

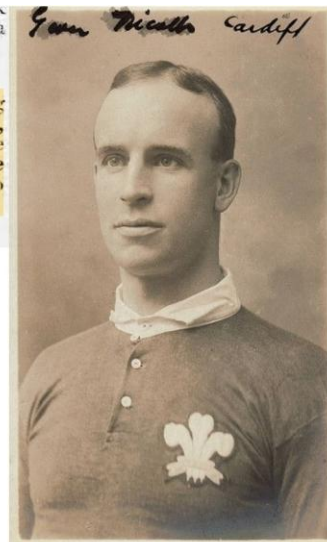
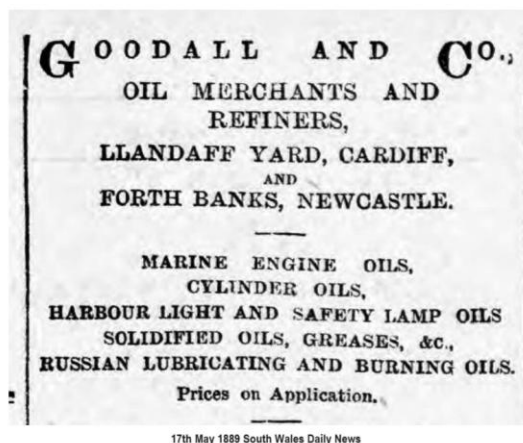
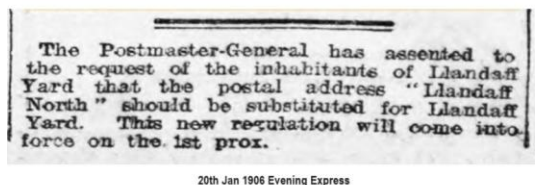
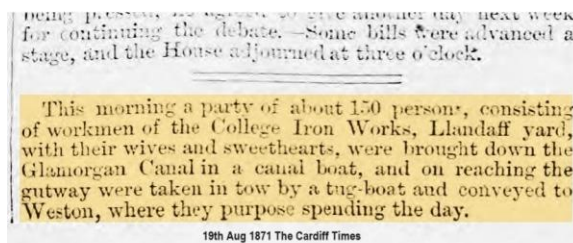
# LLANDAFF YARD

A History and Heritage.

**(All the reference material here is obtained and accredited to: The National Library of Wales – Newspaper Archive)**

This series on Llandaff Yard was written for AWEN. AWEN is a community group based at Whitchurch Library (Cardiff), it is a registered charity run for our local community by volunteers, all local people. To find out more and, or, to get involved contact AWEN by e-mail at [awen.cymru@gmail.com](mailto:awen.cymru@gmail.com) or visit AWEN's website at [www.awenthelibrary.cymru](http://www.awenthelibrary.cymru)

Following AWEN's successful "101 Things You (Probably) Didn't Know About Whitchurch", written by local man Nigel Lewis, Terry was invited to add more to our local story. The local history and heritage theme suits him, so here goes, hold onto something solid.....



Accreditation - The  
National Library of Wales

Newspaper Archive

## LLANDAFF YARD (Ep. 1) – News Events

Llandaff Yard and Primrose Hill are names to conjure with before it all became Llandaff North. Primrose Hill was the area close to the railway station. My father and grandfather were 'Yardies', so I've taken more than a passing interest in this neighbourhood. The name Llandaff Yard is a legacy of its industrial past, the ironworks, foundries, boat repair and building that took place around the old Glamorganshire Canal there. It's an area that forged character, numerous sports

teams, gave rise to many incidents well worth reporting on and there were pubs you never knew existed as the Sunday Closing Act wreaked havoc.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> August 1871, according to The Cardiff Times, “a party of 150 persons, consisting of workmen of the College Iron Works, Llandaff Yard, with their wives and sweethearts, were brought down the Glamorgan canal in a canal boat and on reaching the gutway were taken in tow by a tug-boat and conveyed to Weston, where they purpose spending the day.”

The gutway would be the canal lock and basin at Cardiff docks, but how incredibly adventurous and daring is this story, a small canal boat towed across the channel over to Weston, unbelievable.

Credit where it's due, reported in The Weekly Mail on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1886, the Llandaff Yard Working Men's Club gave 'an entertainment' in the National School room to aid those who suffered in the Mardy explosion. It was presided over by Lieutenant-Colonel Hill, who lived at Rookwood, with a large attendance reported and one of the chief features was the performance of the Llandaff Yard Club Minstrels. It was a fantastic gesture within a community, but who knew of the Llandaff Yard Working Men's Club and where it was and what about the characters that made up the Llandaff Yard Club Minstrels?

Who knew of the Llandaff Yard Cricket Club that held a general meeting, according to The Cardiff Times in March 1886, at the Llandaff Yard Working Men's Club to appoint officers and committees for the 'cricket and rounders'? Was the rounders the origin of baseball in the area?

Among the many industries of the area who would believe there was once Goodall's Oil Merchants (ref photo above) seen advertised in the South Wales Daily News on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1889 and of the opening the Match Factory at Llandaff Yard, reported on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 1894 in The Evening Express? A much needed boost to the local economy, unfortunately not to last, being sold by the liquidator as reported on 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 1899 in the South Wales Daily News.

The Victoria Laundry on Andrews Road would be known locally by many and on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 1899 in the Western Mail they reported on the laundry inviting 20 guests from Cardiff to view the works. (The great and the good no doubt - I'm sure they would have a great interest in clean white shirts and bed linen). Unfortunately, The Victoria Hygienic Laundry also failed, The Evening Express on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1902 reporting on a meeting of the creditors with the Official Receiver remaining as trustee. However this was not the end, when on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 1902 the Evening Express was quick to announce that Gwyn Nicholls (the famous Welsh international rugby player) and his brother in law Bert Winfield had acquired it with the possible excitement of him moving from Newport to play for Cardiff. Even more of a boost to the area was that the Evening Express, on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1902, had reported on him having given a speech at a presentation for Llandaff Yard Rugby Club in which he mentioned “the first time I ever handled a football was on the ground of Llandaff Yard Football club and it is always the greatest pleasure that I pay a visit to this place.” (Rugby back in the day was commonly known as 'football').

What of the name though? The Evening Express on the 25<sup>th</sup> Sept 1902 reported a 'Lively Meeting' – “The district of Whitchurch, below Llandaff Station has within recent years grown so rapidly that a short time since a movement was set on foot to give the place some other name than that by which it is at present known, viz.. Primrose Hill. ....The promoters of the meeting having stated their case, a heated discussion ensued. Several expressed their objection to the movement, and stated that they were quite satisfied with the name the district bore at present. They had lived in the neighbourhood for a considerable time - in fact, long before it had reached its present

proportions and they had not experienced any inconvenience. As time went on the proceedings became exceedingly lively, and the meeting ended without anything being done.”

Despite the resistance, change eventually came and on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 1906 The Evening Express published a small article that read as follows:....The Postmaster General has assented to the request of the inhabitants of Llandaff Yard that the postal address “Llandaff North” should be substituted for Llandaff Yard. This new regulation will come into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> prox.”

## **LLANDAFF YARD (Ep. 2) – More News Events**

One thing that becomes apparent when researching local history and events is just how resilient and tough local people were and just how challenging life was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We have to remember that the area was not as affluent and built up as it is now, but it was something of a development backwater on the outskirts of a burgeoning large town that had its own problems to deal with (Cardiff was not a city back then).

In 1865 (17<sup>th</sup> Feb Cardiff Times) a ‘young man’ who, after work on pay day, had visited “a few of the public houses at Llandaff Yard” had got lost walking home and attempted to get into the vacant, straw-thatched, ‘Gabalva Lodge’ believing it to be his lodging place. Because he could not get in through the door, or the window, he climbed onto the roof and attempted to lower himself down the chimney. Unfortunately he got stuck half way down, helpless, unable to move, “feet downward, thighs fast, hands up and his coat over his head and well besmeared with soot”. He remained there until 1pm the next day when a man and his wife came to look at the lodge to see if it would suit them to live there. When they got inside they heard the groans “O Jesu Mawr” (Oh! great Jesus) which frightened the life out of them and they ran off. Fortunately the man returned and on hearing the words again he managed to get help from the College Iron Works workmen, the very place where the young man was employed. They then commenced pulling down the chimney because he was stuck fast and unable to be moved and as he “gradually became visible to the lookers-on they could not refrain from laughing”. That’s mates for you, I wonder how long it took to live that down, or, what would have happened if someone had not been house hunting.

There was an area of Llandaff Yard commonly known as ‘The Freehold’ and this seems to have been at the back of the Cow and Snuffers around the river end of what we all know as College Rd. It was low lying land sandwiched between the Glamorganshire Canal and the river and sanitation and drainage was a huge problem. Industry, housing, livestock and pubs in the vicinity all produced ‘waste’ and run off. By the 1870’s we hear of the local issues. There was no sewer system, no drainage and no piped water. By Aug 1885 a scheme was put forward for draining Llandaff Yard for “removal of surface water, the great evil complained of”, however, “the open privies and cesspools would be left but if properly looked to, would not be a great evil”. One solution being “deodorising tanks placed in a field near the Glamorgan Canal at Llandaff Yard. After being deodorised the sewage would be discharged into the river”. All this, at the time, for seven houses. This all dragged on and on for years until cases and fears of typhoid (4 x cases in Llandaff Yard reported in Sept 1893) and cholera accelerated progress and an eventual solution. – (Don’t ever refer to the Glamorganshire Canal as the ‘Glamorgan’ Canal, it’s an unforgivable sin).

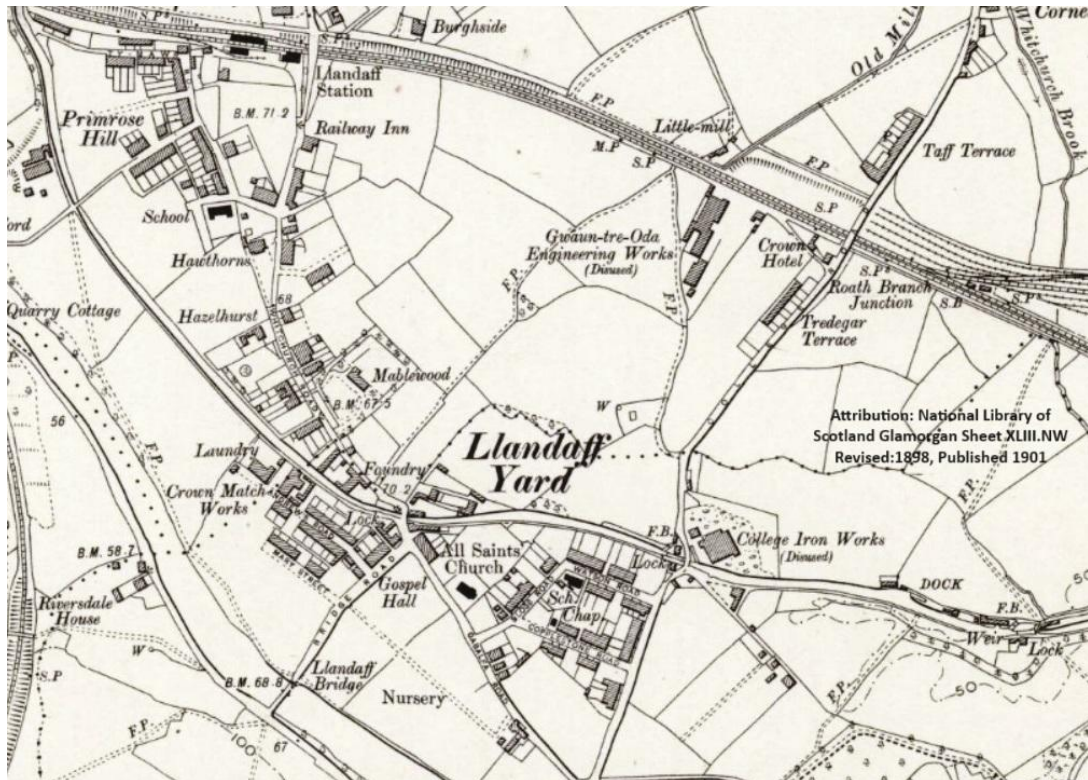
Times were tough, there were many incidents leading to convictions, some serious, some less so. Poor old Billy Llewelyn was ordered to pay 6s 6d (32p now) and remanded for a fortnight for keeping a 'pigstye' close to the highway, "a public nuisance because of the stench". In December 1879, "on the Freehold at Llandaff Yard between 8 and 9pm, a man walked up to the shop window of Mr Follet, butcher, and putting his hand through the ventilator pane deliberately unhooked a leg of mutton and ran away with it". A chase followed but he was never caught. It was December 1882 when W Murray and James Phillips, a grocer of Llandaff Yard, were each fined 10s and costs (10 shillings = 50p) for having unjust weights and measures in their possession, reported by the South Wales Daily News, no doubt never to be trusted by locals again and on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1892 George Hanley was charged with stealing coal at Llandaff Yard on the 9<sup>th</sup> and was fined 20s including costs, or 14 days hard labour (20 shillings - £1 – probably equating to a month's work). In April 1893 "William Williams alias "Billy Butcher", a well known character who has undergone several terms of penal servitude for various offences was placed in the dock at Llandaff police court charged with stealing two pigs from Thomas Lewis a Llandaff Yard haulier" from the College Works. Found guilty he was sentenced to 8 months with hard labour (aged 63).

To some the old canal was a place of recreation, my father and his generation learned to swim in it. However, you would never believe the number of fatalities by drowning in the area, many in the Glamorganshire Canal, some by pure accident, some suicidal and some the heartbreaking loss of children of local people. One of the more common locations for drownings was right outside the Cow and Snuffers, late at night, at the old bridge and canal lock, after leaving the pub. Another was Llandaff Weir, at the weir itself and also at a spot where the old mill stream branched off from the river at a sluice gate. Here, as reported in The Cardiff Times on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1898, "the surface of the water is covered by a thickness of bark, corks, dead timber and other floatage" washed down by the river. To the unwary it appeared solid but below it was a strong current 9 or 10 ft deep. "It is a gruesome spot, choked with carcasses of dogs, cats and even larger animals and it has been the scene of many tragedies". Again it took an age for it to be made safe despite The Coroner directing the responsible authorities "to the dangers of this veritable death trap". Fortunately there were also reports of many heroic rescues, not least of all the actions of two youths named Fry and Day who were named in a report by the South Wales Daily News on 14<sup>th</sup> Jan 1899 for a 'brave deed' "rescuing an old man from drowning in the canal near Llandaff Yard" and in the Cardiff Times on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1906 when John Harris of Andrews Road Llandaff Yard rescued a small boy by jumping into the river "without divesting himself of his clothes" and by resorting to "artificial respiration to eventually succeed in renewing animation". Take a bow if these people are in your family line.

### **LLANDAFF YARD (Ep. 3) - Local Industries**

Make no mistake, this was once a heavily industrialised area, where working people built a neighbourhood off the back of blood, sweat and tears. Some of the old industries in the area are well known, our families having worked in them, tales of those times told around the living room fireplace. Those fireside chats spoke of people commonly baking their home made cakes and bread at the local bake house, the ovens also occasionally used for roasting the Sunday joint, all for a small payment. The way energy costs are going perhaps it's a shared community event we'll see again. Many of you will know of the Glamorganshire Canal, Treseder's, the Victoria Laundry on Andrews Rd., (mentioned previously within AWEN's first post on Llandaff Yard, ref..January

2024) and the Melingruffydd works just beyond, but, how many would know of the Match Works, or the sausage skin factory? So much has changed.



Llandaff Yard owed its creation to the Glamorganshire Canal (constructed 1790 – 1795). Its path from Cardiff Docks to the canal head at Merthyr wove a path through the flat contours of pristine, open fields and meadows that were once around us, creating a support service industry for boat building and repairs, for lock operation and for loading and unloading manufactured goods and raw materials. Poor old James Jones (52) was a boat builder employed by John Rees James at his workshop on College Farm, found drowned at 'Monachdy Lock' apparently having fallen into the canal when returning to sleep at the workshop, "he having no proper place of abode" (Evening Express 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 1907). As far as can be determined, apart from farming, none of the following industries existed until after the canal was completed 230 years ago.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1890 The Western Mail published an article that tells us a lot of the old Treseder's nursery that once occupied the site of Ysgol Glan Taf – ".....while Cardiff's streets are not dingy there are many things that would lead to the supposition that floral culture would be restricted. Yet it is not so, and in proof of this few towns of its size possess so many florists in an excellent way. One of the oldest of these is Mr. Treseder, whose headquarters are in Cowbridge-road and at Llandaff Yard, and Whitchurch has some 40 odd acres under cultivation..... The chief place of interest, undoubtedly, is the Llandaff Yard nursery, some sixteen acres in extent, beautifully situated on the banks of the Taff, and where the visitor has the advantage of the knowledge possessed by the head gardener, Mr. Leyland, who seems a perfect encyclopaedia of botanical knowledge. ....a visit should first be paid to the propagating house where the young plants receive separate life and are nursed during the first part of their existence. This house is most scientifically constructed, and so arranged that various temperatures may be maintained at one and the same time."

The College Iron Works was located near the College Road roundabout directly opposite the Library Hub (Y Hyb). The 1898 map shows it as being 'disused'. In 1856 it was purchased by a Mr David Davies a Merthyr man and a Mr Williams of Aberdare and prior to this the works "were carried on very irregularly, one of the company keeping a public house adjoining the works". To the credit of Davies and Williams "one of the first things they did was to convert the public house into workmen's houses". Not only that but they expanded the works to "employ 80 to 100 men who are paid weekly" with no truck shop and "every man permitted to spend his wages where he thinks proper". In the Merthyr Telegraph and General Advertiser for the Iron Districts of South Wales a report on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1860 describes a meeting on the starting of the Penyarden Works in which Mr Davies (of the College Iron Works Llandaff Yard) spoke of making the works profitable by producing high quality pig iron "illustrated by his works own at Llandaff", this suggesting that there must have been a blast furnace, giving us a picture of what went on here. Knowing that at least one 'hammer man' was employed there, in 1861, this also tells us that some kind of forging was going on there. By February 1863 The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian reported that the works was to be enlarged and that 'Messrs Lumley and Williams (the respected proprietors)' had invited the workforce to meet them at The Red Lion Inn, Llandaff to 'partake of a substantial dinner'.

The Eagle Foundry was on the site of what is now Lidl and before that James and Jenkins (vehicle sales and service). It was also known as the Evans Foundry and was well known. On 17<sup>th</sup> April 1863 The Cardiff Times ran an advert "J Evans & Co Manufacturers of Anchors, Chains & Chain Cables, Llandaff Yard, Near Cardiff" – The Glamorganshire Canal ran just behind it (now a footpath) and would have provided the essential haulage and transport link, upstream and downstream, for the business to flourish. This gives us a sense for its market operations. Some of the Evans foundry products can still be seen locally as drain and utility service covers.

The Crown Match Factory is shown on the old 1898 OS map, next door to the laundry, near the canal and on the opposite bank to the foundry. It opened in January 1894 and was capable of turning out 100 miles of wax tapers/day, there was a plant for wood matches capable of 43,000/day and arrangements were being made for making match boxes on the premises. Interestingly in 1897 they advertised on the 28<sup>th</sup> June in the South Wales Echo "Wanted, 100 Matchbox Hands for home employment: free instructions given – Apply at the Works, Crown Match Co., Llandaff Yard, Cardiff" - A bit of 'pin money' for some, but, either a sign of an expanding business, or an attempt to cut costs. Unfortunately, by December 1898, the business failed. (Did the Crown Works give its name to the pub, or the pub to the works? Were they connected to the Crown Patent Fuel Co.?)

"At Llandaff yard a serious nuisance had been caused by the manufacture of sausage skins and strings for musical instruments. The firm, which formerly carried on the manufacture at Cardiff, had promised to take measures to abate the nuisance" – Reported in the South Wales Daily News on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1880. Where would this have been?

The Manure Works / Slaughter House was on the old 'Fram Works' just north of Colwinstone Street at the College Road end (behind the old Crown pub). The old manure works (started 1889) caused a 'right stink' in more ways than one with many complaints and court actions being taken against it, animal slaughter (12 horses / week) and bone boiling took place there. It was forced to shut in 1892. It was previously the site for the Gwaun Tre Oda Engineering Works, built by De

Bergue in 1861, 'Iron Bridges, Girders, Roofing and Machinery for Bridge and Boiler Work', announcing closure in 1879.

A malt house, was put up for sale in the Cardiff Times on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1868, at some location "convenient to Canal and near Taff Vale Station. Apply to Mr William Llewellyn, Llandaff Yard". Where, I wonder?

Once the Taff Vale Railway (TVR) was constructed (c.1840s) it was the beginning of the end for the Glamorganshire Canal and slowly, but surely, the heavy industries on its banks, that once relied upon it, slowly died, changing Llandaff Yard once and for all.

### **LLANDAFF YARD (Ep. 4) - Sport**

This area is a gold mine for its history and stories. So far, we've covered the area in a general way and the last episode looked at local industries, giving us a good idea as to where and how our ancestors earned their living and how the area grew. Leisure time for them was at a premium, but sport played a big part in the lives of these people.

Of the many sporting activities established here, one of the earliest was the 27<sup>th</sup> March 1886, the Cardiff Times described a meeting at the Llandaff Yard Working Men's Club "for the purpose of electing officers and committee for the cricket and rounders club for the ensuing season. There were sixty members present." On the 31<sup>st</sup> May 1886 The South Wales Echo printed the scores of a match played at Whitchurch against Roath Cricket Club in which Llandaff Yard C.C. lost by 13 runs.

Some of the more 'undercover' activities were bare knuckle fighting, Enoch (Knocker) White and George Asplin (landlord of the Cow and Snuffers) being famously photographed in the act; 'pitch and toss' in which there were many prosecutions "playing this horrid game of pitch and toss—a form of gambling you have no right to indulge in", heavy fines or 7 days imprisonment being handed down as punishment and, wait for it...., cock fighting!

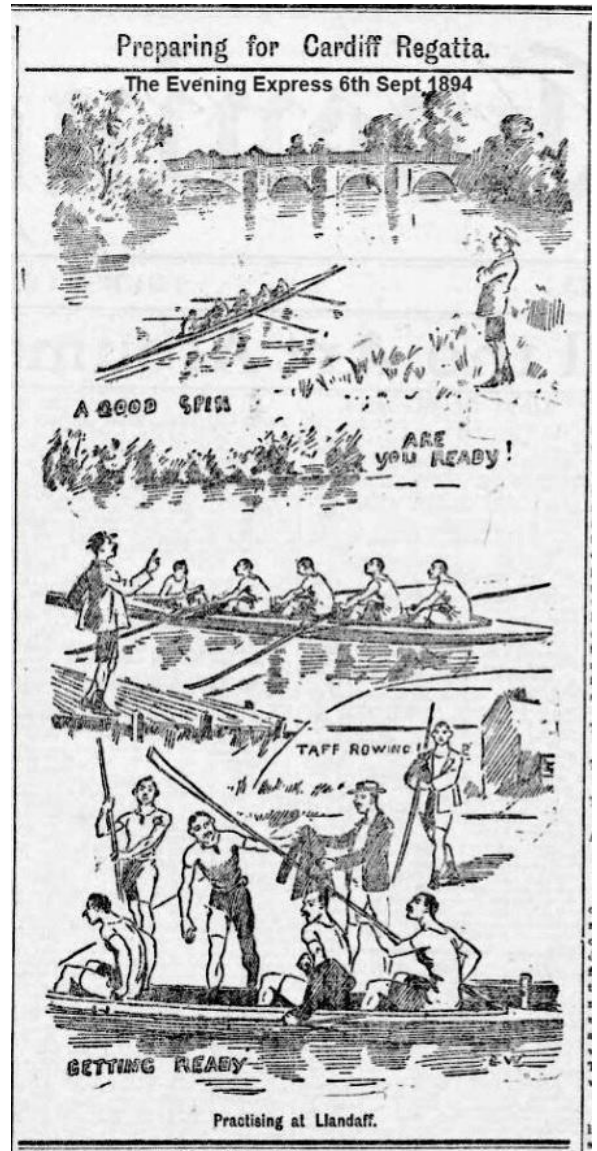
In sharp contrast a popular activity at the time, believe it or not, was table tennis, popularly known then as 'Ping Pong' (hardly a fitting description for a great sport). The Llandaff Yard team was known as the 'Hungarians' playing at the Llandaff Yard Institute. On the 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 1902 the Evening Express printed the results of a match against 'Firebrands', Llandaff Yard winning by 66 points. The report went on to say that the Firebrands were handicapped by having two of their best men vaccinated that day, one being in great pain as a result. The Evening Express also published a report on the 27<sup>th</sup> Jan 1902 - "The ping pong table missed from the Hawthorn Schools, Llandaff Yard, was discovered at the Whitchurch Schools. It is not the property of the board. Thereby hangs a tale".

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1904 the Evening Express published an article on 'Whitchurch Boys' Walk' – "A walking match, for boys under fourteen, will take place tomorrow afternoon from the Three Cups, Llandaff Yard, to the top of the second hill above the Holly Bush Hotel, Whitchurch, the route being through Whitchurch and back by way of Llandaff Yard. Nearly 40 entries have been received. The first prize is a silver cup and among the other prizes is a suit of clothes. Mr. George Stone, the

secretary, is assisted by a strong committee". – ('the top of the second hill' ? - Pendwyallt perhaps and what an incentive 2<sup>nd</sup> prize!).

We are all well aware of the Llandaff Rowing Club, apparently 'Founded in 1946' (according to their website). But, the Weekly Mail on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 1885 published an article on the 'Cardiff Rowing Club' as follows: "This flourishing club, which now has a large number of members and a good stock of boats, which are conveniently housed in the new boat house, situate near the weir, at Llandaff, commenced the season by a four oared race". This tells us that although the boat house was new at the time, the rowing club had 'flourished' there for some time before 1885 and lo and behold The Taff Rowing Club advertised their "First Annual Regatta will be held in Llandaff" in the Western Mail on 25<sup>th</sup> Aug 1876. (Attached newspaper cutting is dated 1894).

There's very little record, if any, on football (Association Football - Soccer), but a club under the name of Llandaff North AFC did advertise for fixtures in the Evening Express on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1910 also stating "average age 19".



Rugby however was different; Llandaff Yard was a hot bed of local talent. Rugby was more commonly known as 'Football' back in the day, making research a little difficult to say the least. One of the earliest reports available, on Llandaff Yard rugby, was 10<sup>th</sup> Sept 1889, The South Wales Echo gave notice that "Llandaff Yard F.C. the annual meeting of this club was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst., when the following officers were elected:- Captain, Mr John Smith; vice captain, Mr Tom Davies; committee. Messrs T. Jones, J. George, J. Brain, W. Phillips, D. J. Howells and W. Stansfield; hon. Sec., W. Jones, Gabalva-terrace, Llandaff Yard" and on the 7<sup>th</sup> Oct 1889 from the South Wales Daily News, "Pentre v Llandaff Yard Stars, in an away match "a rough and very unpleasant game, ended in a victory for the Stars". The club had a regular fixture with Whitchurch, winning by two tries to one in a brief report in The Western Mail on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1890, but, reported as being "a rather rough game" in the South Wales Daily News. This local derby was a highlight on the fixture list and for many years they played each other 3 times / season, the 'gate money' being too good to forfeit. The extent of local interest was demonstrated on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov 1895 in The South Wales Daily News "Single Men v Married – Played at Llandaff Yard, and after a hard

game resulted in a win for the Single Men by 3 tries to nil". Strangely, notice was given in the South Wales Echo on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1899 that "Llandaff Yard Football Club – The second annual meeting of the above club was held at the National School, Llandaff Yard", suggesting that in a formal sense the club's first meeting wasn't until 1898. The club, however, seems to have been active for some time prior as we've shown and also, because The South Wales Echo on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 1899 published the team lists for a "Llandaff Yard F.C. Past v Present" fixture on Easter Monday, listing all 30 players and their positions, past players could surely not have come from just one season! If you have wondered where they were based at the time, well on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 1899 The South Wales Daily News reported that "Llandaff Yard – Football Club – To celebrate the close of a very successful season the members of this club sat down to a capital dinner on Saturday evening at their headquarters, the Railway Hotel, Llandaff Station."

That day, for the record: Llandaff Yard F. C. Past v Present.—On Easter Monday. March 1899 Past - Back: S Chard; three-quarter backs, W Shapland, J Chard (captain), J Edney, and G Stone; half-backs, W Edney and D Owen forwards, D Stone, C Brain, V Taylor, J Godsall, W Watkins, F Brown, W Taylor, and W Lister

Present - Back: W Davies; three-quarter backs, C Seaman, F Boothby, G Day, and S Evans; half-backs, P Chard and J Chard; forwards, D Seaman (captain), A Moss, W Evans, A Chapple, A Leaves, F Holtam, W Holtam, and C Samuel or F Thomas.

Was your family involved?

## LLANDAFF YARD (Ep. 5) - Rugby

If you haven't already, check out Nigel's "101 Things You (Probably) Didn't Know About Whitchurch" on AWEN's website (that's if you can navigate it). Put your wellies on, we are dipping a toe into the past again as Terry continues to add to our local history on Llandaff Yard. (See 4 previous 'episodes' prior to this one).

There is a mist over the origin of rugby in the neighbourhood, its popularity however, is immense. A lot could be written pioneering the early years, space here however doesn't permit. Recently a copy of a 1960's Welsh Rugby 'magazine' was posted on social media (Ref also <https://llandaffnorth.com/about-us/history/> ), it's an excellent read if you get the chance to view it. It introduces Llandaff North Rugby Club, "...whose past goes so far back that there is no record of its actual beginning" and that "there was a side, known as Llandaff Yard which was formed in 1898..." the names of R.C Phelps and brother W. Phelps as secretary and treasurer respectively and N. Seaman as 'skipper' get an honourable mention. (The WRU was founded' in 1881 the year of the first Welsh international match). Llandaff North was once the domain of Llandaff Yard and Primrose Hill and its worth mentioning that there was once a Primrose Hill rugby team, the Evening Express on 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 1898 publishing the team selections for a game against Radyr. A reliable source, having researched early rugby in Cardiff, advises that "During the late 1880s there was a 'Primrose Hill' club; while in the early 1890s a team called 'Llandaff Station' also played over several seasons" one of these being a match against 'Cardiff Crest Juniors' on 8<sup>th</sup> Oct 1892 (S. Wales Daily News).

So, what of the 'Llandaff Yard' rugby history and this date of 1898? Well.....on the 29<sup>th</sup> Nov 1886 the South Wales Daily News printed a brief report on a match between Llandaff Yard Juniors v

Llandaff 'A'. "...after a rough game resulted in a win for the Juniors by two goals and one try (disputed) to one goal (disputed) and one try." No TMO in those days. The South Wales Echo 30<sup>th</sup> March 1889 named all 30 players for a Llandaff Yard FC Past v Present

Llandaff Yard (Rugby) Football Club  
Is this photo the Past v Present fixture of 1899?  
Was your family involved?



Llandaff Yard F. C. Past v Present.—On Easter Monday. March 1899 (Not in any order)  
Past - Back: S Chard; three-quarter backs, W Shapland, J Chard (captain), J Edney, and G Stone; half-backs, W Edney and D Owen forwards, D Stone, C Brain, V Taylor, J Godsall, W Watkins, F Brown, W Taylor, and W Lister  
Present - Back: W Davies; three-quarter backs, C Seaman, F Boothby, G Day, and S Evans; half-backs, P Chard and J Chard; forwards, D Seaman (captain), A Moss, W Evans, A Chapple, A Leaves, F Holtam, W Holtam, and C Samuel or F Thomas.

game on Easter Monday and the same month, in The Evening Express, having fixtures for both a 1<sup>st</sup> XV and a 2<sup>nd</sup> XV and on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1889 the 'Echo' printed the following "Llandaff Yard FC – The annual meeting of the club was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst., naming the officers elected. Rugby, back in the day, was known as 'Football' as opposed to Association Football or 'Soccer'. The derby fixture with Whitchurch was a favourite and one of the earliest was reported in The Western Mail on 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 1890 in a match played at Whitchurch resulting "in a win for Llandaff Yard by two tries to one try" but arguments followed as to the score and which tries were allowed and which ones weren't. The referee was J. George, The Freehold, Llandaff Yard. Clearly, the 'formed in 1898' date needs to be reconsidered, unless you want to argue about the meaning of 'formed in'.

Yet another name springs up in 1893, that of Llandaff Yard United but with many of the named players being the same as for the Llandaff Yard club and logically they seem to be one and the same. An interesting aspect to the club's history is that All Saints Church also had a rugby team with their All Saints (Llandaff Yard) Church Lads Brigade (the forerunners of the Boys Brigade). On 8<sup>th</sup> Nov 1895 The South Wales Echo named the players for a game against Llandaff Stars and some of these young men went on to play regularly for Llandaff Yard in later years.

Such was the strength and popularity of the game here that on the 18<sup>th</sup> Nov 1895 The South Wales Daily News published a "Single Men v Married – Played at Llandaff Yard and after a hard game resulted in a win for the Single Men by 3 tries to nil". No real surprise there then.

Success was just around the corner, but, at the time it didn't seem that way, in 1901 the club were struggling to get a team together having lost eight players to Whitchurch. By 1902 there was an upturn in fortune, with most players returning. The Evening Express on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1902 reported that "Several of the Whitchurch team assisted Llanishen last Saturday against Llandaff Yard to practise for the cup match on Saturday with Ystrad Stars. But the green and white boys made them go all the way and turned out winners of a very interesting game by eight points to three", a clear measure that our local clubs had a strong bond and here we have a clue as to the early club colours.

In the Evening Express on 27<sup>th</sup> Sept 1902 it was announced that the club "... have got a field". The Evening Express on the 1<sup>st</sup> November printed: "Llandaff Yard – The committee of the Llandaff Yard Club have adopted a wise course in forming a second string. With so much promising talent in the district, they ought to be a great help to the firsts" and on the 8<sup>th</sup> November the paper printed... "Llandaff Yard still maintain their position as one of the best district clubs around Cardiff". To emphasise this change in fortune the Evening Express further reported on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1902 "The Llandaff Yard team are improving in every match they play and on their present form it is doubtful whether they can be beaten by any team in Cardiff or the surrounding neighbourhood". The Evening Express published an article on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1902 that further emphasises the strength of the game here: "Llandaff Yard – A crowd of two or three hundred spectators assembled to witness the match between Tongwynlais and Llandaff Yard" and on the 29<sup>th</sup> Nov publishing "Llandaff Yard is all agog with excitement this week on account of their match today with their nearest neighbours – Whitchurch". Another interesting aspect to this report is that it mentioned Llandaff Yard discarding their old jerseys and will in future appear in 'black and green'. In a brief report in The Evening Express on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 1903 it commented that "Llandaff Yard and Tongwynlais grounds are, strange to say, both situated in Whitchurch and often as many as four Rugby teams are playing within the village". (Compare that to today).

It's the 1902 / 03 season that really stands out for Llandaff Yard rugby. The Evening Express reported on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1903 Llandaff Yard applied for "affiliation and desired to play in the Cardiff Shield competition an event confined to the divisions of the Cardiff Union league clubs. They were considered too strong for this and had been offered the opportunity of competing for the Mallett Cup". On the 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 1903 The Evening Express announced that Llandaff Yard "were allowed to become members of the Union" (i.e. Cardiff and District Rugby Union). On 7<sup>th</sup> March 1903 The Evening Express reported "Llandaff Yard has accepted the vacancy in the shield competition. Admission to the competition was at first "refused but afterwards granted although Llandaff Yard on their part had let the matter drop". To participate in the shield Llandaff Yard had to play "more matches than anyone else and each of them away from home" and they were required to pay an agreed subscription of 5/- (Five shillings = c.£50 today).

This was the year that Llandaff Yard rugby club got to the final, beating a number of strong clubs along the way some by the narrowest of margins. Eventually the big day came, 24<sup>th</sup> April 1903 and at no other place than.....The Cardiff Arms Park. (What an honour). The date was the 25<sup>th</sup> April 1903. They played Penarth United in the final k.o. 2 45pm in front of a paying public (24<sup>th</sup> April 1903 Evening Express "The season tickets of the Cardiff Football Club will not be available for admission, the union deciding, with the consent of the Cardiff Football Club, that "all shall pay." A concession has been made, however, to Cardiff elementary schoolboys, and they will be admitted for one penny each". The Evening Express reported extensively on the match on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1903, Llandaff Yard winning "by the narrowest of margins", a game of two halves, Llandaff Yard winning the first, just holding out in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half to win the match "As for Llandaff, they are a very clever lot, and despite a certain amount of uncalled-for prejudice against them, are to be congratulated on their achievement".

Presentation of the prestigious rugby awards took place at the Dolphin Hotel, Cardiff, on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1903, a venue favoured by the Cardiff and District Rugby Union and a venue for their regular committee meetings, The Evening Express reporting “that next year the Union would probably be in possession of a Dewar shield worth 50 guineas.” The awards went as follows: A H Williams Cup and medals to St Teilo’s; Cardiff shield and medals, Llandaff Yard; Mallett cup and medals, Grange Stars.

Despite this success, the fortunes of the club changed once again. At the start of season 1903–04, Llandaff Yard had joined the Cardiff and District Rugby Union Championship first division of the league, with, apparently “the best fixture list in their history. The Evening Express on 7<sup>th</sup> Nov 1903 reported that “Last Saturday Llandaff Yard had their first taste of league football this season” but went on to state how difficult it was for the club to get a side together. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1904 the league positions showed that Llandaff Yard was no longer part of the league structure and that all league points gained by teams that had played against them had been deducted from their totals. From here, things become uncertain, it’s likely that Llandaff Yard continued to play in the regular traditional fixtures they had arranged for themselves, the issue here perhaps being the lack of interest in playing within the structure of the Cardiff and District Union league set up. From this date onwards reference material dries up, but some of those former ‘Yard’ players were now playing for Whitchurch. Perhaps the lure of The Fox and Hounds and a fixture list of playing ‘all the second teams of the Welsh first class clubs’ proved more of an attractive proposition than playing against the District teams.

In June 1906 notification was given that the postal address “Llandaff North” should be substituted for Llandaff Yard” and it’s likely that local groups and team names soon followed suit at this time. It was August 1907 that ‘Llandaff North’ Old Boys RFC advertised for fixtures (Evening Express 31<sup>st</sup> Aug 1907) with applications to Cyril Lewis, Glyn Villa, Ty Mawr Road, Llandaff North. Over the next few months a number of fixtures were arranged and on Boxing Day (1907) they played St. Gabriel (Swansea) under club name ‘Llandaff North’.

## **LLANDAFF YARD (Ep. 6) - Our Pubs**

This is the last in the series.

The local pub, like the church, was once the heartbeat of the Llandaff Yard community. You know of The Railway; The Royal Exchange and The Pineapple and many will also remember The Crown and The Cow and Snuffers, but, there was more. 200 years ago, for a pub to be viable, it needed a community of 250 people, now, it’s more like 3000. Just as in Whitchurch (and probably most of the land) these pubs and the ones you are about to hear about all fell foul of the vague interpretations of the old Sunday drinking laws and for ‘keeping a disorderly house’. Some were repeat offenders and a few, probably ceased to exist because of it, an evocative memory of another time as we lose more and more.

According to The Pub History Society, the 1872 Act apparently remains in force today and it is illegal to be drunk in charge of a horse, a cow, or a steam engine, with a possible penalty of £200 or 51 weeks in prison. Under the Act some drinkers became infamous “bona fide travellers”, those who could be served outside of normal trading hours. Travelling in good faith meant that you

should not be “travelling for the purpose of taking refreshment”, but you could be “one who goes into an inn for refreshment in the course of a journey, whether of business or pleasure”. While people posing as travellers were regularly charged and prosecuted, it was difficult to prosecute licensees who had a handy escape clause in the law. To find the publican guilty, the prosecution had to prove that the licensee did not “honestly believe” that his customer was a bona fide traveller when serving outside of normal opening hours. The accepted distance for ‘travel’ seems to have been 3 miles.

The 1880’s didn’t bode too well for The Crown and landlord George Steel and his wife Frances, for whatever they were selling, they were each fined: him 13/- (13 shillings) and her 10/- + costs, him for having ‘unjust measures’ and her for ‘unjust weights’ and ‘unjust scales’ according to the South Wales Daily News on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1881. Our George came in for it again for “selling beer at an illegal time on Sunday” (6<sup>th</sup> Sept 1886 The South Wales Echo). He was fined 20/- + costs and 3 ‘customers’, who lived close by, were fined 5/- each + costs, (6 others got away). He was fined 20/- again in 1897 for the same offence (25<sup>th</sup> May The Evening Express). Enoch Griffiths got away with one though, in 1900 (The South Wales Echo 16<sup>th</sup> July) the landlord claiming that ‘he was a servant in the house and slept there’ even though he had run from the police at the time. “The bench considered the case a suspicious one, but dismissed it”.

\*\* 13/- = 13 shillings = 65p today but probably a week’s pay back then

On 20<sup>th</sup> February 1900 The South Wales Daily News reported on Alice Davies, landlord of the Exchange, Llandaff Yard, she was “fined 10s and costs for selling rum 27 degrees under proof. Mrs Davies, in extenuation, stated that the liquor had been in the house since Christmas”. (A case of the ‘Angels share’ no doubt, the alcohol having evaporated to the heavens).

The Railway was in the occupation of Eliza Brookman when it was put up for auction in The South Wales Daily News on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1880. At the time it was under lease from Miss Harriet Diana Arabella Mary Richards and the Right Hon. George Rice Baron Dynevor. In 1882, on the 16<sup>th</sup> December in The Weekly Mail, a “D.C. Samuel of The Railway Inn, Llandaff Yard, was fined 5s (5 shillings) and costs for having unjust measures”. A few landlords came and went and on 14<sup>th</sup> Jan 1888 The Cardiff Times reported that “Joseph Harding, landlord of the Railway Hotel, Llandaff Yard was summoned for selling beer on Sunday December 25<sup>th</sup>”. Eight men were in the bar claiming to have travelled from the dock area of Cardiff, however, 7 of the men were from Llandaff and one escaped. The landlord was fined £5, or one month (imprisonment) and had his license endorsed. The defendants were each fined 5s. A similar case was brought against William Amos, landlord of the Railway Inn, Llandaff Yard in 1893 in the Evening Express on 17<sup>th</sup> July, he had the same fine. One of the local characters was David Davies (Railway Hotel, Llandaff Yard), whose funeral was reported in the Evening Express on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1903, a shoe maker by profession, but best known as the toll keeper at the North Road Gate and ‘the last of the recognised gate keepers in the Principality’.

“Isaac Thomas, landlord of the Pineapple, Llandaff Yard was charged with selling beer at 20 minutes past eleven o’clock on the night of Sunday the 31<sup>st</sup> March”, according to the Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1872. “A penalty of 20s and costs was inflicted”. The pub was put up for sale, by public auction and advertised in The South Wales Daily News on 15<sup>th</sup> Dec 1876, including ‘Skittle Alley, Stable and Cottage and held under lease from the Messrs Romilly’ and again for sale by public auction on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1880 in the South Wales Daily News, this time

including the above as well as “Pigstyes, a good baking oven and a splendid Well of Water on the premises”.

Much could be written about The Cow and Snuffers, ‘one of the oldest pubs in Glamorgan’, but space is limited. It was sold in January 1878 according to the South Wales Daily News (24<sup>th</sup> Jan) and was bought by the ‘present occupier’ a Mr Tilley, but there was a problem, part of the house was built on the ground of Lord Romilly. They both claimed the licence for their part of the house. Perhaps this is the reason why, in old photographs, the new pub was built and at one time the old pub stood alongside the new pub. In 1882, Weekly Mail, 10<sup>th</sup> June, “William Mathews landlord of the Cow and Snuffers Inn, Llandaff Yard was summoned for allowing liquor to be consumed on his licensed premises at illegal hours”, he managed to get his case dismissed and got away with it again on 16<sup>th</sup> September according to the Weekly Mail. The pub was put up for auction, 11<sup>th</sup> July 1887 in the South Wales Daily News advertised as “Double Licensed Public House, together with the Skittle Alley, Stable, Coach House and Wheelwright’s Shop as well as Eight Well Built Freehold Dwelling Houses adjoining”. In 1889 (8<sup>th</sup> June in The Cardiff Times) landlord Evan Thomas faced a ‘serious charge’ for Sunday drinking. “Sergt Cole said the house was the worst in the district”. He was fined £5 and license endorsed. He faced the same charge on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1890 in the Western Mail where 11 men were seen in the bar. The distance one of the men, from Grangetown, had travelled was measured and found to be 2 and three quarter miles through Llandaff Fields, but his defence was ‘On account of the newness of the road’ and the case was dismissed. Close to the Cow and Snuffers were two cottages, Exmouth Cottage and Cardiff Cottage, if you have ever wondered where they might have been, both put up for sale 30<sup>th</sup> May 1895, in The Western Mail. On 24<sup>th</sup> July 1899, The South Wales Echo, Mrs Thomas, Cow and Snuffers Inn, was summoned “for selling whisky adulterated to the extent of 42 under proof”. She admitted the offence stating that it had happened while she was away on holiday, she was fined £3 + costs due ‘to the good reputation of the house’.

Some will know of “The Three Cups” beer house in Llandaff Yard. On 16<sup>th</sup> April 1872 The South Wales Daily News reported on landlord John Beynon who was summoned for ‘permitting drunkenness’, the issue here was that it was him who was drunk and by a quirk ‘within the letter of the law’ no conviction could be recorded, he was ordered to pay costs. In 1889, 1<sup>st</sup> October The Western Mail reported on landlord John Meredith who was fined 20s + costs for keeping his house open for sale of drink on a Sunday. On 30<sup>th</sup> November 1892 the Western Mail advertised “To be let, with early possession, The Three Cups Inn, Canal Bank, Llandaff Yard – Apply in the Premises”, again providing a clue as to its location. On the 28<sup>th</sup> August 1893, ‘Martha Davies of the Three Cups beerhouse’ had her case in print in the Evening Express with a long drawn out case ‘for keeping her house open on a Sunday’. She was fined £5 + costs and just managed to keep her licence. It must have been a tough old existence, the South Wales Daily News printed an advert on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1898 “Wanted, strong Girl, business house; good reference required – Three Cups Inn, Llandaff Yard” and again on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1899 “Wanted, Strong General Servant about 20 – Apply at once Three Cups Inn, Llandaff Yard”. Strength was clearly an essential requirement.

You might be surprised to know that there were other pubs. One of the older ones was “The Colliers Arms”, put up for sale by auction, in the Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian on 12<sup>th</sup> June 1858, at Llandaff Yard, “Public House and Garden thereunto belonging, known by the sign of the ‘Colliers Arms’ together with the Coal Yard and Wharf adjoining thereto”. Where on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1859 in the same paper, Jabez Thomas was charged with refusing to admit P.C.85 and for keeping his house open for the sale of beer after 10 at night”, but his case was dismissed. The Colliers was again put

up for sale in Sept 1861 with coal yard and wharf and again in November 1865, this time complete with furniture and brewing utensils, also listing the house contents room by room, the end of the road for this pub, most likely. The 'collier' name is surprising, not knowing of any coal seams in the area, old pub names generally have a historic connection, but, it's worth mentioning that the origin of the 'collier' derived from charcoal burning and this might well be the connection here. Perhaps this pub had a longer history than we could imagine.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,  
(Unless previously disposed of by Private Contract.)  
ON SATURDAY, 3rd day of July, 1858, at the ANGEL INN,  
at CARDIFF, at Three o'Clock in the Afternoon, in  
Two Lots,  
By MR. ABBOTT,  
Lot 1.—All those 7 HOUSES & SHED, held under Lease  
for 3 Lives, yielding an annual rent of £50.  
Lot 2.—All that PUBLIC-HOUSE, and Garden thereunto  
belonging, known by the sign of the "Colliers' Arms," together  
with the Coal Yard and Wharf adjoining thereto, held under a  
Lease for 99 years, and yielding the annual rent of £34.  
The above Lots are situate at LLANDAFF YARD, near the  
Taff Vale Railway Station in a rapidly increasing neighbour-  
hood. Apply to Mr. HUCKWELL, Landaff, for further  
particulars.

TO PERSONS FITTING UP SHOPS AND OTHERS  
The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian 12th June 1858  
The National Library of Wales - Newspaper Archives

In the same 1859 report as the Colliers above, we hear of Thomas Evans of "The Rollers Arms" beerhouse, Llandaff Yard who was also charged with keeping his house open during 'Divine Service' and for having his house open after 10 o'clock at night. He was fined 10s and 8s.9d. for the first count and 1s and 8s. 9d. for the second count. The Rollers Arms mentioned, brings the sad story of landlord Thomas Evans's son who drowned in the Glamorganshire Canal aged 18 months, found by his parents (7<sup>th</sup> July 1860 in The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian). Apart from the grim news, it gives us an idea of the location of this pub, it again being alongside the canal. It was here that a David Evans was charged with having an 'offensive open drain' a 'foot thick of solid sewage in it'. He was discharged on payment of costs (12<sup>th</sup> October 1866, The Cardiff Times). The Rollers Arms was advertised for sale by auction on 5<sup>th</sup> December 1868 in the Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian, complete with 'Household Furniture and Brewing Plant' giving us a picture as to the extent of the business, this advert again probably signalling the end for this particular establishment.

Finally, in the Cardiff Times on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1871 "a number of young men were fined 5s and costs for being in the Fox and Hounds, Whitchurch and the Greyhound Inn, Llandaff Yard during prohibited hours". Unfortunately very little else is known about The Greyhound, where would this have been?