts. Sock knitting was as major activity for the Guild members with one member knitting 283 pairs of socks during the war. They helped equip the Bangor Military Hospital while it was still being set up by the VAD. The equipment they purchased was not required once the professionals took over so it was transferred to the Welsh Hospital Unit in Serbia that the Guild was also helping to fund. Help was also given the Penrhyn Cottage Hospital and to the Belgian refugees in Bangor, Menai Bridge, Llandegfan and Amlwch. Large consignments of blankets were sent to the troops as well as Christmas parcels (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 4<sup>th</sup> April 1919, p5).

Anglesey Soldiers' and Sailors' Gift Fund sent gift parcels to service men from the county. Each parcel contained a woollen scarf, body belt, or pair of socks and mittens, 50 cigarettes, ¼ lb of chocolate, a Welsh Testament and a special greeting card (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 29<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p6). Pwllheli Women's War Relief Association also collected items to send to soldiers on the front. Some of these various groups worked together; such as the Bangor Women's Patriotic Guild sending parcels of socks, vests, bandages etc to the Queen Mary's Needlework Guild for distribution (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 26<sup>th</sup> November 1915, p3).

Children also played their part in the war effort. Their role in food production is mentioned above but they also knitted warm clothing for soldiers (James 2014, 61); the logbook of Carreglefn school, Anglesey records sending a parcel of "woollen comforts" knitted by the pupils (Anglesey Archives: WA/8/22, p46). School children also made cakes and puddings to send to the front and the Girl Guides and schools raised funds. A Girl Guide street collection in Beaumaris was to buy sand bags for the trenches, and money raised by the schools went to prisoners of war held in Germany and local Belgian refugees as well as to the Welsh National Fund for Soldiers and Sailors (James 2014, 62-63).

Existing organisations designed to help servicemen or merchant seamen were obviously quick to be involved once the War started. The Soldiers and Sailors Families Association was called on as soon as the war started to provide a fund for the relief of families of men going to war (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 14<sup>th</sup> August 1914, p8). The Merioneth branch paid out money raised from private subscription and donations as well as from a public source to dependants of soldiers and sailors who were in want. Government allowances to the dependants of servicemen made these hand-outs less necessary but the government scheme had not been rolled out fast enough and many families were still suffering from want and were helped by the Association (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 5<sup>th</sup> March 1915, p7).

The Mission to Seamen, founded in 1856, provided centres at ports across the country where seamen could obtain food, good cheap accommodation, reading and games rooms, and a chapel (The Mission to Seafarers, 2014). The Mission supplied chaplains to provide for the spiritual needs of seamen in Bangor and Holyhead and the great increase in naval boats in these locations increased the chaplains' work. The Bangor chaplain covered boats stationed at Bangor and Menai Bridge as well as the airship station at Llangefni. He set up a Sailor's Club in Bangor in a building lent rent free by the Dean of the Cathedral. At Holyhead the chaplain visited naval ships, the Stanley Sailors Home and Hospital and held services each Sunday on HMS Patrol in the harbour. He distributed warm clothing and plum puddings at Christmas and a library with 5-600 books was provided for the sailors (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 6<sup>th</sup> September 1918, p2; 24<sup>th</sup> December 1919, p4).

Another organisation that became whole-heartedly involved in war work was the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) which aimed to provide welfare services to the British Army during the War (Allen 2014, 5). Before the war YMCA had supplied huts at Volunteer and Territorial Army summer training camps starting with Conwy Morfa in 1901. The huts provided a religious service, sold refreshments and provided a quiet place for soldiers to write letters home (Allen 2014, 8). When the war started the YMCA raised money so that they could extend their facilities to all training camps for Kitcheners New Army. The YMCA also provided tents and bedding to accommodate the large number of new soldiers. As the war progressed the YMCA concentrated on providing recreation huts near the front line, but many huts were also supplied to training camps in Britain (Allen 2014, 13). Some of the larger huts included cinemas, such as at Kinmel Camp (Allen 2014, 23). The YMCA also provided lending libraries in home camps and also on the Western Front (Allen 2014, 58).

The evidence for a YMCA recreation hut (PRN 62331) at Conwy Morfa Training Camp during the First World War comes from a photograph of Lord and Lady Baden Powell leaving a very new hut with a large YMCA sign at Conwy Morfa Camp in May 1915 (Caernarfon RO: XS/881/3) (plate 24). The exact location of the hut is not known, although it appears to have been close to the railway line.



Plate 24. Lord and Lady Baden Powell visiting the YMCA hut (PRN 62331) at Conwy Morfa 1915 (Caernarfon RO: XS/881/3)

A branch of the YMCA opened in Holyhead in September 1918 as a War Emergency Hut. It provided shelter to servicemen travelling through Holyhead and had a canteen, library and billiards table. It was located in the Exchange Buildings which were rented for the purpose (Roberts 1920, 19). The YMCA also provided a hut at Bangor Station for soldiers in transit (Jones Pate date unknown).

#### ***Physical remains of social organisations***

Locating places related to the early work of the Women's Institute is not as simple as it might be thought as many of the adverts in newspapers for meetings do not give descriptions of where the Institutes met. Presumably local people would know where this was. Meetings of the first Women's Institute, opened at Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, Anglesey on September 16th 1915, were held for the first 6 years in a summer house (PRN 6652) at Y Graig, a house in the village. The summer house (PRN 6652) still survives and is a grade II listed building (plate 25). A hut was then purchased from Kinmel Army Camp and erected in 1921 next to the toll house on land donated by Lord Anglesey (Davies 2015, 118, 120, 128, 137). This hut (PRN 33384) is still used as a WI meeting room today (plate 26).

The first purpose built Women's Institute meeting hall built in Britain is supposed to be that built for the Penrhyndeudraeth WI at Minffordd, which was opened in August 1917 by Mrs Lloyd George (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24th August 1917, p6). The hall (PRN 62330) (plate 27) is close to the Minffordd Ffestiniog Railway Station, the land and building having been presented by Miss Alice Williams, sister of Sir Osmond Williams, Lord Lieutenant of Merioneth (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24th August 1917, p6). The building appears on maps prior to the 1917 3rd edition 25 inch map so it seems to have been rebuilt or adapted rather than built from scratch for the WI. The building is still used by the WI.



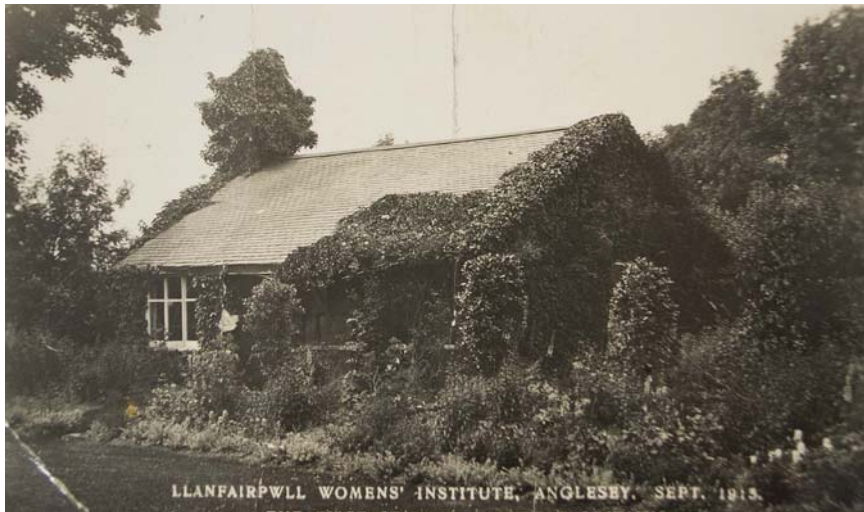


Plate 25. The summer house (PRN 6652) at Y Graig used by the Llanfairpwllgwyngyll WI during their first 6 years (courtesy of Anglesey Archives (WSG/4/139))

Plate 26. Hut (PRN 33384) purchased from Kinmel Army Camp and erected in 1921 next to the toll house on land donated by Lord Anglesey to provide a permanent meeting hall for the Llanfairpwllgwyngyll WI



Plate 27. Penrhyndeudraeth WI Meeting Hall (PRN 62330) at Minffordd

Plate 28. Photograph of the Girls Friendly Society Lodge (PRN 62326) on Church Walks, Llandudno (date unknown) (Conwy RO: CP3203/29/26)



The Holyhead Women's Institute held meetings in the English Wesleyan Chapel Schoolroom, Lhassa Street, Holyhead (PRN 62329) during the First World War (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 21/12/1917, p5). The chapel has recently been demolished and a pair of semi-detached houses stand on the footprint of the schoolroom.

The other societies are even harder to pin down, although one GFS lodge on Church Walks, Llandudno (PRN 62326) (plate 28) and some of the locations used for production of materials, such the use of as Plas Rhianfa, Cwm Cadnant (PRN 62316) to make orthopaedic appliances, can be identified. In most cases references are too vague. Identifying the Queen Mary's Guild's depot in Deganwy Avenue, Llandudno and their sphagnum moss store in Deganwy would be a useful contribution but evidence gathered for this project was not sufficient to locate specific buildings.

The YMCA hut on Conwy Morfa is long-gone but its location can be estimated from a photograph and plans. The hut at Bangor station is unlikely to have survived long after the War.

### **3.6. Belgian Refugees**

#### ***Historical background***

The violation of Belgian neutrality by Germany brought Britain into the First World War and changed British public opinion on joining the war. Prior to this, as late as 1<sup>st</sup> August 1914, much public opinion had been against getting involved, but the attack on Belgium changed that. The attack was used as a major recruiting tool in Wales, with the men of one small nation being called on to defend another. The public also felt considerable sympathy with the civilians Belgian who fled the fighting with their homes and cities destroyed and Britain offered to take in large numbers of Belgian refugees (Beckett 2006, 11, 15). Many of the refugees came to Wales where they had to be found accommodation. The sympathy of the Welsh people for the refugees seems to have been very strong; houses were loaned for their use, money was raised for their support and in some cases they were included in social events.

The refugees were supported by public subscriptions and there seemed to be little attempt to find work for them. This may initially have been due to the understanding that they were to be very temporary residents and were to return home as soon as the fighting had ceased in Belgium. It does appear that some of the refugees did not stay long, some apparently returning to Belgium after 6 months or so, although that seems unlikely with the war continuing (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 1<sup>st</sup> October 1915, p8). Many moved to England seeking work (Jones 2012). All the refugees in Menai Bridge are reported to have left to go and work in England in early 1916 (Jones 2012, 45), but those at Beaumaris were still there in 1919. However in Bangor it was considered that the abilities of the refugees might be used beneficially by appointing a small number to teach French at evening classes (Lindsay 1993, 80).

Some refugees used their skills create work for themselves. Emile de Vynck and his family were given accommodation in Criccieth, and apparently settled in Hendregadredd, Pentrefelin (PRN 62351). He was a woodcarver and made many items for local buildings including the altar and reredos of St Mary's Church, Tremadog, installed in 1917 (<https://wcia.secure.force.com/peacemapwales/>). Even those not working could contribute to the local community. Some refugee families staying in Llandegfan had musical abilities and several contributed to a concert held in the Council School in January 1915 (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 8<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p8).

The refugees were very grateful for the help they received and expressed their gratitude through the newspapers and in other ways. Those staying in Bangor wrote an open letter to the mayor and mayoress published in North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser (30<sup>th</sup> October 1914, p6) expressing their thanks. It perhaps says something about the Chronicle's readership that the letter was published in French with no translation. They also had a plaque made, which they gave to the town and which is currently held in Storiell, the museum in Bangor. The refugees living in the Criccieth area published their thanks in The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard (16<sup>th</sup> October 1914, p7) along with detailed descriptions of their experiences of the German attack on Belgium and their escapes.

The refugees were not always welcomed. There was a resistance to having them in Holyhead, where there was a naval base, as it was feared that German spies might be amongst them and the Admiralty refused to have refugees in the town for security reasons (Jones 2012, 31).





Plate 29. The Grand Ash Hotel, Gloddaeth St, Llandudno, formerly One Ash (PRN 62323), where Belgian refugees stayed during the First World War

Plate 30. 7 and 8 Nant Terrace, Menai Bridge (PRN 62348), where Belgian refugees stayed during the First World War



Plate 31. Postcard of Castle Street, Beaumaris showing the YWCA building  
(<http://picclick.co.uk/Wales-Beaumaris-Castle-Street-YWCA-vintage-voiture-car-182282218075.html>)

### ***Associated sites***

Sites relating to the Belgian refugees are mostly houses where they lived but there are occasional places where they worked and of course the Belgian Promenade at Menai Bridge built with their labour. Most of the locations identified come from newspaper reports, many of which are detailed enough to identify the properties used.

Towns and villages across North Wales took in Belgian refugees; about 300 Belgian refugees came to Anglesey, with refugees being accommodated in Beaumaris, Amlwch, Llangefni, Gwalchmai and Dwyran, as well as the better known ones at Menai Bridge (Jones 2012, 25). The main priority was finding accommodation for these people, mainly families. The types of houses used for the refugees varied considerably from small terraced houses to mansions but perhaps the most prestigious was Bryn Awel, Criccieth (PRN 62350) built for David Lloyd George by his father-in-law and where his daughter Megan was brought up.

The villagers of Bontnewydd near Caernarfon committed to housing and maintaining a family of refugees (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 6th November 1914, p3). Lord Penrhyn gave Wellfield, Bangor House (PRN 29374) rent free for the use of Belgian refugees (North Wales Chronicle 4th Apr 1919), and in September 1914 sixty two refugees were billeted there. A house in Melinda Terrace, Bangor was also used (Ellis Jones 1986, 138). One of the refugees staying in Wellfield House, a Madame Vondormarl (only 23 years old) was reunited with her husband after friends had discovered her whereabouts. While her husband was fighting at the front their town has been bombed and Madame Vondormarl had evacuated and come to Bangor. Her husband meanwhile had been injured and sent to hospital in Eastbourne, where Madame Vondormarl was eventually reunited with him (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 4<sup>th</sup> December 1914, p7).

Eighteen Belgian refugees arrived in Penmaenmawr, and they were put up at the Grand Hotel until the completion of the furnishing and refurbishing of a house called Noddfa (PRN 62313), used later in the war as a sphagnum moss depot. The refugees include an old woman of 72 years, 8 children, 2 men and 8 women, all from Antwerp (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 13<sup>th</sup> November 1914, p7). For 6 months there were 19 refugees but then they were reduced to 9 as the rest had returned to Belgium. Donations were received to help support them at Noddfa (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 1<sup>st</sup> October 1915, p8).

In November 1914 eight Belgian refugees were staying at Benarth House, Llanfairfechan (PRN 62317) (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 6th November 1914, p7). Ten Belgian ladies also arrived to stay at the Clergy House of Rest (PRN 62369) on the sea-front at Llanfairfechan in October 1914 (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser, 2nd October 1914, p8).

Refugees were staying in Fairbourne as one died there after a long illness. Panteinion, Arthog (PRN 62325) was used to house the refugees and one of them, Madam Celestin Mengel, died there in 1915 (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 15th January 1915, p6). There are several references to Belgian refugees in Barmouth but the location of their accommodation there has not yet been identified (e. g. Barmouth and County Advertiser 21<sup>st</sup> June 1917, p3). There was a School for Belgian Refugees in Barmouth apparently in a terraced house on Marine Gardens<sup>8</sup>.

Belgian refugees were put up in Llandudno until summer 1916. The Council gave them free gas, electricity, water and cookers (William 2002, 117). According to the Llandudno Advertiser some of the refugees were billeted at York House (PRN 62322) and at One Ash (now the Grand Ash Hotel), Llandudno (PRN 62323) (plate 29) (Adrian Hughes Home Front Museum).

Sixty three Belgian refugees arrived by train at Menai Bridge station in October 1914 where they were greeted in French by the Bishop of Bangor, before being transported in cars into the town for a welcome meal, passing Royal Welsh Fusiliers who provided a guard of honour on both bridges (historypoints.org). The Belgian refugees were housed in Menai Bridge at 7 and 8 Nant Terrace (PRN 62348) (plate 30). Some refugees were also housed in Preswylfa (PRN 62349) and Bod Idris, the location of the latter has not yet been identified (WCIA Voices website). Twelve were also housed at the Village Hall in Llandegfan (PRN 62416) (historypoints.org), and another 20 in the YWCA hostel in Beaumaris (PRN 62413) (plate 31). The latter arrived in October 1914 and stayed until after the end of the War (Anglesey Archives: WM/1379/1).

The refugees of Menai Bridge left the most permanent reminder of their presence in the area by constructing the

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8 <https://wcia.secure.force.com/peacemapwales/>



Belgian Promenade (PRN 58690) (plate 32). The aim was to find work for the men and funding was provided by the Belgian Refugee Fund (Jones 2012, 27). The promenade runs along the Menai Strait from Ynys Tysilio (Church Island) to Carreg yr Halen and was completed in 1916. The promenade was rebuilt in 1963 and the ceremonial reopening in 1965 was performed by the only surviving refugee, Eduard Wilhelms (historypoints.org; Jones 2012).



Plate 32. Belgian Promenade, Menai Bridge (PRN 58690), looking towards the Menai Bridge

### 3.7. Conscientious Objectors

Compulsory military service was introduced to Britain for the first time by the Military Service Act in January 1916. Initially all single men in England, Scotland and Wales aged 18 to 41 were liable for conscription, and the law was later extended to include married men and those up to 50. The exceptions included those in essential jobs, who had dependents to support, or were medically unfit. There was also an exemption for “those who could show a conscientious objection” (Brookes 1988). The latter exemption led to a group of people from a variety of backgrounds being registered as conscientious objectors, although there were only 16,100 men and women registered throughout Britain. The small number of conscientious objectors may partly be due to the courage needed to openly become a conscientious objector and risk being subjected to violence and abuse (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 251).

Dissent to the war was rare but there were groups of people who objected to the war for political or religious reasons. The most common grounds for objection were religious, with the Quakers being mainly pacifist (Brookes 1988), and many of the Welsh Non-conformist chapels having strongly pacifist traditions. However there were also political reasons for objection to the war. Political objectors included the Union of Democratic Control, a group of radical liberals who were disillusioned with the secret diplomacy that led to the war. Socialists, including many in the Independent Labour Party and some in the Labour Party, as well as the British Socialist Party, also distrusted the causes and aims of the war. They thought the war was for the benefit of the rich at the expense of the poor and the more extreme socialist wanted to use the war as an opportunity to bring about a crisis in the class struggle. They considered that the working class across Europe should be fighting the rich rather than each other (Haste 1977, 140-141; Barlow 2014, 118). All these different groups were isolated and there was never a coherent anti-war movement in Wales (Barlow 2014, 132).

The conscientious objector had to apply to his local tribunal for exemption from military service, and could go before an appeals tribunal if they were refused, and then the Central Tribunal in London if they were refused again. However once a conscientious objector was refused exemption he was considered to have enlisted into military service. The tribunal could give an absolute exemption or one conditional on undertaking work of national importance (Brookes 1988). The alternative work often involved working as ambulance drivers or stretcher bearers at the front or on farms, road building and other projects at home. The more absolute of the conscientious objectors refused any work that could help the war, and these were imprisoned. Those whose exemptions had been refused were considered to be soldiers absent without leave and could be arrested. Those drafted into the army

who refused to obey orders could also be arrested (Brookes 1988). However across Britain only 6261 men were imprisoned (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 251). Although the press and the public were generally strongly against conscientious objectors the government was not very concerned unless the law was being flouted or strikes were being promoted (Haste 1977, 156). However those running the prisons had a more unforgiving attitude towards those imprisoned, and 71 died in prison from injuries sustained there due to abuse and rough treatment (Van Emden and Humphries 2003, 252).

The Bala-Bangor Independent Theological College and its principal, Thomas Rees, strongly supported conscientious objectors amongst the students. Rees had made himself extremely unpopular to the general public by writing against the War from its start and when conscription was introduced he gave help and support not only to his own students but also to those from Bangor Baptist College who wished to argue for exemption (Aled Eirug pers. comm., part of his forthcoming PhD thesis). The college argued, as can be seen in a letter written in February 1916 to the local tribunal defending one student (BALA-BANGOR/65, Bangor University Archives, image 45), that Christian ministry and training for it were already accepted as “a work of sufficient importance in the national interests to exempt those who perform it from military service”. The argument was successful as of the twenty-one Bala-Bangor students requesting exemption, six gained absolute exemption, only one was rejected and the rest were given conditional exemption (Aled Eirug pers. comm.). During the War the college was “in a building at the bottom of Ffriddoedd Road, Bangor, which was once three private houses” (Archives Hub). The only building that clearly was originally three houses in this area is labelled as Wylfa (PRN 62344).

The Pearce Register of Conscientious Objectors was created through research by Cyril Pearce, a retired senior lecturer based at the University of Leeds. It details information on First World War Conscientious Objectors across the UK, and the entries for Wales have been added to the Wales for Peace website. These include 11 entries for Anglesey, 46 for Caernarvonshire and 22 for Merionethshire. Although 27 were theology students or studying for the ministry other occupations were varied, with teachers, grocers, farmers, a bank manager and insurance salesman represented. There were also several quarrymen and slate makers; most surprising of all being HC Darbishire, son of Lt Col Charles Henry Darbishire of Penmaenmawr, the quarry owner. Colonel Darbishire had set up his own volunteer regiment before the war and when the war started was enthusiastic in encouraging his quarry workers to join up. For his son, then acting as quarry manager, to become a conscientious objector, must have been very difficult. HC Darbishire was sent to work on a farm as his war work.

Many of the conscientious objectors served in the Royal Medical Corps under non-combatant agreements or in the Non-Combatant Corps, some serving abroad and 5 gaining the War Medal and Victory Medal. Others were sent to work on farms or to mend roads. More unusually the architect Sir Clough Williams-Ellis employed conscientious objectors to build his new lodge (PRN 12438) at Plas Brondanw, the country house that he inherited at Llanfrothen (listed building record 5248). Though it is not clear how this was defined as important war work.

Only 10 conscientious objectors from north-west Wales were imprisoned. Most were sent to prisons in England, particularly Wormwood Scrubs but William Hughes Roberts of Pwllheli was held in Caernarvon Prison (PRN 62368) from 20th April to 20th September 1917. Philemon James Edwards of Tongwynlais, Glamorgan was also held in the prison (Pearce Register), and there must have been others from outside Wales. There were complaints of poor treatment of conscientious objectors in Caernarfon Prison, with reports of unnecessary punishments, verbal abuse and constant confinement to the cells with no exercise (Cumbria Archive Centre D/MAR/4/39).

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Other phases of this project have led to the recommendation of sites for scheduling. In this case most of the sites identified are of minor significance individually and of temporary use. Even the more significant hospitals were in adapted homes and mansions and the likelihood of features relating specifically to hospital use are small. Where such features do remain they are a small aspect of the history of the buildings, which are likely to be listed for other aspects of their history. This is not to underestimate the importance of these sites as a group to provide a physical perspective to the local history of the war. People often relate better to local history than to distant national events. If they can find out about the history of a building that they see every day or discover what people who lived in their town or village did to support the war effort this brings the period closer to home. It is also useful for engaging those who are uninterested in the military aspects of First World War history. Concentration on battle tactics and military equipment can be seen as glorifying war and can fail to engage many people, whereas making them realise what people at home felt and did can provide a route into engaging these people with this



aspect of their past.

The story of the Belgian refugees resonates strongly today with our current refugee crises. The warmth of the welcome for Belgian refugees might be contrasted with the resistance from many quarters to accepting Syrian refugees today, although their experiences in their respective war zones must have been very similar.

A total of 93 sites have been identified but this must be only a small part of those that could be included if more evidence could have been found. Further work on contemporary newspapers could identify more locations and it is likely that some amateur local historians have knowledge of these places. There must be photographs hidden in attics and in private collections but it has proved quite difficult to reach people to find these.

There are many groups of people across the country interested in finding places where their ancestors worked during the War, especially in hospitals. They often communicate on the internet and making this report available digitally may lead to further discoveries by this community of researchers.

This project has greatly extended the number and range of sites of this period on the HER. This should be of benefit if any of the buildings or sites are to be redeveloped when their First World War history will be highlighted and possibly features relating to it might be discovered.

## 5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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 BALA-BANGOR/65: file of papers relating to the attitude of theological students at Bala-Bangor college towards conscription, etc., 1914-1916 (available on-line ([http://cymru1914.org/en/view/archive\\_file/4075251](http://cymru1914.org/en/view/archive_file/4075251)), accessed 02/12/2016)

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 XS/1515/4: Patients and nurses at the entrance to Bryn Seiont Hospital during the First World War.

##### **Gwynedd Archives, Dolgellau Record Office**

Z/M/6324/23: Folder of material relating to Dolgellau WI 1916-2005  
 Z/M/7372: Statement of accounts and list of subscribers to the Tywyn and District Belgian Refugees Relief Fund 1914-1915

##### **Conwy Archives, Llandudno Record Office**

CP3203/29/26: Photograph: GFS Lodge (no date)  
 CP395/19/33: Photograph of suspension bridge in Betws y Coed  
 CX272/1/1: Scrapbook created by Trefriw WI, 1987

##### **Anglesey Archives, Llangefni**

WSP/151: Postcard of soldiers and nurses outside Plas Trescawen. Labelled "Trescawen 1914-18"  
 WM/1764: Autograph album belonging to Sister Susi Hughes (1915-1917)  
 WM/45: Logbook of Stanley Sailors' Home 1897-1927  
 WA/8/7: Logbook for Amlwch School 1914-1918  
 WA/8/16b: Logbook for Bodedern School  
 WA/8/22: Logbook for Carreglefn School 1914-1918  
 WM/1379/1: YWCA Beaumaris Branch Minute Book 1910-1923

##### **Cumbria Archive Centre (material kindly supplied by Aled Eirug)**

D/MAR/4/39: Catherine Marshall papers; state of Carnarvon prison, date 12/8/17

## **6.5. Newspapers**

Accessed through Welsh Newspapers Online (<http://welshnewspapers.llgc.org.uk/en/home>)

The Barmouth and County Advertiser and District Weekly News

Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard

The Cambrian News and Welsh Farmers Gazette

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser

Y Cymro

Yr Udgon



## **7. APPENDIX I: GAZETTEER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT SITES**

### **7.1. Military hospitals/convalescent homes**

**PRN 6562**      NPRN 28143

**Aberartro House, Llanbedr**

**NGR:** SH60052722

**Location:** Llanbedr, Gwynedd

#### **Description**

The current hall was built in the early 20th century in Arts and Crafts style.

Mrs Antonia Marian Owen, who owned Aber Artro Hall, opened it as a hospital to treat wounded soldiers in the First World War. Aber Artro is included in the official Red Cross list of Auxiliary Hospitals. Mrs Owen received the Royal Red Cross, First Class, in 1917 for her work as commandant of the hospital ([historypoints.org](http://historypoints.org)).

Use of Aberartro Hall as a hospital was reported in The Barmouth and County Advertiser and District Weekly News (17<sup>th</sup> May 1917, p2). This states that there were about 40 patients and records their entertainment by local singers. They were also given cigarettes and tobacco paid for by a fund raising concert.

#### **Sources**

<http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=aber-artro-hall-near-llanbedr>;

The Barmouth and County Advertiser and District Weekly News, 17th May 1917, p2

Red Cross list of Auxiliary Hospitals

**PRN 7983**

**Conwy Hospital (Formerly Union Workhouse), Conwy**

**NGR:** SH77477806

**Location:** Conwy, Conwy

#### **Description**

There has been some confusion about Conwy Workhouse being used as a military hospital (Thompson 2003, p8) but Draper (2005, 197-201), who has studied the history in detail, is quite clear that the workhouse continued in that function throughout the First World War and was not used as a hospital then.

“After 1930, the former workhouse became a Public Assistance Institution and then Conway Hospital for Aged Sick. The site continued in operation as a local hospital until around 2002. The buildings have now been demolished and the site redeveloped for residential use” ([www.workhouses.org.uk](http://www.workhouses.org.uk)).

#### **Sources**

Thompson 2003; Draper 2005; <http://www.workhouses.org.uk/Conway/>

**PRN 11577**      NPRN 17039

**Wern Manor, Dolbenmaen**

**NGR:** SH54273990

**Location:** Dolbenmaen, Gwynedd

#### **Description**

The manor was used as a hospital for wounded soldiers during the First World War. It is listed as “Wern Auxiliary Military Hospital, Portmadoc” in Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals used in WWI and is also listed as a Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital in the newspaper (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th November 1917, p4). Not to be confused with Parc Wern Hospital at Sketty, Glamorganshire.

The first patients arrived on 13th December 1915. 25 beds were initially intended but by July 1917 there were 41 patients. The house was lent, rent free, by Mr and Mrs Greaves, who also provided water, electricity, heating, and food such as vegetables and rabbits. Contributions of money, equipment and food were requested from the public. All the staff were volunteers with the exception of the Sister-in-Charge, who, according to Red Cross rules had to be a paid professional. The cook was also paid for by the Greaves, who were still living in the house and paid the hospital for their own board. Mrs Greave was also the matron of the hospital, for which work she was given an MBE in 1918 (Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 22nd December 1916, p7; North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 15th December 1916, p8; 6th July 1917, p6; 11th January 1918, p2; Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 26th November 1915, p7). Mrs Greave did make an appeal to the public for funds to cover “smokes”, rail fares, prizes and treats (Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 1st November 1918, p5)

Patients visited Pwllheli on Wednesdays and made use of a rest room there. Local people made a collection to enable them to supply tea to the patients. Teas were also provided for patients visiting Porthmadoc (Yr Udgorn 26th June 1918, p3; Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 31st January 1919, p7)

David Lloyd George's daughter Olwen spent part of her Christmas holiday nursing at the hospital (Cambria Daily Leader 9th January 1917, p1).

In spring 1918 the hospital was renovated and the patients were moved to Aberartro Hospital, Llanbedr (Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 8th March 1918, p7).

The hospital closed in December 1918 and it was proposed that the equipment be reused in a new cottage hospital in Porthmadog (Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 20th December 1918, p5).

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th November 1917, p4; 15th December 1916, p8; 6th July 1917, p6; 11th January 1918, p2

Yr Udgorn 26th June 1918, p3;

Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 22nd December 1916, p7; 1st November 1918, p5; 26th November 1915, p7; 8th March 1918, p7; 31st January 1919, p7; 20th December 1918, p5

**PRN 11942** NPRN 404623

**Bodlondeb Castle, Church Walks, Llandudno**

**NGR:** SH7780682697

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

**Description**

A Gothic-style house built in the 1890s.

Bodlondeb Castle was used as a military hospital in the First World War (William 2002, 117; Jones 2002, 35).

The existing HER entry has a completely erroneous grid reference (SH77538237). The correct grid reference is SH7780682697.

Bodlondeb, Church Walks, Llandudno has just been let for "our wounded soldiers" and there will be an auction of (presumably unnecessary) household furniture (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 3rd December 1915, p4). Not included on Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals.

**Sources**

William 2002; Jones 2002; North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 3rd December 1915, p4

**PRN 12264** NPRN 26694

**Lady Forrester Convalescent Home, Llandudno**

**NGR:** SH7969981265

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

**Description**

During the First World War the convalescent home was used by the military authorities and took many wounded Belgian soldiers (homefrontmuseum.wordpress.com).

In 1979 the home became the North Wales Medical Centre that closed in 2006 and it has now been taken over by Blind Veterans UK as rehabilitation and training centre for blind and visually-impaired servicemen and women and veterans (Daily Mail April 2012).

This site is listed in the newspaper as an auxiliary military hospital not under the Red Cross (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th November 1917, p4).

Both British and Belgian soldiers were cared for at the Home (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 1st January 1915, p7)

In October 1914 a train carrying 80 wounded Belgian soldiers arrived in Llandudno and the soldiers were cared for at Lady Forrester's Home (Adrian Hughes Daily Post article 2014)

**Sources**

<https://homefrontmuseum.wordpress.com/tag/lady-forester/>;

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2125192/Blind-Veterans-UKs-state-art-centre-supporting-blind-ex-servicemen-women.html>;

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th November 1917, p4;

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 1st January 1915, p7

**PRN 12323** NPRN 28260

**Caernwch House, Brithdir**

**NGR:** SH76431767

**Location:** Brithdir and Llanfachreth, Gwynedd

**Description**

The Caernwch Red Cross auxiliary military hospital opened for two years during the First World War in Caernwch Hall. The hospital closed on 22 March 1919. The girls and staff of Dr Williams' School, Dolgellau



provided entertainments, eggs and newspapers for the convalescing wounded soldiers (mylearning.org).

The hospital was run by Mary Richards, a keen botanist, who won the Royal Red Cross Medal for her work in the hospital (Condry 1998, 6).

The quarterly accounts for the hospital for January, February and March 1918 were published in The Cambrian News and Welsh Farmers Gazette, 19th April, p8.

#### **Sources**

<http://www.mylearning.org/ww1-home-front-at-dr-williams-school-dolgellau/p-4877/>;

The Cambrian News and Welsh Farmers Gazette, 19th April, p8; Condry 1998.

#### **PRN 19608**

##### **Nannau Auxiliary Hospital, Nannau, Dolgellau**

**NGR:** SH7430520820

**Location:** Brithdir and Llanfachreth, Gwynedd

#### **Description**

In the First World War a neurological hospital was set up within the house and grounds at Nannau, Dolgellau (PRN 12418). It is listed as “Officers’ Hospital, Nannau, Dolgelly” in the Red Cross list of Auxiliary Hospitals. Nannau was used as an officers’ neurological hospital, mainly for victims of shell-shock, giving specialist but not prolonged treatment. The hospital opened on 11th February 1918, the commandant was Louisa Vaughan and the specialist in charge was Sir Alfred Bakewell Howitt. The hospital was in use until May 1921, when the house was handed back to the Vaughan family (Slyfield 2004; Nanney Williams 2016). Nannau was chosen due to its quiet location and private grounds. The nearby house at Maes-y-Bryner was used as a guest house for the relatives of the sick patients (nannau.com). Officers with spinal injuries were also sent to Nannau (Silver 2003). Much of the main house has been destroyed.

#### **Sources**

Slyfield 2004; Silver 2003; Nanney Williams 2016; <http://nannau.com/WWI/>;

#### **PRN 24852      NPRN 410697**

##### **Bodlondeb, Holyhead Road, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH5605171501

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

#### **Description**

There was an Auxiliary Hospital at Bodlondeb during the First World War.

The Red Cross list of military hospitals in WWI lists under Carnarvonshire “Boolondeb [sic], Bangor Road, Menai Bridge”, it is also listed under Anglesey “Bodlondeb Auxiliary Hospital, Menai Bridge Road, Bangor”. These both refer to Bodlondeb, Holyhead Road, Bangor.

Cowell (1990, 26 and 1997, 95) includes photographs of staff and patients at Bodlondeb, which he describes as a large house on Menai Bridge Road. It was owned by Henry Rees Davies, a member of a former shipping family. While he was away on active service during the First World War the house was converted into a Red Cross convalescent home under the command his sister-in-law, Mrs John Davies of Ceris. The nursing staff were from the Red Cross and from the local Women’s Patriotic Guild and all were unpaid volunteers.

Gifts of food were donated to the hospital, some from harvest festivals. The gifts included 10 brace of partridges and 12 brace of pheasants (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12th October 1917, p8; 2nd March 1917, p8). Patients were entertained by Bangor Choir and had whist drives and billiard tournaments (2nd March 1917, p8).

In early May 1915 20 wounded soldiers were received at Bodlondeb. They took the train to Menai Bridge station and were met there by the Bangor VAD Men’s Detachment and some cars lent by local residents to take them to the hospital (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 14th May 1915, p5). Later in the month 23 soldiers injured in the Dardanelles arrived. Some were Australian and one was “Russian”, actually Polish from Warsaw but that part of Poland was under Russian control at the time (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 28th May 1915, p8).

In July 1918 there was a sale of articles made by the patients, along with sports, a flower stall and a band (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 26th July 1918, p2).

#### **Sources**

Berks and Davidson 2007; Cowell 1990 and 1997;

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12th October 1917, p8; 2nd March 1917, p8; 2nd March 1917, p8; 14th May 1915, p5; 26th July 1918, p2

**PRN 34175** NPRN 28607

**Pale Hall, Dyffryn Penllyn**

**NGR:** SH98263608

**Location:** Llandderfel, Gwynedd

**Description**

In September 1917 Sir Henry Robertson handed over his house for use as a military hospital, run by a matron and staffed by local volunteers who had been trained by the St John's Ambulance Association (Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal, 28th September 1917, p8). This is included on the Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals as "Pale Auxiliary Military Hospital, Pale, Corwen".

On 20th August 1917 eighteen wounded soldiers came to the hospital at Pale Hall and more were due to arrive (Yr Adsain, 21st August 1917, p2). By 2nd October 17 of the patients were ready to return to their regiments (Yr Adsain, 2nd October 1917, p7). The hospital presumably closed for a time in 1918 as it is reported as being re-opened in August 1918 with Miss N. R. Lloyd-Williams as commandant (Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 30th August 1918, p5).

Captain Henry Robertson himself was fighting at the front for some of the time that the hospital was in use, coming home only on leave (Yr Adsain, 26th June 1917, p5). He was back at home when in August 1918 that he was fined for using his motor vehicle without permission to go salmon fishing, which he defended by saying that he provided the salmon to the wounded soldiers in his private hospital (Y Dinesydd Cymreig, 14th August 1918, p6; Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal, 9th August 1918, p8).

Miss Kate Jarrett of Faerdref House, who worked at the Hospital was also secretary of the Corwen Ladies Ambulance Class (Yr Adsain, 28th May 1918, p1).

Pale Hall is now a hotel.

**Sources**

Y Dinesydd Cymreig, 14th August 1918, p6;

Yr Adsain, 21st August 1917, p2; 26th June 1917, p5; 28th May 1918, p1; 2nd October 1917, p7;

Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 30th August 1918, p5;

Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal, 9th August 1918, p8; 28th September 1917, p8

**PRN 58710**

**Stanley Sailors Hospital, Holyhead**

**NGR:** SH2529583168

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

**Description**

The hospital was established on Salt Island, Holyhead, in November 1871, for the use of sailors but was used during the First World War as a military hospital. Jane Henrietta Adeane (a niece of WO Stanley of Penrhos), who had been closely involved with the hospital before the War, was the hospital commandant. The hospital was run mainly by nurses came from the Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) of the Red Cross (Jones 2012, 8; Roberts and Lancefield 1997, 80). The hospital was extended to provide extra accommodation during the War, including extra sleeping quarters, a recreation room and a new bathroom. Some of this expansion was funded by Miss Adeane herself and some by an Emergency Fund set up in 1916 (Roberts and Lancefield 1997, 80).

The extended hospital could accommodate 30 patients, with further ward accommodation added in 1916. From 1916 to 1919 over 1400 patients were treated in the hospital, including men from all over the world, including "Chinese, Lascars and negroes" as reported by Violet Martineau, Miss Adeane's niece (Roberts 1920, 6-7; Roberts and Lancefield 1997, 80-82).

After the War it became a convalescent home for disabled servicemen (Roberts 1920, 6-7; Roberts and Lancefield 1997, 83).

The hospital was closed in 1987 ([archiveswales.llgc.org.uk](http://archiveswales.llgc.org.uk)) and then demolished. The site of the hospital is now under the ferry terminal.

**Sources**

Jones 2012; Roberts 1920; Roberts and Lancefield 1997;

[https://archiveswales.llgc.org.uk/anw/get\\_collection.php?inst\\_id=27&coll\\_id=1373&expand=](https://archiveswales.llgc.org.uk/anw/get_collection.php?inst_id=27&coll_id=1373&expand=)

**PRN 58712**

**Stanley Sailor's Home, Newry, Holyhead**

**NGR:** SH2461083109

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

**Description**



The building, now a Sea Cadet's training centre, on Prince of Wales Road has a 1857 date stone and provided refuge for shipwrecked sailors. It was financed by the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society and (Roberts 1920, 43), and took in shipwrecked sailors, often just to get them warm, and give them a meal and clothing before they continued to their destination by sea or railway. This role continued during the First World War, taking in the greatly increased numbers of shipwrecked sailors, most rescued from ships that had been torpedoed by U-boats (WM/45).

The Home is usually considered to be the site of the Beach Auxiliary VAD Hospital in the First World War, but Roberts (1920, 4) states that the hospital was in a "new" sailors' home and as the Stanley Home was established in 1857 it could not be considered new. There is no mention of the hospital in a log book from the Home covering the First World War does not mention use as a hospital (WM/45). All this suggests that the Stanley Sailors' Home was not the Beach Hospital. See PRN 62669 for an alternative location.

#### **Sources**

Roberts 1920;

Conservation area character appraisals: Holyhead beach area 2005, Isle of Anglesey County Council (<http://www.anglesey.gov.uk/Journals/2011/09/28/Holyhead-Beach-SPG--Englishatodiad1.pdf>);

Anglesey Archives: WM/1764 and WM/45

#### **PRN 58713**

##### **Assembly Rooms, Holborn Road, Holyhead**

**NGR:** SH2463282124

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

#### **Description**

The building is shown on the 1924 25 inch map but not on the 1900 map. It has now been demolished and houses occupy part of the site.

The Assembly Rooms were used as a VAD hospital for injured soldiers during the First World War. This was the first such hospital to be opened in Holyhead and was opened in October 1914. It was made available for use by the Co-operative Society. The hospital also took in some wounded Belgian soldiers (Roberts 1920, 4; Jones 2012, 8).

Listed by Red Cross as "Holborn Auxiliary Hospital, Holyhead".

The Belgian soldiers are specifically mentioned as being treated here in 1914 (Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal, 20th November 1914, p5).

#### **Sources**

Jones 2012; Roberts 1920;

Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal, 20th November 1914, p5;

<http://www.rootschat.com/forum/index.php?topic=699294.9>

#### **PRN 62293**

##### **Penrhyn Cottage VAD Hospital, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH5731871865

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

#### **Description**

A hospital, known as Penrhyn Cottage VAD Hospital, was set up to nurse wounded soldiers in the First World War. The hospital was established in a property in Upper Bangor called Llwyneithin lent by Lord Penrhyn and was to be called the Penrhyn Cottage VAD Hospital. It was a convalescent home for wounded soldiers (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 17th March 1916, p8; 17th December 1915, p5; 4th February 1916, p8).

Llwyneithin, Ffriddoedd Road, is now part of Hillgrove School (David Price pers. comm.) but the building appears largely unchanged externally compared to the 1914 25 inch map.

The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser (14th April, 1916, p8) lists a large number of people giving money and equipment to the hospital, and a statement of their accounts was published in the same paper 16th March 1917, p8. On 14th April 1916 Mrs Trench, the vice-president of the Bangor Red Cross Society VAD, requested whether anyone "would kindly give her a little pig for the farming branch of the hospital".

Cowell (1990, 25) has a postcard of the hospital which he identifies as at Llwyn Eithin and says was used for the convalescence of officers. He suggests that the Penrhyn Cottage Hospital was separate from the VAD hospital at Llwyn Eithin, but the newspaper reports make it clear that this was the same site.

Gifts of food and cigarettes were donated to the hospital (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12th October 1917, p8).

#### **Sources**

Cowell 1990;

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 17th March 1916, p8; 14th April, 1916, p8; 16th March 1917, p8; 17th December 1915, p5; 14th April 1916; 4th February 1916, p8

**PRN 62294** NPRN 415106

**The Cliff Hotel (Darien Hotel), Trearddur Bay**

**NGR:** SH2460079470

**Location:** Treaddur, Ynys Mon

**Description**

The hotel is shown on the 1924 25 inch map but not on the 1900 map. However it was certainly built by the First World War.

It is marked on the map as the Cliff Hotel but during the First World War seems to have been called the Darien Hotel, when it was run by a Miss Udall (Trearddur Bay Sailing Club: [www.tbsc.org](http://www.tbsc.org)). Part of the complex is currently known as Plas Darien and there is a Cottage and Darien Bach nearby preserving the earlier name. The hotel was used as a VAD hospital for wounded servicemen during the First World War (Roberts 1920, 4; Jones 2012, 8), and is recorded by the Red Cross as "Darien Auxiliary Hospital, Trearddur Bay, near Holyhead". Wounded Belgian soldiers were also treated here (Roberts 1920, 4).

Belgian soldiers are specifically mentioned as being treated at the Darien Hotel in 1914 (Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal, 20th November 1914, p5)

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser (20th November 1914, p6) states that 8 detachments of Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) are employed at the Darien Hotel.

**Sources**

Jones 2012; Roberts 1920;

<http://www.tbsc.org/index.php/club-2/club-history/>;

Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal, 20th November 1914, p5;

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 20th November 1914, p6

**PRN 62295**

**Isallt Fawr, Trearddur Bay**

**NGR:** SH2439379948

**Location:** Treaddur, Ynys Mon

**Description**

The house is shown and named on the 25 inch maps from 1889 but was extended by 1900. The plan of the house seems to be largely unchanged since 1924.

The house was used as a convalescent home for wounded servicemen during the First World War (Roberts 1920, 4; Jones 2012, 8), and is recorded by the Red Cross as "Isallt Faur [sic] Auxiliary Hospital, Trearddur Bay, near Holyhead".

An autograph book kept by one of the nurses at the hospital, who also worked at the Beach Hospital, is held in the Anglesey Archives (WM/1764). This has poems and drawings by the patients and says which regiments they were in and where they came from. The patients also give their hospital address, either Beach hospital or Isallt Fawr. One patient gives the address as: "Isallt Fawr, Red Cross Bungalow Hospital, Holyhead", this presents a problem as the Red Cross list includes Bungalow Hospital as a separate location. The list has errors so it is possible these names refer to a single hospital, although Isallt Fawr is not a bungalow.

**Sources**

Jones 2012; Roberts 1920; Anglesey Archives: WM/1764

**PRN 62296**

**Llys y Gwynt, Llanfawr Close, Holyhead**

**NGR:** SH2535082045

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

**Description**

The house is shown on the 25 inch maps from 1887 with a garden with greenhouses to the SE and a more open area bounded by trees to the NE. The garden is recorded by NMR as NPRN 86555. The house still exists but the gardens have been built over. In the early 20th century it was the home of Colonel Pilkington (Roberts 1920, 4).

The house was used as a hospital for wounded servicemen during the First World War (Roberts 1920, 4; Jones 2012, 8).

This may be the hospital listed by the Red Cross as "Hill Auxiliary Hospital, Holyhead".

**Sources**



Jones 2012; Roberts 1920; Red Cross list of Auxiliary Hospitals

**PRN 62297**

**Ysbyty Eryri, Caernarfon**

**NGR:** SH4870361607

**Location:** Caernarfon, Gwynedd

**Description**

In 1910 the Poor Law Board decided that the infirmary building associated with the workhouse at Bodfan had become outdated and that a new infirmary was needed. The New Poor Law Caernarfon Infirmary was opened in 1913 providing 70 beds including a maternity section ([www.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.wales.nhs.uk)).

The hospital was also known as Eryri Infirmary or Eryri Hospital and later as Ysbyty Eryri.

The hospital was built for patients from the adjacent workhouse, but in December 1914 it was proposed that the hospital be taken over by the War Office for the use of wounded soldiers. It was not until January 1916 that the workhouse patients were moved out and the wounded soldiers moved in. In July 1917 there were 74 wounded soldiers in the hospital and by January 1919 there were still 32 soldiers there, but in that month the military authorities handed the hospital back to the Workhouse (Lindsay 1991-92, 81).

In 1930 the responsibility for the hospital was transferred from the Board of Guardians to the County Council and with the formation of the National Health Service in 1948, control was passed on to the Minister of Health. At this time the hospital dealt with the chronic sick. In 1950 the Eryri was transformed into an acute bed hospital for medical, surgical and orthopaedic patients. In 1984 the Eryri became a Rehabilitation for the Elderly Hospital ([www.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.wales.nhs.uk)).

**Sources**

Lindsay 1991-92; <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/861/page/41648>

**PRN 62298**

**Bungalow Auxiliary Hospital, Trearddur Bay**

**NGR:** SH2582578853

**Location:** Trearddur, Ynys Mon

**Description**

The Red Cross list "Bungalow Auxiliary Hospital, Trearddur Bay, near Holyhead" as an auxiliary hospital used in the First World War. This may have been at "The Bungalow" that is shown on Lon St Ffraid on the 1924 25 inch map. It was not built when the 1900 map was surveyed. It may possibly be one of the other known hospitals/convalescent homes in Trearddur Bay, although none of the others seem to have been in bungalows. An autograph book kept by one of the nurses at the Beach Hospital, held in the Anglesey Archives (WM/1764), includes a patient giving his hospital address as: "Isallt Fawr, Red Cross Bungalow Hospital, Holyhead". This suggests that Isallt Fawr and the Bungalow Hospital are the same place, even though the Red Cross list includes them as separate locations. The list has errors so it is possible these names refer to a single hospital, although Isallt Fawr is not a bungalow. The location of the Bungalow hospital cannot yet be said to be identified with any certainty.

**Sources**

Anglesey Archives: WM/1764; Red Cross list of Auxiliary Hospitals

**PRN 62299**

**Ty Wrideen (Ty Wridin), Roscolyn**

**NGR:** SH2638075912

**Location:** Rhoscolyn, Ynys Mon

**Description**

This house and farmyard are shown on the 25 inch maps from 1889 onwards. Also known as Ty Wridin.

For some time during the First World War the house was used as a convalescent home for wounded servicemen. The home was opened in July 1915, had 12 beds and was maintained by Sir HM Grayson MP (Jones 2012, 8, 37; Roberts 1920, 4). In September 1916 Mrs Grayson held a garden fete to raise money for the Rhoscolyn and Trearddur Bay Nursing Association. The report on the event mentions staff from the Ty Wrideen Hospital (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser, 15th September 1916, p7).

**Sources**

Jones 2012; Roberts 1920;

**PRN 62300** NPRN 308081

**Plas Llanfair, Llanfairpwllgwyngyll**

**NGR:** SH5325071230

**Location:** Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, Ynys Mon

**Description**

Plas Llanfair, originally known as Ty Mawr, was first recorded in 1673. In the late 18th century the estate became the property of the Earl of Uxbridge (who became the Marquis of Anglesey). In 1937 it was converted into a country house hotel and during the Second World War was commandeered by the War Office and used by the US Army. In 1944 it was leased to Indefatigable, an establishment which trained boys for a career in the Merchant Navy, and continued as a training school until it closed in 1995, when it was purchased by MOD for the Joint Service Mountain Training Centre Indefatigable ([www.nuffieldanglesey.org.uk](http://www.nuffieldanglesey.org.uk)).

During the First World War the hall was used as a temporary convalescent home for wounded servicemen (Jones 2012, 8).

**Sources**

Jones 2012; <http://www.nuffieldanglesey.org.uk/history/>

**PRN 62301**

**Plas Tre-Ysgawen (Plas Trescawen), Capel Coch**

**NGR:** SH4505081040

**Location:** Llanddyfnan, Ynys Mon

**Description**

Large house with extensive garden and park. It is now a country house hotel.

During the First World War the hall was used as a temporary convalescent home for wounded servicemen (Jones 2012, 8). Photo of staff and soldiers in Barlow 2014, p211 (Anglesey Archives WSH/15/2). Photo also shown at <http://education.gtj.org.uk/en/item1/12132> and <http://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/26093>

**Sources**

Jones 2012; Barlow 2014

**PRN 62302**

**Ty'r Enfys, Trearddur Bay**

**NGR:** SH2449379330

**Location:** Trearddur, Ynys Mon

**Description**

The house is shown on the 1924 25 inch map but not on the 1900 map. The house has been extended to the NE but otherwise its plan is relatively unchanged since 1924.

The house was used as a convalescent home for wounded servicemen during the First World War (Jones 2012, 8). The house is named as Ty'r Ynys by Roberts (1920, 4). This site is not recorded in the Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals used in the First World War.

**Sources**

Jones 2012; Roberts 1920

**PRN 62303**

**Edward Malam Convalescent Home, Warren Drive, Deganwy**

**NGR:** SH7873278443

**Location:** Conwy, Conwy

**Description**

The home was used for convalescent and recuperative holidays for the people of North Staffordshire from 1913. There seems to be relatively little known about this institution but North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser (16th November 1917, p4) lists this as a military auxiliary hospital in the First World War not under the authority of the Red Cross. A mention in the same paper of the Malam Home and the soldiers it looked after in 1915 and that in 1916 the Edward Malam Convalescent Home, Deganwy, was being used as a Hospital for wounded soldiers confirms that this was used as a military convalescent hospital (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 3rd December 1915, p7; 25th February 1916, p4). Y Cymro (23rd June 1915, p7) also records a dinner and concert given for the wounded soldiers from the Malam Home.

The Home was partly staffed by Deganwy V.A.D. (Voluntary Aid Detachment) Carnarvon 14 (Adrian Hughes (Home Front Museum) pers. com.).

The Home is now converted into apartments and called Malam Court (Elan Rivers pers. com.) and the building appears largely unchanged compared to a photograph showing it as the Home (provided by Adrian Hughes,

Home Front Museum). The building is not shown on the 1913 25 inch map but does appear on the 1937 map, so it was probably built in or shortly after 1913.

#### **Sources**

E Rivers, 2010. History of Deganwy Group .Walk Around Deganwy: Part 1;  
<http://staffsfoundation.org.uk/funds/endowment-funds/malamheathfund/>;  
North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th November 1917, p4; 3rd December 1915, p7; 25th February 1916, p4; Y Cymro 23rd June 1915, p7;  
Elan Rivers pers. com.

#### **PRN 62304**

##### **Plas Llanfair (Y Plas), Llanfairfechan**

**NGR:** SH6833574945

**Location:** Llanfairfechan, Conwy

#### **Description**

Richard Luck purchased the land from the Bulkeleys in 1857 and built the house of Plas Llanfair, also known as Y Plas. His grandson Herbert Luck North, the architect, lived in the house from the end of the First World War until 1924 (historypoints.org, Roberts 2012, 13-14). In 1924 St. Winifred's School for Girls (PRN 6389) acquired the house. Previously the school had been in Bangor and then from 1922 in Plas Gwyn, Llanfairfechan (Roberts 1937, 21).

The house is shown on the 25 inch maps up to 1914 and is shown as part of St Winifred's School on the 6 inch map revised 1938 1948 and published 1953. The school closed in 1968 and was demolished for a housing estate. Presumably Y Plas was demolished at the same time. The site is now covered in modern housing (Cowell 1994, 73, Roberts 2012, 194) .

The Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals lists "Plas VAD Auxiliary Military Hospital, Llanfairfechan", and this was in Plas Llanfair. On the death of Fanny North, Herbert Luck North's mother, in 1917 the house was used as a convalescent hospital until the end of the First World War (historypoints.org, Roberts 2012, 13-14). A photographic album in Conwy Archives (CP1206/4) contains some photographs of staff and patients at the hospital.

#### **Sources**

Cowell 1990; Roberts 2012; Roberts 1937  
[http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=herbert-luck-north-s-family](http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=herbert-luck-north-s-family;);

#### **PRN 62305      NPRN 412284**

##### **Plas Tudno, Llandudno**

**NGR:** SH7782682808

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

#### **Description**

The building is shown on the 25 inch maps from 1890 onwards with its fine garden. It is not named on the maps but the garden runs up from Plas Road. The building is now divided into flats.

This appears to be the location of the Plas Tudno and St. Tudno Auxiliary Military Hospital in the First World War. The Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals also separately lists "Plas Tudno Nursing Home, Llandudno", but this seems to be the same place. A newspaper report suggests that while this was an auxiliary hospital it was not a Red Cross one (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th November 1917, p4).

Even at the end of the war the hospital still looked after soldiers as an arrangement was made for the hospital to treat disabled ex-soldiers on military pensions as in-patients (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 20th June 1919, p2).

A German national, Robert Hempel, was working at Plas Tudno as a porter. There was uproar, and a protest began with the wounded soldiers demanding the dismissal of Herr Hempel. The protesters got their way and Robert Hempel was arrested and interned (Adrian Hughes (Home Front Museum) pers. Com.)

#### **Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 16th November 1917, p4

#### **PRN 62306**

##### **Red Court Hospital, Church Walks, Llandudno**

**NGR:** SH7770782508

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

#### **Description**

The Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals includes "Red Cross Hospital, Red Court, Church Walks, Llandudno".



Mr WG Lecomber handed over his house at Red Court to the Red Cross to be converted into a hospital for wounded soldiers. By 1st January 1915 it was fully equipped and ready to receive patients. (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 1st January 1915, p7).

This was a hospital for use by the RWF billeted in the town and had 25 beds. Between December 1914 and August 1915 (when the RWF left the town) 393 soldiers were treated at Red Court as in-patients and 'many thousands' attended as out patients. Red Court then started receiving soldiers wounded overseas in September 1915; it was attached to First Western General Hospital, Fazakerley, Liverpool (presumably as an overflow facility). Treatment of the soldiers was administered by the RAMC (Royal Army Medical Corps), BRCS (British Red Cross Society) and the Llandudno (Carnarvon 12) V.A.D. (Voluntary Aid Detachment). The VAD were responsible for some of the nursing, cleaning, cooking and for transferring the wounded soldiers from the railway station to Red Court. The matron in charge at Red Court was a Mrs Goody, assisted by Sister Bryson. When the Balmoral Hospital opened in December 1915 Red Court closed (Adrian Hughes (Home Front Museum) pers. com.).

The identification of Red Court as 28 Church Walks is not certain and needs confirming (Adrian Hughes (Home Front Museum), pers. com.). 28 Church Walks is now a synagogue and the Chabad Retreat Centre for the Jewish community (<http://jscn.org.uk/small-communities/llandudno-colwyn-bay-hebrew-congregation/>).

#### **Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 1st January 1915, p7;  
<http://jscn.org.uk/small-communities/llandudno-colwyn-bay-hebrew-congregation/>

#### **PRN 62307**

##### **Ysbyty Bryn Seiont, Caernarfon**

**NGR:** SH4822461514

**Location:** Caernarfon, Gwynedd

#### **Description**

Bryn Seiont is identified as a dwelling on the earliest maps of the area, dating from the 1820s, and the present house was erected in 1872 for Captain Pearson, an investor in the slate industry. It became the site of a sanatorium in 1914. It was managed by the Caernarfon and Anglesey Hospital Management Committee following the 1948 NHS Act and treated patients with tuberculosis, a scourge of Arfon quarrymen. Following a local government reorganisation in 1974 the site fell under the control of Gwynedd District Health Authority, and then North West Wales NHS Trust from 1999. Bryn Seiont later became a hospital offering palliative care by Macmillan nurses for cancer patients and then a centre used by the Blood Transfusion Service and a base for ambulances (Gwyn and Brooks 2013).

Ysbyty Bryn Seiont was founded in 1914 and opened in 1916 as the Brynseiont Tuberculosis Hospital (Gwyn and Brooks 2013) by the King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association for the treatment of tuberculosis. It was incorporated into the National Health Service on its formation in 1948, and became an isolation hospital. It later served as a geriatric hospital, then for palliative care. In December 2004 the palliative care unit was closed, and the hospital was used only for administrative and training purposes until the site was sold off in December 2009. In April 2011 an annexe of the hospital was destroyed in an arson attack (geotopoi.wordpress.com).

After redevelopment it opened as Bryn Seiont Newydd for dementia patients in October 2015 ([www.walesonline.co.uk](http://www.walesonline.co.uk); [www.dailypost.co.uk](http://www.dailypost.co.uk)).

Gwynedd Archives has notes on Bryn Seiont and Eryri Hospitals date unknown (catalogue ref. 200).

Opened as a tuberculosis hospital by Mrs Lloyd George on 27th April 1916 (Y Dinesydd Cymreig 3rd May 1916, p3).

Bryn Seiont, formerly the home of Mr Lloyd Carter, was bought by the Welsh Memorial Society for conversion into a tuberculosis hospital (Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal 23rd January 1914, p3)

There is a photograph from the First World War of nurses and patients from the hospital (CRO: XS/1515/4; [www.welshnewsextra.com](http://www.welshnewsextra.com)) that shows soldiers wearing issue 'convalescent blue' uniforms (patient uniforms), including a black soldier. There is no evidence that Bryn Seiont was used as a 'war hospital', and the soldiers were probably sent there because they were found to be suffering from TB (Gwyn and Brooks 2013, 14).

#### **Sources**

Gwyn and Brooks 2013; <https://geotopoi.wordpress.com/2011/09/19/ysbyty-bryn-seiont/>;  
<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/business/business-news/jobs-dementia-centre-caernarfon-creates-8479192>; <http://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/north-wales-news/first-look-inside-bryn-seiont-10338723>;  
<http://www.welshnewsextra.com/bronze-age-secrets-at-site-of-new-7m-dementia-centre/>

**PRN 62308****Balmoral Red Cross Hospital, Llandudno****NGR:** SH7841282097**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy**Description**

The Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals in the UK during the First World War includes “Balmoral Red Cross Hospital, Llandudno”. This was probably on Trinity Square and is likely to have been in this building now converted into apartments and previously called “Balmoral Holiday Flats”.

William (2002, 117) also mentions that there was a marquee in the Holy Trinity Church grounds by July 1916 to accommodate wounded soldiers and that this was later replaced by huts that were present until March 1919.

The Balmoral Hospital was opened in the former YMCA Hostel on 15th December 1915. Later two houses opposite on Charlton Street were taken over to increase the beds to 100. This extension was opened in May 1917. The convalescent soldiers dug and planted 3 allotments to produce vegetables for the hospital. (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 4th May 1917, p3)

Balmoral was officially opened by General Donald on the 15/12/1915. The Balmoral had 50 bed spaces.

However this still wasn't enough and so in 1917 two buildings on Charlton Street (directly opposite the Balmoral) were requisitioned, increasing the bed space to 100. It then seems that a hut was built/erected in the grounds of Trinity Church, also opposite the Balmoral, to provide a further 20 beds. In May 1919 the Balmoral closed. In total 1733 men had been admitted as in-patients at Balmoral – six died -some of these are buried on the Great Orme (Adrian Hughes (Home Front Museum) pers. com.).

**Sources**

William 2002; North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 4th May 1917, p3

<http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=130075>;

**PRN 62309****St David's Hospital, Site of, Bangor****NGR:** SH5698071080**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd**Description**

The hospital was built in 1913 as a Poor Law Infirmary replacing the hospital in the workhouse. Shortly after it was completed it was requisitioned as a military hospital for the duration of the First World War. After the war the building was left empty for a couple of years then returned to the Poor Law Institute as a workhouse hospital. On 1st April 1930 it was transferred to Caernarfonshire County Council and became the County Hospital. It had maternity care from 1940. On 1st July 1948 it became part of the NHS and in 1953 the name was changed to St David's Hospital for Women and Children (Povey and Hughes 1994; Cowell 1997, 101; Griffith 1994, 71). The hospital was closed in 1994 and demolished to make way for the present shopping centre in the late 1990's (Berks and Davidson 2007, 34; [www.workhouses.org.uk](http://www.workhouses.org.uk)).

Cowell (1990, 24) has a postcard of the military hospital with tents in the garden at the front and (1997, 101) a photograph of servicemen convalescing in the hospital during the First World War. Also (Cowell 2006, 23) a photograph of the West Ward with patients and staff.

[www.workhouses.org.uk](http://www.workhouses.org.uk) has a photograph of the hospital as a military hospital labelled “Military Hospital, Bangor 1915”. This shows tents outside the building presumably for additional accommodation.

There has been some confusion because the use as a hospital was included on the HER record for Bangor Workhouse, when these were two separate sites (Thompson 2003, 7; Berks and Davidson 2007, 34).

A group from Menai Bridge put on a concert to entertain the patients at the military hospital (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12th October 1917, p8). The patients were mostly soldiers who had lost limbs, suffered shellshock or the effects of gas. Some soldiers were accommodated in bell tents in the gardens in front of the hospital (Povey and Hughes 1994, 3).

Although a military hospital the hospital was initially run with the help of the Red Cross and staffed largely by both women's and men's sections of the Bangor Volunteer Aid Detachment, who also raised money for uniforms and equipment. The aim was to establish 200 beds but the initial effort was to supply 50 beds and the first patients, 40 men, arrived on 30th October 1914. In April 1915, after the volunteers had worked to set up the hospital and run it for 6 months Brigadier General Mackenzie of 112th Brigade visited the hospital, thanked the volunteers for their work and informed them that they were no longer needed as professional military nurses were being sent up from London (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 14th August 1914, p5; 30th October 1914, p6; 9th April 1915, 5).

The County School for Girls in Bangor was first requisitioned for a hospital before it was realised that the new Infirmary would be a better option. The military authorities asked for 50 beds to be prepared in 24 hours to

take the first patients with the aim of eventually providing 200 beds (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 6th November 1914, p3)

**Sources**

Thompson 2003; Berks and Davidson 2007; Cowell 1990 and 1997; Griffith 1994; Povey and Hughes 1994  
<http://www.workhouses.org.uk/Bangor/>; Coleman, A.H., date unknown (part of Bangor Mss 10084);  
North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 6th November 1914, p3

**PRN 62310**

**Belmont, Llandudno; 21 North Parade**

**NGR:** SH7812382761

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

**Description**

House built in 1850s. Probably used in the First World War as an auxiliary hospital. The Red Cross list of hospitals includes “Belmont” with no other information, under the list of hospitals in Caernarvonshire. The Geograph website ([www.geograph.org.uk](http://www.geograph.org.uk)) identifies this as Belmont, North Parade, Llandudno, and this seems likely though no other evidence of this being an auxiliary hospital has so far been found.

**Sources**

<http://www.geograph.org.uk/article/Auxiliary-Hospitals/6>

**PRN 62321**

**Lady Thomas Convalescent Home, Holyhead**

**NGR:** SH2380682330

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

**Description**

The Lady Thomas Convalescent Home for Discharged and Disabled Soldiers and Sailors was opened on 14th July 1919 and cared for discharged disabled servicemen. It had three wards and could look after 38 men. It was opened by Mrs Lloyd George (Jones and Jones Rowlinson 2015; Roberts 1920, 20). It later became the Gors Maternity Hospital and has now been converted into flats (Jones 2012, 8).

The 25 inch maps show no building on the site in 1890 but there is a building called “Gors” by 1900, an unfinished mansion on the estate of RJ Thomas MP. This was rearranged and extended to create the Home, in which there were two 19 bed wards, a 6 bed ward, a sick ward, a billiards room, recreation and work rooms, offices for the commandant, matron and sister and a dispensary. Lady Thomas was the commandant (Roberts 1920, 20).

**Sources**

Jones and Jones Rowlinson 2015; Jones 2012; Roberts 1920;

**PRN 62414**

**Plas Llanfawr, Holyhead**

**NGR:** SH2564881780

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

**Description**

A large house with extensive grounds shown on the 25 inch maps from the first edition.

In the late 19th and early 20th century it was occupied by Miss Jane Henrietta Adeane, a niece of WO Stanley of Penrhos. She was closely associated with the Stanley Sailors’ Hospital and was its commandant during its use as a military hospital in the First World War. During this time she used her house as a billet for volunteer nurses working at the Stanley Sailors’ Hospital and invited patients to tea at her home (Roberts and Lancefield 1997, 80-83).

The main part of the house has been demolished and housing has been built over it and the garden. The rear wing seems still to survive but it has been heavily modernised if not largely rebuilt.

**Sources**

Roberts and Lancefield 1997

**PRN 62669**

**Beach Auxiliary Hospital, Holyhead**

**NGR:** SH2446783118

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

**Description**

A Sailors’ Home run by the British and Foreign Sailors’ Society and was loaned to the Holyhead VAD for



conversion into a hospital to take wounded soldiers in the First World War (Roberts 1920, 4). This hospital is listed in the Red Cross list of auxiliary hospitals as “Beach Auxiliary Hospital, Holyhead”. The hospital could accommodate 80 patients and 3 wards were paid for by Sir RJ Thomas, MP (Roberts 1920, 4).

An autograph book kept by one of the nurses who worked at the Beach Hospital, is held in the Anglesey Archives (WM/1764). This has poems and drawings by the patients and says which regiments they were in and where they came from. This shows that at least 3 Belgian soldiers were cared for in the Beach Hospital as well as other soldiers from as far away as Australia and Canada.

The Beach Hospital is generally assumed to have been in the Stanley Sailors’ Home. However Roberts (1920, 4) states that it was a “new” home that was used for the hospital and the Stanley Home was established in 1857 so could not be considered new. It was the Shipwrecked Mariners Society that funded the Stanley Home (Roberts 1920, 43) and a log book from the Home covering the First World War does not mention use as a hospital (WM/45). All this suggests that the Stanley Sailors’ Home was not the Beach Hospital. The 1924 25 inch OS map shows a “Sailors’ Rest” on St David’s Road, looking on to the Beach. This is not shown on the 1900 map, so it would probably have been new during the First World War. No additional proof has been found for this identification but it seems to fit the evidence.

Google StreetView dated April 2015 shows the building to have been demolished.

#### **Sources**

Roberts 1920;

Anglesey Archives: WM/1764 and WM/45

## **7.2. Medical supply depots and workrooms**

**PRN 11004** NPRN 15574

**Baron Hill Mansion, Beaumaris**

**NGR:** SH59857660

**Location:** Beaumaris, Ynys Mon

#### **Description**

During the First World War Baron Hill was the location of the Beaumaris Red Cross Workroom No. 4375, run by Lady Magdalen Bulkeley ([www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)). Here volunteers made supplies for the VAD hospitals. Baron Hill also took in wounded soldiers to provide them with a place to convalesce (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 21st May 1915, p6).

This building is now ruined and dangerous with all the roofs gone and walls unstable.

#### **Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 21st May 1915, p6; [www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)

**PRN 62311**

**Lonfa, Penmaenmawr**

**NGR:** SH7245476174

**Location:** Penmaenmawr, Conwy

#### **Description**

A house on Mountain Lane appearing on the 25 inch OS maps from the first edition, but now called Plas Heulog. During the First World War Mrs John Jenkins ran the Red Cross Workroom no 1792 in Lonfa. Here volunteers made supplies for the VAD hospitals (Scarletfinders).

#### **Sources**

[www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)

**PRN 62312**

**Tros-yr-Afon, Llangoed**

**NGR:** SH6150579160

**Location:** Llangoed, Ynys Mon

#### **Description**

Large house south-east of Llangoed. Appears on OS 25 inch maps from first edition. During the First World War this was the location of the Beaumaris Red Cross Workroom No. 1219, run by Miss Turner. In February 1918 Miss Turner supplied to the Penrhyn Cottage Hospital pyjamas, bed socks, day socks, and slippers made by the workroom (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 1st March 1918, p4).

Also see list of workrooms on the Scarletfinders website.

#### **Sources**

**PRN 62314**

**Bronwylfa, Penmaenmawr**

**NGR:** SH7236076814

**Location:** Penmaenmawr, Conwy

**Description**

A house on Conwy Road appearing on the 25 inch OS maps from the first edition. During the First World War Miss Jones ran the Red Cross Workroom no 1462 in Bronwylfa. Here volunteers made supplies for the VAD hospitals (Scarletfinders).

**Sources**

www.scarletfinders.co.uk

**PRN 62315**

**Rectory, Llanfairfechan**

**NGR:** SH6816474615

**Location:** Llanfairfechan, Conwy

**Description**

The rectory is shown on the 25 inch OS maps from the first edition but no longer survives. During the First World War Mrs Watkin Davies, wife of the rectory Rev. F. P. Watkin Davies, ran the Red Cross Workroom no 4743 in The Rectory. Here volunteers made supplies for the VAD hospitals (Scarletfinders). Mrs Watkin Davies was also the commandant of the Plas Auxiliary Hospital in Llanfairfechan (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24th January 1919, p4). She was also honorary secretary to the local branch of the Queen Mary's Needlework Guild and sent garments to the Red Cross made through that organisation (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 6th November 1914, p7).

**Sources**

www.scarletfinders.co.uk; North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24th January 1919, p4; 6th November 1914, p7

**PRN 62316**

**Plas Rhianfa, Cwm Cadnant**

**NGR:** SH5701473385

**Location:** Cwm Cadnant, Ynys Mon

**Description**

The Gothic mansion was built in the 1850s by Sir John Hay Williams, 2nd Baronet of Bodelwyddan. It is now a luxury hotel known as Chateau Rhianfa.

Rhianfa was used during the First World War by the Menai Bridge and Llandegfan orthopaedic branch of the Queen Mary's Guild to make orthopaedic appliances, mostly from disused materials (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 28th June 1918, p4).

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 28th June 1918, p4

**PRN 62317**

**Benarth House, Llanfairfechan**

**NGR:** SH6808475084

**Location:** Llanfairfechan, Conwy

**Description**

A house on Park Crescent appearing on the 25 inch OS maps from the first edition. In November 1914 8 Belgian refugees were staying at Benarth House (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 6th November 1914, p7).

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 6th November 1914, p7

**PRN 62318**

**Allt Fawr, Barmouth**

**NGR:** SH6063616996

**Location:** Barmouth, Gwynedd

**Description**

A house on the main road to Llanaber, which appears on the 25 inch OS maps from the second edition. With some additions it seems relatively unchanged today.

During the First World War Miss Patchett ran the Red Cross Workroom no 1364 in Allt Fawr. Here volunteers made supplies for the VAD hospitals ([www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)). The listing on the Scarletfinders website refers to 'Allt Farm', but this is certainly a mis-spelling and newspaper reports show that the Patchetts lived at Allt Fawr during the period of the war.

**Sources**

[www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)

**PRN 62319**

**The Bungalow, Caernarfon**

**NGR:** SH4850863960

**Location:** Caernarfon, Gwynedd

**Description**

A house on the shore of the Straits, which appears on the 25 inch OS maps from the first edition, and is labelled on the 3rd edition as The Bungalow. It seems to have been rebuilt between 1889 and 1900 as a neater, square building. It is now ruined and overgrown.

During the First World War Mrs E Jackson ran the Red Cross Workroom no 1654 in The Bungalow. Here volunteers made supplies for the VAD hospitals ([www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)).

**Sources**

[www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)

**PRN 62320**

**Vicarage, Holyhead**

**NGR:** SH2460483030

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

**Description**

A large house which appears on the 25 inch OS maps from the first edition, and is labelled as the Rectory, although generally and probably correctly referred to as the Vicarage. Now converted to government buildings, but largely unchanged externally, although various buildings have been added.

During the First World War wife of the vicar, Rev. Edwin Jones, ran the Red Cross Workroom no 4795 in the Vicarage. Here volunteers made supplies for the VAD hospitals ([www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)).

**Sources**

[www.scarletfinders.co.uk](http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk)

### **7.3. Buildings and sites used by soldiers in training or transit**

**PRN 1701**      **NPRN 26203**

**Castle Hotel, Site of, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH5806471994

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

**Description**

In February 1915 the 11th Battalion of South Lancashire Regiment, known as the St Helen's Pals, arrived in Bangor. Their officers were billeted in the Castle and British Hotels and the men were found lodgings throughout the city. The soldiers were in the city for less than 2 months but later the same year men of the West Lancashire Engineers were also billeted in the city for a while, probably at the same hotels (Ellis Jones 1986, 138-9).

**Sources**

Ellis Jones 1986

**PRN 12595**      **NPRN 31421**

**Penrhyn Hall, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH5816572126

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

**Description**

During the First World War the hall was used as a recreation centre by soldiers training in the area, especially the South Lancashire Regiment and West Lancashire Engineers (Ellis Jones 1986, 138-9; North Wales Chronicle 20.10.1916).

**Sources**



Ellis Jones 1986; North Wales Chronicle 20.10.1916

**PRN 24840**

**Former British Hotel, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH5776271677

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

**Description**

In February 1915 the 11th Battalion of South Lancashire Regiment, known as the St Helen's Pals, arrived in Bangor. Their officers were billeted in the Castle and British Hotels and the men were found lodgings throughout the city. The soldiers were in the city for less than 2 months but later the same year men of the West Lancashire Engineers were also billeted in the city for a while, probably at the same hotels (Ellis Jones 1986, 138-9).

Cowell (2006, 14) has a photograph of Royal Welch Fusiliers outside the British Hotel, where their officers were also billeted, and a photograph of the 11th Battalion of South Lancashire Regiment (the St Helen's Pals) outside the hotel in 1915 (Cowell 1994, 35).

**Sources**

Berks and Davidson 2007; Cowell 1994 and 2006; Ellis Jones 1986

**PRN 34688**

**Craig Beuno, Garth Road, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH58227257

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

**Description**

No evidence has been found for the use of this building as a hospital during the First World War. There is no mention of it in contemporary newspapers or in the Red Cross list of hospitals. However it was used as part of the war effort as in 1915, when the 11th Battalion South Lancashire Regiment was billeted in Bangor, the Brigadier General of the whole Lancashire Brigade established offices in part of Craig Beuno, presumably when Charles Pozzi was still living in the rest of the house (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12th March 1915, p6). Pozzi was a councillor on the City Council and a strong supporter of the use of the town for training soldiers.

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 12th March 1915, p6

**PRN 62338**

**Rest Camp, Holyhead**

**NGR:** SH25378254

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

**Description**

From March 1918 there was a Rest Camp at Holyhead, which could cater for 1000 people and about 73,000 men passed through the camp between March 1918 and October 1919, including Sinn Fein prisoners (Roberts 1920, 9; Jones 2012, 8). There had particularly been problems with housing troops when sailings were suspended due to U-boat activity and the camp was erected by General Sir Owen Thomas to provide somewhere for the troops to stay as they waited for a boat. Captain B Jones of the Monmouth Regiment was the first Commandant of the Camp (Roberts 1920, 9). The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser records that 46 Sinn Fein prisoners were briefly held at the Rest Camp before being sent on to their destinations at prisons across Britain (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24th May 1918, p2). There is a claim that the prisoners included Eamon de Valera (Roberts 1920, 9) but the Chronicle does not mention him and it is likely that he would have been mentioned if present. It does mention the presence of Countess Markievicz and her dog, for whom she had to buy a ticket on the train taking them to jail from Holyhead. The prisoners were landed in great secrecy at night in a quiet part of the harbour and transferred to the rest camp, apart from the Countess and her dog who were housed elsewhere as she was the only female prisoner.

Local tradition identifies the land belonging to Tyddyn Lantern (PRN 16079) at the northern end of Turkey Shore Road and above the old dock as the location of the rest camp. This would be a sensible location as it was close to the South Pier where the soldiers were presumably embarked.

This site was visited on 29/01/2017 but an inspection of this area revealed nothing to prove that the rest camp was here. However the area is very overgrown and part has been extensively dumped on and the soil scraped away down to bedrock.

**Sources**

Jones 2012; Roberts 1920

**PRN 62339**

**88-90 Mostyn Street, Llandudno (Majestic Ballroom and Café Royal)**

**NGR:** SH7810682477

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

**Description**

In 1914, when the building housed the Dorothy Café, it served as the headquarters for the 15th (1st London Welsh) Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers. After the war it became the Café Royal and the Majestic Ballroom, owned by Arthur Payne. Today the building is a shop (Jones 1975, 53; historypoints.org; William 2002, 117).

**Sources**

William 2002; Jones 1975

<http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=former-majestic-ballroom-footnotes>;

**PRN 62341**      **NPRN 23232**

**National School, Caernarfon**

**NGR:** SH4823262683

**Location:** Caernarfon, Gwynedd

**Description**

Caernarvon National School, the 'Ysgol Rad' or free school. Said to have been opened in 1843. Now demolished.

In 1916 the Boys' and Girls' National School was taken over to billet soldiers (Lindsay 1993, 86).

**Sources**

Lindsay 1993

**PRN 62342**      **NPRN 43081**

**Suspension Bridge, Betws y Coed**

**NGR:** SH7962756517

**Location:** Betws y Coed, Conwy

**Description**

Llandudno Record Office has a photograph taken from the suspension bridge (CP395/19/33). The catalogue entry for this has the following information about the bridge "This position of the river was originally crossed by stepping stones. The First World War brought a Company of Royal Engineers to Betws-y-Coed and they built a temporary footbridge behind the Railway Station (Sapper's Bridge). By 1928 the bridge had been swept away during heavy flooding and it was replaced in 1930 by the present suspension bridge built by D. Rowell and Co. Ltd."

**Sources**

Llandudno Record Office CP395/19/33

**PRN 62343**      **NPRN 17015**

**Oriel Mostyn, 12 Vaughan Street, Llandudno**

**NGR:** SH7853482036

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

**Description**

Founded as a purpose-built art gallery for female artists by Lady Augusta Mostyn, the building was designed in 1900 by Mostyn estates' architect, GA Humphreys, and began exhibiting in 1901. In 1914 it was requisitioned as an army drill hall. Between the wars it was a warehouse and used during the Second World War for storage by the Inland Revenue, with an American Medical Corps café in the basement. After the war it was a commercial piano store. In 1976 the artist Kyffin Williams campaigned for its restoration as a gallery and it reopened, as Oriel Mostyn, in 11 August 1979 (Jones 2002, 118; historypoints.org).

**Sources**

Jones 2002; <http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=oriel-mostyn-art-gallery>

**PRN 62353**

**Sir Hugh Owen School, Caernarfon**

**NGR:** SH4867063370

**Location:** Caernarfon, Gwynedd

**Description**

There had been a County School in Caernarfon since 1820, but a new building, known as Segontium School, was built on Llanberis Road (PRN 24738) and was opened in the summer of 1900. However additional larger premises were later built along the Bethel Road and the Bethel Road site became the main focus for the County School, (also called the Higher Standard or Central School). In 1945/6 the school was renamed Caernarvon Grammar School and in the 1950's with the introduction of the Comprehensive system it was renamed after Sir Hugh Owen, an early lobbyist for the introduction of public education (Smith 2006). The school has expanded well beyond the original building but is still on the same site.

In 1916 the school was taken over to billet soldiers being trained in the area during the First World War (Lindsay 1993, 86).

**Sources**

Lindsay 1993; Smith 2006

**7.4. Allotments****PRN 62333****Allotments, near the Town Hall, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH5798772122 A

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

**Description**

This area is probably that described as the "sward by the Town Hall" acquired for use for allotments during the First World War (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 2nd March 1917, p8). This area also had a gorsedd circle associated with the Eisteddfod held in Bangor in 1915. These allotments were said to have "yielded fine crops" by June 1917 (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd June 1917, p2).

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 2nd March 1917, p8

**PRN 62334****Allotments, Holyhead Park**

**NGR:** SH24058266

**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon

**Description**

During the First World War Holyhead Park was taken over by the Local Authority and divided into plots for allotments. The Park was only newly created as it does not appear on the 1900 25 inch map. In 1917 the Park was given by Mr William Thomas, a Liverpool ship-owner, to the Local Authority. The 1924 map shows the lower flatter part of the park as allotments and 1199 allotments were been rented from 1916 to 1919. The Local Authority provided allotment holders with free seed potatoes and Mr John Magee provide free manure (Roberts 1920, 14).

**Sources**

Roberts 1920

**PRN 62335****Allotments near Military Hospital, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH5704971030 A

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

**Description**

The probable location of allotments cultivated from 1917 for the duration of the First World War, described as being a plot below the Military Hospital (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 2nd March 1917, p8). These allotments were chiefly let to railwaymen and used to grow potatoes (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd June 1917, p2).

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 2nd March 1917, p8; 22nd June 1917, p2

**PRN 62336****Deiniol Road Allotments, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH57657176 A

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd



**Description**

St Paul's School had a garden at the corner of Deiniol Road and Farrar Road acquired during the First World War specifically to grow food during the war (Lindsay 1993, 84). It is not clear which side of the road the garden was as open space that might have been used is shown on both sides on the 1914 25 inch map. However extensive allotments were developed off Deiniol Road, which suggests that the land used was between Farrar Road and the station, with St Paul's school having some of the lower part of this area. The Women's Food Production League is described as having allotments in the upper portion of this land, so presumably closer to the station (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd June 1917, p2).

**Sources**

Lindsay 1993; North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd June 1917, p2

**PRN 62337****Garth Road Allotments, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH58317262 A

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

**Description**

There were extensive open areas between Garth Road and the Afon Adda and some or all of this area was probably used for allotments during the First World War. Allotments off Garth Road are listed in the North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser (22nd June 1917, p2).

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd June 1917, p2

**PRN 62415****Ysgol Parc y Bont, Llanddaniel Fab**

**NGR:** SH5041969932

**Location:** Llanddaniel Fab, Ynys Mon

**Description**

Ysgol Parc y Bont opened in 1874 in a new building by the river Braint (historypoints.org), labelled as a school on the 25 inch maps.

In 2001 the school moved to a new building in the village and the old school building is now a children's nursery (historypoints.org). The building appears very largely unchanged from how it looked in the 19th century. During the First World War the school, like many others, were involved in the effort to increase the food supply. Part of the playground was converted into a garden and potatoes and broad and French beans were grown (James 2014, 69).

**Sources**

James 2014

[http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=nasa-space-officer-s-school-llanddaniel;](http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=nasa-space-officer-s-school-llanddaniel)

**7.5. Forestry****PRN 58738****Felling Camp, Tregarth**

**NGR:** SH586666 A

**Location:** Llandygai, Gwynedd

**Description**

A felling camp was established in 1916 above Pentir next to Parc y Bwlch wood. This was worked by a team of Finnish sailors, who were housed in huts. There was a tramway running from the camp to a temporary saw mill (PRN 62346), where the timber was cut into planks. The Finns, known locally as the Russians as Finland did not gain its independence from Russia until December 1917, mixed with the local people, learnt some Welsh and drank in the pubs of Bethesda, but they initially earned more than local men working at the felling camp which caused tension and the wages of the local men had to be raised. Two of the Finnish sailors married local girls and stayed in Tregarth after the war (Stammers 2012, 78-81).

Stammers (2012, 78) thinks it is likely that the camp was at SH586666, which places it in a field with a stream conveniently running through the middle. The field is fairly level and sheltered. Accommodation was probably in the Forestry Department's standard prefabricated 24ft by 16ft wooden huts, with straw mattresses and blankets provided (Stammers 2012, 76, 78).

The site was not closely inspected but it appeared unlikely that traces of the huts remained. The location of the

camp is sheltered by gorse covered knolls and is fairly, although not perfectly level. Visited 23/01/2017.

**Sources**

Stammers 2012

**PRN 62340**

**Row of trees, Craflwyn Hall, Beddgelert**

**NGR:** SH5998648947

**Location:** Beddgelert, Gwynedd

**Description**

A double row of trees is shown on the 1889 map on either side of the west drive at Craflwyn Hall. By 1900 the northern row has gone and by 1915 both rows have been felled. Cadw (1998, 187) states that Captain Higson, who owned the hall during the First World War, felled and sold most of the timber from the garden during the War, including the row of trees along the west drive. This must have been just the southern row as the northern had already been felled by then, and seems to have included standards all along the southern boundary of the garden that had also disappeared by 1915.

**Sources**

Cadw 1998, Register of Parks & Gardens of Special Historic Interest; Part I: Parks and Gardens, Conwy, Anglesey and Gwynedd

**PRN 62345**

**249 High Street, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH5822572080

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

**Description**

During the First World War this was the office of Division II of the Timber Supply Department run by Fraser Story, professor of Forestry of University College, Bangor (Hetherington 2004). This division covered North Wales and Professor Story had a staff who valued the timber, supervised felling, and looked after plant and labour (Stammers 2012, 75)

**Sources**

Stammers 2012; Hetherington 2004

**PRN 62346**

**Temporary saw mill, site of, Tregarth**

**NGR:** SH6008267954

**Location:** Llandygai, Gwynedd

**Description**

Site of a temporary saw mill used during the First World War in conjunction with the felling camp (PRN 58738). The timber was sawn into planks before being transported on the railway to where it was needed. The timber was brought down to the saw mill by a light railway (Stammers 2012, 78-80).

**Sources**

Stammers 2012

**PRN 62352**

**Tramway associated with Felling Camp, Tregarth**

**NGR:** SH5917566978 A

**Location:** Llandygai, Gwynedd

**Description**

During the First World War timber from Parc y Bwlch wood was felled for war use. A temporary tramway took timber from the wood down to a sawmill (PRN 62346) near Tregarth. The timber was sent down a chute down the steep slopes of the hill to the start of the tramway, which was a narrow gauge railway. A section of tree would be chained to a small wagon and would descend the tramway by gravity with one of the tree fellers standing one it to try and brake. Horses were used to haul the empty wagons up again (Stammers 2012, 79-80). Stammers (2012, 79) suggests a route for the tramway running from near the felling camp (PRN 58738) to the sawmill (PRN 62346). However there is no trace of this route on aerial photographs. A linear feature was seen on Bing Maps and then located on aerial photographs from Central Photographic Unit, Cardiff dating to 1986. This feature could be intermittently followed in a nearly straight line from near the woods down to just before Pandy, and is aligned on the sawmill. The feature is visible on the ground in several places and was inspected on 23/01/2017, however an air valve access hatch was seen on the line and this raised the question of the nature of

the feature. A utilities search was carried out and this showed that the linear feature is in fact the route of a high voltage electricity cable. The air valve being related to a pipe crossing the cable and coincidentally placed on the line of the cable. This means that the precise route of the tramway is still unknown.

**Sources**

Stammers 2012

APs from Central Photographic Unit, Cardiff: Library No. 8606, sortie J A Story, frames 5286/0112 and 0171, date 01/10/1986

## **7.6. Sites relating to the work of Societies and Institutes during the War**

**PRN**

**WI, Dyffryn**

**NGR:** SH58952175 A

**Location:** Dyffryn Ardudwy, Gwynedd

**Description**

Dyffryn WI meetings were held at Beulah, Tal y Bont (Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 20th Dec 1918, p5). The exact location of Beulah was not established but it should be possible to find it with further research.

**Sources**

Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 20th Dec 1918, p5

**PRN 6652**

**Summer House, Y Graig**

**NGR:** SH5329871657

**Location:** Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, Ynys Mon

**Description**

The summerhouse is a single-storey building, slate-hung on timber frame, with a slate roof, and red brick chimney. Its importance comes from it being used as a meeting hall by the first Women's Institute set up in Britain. The Llanfairpwllgwyngyll WI was founded in September 1915 and for the first 6 years the summerhouse at Y Graig was used for meetings (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd September 1916, p8; Davies 2015).

The Women's Institute was first formed in Canada as a branch of the Farmer's Institute. The movement was introduced to Britain during the First World War to encourage countrywomen to get involved in growing and preserving food to help to increase the supply of food. The WI in Britain was formed under the auspices of the Agricultural Organisation Society (AOS) (Davies 2015; [www.thewi.org.uk](http://www.thewi.org.uk)).

**Sources**

Davies 2015

<https://www.thewi.org.uk/about-the-wi/history-of-the-wi/the-origins>;

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 22nd September 1916, p8;

**PRN 33384**

**Women's Institute Hall, Llanfairpwllgwyngyll**

**NGR:** SH5313371540

**Location:** Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, Ynys Mon

**Description**

Llanfairpwllgwyngyll had the first Women's Institute opened in Britain. It was established on September 16th 1915, but for 6 years met in the summer house (PRN 6652) at Y Graig. The site adjacent to the toll house was given to the WI by Lord Anglesey and the WI rented the toll house which was used for meetings by November 1920. Money was raised to purchase a hut from Kinnel Army Camp and this was installed next to the toll house and was first used for a general meeting on June 21st 1921 (Davies 2015, 118, 120, 128, 137). This same hut is still in use today by the WI.

**Sources**

Davies 2015



**PRN 36232** NPRN 8366

**Capel Salem, Dolgellau**

**NGR:** SH7258117666

**Location:** Dolgellau, Gwynedd

**Description**

Before 1937 the Dolgellau Women's Institute had a room for their sole use in Capel Salem. The Institute was founded as Brithdir and Bryncoedifor WI in February 1916 (Z/M/6324/23).

**Sources**

Dolgellau RO: Z/M/6324/23

**PRN 62326**

**Girls' Friendly Society Lodge, Church Walks, Llandudno**

**NGR:** SH7760082370

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

**Description**

The Girls' Friendly Society had a lodge/hostel on Church Walks, Llandudno. A photograph in the Llandudno Record Office (CP3203/29/26) is described in the catalogue as being of the GFS lodge. The house is described as being in "Church Walks, Abbey Road". Comparisons between the photograph and the buildings as they are now shows that this was what is now 36 Church Walks, currently housing the Jaya Indian Cuisine Restaurant. The Girls' Friendly Society provided safe accommodation and support for young women working away from home and it is possible that this lodge was used in the First World War by women coming to help on the land.

**Sources**

Llandudno Record Office: CP3203/29/26

**PRN 62327**

**Women's Institute Depot, Lower Cardiff Road, Pwllheli**

**NGR:** SH3731734998 A

**Location:** Pwllheli, Gwynedd

**Description**

The Pwllheli branch of the WI was in existence by May 1917. A room was hired as a depot for collecting and marketing vegetables grown by the WI women. There was also equipment for bottling. The depot was at Lower Cardiff Road (Yr Udgorn 23rd May 1917, p3), opposite the post office (Yr Udgorn 1st August 1917, p3). The house indicated by the grid reference is directly opposite the post office but it is not certain whether the depot was in this house or one nearby.

**Sources**

Yr Udgorn 23rd May 1917, p3

**PRN 62328**

**Drill Hall, Criccieth**

**NGR:** SH4937537910

**Location:** Criccieth, Gwynedd

**Description**

Drill Hall first appearing on 3rd edition 25 inch map (1916). There is still a Scouts and Guides Hall on the site but it appears to have been entirely rebuilt.

The Drill Hall was used by Criccieth Women's Institute as a depot and the location for a market stall selling fruit and vegetables. The stall was opened in summer 1916 that was held twice weekly from May till October and worked on a voluntary basis. Fruit and vegetables were brought by WI members to the Drill Hall and they were weighed and sorted and the producers were paid according to the price on the Liverpool market. In 1917 the stall was registered as a co-operative society and was known as the Criccieth and District WI Cooperative Society. In 1919 the Cooperative Society was forced to separate entirely from the WI and was run as an independent company, but increased costs and other problems caused the business to close. (Davies 2015, 202-208). There were protests about the price paid to the small group of producers as it was seen as unfair to other producers and raised the prices of vegetables in the area (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 04/05/1917, p7).

**Sources**

Davies 2015

**PRN 62329****English Wesleyan Chapel Schoolroom, Lhassa Street, Holyhead****NGR:** SH2451882162**Location:** Holyhead Urban, Ynys Mon**Description**

Schoolroom to English Wesleyan Chapel (PRN 8148). It is assumed that the schoolroom was the building shown on the 1924 25 inch map on the eastern end of the chapel. Neither building was shown on the 1900 map. The schoolroom seems to have been built over on the original footprint by a pair of houses. In 2014 the chapel had also been demolished and the land was being built over (Google Street View).

Holyhead Women's Institute held meetings in the schoolroom during the First World War (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 21/12/1917, p5)

**Sources**

The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 21/12/1917, p5

**PRN 62330****Penrhyndeudraeth Women's Institute Hall, Minffordd****NGR:** SH6003938543**Location:** Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd**Description**

Small hall supposedly the first purpose built WI hall in Britain. Penrhyndeudraeth WI was formed on January 22nd 1917 as the annual general meeting was reported in the Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard (28th December 1917, p7). The Institute bought seed potatoes and other vegetable seeds and sub-committees on basket making, poultry, domestic economics etc had been formed and had "done effective work" (Cambrian news and Welsh Farmers Gazette 28th December 1917, p5). Money was raised for a hall.

Penrhyndeudraeth Institute hall was opened in August 1917 by Mrs Lloyd George. The hall is close to the Minffordd Ffestiniog Railway Station, the land and building having been presented by Miss Alice Williams, Cae Canol, sister of Sir Osmond Williams, Lord Lieutenant of Merioneth (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 24th August 1917, p6). The building appears on maps prior to the 1917 3rd edition 25 inch map so it seems to have been rebuilt or adapted rather than built from scratch for the WI. The building is still used for WI meetings.

**Sources**

Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 28th December 1917, p5

**PRN 62331****YMCA hut, site of, Conwy Morfa Camp****NGR:** SH7649578284 A**Location:** Conwy, Conwy**Description**

The YMCA supplied a recreation hut for the use of the soldiers at Conwy Morfa Camp during the First World War. Evidence of this comes from a photograph of Lord and Lady Baden Powell leaving a very new hut with a large YMCA sign at Conwy Morfa Camp in May 1915 (XS/881/3). The exact location of the hut is not known, although it appears to have been close to the railway line. Most structures permanent enough to be shown on the maps in this area were latrines as annotations on a 1912 map show (Conwy Archives CP/Maps and Plans/23/2/287) and it is likely that the YMCA hut was not recorded on an OS map.

**Sources**

Caernarfon Record Office XS/881/3

**7.7. Buildings housing Belgian Refugees****PRN 29374****Wellfield House and Garden, Site of, Bangor****NGR:** SH58257222**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd**Description**

During the First World War Lord Penrhyn gave Wellfield House rent free for the use of Belgian refugees (North Wales Chronicle 4th Apr 1919).

In September 1914 Bangor City Council billeted 62 Belgian refugees in Wellfield House leased by Lord Penrhyn for the purpose. A house in Melinda Terrace was also used (Ellis Jones 1986, 138).

**Sources**

Ellis Jones 1986

**PRN 58690****Belgian Promenade, Menai Bridge**

**NGR:** SH5529771703

**Location:** Menai Bridge, Ynys Mon

**Description**

A promenade on the banks of the Menai Straits at Menai Bridge. It was built by Belgian refugees who were resident in the area during WW1.

About 300 Belgian refugees came to Anglesey during WWI and stayed at various locations, including Menai Bridge and Amlwch. Those at Menai Bridge helped locals to build a promenade along the edge of the Straits from Carreg y Halen to the causeway at Church Island. The work was paid for by the Belgian Refugee Fund and was completed in early 1916 (Jones 2012, 10, 22, 23, 45).

The promenade was damaged by storms and rebuilt in 1963. The ceremonial reopening in 1965 was performed by the only surviving refugee, Eduard Wilhelms. The promenade was resurfaced in 2000 as part of a millennium project (historypoints.org).

**Sources**

Jones 2012; <http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=belgian-promenade-menai-bridge>

**PRN 62313****Noddfa, Penmaenmawr**

**NGR:** SH7206876557

**Location:** Penmaenmawr, Conwy

**Description**

Noddfa, Conwy Road, Penmaenmawr was a clinic of sorts for many years and HQ for the district nurse / midwife from the early days 20th century. It was partially funded by local support and housed the Noddfa Girls Club which raised money by performing musical events in the town (Dennis Roberts pers. com).

Miss L. Jones-Hughes, Bronwylfa, opened a depot at Noddfa, Penmaenmawr for the collection of Sphagnum Moss, for use in Red Cross Hospital work (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 27th April 1917, p8).

18 Belgian refugees arrived in Penmaenmawr. They were put up at the Grand Hotel until the completion of the furnishing and refurbishing of Noddfa. The refugees include an old woman of 72, 8 children, 2 men and 8 women, all from Antwerp (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 13th November 1914, p7). For 6 months there were 19 refugees but then they were reduced to 9 as the rest had returned to Belgium. Donations were received to help support them at Noddfa (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 1st October 1915, p8).

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 27th April 1917, p8; 13th November 1914, p7; 1st October 1915, p8

**PRN 62322****York House, York Road, Llandudno**

**NGR:** SH7778782403

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

**Description**

According to the Llandudno Advertiser, Belgian civilian refugees were billeted at York House which was the annexe of Lansdowne House School (Adrian Hughes Home Front Museum).

Whilst Lansdowne House appears on the 1890 25 inch map York House does not appear until 1900.

**Sources**

Adrian Hughes Home Front Museum, Llandudno

**PRN 62323****One Ash, Gloddaeth St, Llandudno**

**NGR:** SH7792082435

**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy

**Description**

According to the Llandudno Advertiser, Belgian civilian refugees were billeted at One Ash (now the Grand Ash Hotel) (Adrian Hughes Home Front Museum).

**Sources**

Adrian Hughes Home Front Museum, Llandudno



**PRN 62324****The Poplars, Clement Avenue, Llandudno****NGR:** SH7783582455 AA**Location:** Llandudno, Conwy**Description**

According to the Llandudno Advertiser, Belgian civilian refugees were billeted at The Poplars', Clement Avenue (Adrian Hughes Home Front Museum). Precise location of the Poplars is not yet known.

**Sources**

Adrian Hughes Home Front Museum, Llandudno

**PRN 62325      NPRN 28613****Panteinion Hall****NGR:** SH62311246**Location:** Arthog, Gwynedd**Description**

The hall is shown on the 1888 1st edition 6 inch map with the layout of hall and farmyard much as it appears today. The hall has been extended on the NW side since 1888.

During the First World War Panteinion was used to house Belgian refugees and one of them, Madam Celestin Mengel died there in 1915 after an illness (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 15th January 1915, p6).

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 15th January 1915, p6

**PRN 62332****Idris Villas, Tywyn****NGR:** SH5816000820 C**Location:** Towyn, Gwynedd**Description**

Three blocks of terraced housing built along the SE end of Sandilands Road. They are not on the 1888 25 inch map but where built by the 1901 map was surveyed.

Belgian refugees were housed in at least one of the Idris Villas houses. A list of subscribers and expenses of the Towyn and District Belgian Refugees Relief Fund lists maintenance done to Mrs Martin's house, Idris Villas, presumably one of the houses used to accommodate the refugees. Another house, "the Kilburn sisters' house", is mentioned but there is no indication of which this house was (Z/M/7372).

**Sources**

Dolgellau RO: Z/M/7372

**PRN 62348****7-8 Nant Terrace, Menai Bridge****NGR:** SH5579472298**Location:** Menai Bridge, Ynys Mon**Description**

A row of terraced houses at the north end of the High Street is named on the 25 inch maps from 1889 as "Nant Terrace".

During the First World War Belgian refugees were housed in 7 and 8 Nant Terrace (WCIA Voices website).

**Sources**

Welsh Centre for International Affairs: WCIA Voices website (<https://wciavoices.wordpress.com/2016/08/09/menai-bridge-information/>)

**PRN 62349****Preswylfa, Menai Bridge****NGR:** SH5575271776**Location:** Menai Bridge, Ynys Mon**Description**

A house shown on the 25 inch maps from 1889 and currently called Preswylfa, but not named on the maps.

The worn-out name above the door shows that this was its original name. During the First World War Belgian refugees were housed in Preswylfa and Bod Idris, the location of the latter has not yet been identified (WCIA Voices website).

**Sources**

Welsh Centre for International Affairs: WCIA Voices website (<https://wciavoices.wordpress.com/2016/08/09/menai-bridge-information/>)

**PRN 62350****Llys Owen and Bryn Awel, Criccieth**

**NGR:** SH5037638240

**Location:** Criccieth, Gwynedd

**Description**

In about 1890 Richard Owen (David Lloyd George's father-in-law) built a pair of houses on Porthmadog Road, Criccieth. One called Llys Owen was for himself and his wife and the other called Bryn Awel was for David and Margaret Lloyd George (Hattersley 2010). These houses appear on the 25 inch maps on the 1900 second edition. Bryn Awel is now called Pengolwg.

During the First World War Bryn Awel and possibly also Llys Owen were used to house Belgian refugees ([wcia.secure.force.com/peacemapwales/](https://wcia.secure.force.com/peacemapwales/)).

**Sources**

Hattersley 2010; <https://wcia.secure.force.com/peacemapwales/>

**PRN 62351      NPRN 96267****Hendregadredd, Pentrefelin**

**NGR:** SH5268839871

**Location:** Dolbenmaen, Gwynedd

**Description**

A large house with an extensive garden appearing on the 25 inch OS maps from 1889 onwards and still existing with ground plan of the main building largely unchanged, but with an extension added to the north.

During the First World War it is believed that the house was the home and workshop of the Belgian Refugee Emile de Vynck, who became a famous woodcarver. He executed works that can still be seen in local buildings, including the altar and reredos at St Mary's Church, Tremadog and work in Cemaes Heritage Centre, Criccieth Memorial Hall, and Capel Bethel Penmorfa (<https://wcia.secure.force.com/peacemapwales/>).

**Sources**

<https://wcia.secure.force.com/peacemapwales/>

**PRN 62369****Clergy House of Rest, Llanfairfechan**

**NGR:** SH6872275619

**Location:** Llanfairfechan, Conwy

**Description**

A rest home for disabled or convalescent clergymen on the sea-front at Llanfairfechan. The building is shown from the 1st edition 25 inch map but only labelled as the Rest House on the 3rd edition map. As there is no division in the front garden it is assumed that both of the semi-detached houses were part of the rest home.

During the First World War the home was used to accommodate Belgian refugees. Ten Belgian ladies arrived in October 1914. Miss Howard was in charge of the institution, Dr. Clifton Hughes was the medical officer and Colonel Platt undertook to supply milk and butter for the occupants (North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser, 2nd October 1914, p8). The site of the building is now under the A55 and its embankment.

**Sources**

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser, 2nd October 1914, p8

**PRN 62413****YWCA Home, Beaumaris**

**NGR:** SH6044175957

**Location:** Beaumaris, Ynys Mon

**Description**

A house in Beaumaris called La Noria was bought by the Beaumaris YWCA as a hostel. It was opened on 13th December 1912. The hostel was used to accommodate 20 Belgian refugees who arrived in October 1914 and stayed until after the end of the War. They had left by March 1919 (WM/1379/1).

Newspapers (e.g. North Wales Chronicle 25th August 1900, p3) show that La Noria was formerly owned by Rev. Chaloner Greville but its precise location was unclear. However a postcard for sale on Ebay (unfortunately too expensive to buy) showed Castle Street Beaumaris with "YWCA" marked on the side of a building that is

clearly No 51 Castle St., now called Chimney Corner.

**Sources**

Anglesey Archives: WM/1379/1

<http://www.rootspoint.com/record/1901-UK-Census/Chaloner-Greville-1829-Scotland-Beaumaris-Part-Of/d2c548d7-8bdd-425b-ae99-76ec291fb01d/>

**PRN 62416**

**Parish Hall, Llandegfan**

**NGR:** SH5653574064

**Location:** Cwm Cadnant, Ynys Mon

**Description**

Early 20th century parish hall in Arts and Craft style. The hall does not appear on the 1900 25 inch map but is shown by 1914.

During the First World War it was used to accommodate 12 Belgian refugees (historypoints.org).

**Sources**

<http://historypoints.org/index.php?page=belgian-promenade-menai-bridge>

**PRN 62417**

**Llaingam, Llaneilian**

**NGR:** SH4590892406

**Location:** Llaneilian, Ynys Mon

**Description**

A small house shown on the 25 inch maps from 1889 and apparently largely unchanged.

Jones (2012, 27) identifies this as one of the houses in the Amlwch area that were used during the First World War to accommodate Belgian refugees. It is recorded in the

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser (6th November 1914, p7) that two parties of Belgian refugees arrived at Amlwch on 3rd November 1914. They were greeted at the station by a large crowd including members of the Town Council and were accommodated in Llaingam and Ling Crag.

**Sources**

Jones 2012; North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser, 6th November 1914, p7

**PRN 62418**

**Ling Crag, Llaneilian**

**NGR:** SH4666991681

**Location:** Llaneilian, Ynys Mon

**Description**

A house shown on the 25 inch maps from 1889 but by 1924 it had been rebuilt as a larger building.

Jones (2012, 27) identifies this as one of the houses in the Amlwch area that were used during the First World War to accommodate Belgian refugees. It is recorded in the

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser (6th November 1914, p7) that two parties of Belgian refugees arrived at Amlwch on 3rd November 1914. They were greeted at the station by a large crowd including members of the Town Council and were accommodated in Llaingam and Ling Crag.

The house still survives and its plan is little changed from that of 1924.

**Sources**

Jones 2012; North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser, 6th November 1914, p7

## **7.8. Sites relating to Conscientious Objectors**

**PRN 12438**      NPRN 28668

**New Lodge, Plas Brondanw**

**NGR:** SH6142042045

**Location:** Llanfrothen, Gwynedd

**Description**

Lodge designed by architect Sir Clough Williams-Ellis.

The New Lodge was constructed by conscientious objectors during the First World War.

The listed building entry dates the building to 1914, however it is not shown on the 1916 25 inch map and conscientious objectors would not have been available until after conscription was introduced in 1916. The



lodge must therefore have been built towards the end of the war and not in 1914.

**Sources**

Listed Building description

**PRN 62344**

**Bala-Bangor Independent Theological College, Bangor**

**NGR:** SH5755872089

**Location:** Bangor, Gwynedd

**Description**

The Bala-Bangor College was established as the Independent College in Bala, Merionethshire in 1842. By the 1850s there was a disagreement that led to a split in the college and one part moved to Bangor by 1886 when it was located in The Poplars, College Road. In 1892 the Bala department was also moved to Bangor and the two parts of the college reunited. "The new united college was named Bala-Bangor and in time moved from The Poplars to a building at the bottom of Ffriddoedd Road, Bangor, which was once three private houses" (Archives Hub).

The only building that clearly was originally three houses in this area is labelled as Wylfa on the 1889 1:500 map of Bangor. This building seems largely unchanged from how it is shown on the 1914 25 inch map.

**Sources**

Archives Hub: Papers on the Bala and Bala-Bangor Independent Colleges; Administrative / Biographical History (<http://archiveshub.ac.uk/search/summary.html?recid=gb222-bmssbbb&rsid=d7eb702&hit=0&startRecord=1&maximumRecords=20#rightcol>)

**PRN 62368      NPRN 23238**

**Caernarvon Gaol; Old Prison Buildings; Council Offices; Swyddfa'r Cyngor, Shire Hall Street**

**NGR:** SH4772562748

**Location:** Caernarfon, Gwynedd

**Description**

The present Gothic buildings were built from 1869 as the County Prison on the site of an earlier gaol. They are not depicted on historic OS mapping for security reasons. The buildings are now used as County Council offices.

During the First World War some conscientious objectors were detained in the prison, but the numbers seem to have been small as most were sent to prisons in England (Pearce Register on Wales for Peace website).

**Sources**

Pearce Register on Wales for Peace website: <http://www.wcia.org.uk/wfp/pearceregister>



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